

Getting Your Book Done Right: Four Key Steps

Raquel Hunter

Congratulations: You have decided to create an amazing book or book series. You have your concept, characters, and even your manuscript. Now what do you do? Here are four things you need to do to make sure your book gets done *right*:

BUILD A TEAM

There are so many decisions you will need to make about your soon-to-be-finished product, and you **CANNOT** do it all alone. As much as you may want to protect and coddle your creation like a baby, you will need to vet and trust professionals to bring your book to life. You will absolutely need professionals like illustrators, proofreaders, editors, and graphic designers who specialize in book design and layout. If you select great professionals, they will give insight to you that will help carry you through your literary publishing journey. Connecting with highly skilled professionals who are passionate about what they do will help to ensure that your literary project is of great quality, published, and available for public purchase in a timely manner.



CONNECT

Once your book is published, the hard work comes into place – networking and marketing.

You must begin to put yourself out there! You must begin to network, network, network and market, market, market. Hopefully, this is something that you started to lay the groundwork for during the creation of your book – during those rare moments of writer’s block. If not, it is never too late to create a list of people, communities, and institutions that will support the messages in your book. Reach out through email and

telephone, and especially face to face. I have found that people enjoy and respect meeting an actual person behind the brand or the product. The human connection of it all will propel your project more than you know. So be ready to be the face behind your project.

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The Importance of Building Your Visual Identity

Peggy Nehmen

What is the promise you’re making to your readers? What is your reader looking for? One key to effectively marketing your book is a visual identity, so your readers know who you are and what you’re promising.

Your image and reputation are starting points for your brand. It’s the way you package and present yourself, and it’s an essential component of marketing your book. In her presentation to the St. Louis Publishers Association on Wednesday, June 13, book designer Peggy Nehmen will focus on visual basics, tips, and insights, including questions to get you thinking. A good identity is worth a thousand words. It’s possible for someone like you, a writer or author, to create a style with just a little bit of knowledge. Get ready to take notes as you learn:

- How a good identity sets you apart from others in your genre
- How to be memorable and on the minds of your audience
- How to represent who you are through visuals
- How to connect to your target audience
- How consistency of visual style helps to build a brand

Peggy Nehmen, a veteran graphic designer, has a love of typography, book design, and all things creative. Her design studio, Nehmen-Kodner, provides branding and marketing for self-published authors, startups, and established companies. Peggy guides authors through the book design process to produce customized covers and interiors. Learn more about her work at nkcreative.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jun 15–17 @ RENAISSANCE StL AIRPORT HOTEL:

Gateway Con

presented by the St. Louis Writers Guild

▶▶ **\$20 DISCOUNT FOR SLPA MEMBERS** ◀◀

— stlwritersguild.org/gatewaycon/conferenceregistration.html

Jul 11, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:

Digital Tools to Market Your Book

with Dave Strom

— stlouispublishers.org/event-2818627

Jul 21, 7pm @ WESTBOROUGH COUNTRY CLUB:

The Ins & Outs of Amazon & Getting Your Book Into Book Stores & Beyond

with Amy Collins

— stlouispublishers.org/event-2899943

Aug 8, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:

