

How and why you should niche publish your book!



The rationale and process are explained in the **21 free blogs** listed below. All are found at this site.

The first six blogs explain what “niche publishing” is and why every publisher (and every expert of any stripe) should be running to get in line before the others catch on!

So you can quickly pick the information that you most want to know about “niche publishing,” here is a concise **summary of its benefits.**

If you “niche publish” rather than publish “the regular way” you could...

- * **earn far more money, much faster**, with nary a nick of risk!
- * you'll **never have to compete with big-house publishers**,
- * you'll **never have to sell through bookstores**, and
- * from the topic you select **you could create your own very profitable, life-long empire—with YOU the empress or emperor.** By expanding your sphere of buyers, the benefits of your book and message will continue to multiply your appeal, which will continue to bring you more money even faster—

“Niche publishing” (and “niche marketing”) aren’t magic. But they bring two huge benefits that standard publishers can’t provide.

The first is pre-testability. That means that before you write or print a page of your book, you can pre-test it to see (1) if that book will sell enough copies (that is, the rough number of copies that will be bought and by whom), (2) if the title works, and (3) if you chose the right problem to solve or needs to be met, the right benefit(s) to promise, a persuasive table of contents, and the right author. If the test results yell “GO!”—go. If not, retest until you get the right pre-test response. Or write another book, then build your empire around that book. (The cost of the test? \$500-600? Under \$1,000. If you as a niche publisher using the self-publishing process expect to receive \$100,000 gross from your book sale; \$50,000 net; and the test may cost 1-2% of returns. If the test is no-go, that’s a 2% risk. Take that bet every time!)

The second benefit is that your **niche book can be the core product of an empire** that can triple your book income every year, and multiply that again from spin-off or related books, MP3s, videos, seminars, speeches, reports, consulting, and classes that you can offer or sponsor to your eager book buyers and their colleagues. Why? Because **your book, targeted specifically to those buyers, proves that you’re an expert in their field, that you and your guidance can solve their problems and fix their frustrations.** Why wouldn’t they rush to buy more good stuff from you in book #2 or through a dozen other empire-linked ways once you have proven that what you say or show works as promised?

So that’s where two elements linked to this blog play key roles.

In 2008 I published a book called *Niche Publishing: Publish Profitably Every Time*. See www.nichepublishing.org for full details and the book's table of contents. That book has sold out in four different renditions, and the paperback issue is still unavailable (unless Amazon is selling old copies of it and keeping the royalties.)

Eureka! **The original, last version is still alive in digital format.** It's available for \$7. We offer it, instantly downloadable, at www.gordonburgett.com.order3.htm.

I've offered 100+ four-hour seminars about niche publishing and have had the opportunity to hear every question, challenge, and suggestion about the process. I still remain convinced that, done as suggested, it is still the best process (with the least risk, if any) and the fastest and safest way for self-publishers to enter the field and reap the rewards.

Alas, while there are many "empires," as I call them, prospering today, it's more difficult to tie them directly to the emergence of one book and one gutsy, hard-working emperor or empress drawing their buyers to the empirical central theme.

What I see more often is a speaker emerging from a topic field with a new idea or process and a following drawn from attendees at their seminars, keynote speeches, or breakout sessions. Somewhat less obvious is the leader's book that serves as the central focus of the unique message the "leader" comes to represent. But what stays as the binding tool as that "empire" takes form is the book, and spin-offs from it, that continue to give substance and breadth to the person and their idea. The point: **empires are usually built from a book's foundation.**

Final points.

If niche publishing seems to fit your path of development, the

one element least discussed but most needed is likely shared as much by you as it was by me: we can build our niche empires faster, better, and surer if we take the time to **create a solid strategy for growth**. Then focus on one message, like the big tree, from which our modest forests will eventually grow. **Make oneself “the” core of something that others in our orb need for their own development**. Write “the” book that your colleagues must master to create (or at least establish) their own excellence. Focus there, spread your process and message until its name and your become synonymous. (The topic of self-publishing is synonymous with the name Dan Poynter. That began with his book *The Self-Publishing Manual*.)

That’s where the remaining 21 blogs fit in. They answer the questions a “niche publisher” must ask. They are trees in our forest. Combine them with *Niche Publishing: Publish Profitably Every Time!*

Where are those other 15 “magic” blogs?

Go to blog.gordonburgett.com (if you’re not reading this blog at that site) and all 21 blogs are there waiting for you! When a blog opens up, go to the **search box in its upper right corner**. Then select and type some key words from a selected blog title, open it with your mouse, and that chosen blog will rather miraculously appear. Hiding the same way is where you’ll also find the 20 more niche-related blogs.

Even if you just type “niche,” about 10 assorted niche-related blogs will appear, and if the sought blog isn’t there, continue downward to the end of that blog chain to where it says “older” or “newer,” and in the subsequent lists of “niche” blogs you will find what you are seeking...

