

# Niche books are very profitable. How are their authors chosen?

I publish to niche markets, in my case to K-12 school administrators. All of those who write books for my firm must have a specific field of expertise of interest (and meet needs of) K-12 school administrators. Two examples, our two latest books, are [\*The Art of School Boarding: What Every School Board Member Needs to Know\*](#) and [\*The School Principal's Toolbook\*](#). Our book titles tell the kind of knowledge (and expertise) the author is sharing.

Before we ask an author to publish with us we know that they are the best expert we can find about their topic. The author tells us what of their expertise our niche members will pay to read about; that is, what buyers' needs their book will help the buyer meet. Together, we write a title that tells in one short line what their book is about, and from it we create a book description that explains more fully what the book will cover and what benefits they will receive from buying (and applying) the book's message and processes. Finally, we develop a tentative table of contents so that everything important is covered in a sensible order.

The writer then writes their book, we edit it (in collaboration with them), they rewrite what needs redoing, we have it proofed, we edit a last time, and out comes the book.

I mention the process because we have a second and equally important selection criterion for the writer: that they have experience speaking to the niche, are an association member, and expect to regularly offer major presentations built around the book and their expertise to the niche. A logical extension is that their listeners will want to buy their book after

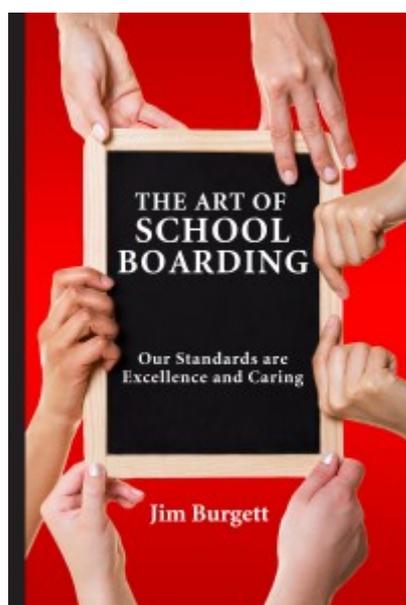
hearing their presentations. (We also encourage them to write articles based on their book for association newsletters, journals, or related venues.)

We want to help our authors build their own expertise “empires,” and we hope that the book that we jointly create is the foundation of that growth.

The reason for this blog? How do we select or reject authors is a frequent question asked when I speak about niche publishing, so I hope the information above shares some insight into our firm’s procedure.

We also pre-test our niche books so we know, before the books are written and printed, an approximate number of bound books we will sell, the price (or range) that buyers will pay, and if the title is acceptable. How that’s done requires much more detail and examples. The best source is my [\*Niche Publishing: Publishing Profitably Every Time\*](#). Other related material can be found [here](#).

Best wishes,



Gordon Burgett