

# Think smaller and write/sell more booklets, short books, and blogged books

That was the gist of a very well organized and enthusiastically presented one-hour feature presentation by Nina Amir to the [BAIPA](#) (Bay Area Independent Publishers Assn) gathering in San Rafael, CA on January 12.

Nina, the *Inspiration to Creation Coach*, is the author of Writer's Digest's **How to Blog a Book: Write, Publish and Promote Your Work One Post at a Time**. She has also published 11 short books, has five blogs, and speaks widely. Her website is at [www.ninaamir.com](http://www.ninaamir.com).

"One book alone is not enough," Nina said. Then she showed how, from one core or extended idea, could come enough concept(s) can be expanded into tip books, booklets, booked blogs, blogged books, list books, anthologies, prescriptive nonfiction, Q & A books, short stories, novellas, chat books, poetry, and other information products. By doing so you create a diversified platform that makes it easier to sell your key book to others and to major publishing houses, as well as to back-of-the-room buyers at your workshops or presentations.

Most of the examples shown and discussed were smaller printed paper books, but all could simultaneously be published through "open" publishers like Kindle, Nook, Smashwords, and others.

Nina emphasized focusing on your expertise, and trying to find the most-sought benefits for your buying audience. Also, to provide published items to sell to your audience, in the <\$10 range. **Booklets** she said had saddle-stitched binding, included up to 48 pages, were condensed versions, needed no ISBN, and could be produced at booklet presses or at Kinkos/Office Depot. They are prepared in .pdf and cost about \$1 each. The

best seller was the \$3, author-unknown **Famous Little Red Book That Makes Your Dreams Come True**, which has sold in the millions.

The booklets might be chapters of a book or its introduction, part of a memoir, a short story, a brief teaching lesson, an extended tip book, details about the characters or location of a novel, or how a novel was researched.

Much of Ms. Amir's animated talk focused on blogs.

In a **blogged book**, for example, the author designs the purpose and structure of the book, creates a table of contents, then writes the chapters (300-1000 words) in order, brings them together, adds and edits, and releases a paperback and/or ebook. The six steps to doing that are (1) identify the topic, benefits, and readers/buyers, (2) map out the content, (3) set up the blog time period, (4) post the chapters in blog form, (5) write the blogs, and (6) edit them. Then the finished book must be published and, one hopes, sold.

But a **booked blog** starts with an assortment of blogs. To repurpose those blogs profitably, the author studies his/her buying list to find a common thread that most of the potential readers would want to know more about. One can use the categories and labels and tags in blogging to extract a book theme and to identify the most appropriate blogs, bring them together, and edit them (and add new copy), to cut and paste into a buyable book.

**List books** are just that: things you know about (or could) shared in list fashion. They can be about business, specific information, a product, or services. To fill the book out and add value, add a paragraph or two per list item, one listed item per page.

An **anthology** can be written by others, with you the gatherer, judge, editor, and book producer. Select an area of expertise, find 10-25 experts who will each write a free chapter.

Contributors can later sell the finished book or it can be given free by all to expand the awareness of the authors' expertise. Here, you pick the theme and slant and get the contributors, while you divide up the topic, determine word count and deadline, get the publishing rights from the authors, and write or arrange for an introduction and conclusion. An anthology example we all know? The Chicken Soup books.

A **quote book** usually has one theme and 25-50 quotes, sometimes each a page long. They can even be quotes extracted solely from a new book.

**Q & A books** most commonly come from the writer's clients, where the book captures the most common and/or the most challenging questions and gives each a reasoned response.

The point that Nina repeatedly made was that virtually anything you write can be repurposed into a book.

Her book model was to create a solid table of contents, find another book similar to what you want to write as an example or standard, not to edit as you wrote the first draft, don't seek perfection, and start with a firm deadline.

Regarding blogs, she said to focus on great content, write often (2-5 times a week), and do that for 6-12 months to build writing stock and create traffic to the blog.

Why would people buy a book built around blogs they've probably read? (1) Because they love that or those blogs, (2) together the blogs create new material, (3) they are more closely edited when repositioned, (4) it's hard to read a book in blog form, and (5) many people start reading the blogs in the middle.

The theme that prevailed the whole hour: new writers can be published far more often and far quicker than they imagine, and by creating smaller booklets or books they will build a

needed platform of displayed expertise and reach far more fans than through earlier, now outdated writing models that were developed before the huge transformations in digital production.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett