

## **Blatant Self-Promotion (Thinking Outside the Bookstore)**

Books:

*Publicize Your Book! – An Insider’s Guide to Getting Your Book the Attention It Deserves*  
Jacqueline Deval  
Perigree/Penguin Putnam

*1001 Ways to Market Your Books*  
John Kremer  
Open Horizons  
P O Box 205  
Fairfield, IA 52556

*Guerilla Marketing for Writers – 100 Weapons for Selling Your Work*  
Jay Conrad Levinson, Rick Frishman & Michael Larsen  
Writer’s Digest Books

*How to Publish and Promote Online*  
M.J. Rose and Angela Adair-Hoy  
St. Martin’s Griffin

*The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing – Everything you need to know to write, publish, promote, and sell your own book*  
Tom & Marilyn Ross  
Writer’s Digest Books

*Book Promotion for the Shameless – 101 Marketing Tips That Really Work*  
Lorna Tedder  
Spilled Candy Publications  
P O Box 5202  
Niceville, FL 32578-5202

*Advanced Book Promotion for the Shameless – More Marketing Tips for Penny-Pinching Authors*  
Lorna Tedder  
Spilled Candy Publications  
P O Box 5202  
Niceville, FL 32578-5202

## **Blatant Self-Promotion Tips**

Use your phone-answering machine as a promotional tool. My message promotes my book every time someone calls and I don't answer the phone. I try to change the message at least every month so regular callers don't get frustrated by hearing the same message ad infinitum.

Use your word processing program to print up bookmarks with the rave reviews you get from readers and reviewers. Make sure you include ordering information for your book(s), and put something on the reverse side of the bookmark, like your forthcoming appearances. People always check to see if there's something on the back. Print from your own printer, or take to the copy shop. Use whatever paper you deem best: colored paper, regular paper, card stock, or photo paper.

Send out a flyer promoting your book to every friend, relative, and acquaintance for which you have a mailing address.

Double or triple your mailing list by adding books by a second or third author to the flyer and having them split expenses with you as they provide additional names for the mailing list.

I take a wedding guestbook with me to signings, and ask my customers to sign it while I sign their books. I explain I want to let them know when my next book comes out, and they are happy to do it.

Rules of speaking engagements: Have a copy of your book in your hands, so when people tire of looking at your face, they can focus on your book. Make sure the cover is facing out! (Lorna Tedder)

Take bookmarks everywhere you go. Leave them on countertops at the post office, with your tip at a restaurant, or (extra blatant warning) tape them at eye level in restrooms. (Lorna Tedder)

## **Must Have Advice for Authors**

### **by Brenda Nixon**

Getting your book published is only half the battle. Promoting and selling it is the other half. Even if a major publishing house does the work, the author is still expected to promote, promote, promote. I've heard horror stories from authors who've discovered their precious "baby" was stockpiled in a distributor's warehouse or the in-house publicist did little or nothing about getting book signings. So whether you're a self- or traditional published author you must campaign for your own product. Here are some ways that have helped me:

**Rubber Stamp.** As soon as my book was published I purchased a rubber stamp promoting my book. Actually, I have two. One says, "New book takes error out of raising tots; Parenting Power in The Early Years by Brenda Nixon, order toll free 877-421-7323." I brand every envelope that leaves my home or office with this stamp! Who knows who might read my book information while it's passing through the postal system?

**E-mail Signature Line.** At the end of your e-mail you can promote your book. It's simple to go into your e-mail options and add a standard line – the signature – that will be attached to all outgoing messages. At the bottom of mine are these words: "Brenda Nixon, speaker, author of Parenting Power in the Early Years available on Amazon. Don't let any daily opportunity to promote your book pass."

**Join Associations.** Writer's associations are mutually beneficial: you can learn to hone your craft plus network and promote your book. One that particularly applies to me is the National Association of Women Writers at [www.naww.org](http://www.naww.org). Rated one of Writer's Digest Top Ten "Best Sites" the NAWW annual dues are only \$55/year and you can join using PayPal payment services. I'm a member of other professional associations and while it's not my primary goal to promote my book it happens and I've sold some through this avenue.

**Marketing Sites.** Scour the web for sites that give book promotion tips. One of my favorites is [www.bookmarket.com](http://www.bookmarket.com) - website of the author of 1001 Ways to Market Your Books. Here I can read success stories from other authors promoting their books and get new ideas for mine.