SLPA Vendor Showcase

*** FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ***

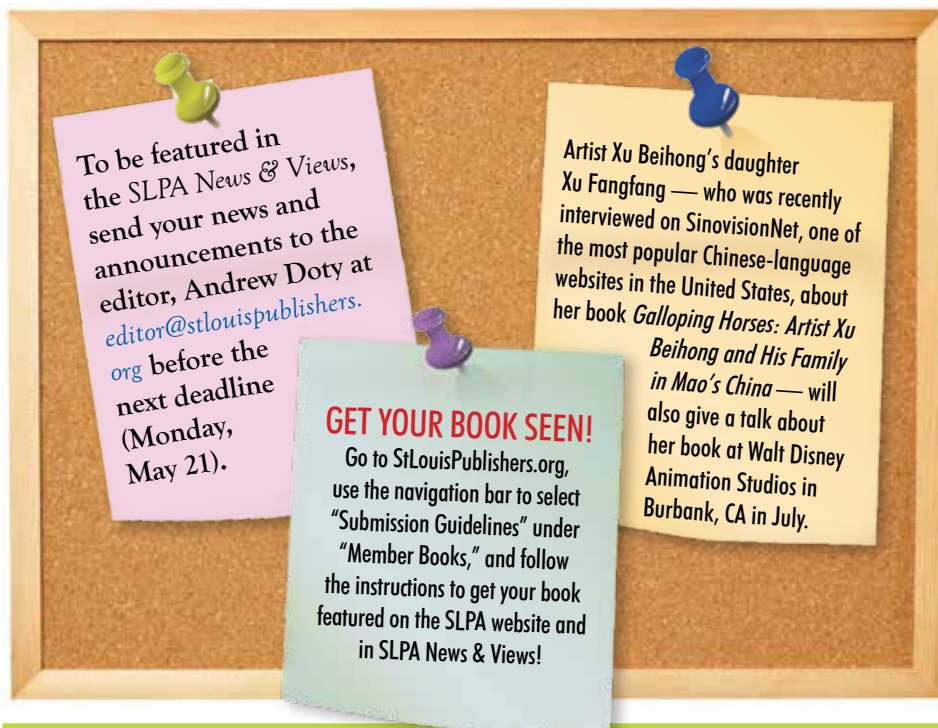
— stlouispublishers.org/event-2874475

WRITERS ASSEMBLE

Register Now for Gateway Con! stlwritersguild.org/gatewaycon.html

Volunteer – and Sell Your Books at Gateway Con!

The SLPA is proud to be a sponsor of the Gateway to Publishing Conference & Convention, organized by the St. Louis Writers Guild. We invite members in good standing to represent the SLPA at the conference by volunteering to hand out publicity material and tell visitors about our nonprofit. Volunteers will also have the opportunity to represent your own books, so this is a great chance to practice your book pitch and move some units! For more information, visit StLouisPublishers.org/event-2897817 or email Jan Kraus at janet@stlouispublishers.org.



(Four key Steps continued from page 1)

REPRESENT

To sell, you will most likely need to be the face and image behind your literary works. Your credentials and experience matter and are what will validate your book to others. Thought you were done with networking and marketing? Not at all. There are more layers that continue to grow and grow. You will also need to develop a polished elevator pitch addressing the main points about your project or product in 30–60 seconds. This is most helpful in rushed encounters, such as in passing or on the elevator with a person who absolutely must know about your awesome book.

SHOW ME

Although having a great 30–60-second pitch is useful, talk can only go so far. We are in an era that says “show me,” like the great state of Missouri has always demanded. Your message will go so much further with a sample copy or product that can be explored and shared with others. Be willing to provide one or two free copies to your network to provide hard evidence. I have learned to always keep a few copies of my books in my trunk, just in case. Get used to giving free copies away to select people who can place your book in the right hands. The cost of giving away free books does not compare to the value of spreading the word.

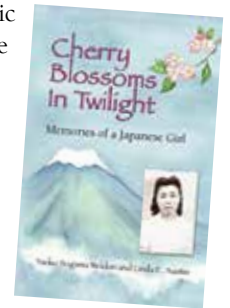
THE BOOK CORNER

Cherry Blossoms in Twilight: Memories of a Japanese Girl

Yaeko Sugama-Weldon & Linda E. Austin

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Linda Austin wrote and published her mother's story of growing up in Japan around WWII because no one else

had written that perspective. *Cherry Blossoms in Twilight* was published in 2005 and followed by a second edition in 2007 after Linda joined the SLPA and learned more about writing and publishing. The book is still selling after all these years, and copies can be found in libraries across the country. Read more and buy the book at <https://www.amazon.com/Cherry-Blossoms-Twilight-Memories-Japanese>.



Meetings on the Second Wednesday of the Month

Richmond Heights Community Center (THE HEIGHTS)
The Argus Room • 8001 Dale Ave.
Richmond Heights, MO, 63117
(Child care available at THE HEIGHTS)

Doors open for networking at 6:30pm
Program begins at 7pm
The meeting concludes around 8:30pm
Networking until 9pm

Regular meetings are free to members
Membership \$60 per year
Guests: \$10 at the door

SLPA NEWS & VIEWS
Editor: Andrew Doty
Designer: Cathy Wood
Webmaster: Kevin Ericson