Here are the titles of the 21 blogs that help explain “niche publishing”:

Niche Authors and Publishers:

- * Make a bundle almost risk-free by publishing niche books.
- * Why niche publishing is a much better deal...
- * Ten advantages to niche publishing.
- * How niche authors and niche publishers share the gold.
- * Niche books are very profitable. How are their authors chosen?
- * Why you may not want to niche publish.

The Niche Blog Bundle:

- #1. What's so good about niche publishing?
- #2. The goals and assumptions of pre-test publishing.
- #3. How do you define (or find) a profitable niche for your book?
- #5. Are you a niche writer, a niche publisher, or both?
- #6. How much should you charge for your book?
- #7. How much does it cost to pre-test your niche book?
- #8. Get a free mailing list for your niche book pre-test.
- #9. Two sample notes to pre-test a niche book.
- #10. A sample flyer like those used in niche book pre-testing.
- #11. A postcard to know your niche pre-test book results!
- #12. It's time to actually test your niche book!

More about Niche Pre-Testing:

- * 25 key steps about pre-testing your niche book.

Niche Speaking:

- * Niche Speaking: Cash in with fewer (but more devoted) listeners.

Niche Book Marketing:

- * 101 niche marketing topics.
- * Can we sell two new books by using 12,200 jumbo postcards?

(Incidentally, there are **400+ writing-, speaking-, and**

publishing-related blogs also lurking on this page quietly awaiting your visitation!)

That's it. Best wishes to you with your "niche publishing." I do **consult** in this area so if I can be of assistance, please contact me at glburgett@aol.com.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

[What do I do special as a writing coach?](#)

I just woke up to a question/discussion on LinkedIn's Promocave:

Carrie Golden, Citizen Journalist/Poetry Consultant to filmmakers at Motionpoems, Inc., asked:

Writing coach...

Not sure if this group [Promocave] is the right place to post this question but...what exactly does a writing coach do to help writers?

I wear two hats (on one head): (1) "**court-of-last-resort**" **editor**, providing a last-chance no-nonsense review of what the writer is about to submit (the final final draft) for book publication and (2) a **first-step writing coach** (before much writing). So here was my contribution to the discussion that defines my view of what different do I offer as a writing coach—and why.

[As a writing coach] I think of myself as a nonfiction “what” coach. I prod the souls [rather deeply] through six or so what’s (?), then the “how’s” make sense (and cents). I’m there if they need me later, more as an action guide and (sometimes) a silent co-planner of their future empire.

Here’s a longer explanation of (2), if you are interested and it helps you (*sans me*) do your own early nonfiction book planning, writing, and publishing.

There’s not much mystery about the steps a nonfiction writer can and usually takes to prep and submit a book for publication. See a hundred books in libraries worldwide that address that, and I have two books that address it too: [How to Get Your Book Published in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days](#) and [How to Pick the Right Kind of Publisher](#).

What distresses me most is the number of smart, organized, diligent would-be book writers who wander about, with perfectly good words and spelling, looking for something to say and, mostly, a reason to say it. Bewildered souls with hundreds of pages (at least it reads that way) of “what’s that?” copy that has no clear (or any) purpose (or buyers) presented in sweet-reading, grammatically correct prose. Their command of English is strong. (It’s worse if it’s not.) What’s missing is their grasp of elementary common sense about what a book must do to become a book...

The saddest thing is how easily that could have been prevented if they hadn’t been in such a damn hurry to see themselves and their brilliance in print (everywhere), with assumedly a fat advance almost in hand and many years of fatter royalties following assuredly behind.

About six questions will create the structure and map, plus point the writer to the most likely reader, why they would read it, what they would do with it, and how they just saved

themselves about 75% in misdirected (or undirected) research, “what’s that?” writing, and the one thing they can’t get back, wasted time. Of course each question leads to deeper, related sub-questions which, in turn, lead to a dozen related books written (or waiting for you to write) that, combined with speaking, consulting, focus book series, perhaps audiobooks, and so on, can rather quickly create an empire based on their acquired expertise (which began with book one and is further proven and strengthened in subsequent products.)

So I guess that really makes me a **pre-writing and empire-building coach** (if being an emperor or empress is your thing).

That’s the longer overview of what my kind of writing coach does. (Most of the others start when the writing itself appears. Bless them.)

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Promoting Your Own Seminar: Planning and Implementation

To promote your seminar other people must know about it. Making them aware of its existence can cost you more than all of your other costs combined. So success with self-promoted seminars is directly related to how you inform potential participants, its cost, and the sign-ups resulting from that information.

Some things help before you blow the first bugle.