**Independent Reading.** Authors are on a learning curve about publicity. I recommend writers get and read Sally Stuart's Guide to Getting Published (1999, Shaw). There's some info on marketing in her book but, in my opinion, the bible of marketing is Carmen Leal's You Can Market Your Book, subtitled, all the tools you need to sell your published book (2003, Write Now Publications).

**Website Promotion.** Publicize your book through your own website. Not only do I have a picture and order information on my book but my website gives testimonials and a brief description. If you don't have a website you can design one and register it at a reasonable price with [www.GoDaddy.com](http://www.GoDaddy.com). Because of deregulation you can register your domain name with any company now even if you previously registered with a particular provider. So shop around for the best service and price bargain.

**Book and Gift Stores Chains.** If you're self-published you must have an ISBN or bar code. Since most stores are computerized, an ISBN helps them order books and track sales. A self-published book without a bar code is suicide. For books published through a traditional house where the ISBN is provided there should be no trouble getting your book into the system. Getting the store manager or acquisitions person to order it is another challenge. My book, Parenting Power in The Early Years is on [bn.com](http://bn.com), the Barnes & Noble website. It can be in any

Barnes & Noble around the country. But walk into a location now and you probably won't find my book. I or another customer must personally request that Parenting Power in The Early Years be stocked because Barnes & Noble doesn't routinely order it. This is to warn you that the ISBN does not guarantee stores will carry your book. You must do individual requests.

Independent Stores. There are thousands of these around the country and it's pretty easy to get them to buy your book. For example, last summer while on vacation I walked into a pharmacy in a small Utah town. After visiting with the cashier, whose husband owned the store, about my book, she promptly purchased five copies. Although my book is available through major distributors such as Baker & Taylor and Spring Arbor I ALWAYS carry books in my car. In this instance, I was able to immediately fulfill her request.

Think of stores where your book will be a good fit. My book is for parents-to-be and those with toddlers so I try to get hospital gift shops to carry it. Recently, I was a counselor for my daughter's youth camp. The camp offers a tiny gift shop, which serves all age camp programs. After describing my book's topic to the gift shop manager she ordered some to sell during Family Camp. Schools, churches, and daycares have lending libraries that may need to know about and want your book too.

Pray. Ask the Creator for creative ways to promote your printed words.

Remainder Dealers. There are companies that purchase out-of-print books and overruns. They'll also buy high quality self-published books from the author. One dealer is Ideal Books, 400 S Dixie Hwy #3, Hallandale, FL 33009. Website: [www.idealbks.com](http://www.idealbks.com). You can Bonnie Kaufman at [idealbks@aol.com](mailto:idealbks@aol.com) to query her interest. But she only pays \$.65 for each book. So before you go this route make sure you've expired all your promotional options.

I hope some of these tips are new to you. Perhaps some you know but forgot. A virtue I practice in book promotion is persistence. Success is not a respecter of intelligence but of diligence.

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As a speaker, writer and educator to parents Brenda Nixon is dedicated to building stronger families. For information on her book and speaking topics go to her website at **[www.parentpwr.com](http://www.parentpwr.com)**

## **MAJOR MARKETING SUCCESS**

**Dusty Rhodes - [www.eclectics.com/dustyrhodes/](http://www.eclectics.com/dustyrhodes/)**

Okay . . . so many of you have asked me to explain how I sold \$ 1,920.00 worth of books at a three-day week-end event.

Let me preface my remarks by assuring you that I am definitely NOT a marketing "expert" nor do I claim to be. I am NOT some kind of "super salesman". Lots of you have asked me "what's your secret ?" . . . okay . . . here it is . . . I work very hard at selling my books!

First, I look for an event of some kind that draws LOTS of people. People who are not in a hurry. People who browse. People that would be interested in the kind of books I write. Namely historical Westerns. (events I look for) Pioneer Days (where I was two weeks ago) Apple Festivals (where I was last week-end) Blue Grass Festivals (Where I will be this coming week-end) Antique Car Shows (where I will be the week-end after that.) Rodeos, etc. (places to avoid) Shopping Malls, Book stores, Grand Openings etc.

