

Your Brand Identity Statement

By Bob Baker

Think of your identity as an author and your book as the steel tip of a dart. Now visualize that the people of the world are spread out across a giant wall filled with thousands of dart boards. Each dart board represents a specific group of people.

One might be teenagers who like vampire stories, while another symbolizes adults who enjoy satire. Other dart boards might include fans of historical fiction, children's books, graphic novels, political humor, fitness books, and so on.

Key: When you market your book, it's your job to aim the tip of your dart directly at the bull's-eye of the dart boards that represent your ideal fans. You do this by sending targeted messages to the websites, blogs, podcasts, online forums, newspapers, magazines, and radio stations that your potential fans frequent.

But what kinds of messages do you send? Most self-promoting authors make one of two mistakes. They either throw their dart randomly all over the wall and end up reaching no one, or they aim their dart at the proper boards but with a vague or confusing message, so the dart doesn't stick to any of them.

The solution: Create a Brand Identity Statement (BIS) about your book or yourself as an author. A BIS is a simple but powerful sentence of no more than 15 words (10 words or less is even better) that describes your specific identity.

If you could take every feature and beneficial aspect associated with your book and run them through a grinder, only to be left with the pure, concentrated essence of you and your book, that would be your BIS.

You should craft your BIS to include a

benefit statement to your fans. Two well-known Brand Identity Statements from the business world are Domino's's "Fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less, guaranteed" (13 words) and M&M's's "Melts in your mouth, not in your hands" (eight words).

The BIS I use to promote my FullTimeAuthor.com website is "Marketing advice for indie authors and book publishers" (eight words).

You can use your Brand Identity Statement in two ways: privately and publicly.

Privately, having a BIS keeps you focused on your marketing message. Therefore, every time you write a press release, set up a photo session, do a radio interview, or design a book cover, you make certain your vision stays focused on your core identity, which is stated in your BIS.

You can also use your BIS as a public slogan that appears on all of your web pages, fliers, bookmarks, business cards, banners, posters, T-shirts, stickers, and more. That way, whenever people hear your name, they will be reminded of your identity and what's in it for them.

Examples: Here are some good, short Brand Identity Statements used by successful authors:

- Joan Stewart goes by "The Publicity Hound."
- Gary Ryan Blair is known as "The Goals Guy."



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- Alexandria Brown used to call herself "The Ezine Queen."

Here are some real-life examples of other Brand Identity Statements:

- Author Katherine Woodward Thomas uses "7 Weeks to Attract the Love of Your Life" on her website.
- Brenda Novak's home page starts with "NY Times Bestselling Romantic Suspense Author."
- Corinne Richardson used the phrase "Helping people simplify the second half of their lives."

Important: Ideally, the title of your book will act as a Brand Identity Statement too, as in:

- *The UltraSimple Diet: Kick-Start Your Metabolism and Safely Lose Up to 10 Pounds in 7 Days*
- *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*
- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Is there any doubt as to what these books deliver? Do you know instantly whether or not these topics are for you?

That's why you need a Brand Identity Statement. It greatly increases the odds that your promotional dart will reach and stick to the right types of readers and fans.

SLPA ELECTION RESULTS

The SLPA's annual officer elections were held at the meeting on Wednesday, November 9. Twenty members voted unanimously to retain SLPA President Warren Martin, Vice President Pat Dorsey, Treasurer Linda Austin, Secretary Michael DePung, Membership Chair Peggy Nehmen, Editorial Director Andrew Doty, Newsletter Designer Cathy Wood, Webmaster Kevin Ericson, Publicity Director Rujuta Paradkar, and Board Member-at-Large Bob Baker, and to newly elect Tim Yohe into the new position of Social Media Director.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **JAN 11: JENNIFER GEIST:**
HOW TO BUILD & MAINTAIN
YOUR AUTHOR PLATFORM
- **FEB 8: ALAN SPECTOR:**
LESSONS LEARNED: A WRITER'S JOURNEY FROM
BASEBALL FIELDS TO BATTLEFIELDS
- **MAR 8: TBA**
- **APR 12: JILL FARMER:**
AUTHOR JOURNEY

Jennifer Geist: How to Build & Maintain Your Author Platform

In the digital age, with the number of books being published at an all-time high, it's more important than ever to efficiently and effectively reach your readers. Even if an author pairs with a larger publishing company, every additional bit of marketing can help. The first step to marketing is building an author platform: a following based on who you are and what you do. It is much deeper than a marketing campaign for a single book.

Author platforms can vary wildly between authors, based on their personalities, books, and target audiences. At the monthly SLPA meeting on Wednesday, January 11,



Jennifer Geist

we'll explore what should be included in all author platforms, as well as different options that may work well for you, such as: growing an email list, choosing and managing social media profiles, creating a website, blog, vlog, or podcast, scheduling and attending events, and more.

A smart author platform draws on other important pieces of the writing puzzle — such as your business plan, target audience, and market research — and should be in progress before you start querying authors and agents. It could mean the difference between receiving a publishing contract or a rejection.

Bulletin Board

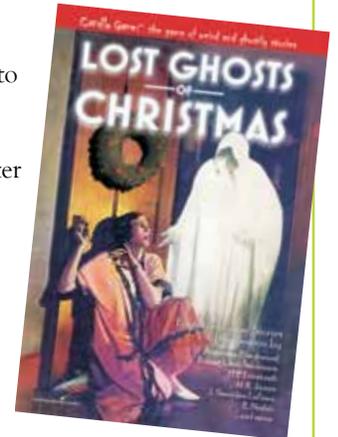
- SLPA member Peter H. Green, in co-authorship with his mother, Alice H. Green, has just published *Radio: One Woman's Family in War and Pieces*, "one of the rare remaining eyewitness accounts of women's heroic role in tending hearth and home and supporting their families during World War II." Read more at peterhgreen.com/women-wartimes-unsung-heroes. Peter Green was also at VFW Post 3944 on Veterans Day with his father's memoir, *Ben's War With the US Marines*.
- Fangfang Xu recently published a biography of her father, pioneering Chinese artist Xu Beihong. *Galloping Horses: Artist Xu Beihong and His Family in Mao's China* describes how his family and legacy survived the turbulence of Mao's ever-changing policies, which dictated the direction of art and music from 1949 through the devastating ten-year Cultural Revolution. Visit beihongchinaarts.com for more information.
- SLPA Treasurer Linda Austin and William "Doc" Anderson had a successful book signing at VFW Post 3944 on Veteran's Day, selling his Korean War memoir *Battlefield Doc*. Doc and Linda were also featured that day in the *Webster-Kirkwood Times*. Linda also had a table at the Local Authors Open House on Nov 17 at the St. Charles Library. Read the article at websterkirkwoodtimes.com/Articles-Features-c-2016-11-10-199700.114137-sub28363.114137-Doc-Anderson-Recalls-Battlefield-Experiences-As-A-Medic-Serving-In-Korea.html.
- Congratulations to Ann Conklin Unruh, whose book *Coffee is Cheaper than Therapy* was recently selected by the South County Book Club as their book of the month. Unruh was invited to share stories about her book at the book club. Her book can be found at amazon.com/Coffee-Cheaper-Therapy-Conklin-Unruh/dp/0692524711.
- Thanks to SLPA Vice President Patrick Dorsey, Jim Longo's legendary but long out of print *Haunted Odyssey* (an original collection of history and first-person accounts of ghosts in St. Louis and the surrounding area) is available again in a special thirtieth anniversary edition through Factual Planet, an imprint of St. Louis indie publisher Legendary Planet. Read more at amazon.com/Haunted-Odyssey-Ghostly-Mississippi-Valley/dp/1939437458.
- *The Tale of Willy Willys*, the true story of a 1926 Willys Overland touring car, written by Ben Hilliker and designed by SLPA Board member Cathy Wood, is now on display at the Missouri History Museum's Route 66: Main Street Through St. Louis exhibit alongside a lovingly restored Willys car. Congratulations, Cathy! Read more about the book at willywillys.com.

THE BOOK CORNER

Candle Game: Lost Ghosts of Christmas

edited by Patrick Dorsey,
published by Legendary Planet

Forgotten today, for centuries ghost stories by the fireside on Christmas Eve were as much a part of traditional celebrations as festively decorated trees and joyous carols. In the season when dark nights are their longest and coldest and the upcoming new year turns thoughts to reflect on the past, when better for the ghostly to reach out and make itself known?



Buy now at <https://www.amazon.com/Candle-Game-Christmas-Forgotten-Stories/dp/1939437431>.

MEMBERSHIP DUES
\$60 in 2017

SLPA Meets 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.
Guests: \$10 at the door.



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