If you are well known, participants may come simply to see and

hear you. So **one tool is to make yourself better known**—and worth hearing. *[I talk about this in depth in the more than 20 blogs about seminars stored at this site. Just write “seminars” (no quotes) in the search box in the upper right of the first page of this blog and most of them will appear, sometimes chronologically!].*

If the title of your seminar sparks instant interest, you might be able to thrive with a minimum of planned publicity, counting on word-of-mouth (and usually greed) to draw an audience. If you plan to show how to turn kitchen spoons into gold, for example, you could probably speak at the dump at 2 a.m. and charge \$100 a head and make more money than you could count. Show a few opportunists a “before” spoon and an “after” gilded creation, tell each to bring a friend who can bring a friend, and so on—you get the point. And bring several dozen spoons each! Two things are at play here: the title (or topic) and your credibility. The latter can be greatly enhanced by hordes of listeners going home with golden spoons.

A third element is crucial: **audience identity**. You must know to a type and age the kind of people who will benefit most from hearing you speak. Who needs to know what you will say, why, and what benefits can they expect from it? You must also have a feeling for how badly they need your message, or think they need it. And you must sense how much they will pay to attend the seminar.

Assuming that you have worked and worked at developing a clear, enticing title followed by an exciting, **reward-promising description**, and that you have identified who will attend and why, what remains is simple: **getting as many through the door for as little expense as possible**.

So first you should concentrate on the **information dissemination items that are free**. They may be the most important elements anyway.

Start with a **news release** sent to every possible outlet: newspapers (dailies, weeklies, free handouts), newsletters, company organs, any vehicle read by others who might attend your gathering. **Also send a .jpeg** to those with the greatest impact on potential participants. (Make sure that your appearance is in keeping with your purpose: tie and coat or business attire if you want businessmen at your meeting, etc. Shoes are a must.)

Then condense your material into radio-TV (any audio) release segments: 24 lines for a 5-second spot; double that for 10 seconds. Write "COMMUNITY ACTIVITY" on top, followed by the copy and your name, address, and phone. No photo here, of course.

What are the chances that this material will be read? Good for newspapers, if it sounds newsworthy; poor for radio; worse for TV or online—but it's free and if it is used you are that much ahead. Any exposure makes others aware, increases your visibility, and helps.

If you use **social media** this way, go to it. Remember that if you call for action, they need way to respond.

To increase your exposure even more, contact the **area talk show program directors** to see if you could appear on a show some days before your seminar to discuss your topic. Tell him/her why the subject would interest the listeners. (Don't dwell on the seminar if you do appear; mention it once [maybe twice], and refer to it again before the show closes: that's enough.)

Your best selling tool is you, so visit every group, organization, gathering or outlet you can to tell those there about your offering. Contact the meeting director and ask for two minutes early in the session. Introduce yourself, your topic, why they would benefit from attending, how to sign up, and leave enough flyers for all in attendance. Ask others

interested in your program to tell friends. **Put fliers on bulletin boards**, in places where participants might gather, or at any logical spot where they might attract sign-ups.

Having a professional looking book that you wrote about your topic is a huge plus. Include a copy of the cover with every press release or flyer. If the book's title is the same or similar to your seminar title, all the better. It can be self-published, but it must be impressive in appearance. You might also up the program cost and include a free copy. (Or give a free copy to the first 10 or 20 paid registrants, or whatever number you can afford. Sign the book on the inside title page and give it to the person when they arrive.)

Flyers: I can't tell you how to make them here. Most of it is common sense, and much of that comes from using what works best on other fliers. Two places can help you with basic how-to information: art supply stores (sometimes office supply too), that sell the tools, and printers, who put the flyer on paper. Tell either what you have in mind, find an example similar among the millions of flyers in the mail and on boards, and let them tell you how to make one similar. A seminar or even a class about basic graphics and flyermaking should be seriously considered if you will be your own provider of graphics.

Keep in mind: a flyer is a selling tool. It needn't be done in three colors on glossy paper to impress, but it must be clear, neat, errorless, and inviting. Too much copy is worse than too little: white or blank space means class. Stick to simple type, straight-forward messages, don't be too funny, get the "5 W's and H" down—who, what, why, where, when and how—and be sure that the title is what everyone sees first. The viewer will assume that the seminar is like the flyer. Too shoddy and they'll stay away.

Newspaper advertising? Probably a waste of your limited funds, unless just about everybody would want to attend, you have

money to buy a big splash (1/3 of a page or more) to run about three times, or you can place a key ad in a specific section read only by your people. The major exception is for a specialty newspaper, like one sent to nurses only when your seminar offers BRN credit to nurses.

Likewise, radio and TV are not good vehicles for paid seminar advertising unless the appeal is extremely broad or you can somehow focus your topic and the program-ming of the station on a specific audience: a seminar on how to become a professional umpire needs a spot, if any at all, in the middle of the sports results.