I have one of those 10 foot X 10 foot "Easy-up" self contained tents that I can put up or take down by myself. I rent a space (they usually run from \$20.000-\$80.00 for the event). I place my 3' X6' folding table you can buy at Wal-mart for \$24.00) in the front-center of the opening facing the traffic. I cover it with a red velour cloth, display my books on a book display stand (you can purchase anywhere for under \$ 2.00). I have a good supply of books stacked high directly behind the displayed one. I print up a large supply of personal business cards with my picture on them. On the back wall of my "booth/tent" I have a large banner that says:

"MEET DUSTY RHODES  
AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF MAN HUNTER  
NAMED BEST WESTERN E-NOVEL OF 2002"

Invariably, people read the banner as they walk in front of my booth. If they pause at all while they are reading, I reach out and offer them a card and introduce myself . . . "Hello, I'm Dusty Rhodes. I write Western Novels!"

I have yet to have anyone refuse to take the few steps over to accept my offered card. Even if they are 20 feet away. As they take the card I call their attention to my "Man Hunter" book and tell them, "This is the book that was the BEST WESTERN E-NOVEL last year."

Most everyone will pick up the book, flip it over, and read the blurb and authors bio on the back. While they are doing this I engage them in casual conversation . . . "Where are you from?" . . . "Do you enjoy reading Western books?" . . . "Who is your favorite author?" etc.

Many have a husband or father or grand-father that likes to read westerns. I explain that my books are similar to Louis L'Amour's books in that there are no bad language or sexual connotations in any of my books. My experience is that I will sell more than half of those that actually pick up the book.

Again, this is what seems to work for me. But it works only because I work at it. You can't just sit there behind your table and watch the people walk by and hope to sell your books.

Hope this helps someone sell more of your books.

## **Self-Promotion Tips**

**Priscilla Maine – [www.PriscillaMaine.com](http://www.PriscillaMaine.com)**

Unless your initials are H. C. and you're married to the "Come Back Kid" you can pretty well kiss off the idea of your publisher forking over an \$8 million buck advance and a publicity blitz that jets journalists from foreign countries to interview you and all major networks & CNN scrambling for a slot on your schedule. Your face, name and book cover won't be plastered on the side of metro buses, magazines, or tabloids. No coast to coast book signing tour either. As Tony Soprano would say, "fogetaboutit." There won't be a publicity frenzy.

Your book is one among the estimated 55,000 published annually. How will it be promoted? If it gets done, it's up to YOU!

So, where do you start? Find your niche. Where will your book fit? A Western writer has two books for Young Adult readers set on a horse ranch. She has used this setting to promote her books by visiting Feed and Grain & Tack Supply stores. Now that's a unique outlet, don't you think? And it's working well for her.

Antique Shops are another untapped venue. I make lye soap and Poke Bonnets, both relate to my storylines. Antique dealers love them and carry my books just to get their hands on my soap and bonnets. Gift Shops and Traveler Plazas are another good source, especially if your story takes place in the local vicinity of either. Sign your books and tuck a re-order form inside each. These get passed along to friends/family.

Never travel without a fistful of business cards and brochures, and leave them everywhere you stop or shop. Using 1" X 2 5/8" mailing labels print your book information (use colors to draw extra attention) and stick on every piece of mail that leaves your office. Postal workers read too, you know. Plus, everyone who handles that envelope will see and read it.

Create bookmarks and stuff inside those envelopes, too. Don't save these items just for family and friends, put them in your utility bills as well. You never know where you'll find your next reader.

Get acquainted with your area Chamber of Commerce secretary. They love having local talent to boast about in their advertising pamphlets.

Volunteer to speak at schools, Churches & organizational activities. Speakers are always welcome. Take along books to sell.

If you're going on vacation and plan to stay with friends or relatives, try to set up a book signing. Let your publisher know about your planned trip, too. They may be able to set up a signing at a local book store, if one is available, since it would cost them nothing to have you appear.

Make up T-Shirts for friends and family members and not just those living nearby. Send them across country...spread the word. When you mail those shirts include a sheet of those mailing labels and bookmarkers and ask them to help you out by using them. Grandchildren are wonderful promoters. Even the neighborhood youngsters love a free T-shirt.

Make mouse pads, fridge magnets, calendars & tote bags with your cover art & ISBN on them.

And how about the BLURB? Don't overlook the value of the blurb. It grabs attention and often makes the final decision for a reader if it's recommended by an author they already read.

Get creative. You wrote a book, now sell it.