How to get started with newspaper, radio, or TV ads if you think they are for you? Go to the person who sells the ad space, leave your wallet at home (I'm not kidding), and say, "I think that _____ would be a good vehicle to advertise my seminar about _____. Do you? (Of course.) Then how would I go about setting up the best ad possible to draw the most participants?" Let the person explain, write it down, take the handouts, and go home and think. Don't buy anything that day; don't buy the whole package: try one ad and test. Rewrite it, if it doesn't draw well, and test again... Compare costs and evaluate possible results. If you decide to go ahead, do everything you can yourself, hiring others to do the rest on a freelance basis and under the condition that they will explain how they did what they did. Soon enough you'll be able to do it all. About 90% of promotion is also common sense and a hard financial eye, plus some creativity. The rest needs tools.

Remember, **you are the best advertising possible**. Your enthusiasm, your drive, your planning, and your clear prose. Put that in action, on paper through friends. Let everybody know, keep a hard eye on expenses, and study everything you see in print or the media to see how others are doing it. By your third seminar you will have it down cold—if you hustle, plan, and economize enough in the beginning to survive (and thrive) until seminar four!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. For 20+ years I offered more than 2,000 four-hour seminars. From that experience I created a four audio cassette program, with a 26-page workbook, called "[How to Set Up and Market Your Own Seminar.](#)" It's now [available](#), if interested.

[The most important / most profitable reason to self-publish](#)

I enjoy and learn a lot from Bob Bly's frequent missives. (See www.bly.com). We sort of walk and work the same side of the street regarding professional writing and publishing, and we both agree on the importance of strategizing first, then following up with processes that work.

So the other day when Bob offered five reasons or situations where self-publishing should seriously be considered, I found myself nodding and uttered an aging "yep" at every point.

Alas, I had an extra "yep" unuttered, so I thought it fair in this blog to add number six to the list. We agree that self-publishing (1) can be a means of getting your words in print, (2) it will let you can control your tome's contents and design, (3) if you can market well, by self-publishing you can sidestep the big-house foot-dragging, (4) when your book is complementary to your greater purpose of displaying your expertise (as, for example, using your book to secure related

speaking engagements), or (5) when self-publishing is the best (and perhaps only) way to get your words and ideas past the older, established houses so potential readers and buyers have a chance to see and decide about the merits of your independent offering.

The missing reason—the unuttered “yep”—for me trumps the other five. I think that **self-publishing** and **niche publishing** are potentially the two halves of a **golden egg**.

In fact, they have walked hand in hand long before “open” publishing made it possible for any writer to ignore the major houses and see their work in print. Many did profitably self-publish long ago, like Dickens, Twain, and General Roberts (of *Roberts’ Rules of Order*). But when the focus swung from books for general markets (risky indeed) to tightly targeted or niche markets, and pre-testing (usually through direct mail testing) allowed the publisher to define the specific buyer demand, then self-publishing let the niche publisher create publications with finely honed titles tailored to pin-point targets. It became a potentially risk-free investment since the publisher would then be able to print the number of books needed to satisfy that predetermined need.

We’re not in disagreement here since Bob sells solid products about niche publishing and my [Niche Publishing—Publish Profitably Every Time](#) also extols (and explains) the “how’s” of niching and pre-testing. I simply wanted to remind my readers that niche publishing continues to be a lucrative path (I think *the* most lucrative) in the grove of self-publishing.

Incidentally, blogs being structured as they are, I probably have 40 or 50 related blogs about “niche publishing” hiding right behind these words for further perusal, if interested. Just type “niche” or “niche publishing” (no quote marks) in the SEARCH box above and Word Press will kindly stack them up for you to read. (Since in my mind niche publishing and **empire building** can be almost synonymous, you are invited to check

“empire building” too!)

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

How can I make my self-published memoir a big seller?

It's doable but very hard. It takes a combination of good things, some not much in your control.

A starting definition is required: what is a “big seller”? Almost everybody will agree that if your book has “many, many thousands of sales; royalties in six-plus figures; a book-based movie, and spin-offs of book fame like Charlie Rose, the morning shows, and widespread name recognition, that's a big seller.

All of that can happen, despite the self-publishing (which too often is linked to poor production and artwork, weak marketing, little or no selling pre-prep, and reluctance by book distributors to keep the book in stock and sight).

Your book is most likely to break out big if you are well known or you say things that lots of book buyers want to read—and repeat to their friends. Those sales can be quickly magnified if the timing is right—the topic excites readers eager to know more about what you are saying. (I'm presuming your prose is tight, true, and flawlessly professional.)

I think I heard you say, “Fat chance! No way my message will

hit the headlines—and what would Charlie Rose, or even Tokyo Rose, ask me even if they could find me?”

Yet there are self-publishers who define being a “big seller” differently, though they’d be happy to be “found” if the world started spinning in reverse. They have already sold a few thousand copies, pushed through Kindle and CreateSpace. One suspects they are about as happy as they’d be if they’d won a Noble and Pulitzer Prize and Miss Spenser, the senior literature class teacher, had given them a posthumous “A.” Their books are well written, to the point, and spotlessly proofed. But the covers aren’t bookstore stuff: free artwork, Arial type, more cartoonish than befitting a true big-house tome.

They all did pretty much the same thing. They told stories, about themselves, their families, some friends. One book was sad. It was a true story. It was patched together with such gentleness and determination that it was hard to put down. A book you gave your spouse or your aunt even though none of you know the author. Or like your friend who told you to buy it—“you’ve got to read this.”

The other two popped with humor. Both worked because the dialog sounded true—and was funny; it was how men, the key protagonists, talk—one book, three brothers and an older sister in a tense, disintegrating family all sliding apart on strings of love; the other, a loose tale of a not-so-good magician working the subway, the bus station, and a bewildering corporate bachelor party, realizing that the weaker his magic was, the funnier was his patter.

Those are also paths to “best sellerdom” for the unchosen. There are as many, or more, winning paths in non-fiction too. I suspect there are thousands of writers of wee books who are puffing with pride just having the best they can do available digitally or in paperback. They’d take the fame and chat with Charlie but in the meantime they can scarcely hide their smile

when somebody whispers, "I read your book. It was great."

And what happens if only a handful of people buy or read your book. Don't brag too loudly about your fan club. There's no reason to say anything. Keep that book in your goods box to give your grandkids. You wrote and published a book. How many others in your family are in print? Or your friends? You count.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Can we sell two new books by using 12,200 jumbo postcards?

At 11" x 6," the postcards are big enough to cover other books already on the potential buyer's desk. But the real issue is, **are the cards clever enough to lovingly pick the buyers' pocket?**

Said another way, it will cost us about \$6500 to get the sales missive done right and delivered on time. But will the returns grossly exceed that cost while we are still in the same flesh? (Three months will tell the tale, hoping for a third of that in three weeks.)

I'm a niche publisher. A few years back my firm hit a bulls-eye designing, creating, and selling standard operating procedures manuals for dentists. Now we create and sell books to K-12 administrators: mostly principals, superintendents, school board members, and teachers. Flossing was pretty much what I knew about dentistry at the earlier incarnation, and

avoiding the grumpy old dudes who ran schools was my gift as a kid. How the niche publishing came about is another blog, or several—go to the search box on this blog and write “**niche publishing**” and you can read what I’ve said so far. Or read my book: [Niche Publishing: Publish Profitably Every Time](#).

The bottom line is that I don’t write education (or dental) books: I get first-rate leaders (preferably already speaking widely in their field) who are experts about the target topics. **They are the heroes**. They share their hard-earned well of knowledge—in writing. (I have had 46 books published that I did write, but that’s a different, and concurrent, life!)

Here the expert is my younger brother, Jim, and these are his fifth and sixth books for me. Why him? I can’t find anybody else with more experience, ideas, and recognition among other superintendents, principals, and teachers, nor anybody who has also given so many key speeches to conferences, conventions, academies, ... Anyway, he’s a lot of fun, disciplined, and full of reliable genes, good ideas, and true stories...

But here’s what’s up now. Jim wrote two books that I want to sell simultaneously: [The Art of School Boarding: What Every School Board Member Needs to Know](#) and [The School Principal’s Toolbook](#). (We try to make our titles so clear that a buyer knows what’s inside before lifting the cover, so I hope these too are self-explanatory.) They are dynamite books but running two separate selling campaigns costs money—and we think one campaign makes giant sense.

Here’s the most important item on the card:

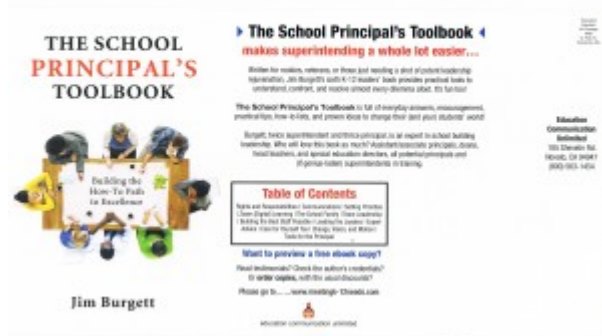
Our buying target is the SUPERINTENDENT, who is chosen by the Board and chooses the principals! If the other two don't work, he or she doesn't either, at least for long. The rest of the postcard explains the books, shows the covers, summarizes the tables of contents in key words, soothes the super's soul in three paragraphs each of selling prose, all leading to four wee questions, "(Do

you) want to review a free ebook copy (of one or both books)? ... read testimonials? ... check the author's credentials? ... or order copies, with the usual discounts?" Then it politely sends the mesmerized 12,200 superintendents (a large percentage of all of them in the U.S.) to www.meetingk-12needs.com for the rest, to decide and close the deal. (Go ahead: you needn't be a superintendent to be curious—although admittedly there are a lot of curious superintendents!)

So that's why I asked in the headline, "Can we sell two new books by using 12,200 jumbo postcards?"

Here are the images on the (two) sides of the postcard:





We don't know. The cards hit the mail yesterday. Here's what it looked like, scanned to blog size. I'll report back right here every three weeks or so. It might be a pinch slow at first because the dust is still settling from the Easter break. The honchos are probably still trying to find their stray kids.

But I can share one thing now: what I had to do to put the jumbo postcard together and get the offer in flow.

1. Think up a **way to sell** two very different books to three school chiefs at once. Does it make sense? Was the superintendent the right target? Will I starve my wife, kids, and myself to death?
2. Find a reliable, current, affordable **mailing list** of superintendents. Google first, limit it to four, and call and let them (quickly) sell their wares and virtues to me.
3. Find a fast, reliable **printer** who is comfortable with jumbo cards and can also sync the mailing (I send the list) and provide inexpensive small adjustment art tweaks, if necessary.
4. Find a card (or graphics art) **designer** (or design it yourself if you are experienced) and get the copy, changes, colors, and the rest pulled together on time.
5. Find the **money** and distribute it gratefully when everybody does what you want—preferably, far better than you imagined.

6. Get my **website** up-to-date, and go through the link lines the buyers will visit so it's all current, easy to follow, and delay-free. Like the supermarket, don't slow the buyer down but be sure he/she at least sees your other products and services along the way.

7. Plan the **fulfillment**. Get the free ebook email ready; write thank-you model replies to your lucky customers; find envelopes, bags, or boxes for shipping; set up a meter mail system with the post office; get tape and all the incidentals; listen to your phone message and make it clear and relevant; set up an invoicing system for direct purchases (usually for purchase orders); double-check your shopping cart process (if used); line up helpers if needed, and lay in enough book stock to cover the initial surge, with a fall-back five-day POD replenishment lever ready to pull if good fortune gushes in.

That's it. "Cross" is the word of the day. My fingers are crossed—or my banker will be cross. See you soon.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

[Multiply your book's sales by turning your book into 6](#)

Here's how that works.

Let's say that you have written a book that is 240 body-copy pages long, excluding the front matter, table of contents, bio, and index.

Let's also say that before you wrote the book you created an

outline. That outline included an intro/explanation chapter, four systems chapters (each including a different concept and example), and a roll-out chapter that took the four concepts and told how they would work with other information dissemination means, either individually or by working together.

That sounds kind of vague, doesn't it? Here's an example that might be easier to envision. (I plan my books first, then write.) Its title is **How to Sell 75+ of Your Freelance Writing Almost All of the Time.**

While the book's contents aren't related to this blog, its Table of Contents below shows **where the six ebooks might come from.** It also shows how all of the book(s)—a major paperback of 240+ pages and six ebooks, each from a chapter or section of that paperback—should multiply your total earning power with only about 50-75% more time spent in the ebooks' preparation, rather than 600% that six books might suggest.

Here's a tentative Table of Contents of my coming book:

How to Sell 75+ of Your Freelance Writing Almost All of the Time

Introduction

1. Why just sell your writing (idea) once? Why not sell it again and again, then once more—and once again...?
2. Magazines and Newspapers: two magic systems with lots of sales in each
3. Books: sell the original in 11 different formats and each of those in six ebooks
4. Niche Publishing: where the gold is hiding in book publishing
5. Topic-spoking: one idea exploded, then filtered through the hungriest buyers
6. The roll-out: once the copy exists, why not make a lot more money from the idea by six other non-print information dissemination means?

It never happens that the 240 pages of your paperback's content are evenly divided into six equal sections of 40 pages each. But my first thought is six books of 40 pages each. (I call these shorties wee ebooks.)

Still, 40 pages to me seems small, and once the six topics are separated from each other and pulled apart, they could easily be expanded into 50 or 60 pages apiece (perhaps by adding an additional example or two in each book). It's your choice. You can make your wee ebooks as long as you want; they are your books and length isn't anti-environmental or anti-anything, as long as the copy and concepts are tight and professional.

You might take the six chapters in my book above, extract each, and massage it into a stand-alone small book. **It can include** the same examples (or different ones) and **almost the same prose as the original book**. Just prune out links, references, and extraneous resources if they aren't about this specific topic. Refer to the big book a couple of times, where appropriate, just as you would other books or support data. Also, include information about the big book and all of the other five wee ebooks on a page or so in or near the resources in the back.

After all, you're publishing this wee ebook in part to direct its readers to good, related information and guidance in your big (or mother) book. So make its existence obvious, but don't overdo it. **The other reasons you are making it available are** that (1) it confines itself to a specific subject offered in an easy-to-use, inexpensive edition, (2) it puts more published books in your featherchest, which can be very important if you wish to display your expertise in the topic and to speak about it, (3) it pays you additional money for your having shared clear, usable information—without huge amounts of energy and for very little additional expense.

How might this multiply your earnings? You will promote the big book, so it will bring in an usual book's expected sales

income. You can also promote the other five wee ebooks at the same time (since each book's title must be different or you will drive sellers and buyers nuts), and that will pick up more buyers. The two books will excite different clientele at different buy levels.

Let's say that you will sell your paperback at \$17.95 (also test \$19.95 and \$24.95). And that you will sell each of the six wee ebooks at \$3.99 each (though run it as a special now and then at \$2.99). And, as mentioned, you will also promote the other six books in each of these books. So, for example, if you sell the wee ebook about Magazine and Newspaper selling, its readers may also be interested in another wee ebook, say about Books. And if they see that they now have a third (two slightly modified chapters) of the big book, they may well then buy the big book too—or recommend it to friends based on the solid content and writing quality of the wee books they have already read.

Another point: consider issuing the wee book as both an ebook and a paperback. Or test just one in both formats to see if there is more interest in having it in one form or the other. (In my field I find that writers usually want print-on-paper books rather than ebooks, so it would indeed be worth my testing both formats.)

And also that you will focus on the social media to promote the wee ebooks as much as the big book, plus of course list all of the books as widely as you can through the "open" publishers.

That's it.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Great way to find your Smashwords earnings!

I'm a publisher with a stable of six gifted authors, so **knowing how many books each of them have sold** at any particular time is a pesky problem. Especially if they want to know their **Smashwords** sales, where we had to wade through a mind-boggling list to make even an approximate tally.

Until now it was almost impossible to nail down the sales by item within a needed time frame, other than the quarterly checks that told the income earned for that quarter—but for what? **Good news:** that appears to be over. The headache at Smashwords has been fixed with a nifty, simple “Sales and Payment Report.”

Go to [Smashwords](#), to the **dashboard**, to the “**Sales and Payment Report**,” find the respective year you want to check, and open the “**Quarterly Earnings Mapping Report**.”

There, you will see a pick-the-buttons sort of keyboard where you will find **four categories:** (1) an **author** button, (2) **ghost author** buttons (like our six), (3) the **book titles** of [1] and [2] that are currently handled by Smashwords, and the (4) **15 channels (distributors)**—Smashwords, Sony, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Amazon, Apple, Diesel, Page Foundry, Baker & Taylor, txtr, Library Direct, OverDrive, Flipkart, Oyster, and Scribd. (You may have to use the Control key to open more than one item per category. Hold it down as you add more information to the lists.)

You punch all of the keys you are researching (I hit “all” in each category) and out will come your quarterly earnings total, in Excel. You can sort the information in an Author or

Title format. (The Title list tells which specific channel bought which books, and seems a bit more useful than the Author choice.)

It's a godsend, and is actually quite clever. It's also fun to see Oyster and Scribd subscribers pecking at your offerings. One soul looked at one of my 99-cent reports—but only at 6 cents worth! This person was either an extraordinary speed reader or particularly discriminating.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. If this is helpful, use the search button on any of my blog reports to find other comments about Kindle, Nook, BookBaby, Create Space, LSI, and other “open” publishers.

[Profits from reprints, rewrites, and reprints of rewrites](#)

As long as you have written a fetching **article** that an editor wants readers to read on his/her pages, why not sell the same blend as **reprints**, then mix the same magical facts, quotes, and anecdotes into a **rewrite** or two with different slants? You could even sell some **reprints of the rewrites** later on!

Lest that sound like a hapless hodgepodge of word play, it's precisely what professional writers have done for decades to squeeze much more honest pay out of ideas, facts, interviews, photos, lists, and historical slants, plus similar retellings elsewhere in the world.

I blush only slightly to admit that my reprints and rewrites kept me and my family alive (and the girls later in college) for many years until books and speaking came to the rescue!

Alas, what baffles writing novices is how it's done, where second-rights markets hide, how reprint-seeking editors are approached, and how copyright toes aren't stepped upon. So I've tried to mentally untie the strings in **30-page wee ebook**, now offered almost instantly by [Kindle](#) or [us](#) for the shameless sum of \$2.99. It's called [Reprints, Rewrites, Reprints of Rewrites, and Resales: Sell What You Write Again and Again \(and Again\)...](#)

Want some quick peeks under the printed sheets?

Think **newspaper** (or **magazine**) travel where almost any site almost anywhere has four or five different slants to be seen anew, or to be reborn in comparison with four other like places or three different epochs. "Downton Abbey" begs to be slanted a dozen ways (each an article or a spin-off), like fashion, class, downstairs/upstairs, pre- and post WWI... Or the Life of Lords in the 1100s; in the days of Shakespeare; in France, Russia, Sweden, or Spain (or any of them in comparison with Julian Fellowes' currently created TV society and castle)...

Or the **sidebars** accompanying any article above: specifics about how to actually visit any site suggested, the state of health and medicine then or there, the life of children at any point or place, or of women, or the lame, the gifted, the odd. Sidebar shards gathered like caste-offs from unused research, then re-grouped to fill readers' by-product curiosity and questions.

When are **query letters** needed (mostly for full articles), or how **cover notes** cover newspaper simultaneous submissions—see four samples in the ebook—or if/when you send sidebar copy, unannounced, with the expected text—when it's short and you

can't bring yourself to throw it away!

When **reprints** are welcome (by "pay on publication" editors) and how their arrival is announced. Can you make changes in the reused copy? When should you? Which **photos** can be sold (any not bought by the original buyer). How many more complications arise when you sell the **reprint of a rewrite**?

And the breadwinners, the shiny new **rewrites**, mostly restructured, words and ideas in new places, a different article sharing many common bricks (and sometimes a few quotations). But how much must they be rewritten? Or whether they are rewrites must be said at all. And those photos again—just remember that those sold are toxic to resell.

A final point, if reprints and rewrites seem akin to journalistic thievery. The best return in writing for money comes from **niche publishing**, which can be the baronial foundation of empire building, where just one set of words about one need or frustration met can indeed be very rich mortar. Most of that long-life paying mortar comes from reworking and reusing the same words and ideas again and again, the same we are discussing here, but in niching more than the same.

Best wishes unraveling!

Gordon Burgett

P.S. If "**Writing Travel Articles That Sell!**" is the kind of four-hour seminar you might need, and Santa Rosa, CA, is within driving distance, I will be offering the program from 1-5 p.m. on Saturday, February 7. Please check the details [here](#).

Can you sell the same article to a magazine, newspaper, and blog?

(1) Can you sell the same article to a magazine and a newspaper?

(2) And can you use the same article or item in both print on paper and in the digital market, like blogs, at the same time?

The real question for both is “Should you...?”

With a big healthy dose of caution and common sense you probably could. But with a bit more common sense you probably wouldn't.

#1 has a stronger protocol in place. If you query a pay-on-acceptance magazine and they agree to publish the article, in print it's theirs, even if they only bought first rights. You can then create a different query, write a different article (you can use many of the same facts, with discretion, and maybe a few of the earlier quotes), and sell it again to another magazine. I'd make sure they aren't competitors or you'd likely lose both for future sales. Best if they hug different coasts. That's the rewrite system.

On the other hand, you can use the same copy from the first buyer, without a whit of change—and sell it as **second (or reprint) rights** to anybody who will buy it. In that case you copy the article once it's in print and send the copy to your other potential buyer(s) with a cover note that explains (a) “I sold first rights to XXX Magazine on Y date, (b) it appeared in print on Z date, as you can see by the copy enclosed, and (c) I am offering you second (or reprint) rights. Who would buy it? Those that buy second or reprint rights. It tells you who they are in the **Writer's Market**.”

Incidentally, you can sell a **rewrite** of the original the same way too. And all **photos** that were sold on a one-time rights basis to the original magazines can be resold with the reprint(s)—plus all those that remain unsold.

Then you can sell **reprints of the rewrites!** Does it ever end?

#2 is more good business than a traditional, accepted procedure. You can fairly well track a printed article if it's to a reclusive niche market; there may be no rights conflict. But digital sales somehow travel around the world like lightning and nobody will be pleased if the reader/viewer finds it popping up "free" just when the other paid for some exclusivity.

Instead, do what professionals do when they find a chewy fact bone. They cut it into pieces, focus on some distinct element in each segment, get particular quotes about each bonelet, then write the devil out of it so none of the articles or items look (much) like the others—then they sell each to a different market. The best of all worlds would be to also write each in a different language!

Think of baseball as a field you could play on. If you focus your writing solely on retelling Lou Gehrig's "goodbye" speech, heavens. Even if you're a magic-word genius, where do you go to sell it the fourth time?

But you could play your whole life following, say, the National League teams and players and the World Series from 1876 to now. You could even start with the Cubs (then the White Stockings) winning the very first pennant that first year, beating the Louisville Dark Blues in six games...

There's a lot more about rights, reprints, rewrites, and resales in about five of my **blogs at this site**. Just put those words in the search box near the blog title. Also see my [Travel Writers Guide](#), which is a few books short of being O.P. The [ebook](#) lives on, though, and lots of the bound versions

hide in libraries.

Patience. You still have to write and sell that first article. By that time you will be so rich and brilliant these reuse answers will just ooze out of you!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett
