

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

A visible punctuation error that gets writers unbought!

You want to get paid for your wordsmithing by some deep-pocketed, eagle-eyed editor who refuses to rewrite your mistakes, here’s something that can keep you poor and quickly rejected. Even worse, it’s easy to spot before the editor reads a word.

Learn how and when to use the “en” and “em” dashes right every time.

Worse yet, do you know that there are em dash, 2 em dash, and

3 em dash decisions too? And do you put a space before and after it or snug it up to the type every time it is used?

The dashes all get their names from their girth and volume. The “en” dash is the size of a hyphen and is the width of the letter “n”; the “em” dash is twice as wide (but all in one dash) because it’s the size of the fatter letter “m.”

“Look at me, I’m a simple en dash!”

The easy dash is the skinny brother, en.

You use the en dash all the time. It even has its own key on the keyboard, above and to the right of the letter “p.” And there are never blank spaces before or after it. It usually means “to” when you connect numbers in ranges, like dates (2001-2013), or months (June-July), or miracles, like the Cubs won the pennant game 9-1.

But you don’t use the single dash when the number or word is preceded by from or between (from...to, or between...and). Two examples: “The zoo is closed from November to February” or “It’s most comfortable when the temperature is between 65 and 77°F.”

The most confusing is when the en dash is used when joining compound modifiers where at least one of the words is an open compound (meaning not hyphenated) or is already hyphenated. Like, the Chicago-Rome connection, bridesmaid-approved dresses, or pre-election polling restrictions.

“No, look at ME, I’m a bewildering em dash!”

The em dash should look like —, but it still appears (in earlier typed text) as two hyphens without a space between (because that was your only choice on old-fashioned typewriters.) The em dash is so common that it is what most mean when they say “a dash.” It’s used primarily in informal writing in place of a comma, colon, semicolon, or parentheses

to provide emphasis.

You most often see it used to set off parenthetical expressions like “When I hit the high C—or tried to hit, or at least reach, the high C—the students broke out laughing!” I could have substituted with parentheses, but not a comma because commas cannot be used to set off parenthetical expressions when there is internal punctuation (commas inside the expressions.)

Two uses where the em dash, usually used in pairs, might appear alone:

“Betty, How could—Why would you do such a thing?”

“Can I finish my—,” the husband pleaded.

It can also be inserted, alone, in place of an unknown value in a table.

Where do you find em dashes on a keyboard? Go to “Insert/symbol/special characters” and both the em and en dashes will appear. But most software programs let you type two consecutive hyphens (no space between) and as you type the next item the double hyphen will also convert into an em dash.)

Don’t forget us: we’re double em and triple em!

I’m double and you see me used to indicate missing letters in a word, either because material is missing or illegible, or to conceal a name. Like Sister M ——. Or “Two of the players, —— and ——, got thrown out for fighting.” (Notice that in blogs and computer text the spaces between the en dashes still appear? Imagine here they are joined, two in one.)

I’m triple em (didn’t you notice?) and I am much more formal. I am used in bibliographies when the author’s name is repeated, like

———. Adventures in Dashes. New York: Big House Publisher,

2015.

Finally, do you insert a space before and after an em dash? It depends. They seem to do so almost all the time in England, and some U.S. newspapers (and a few magazines) do too. I don't nor do I see it much where I publish (articles and books) and I think the trend is to join the em dash on both sides, like: "this is an example–albeit a bad one–of what..." I'd just be consistent throughout the piece and the editor will recognize and usually correct your weird style. But inconsistency, at least here, may drive the editor daft–or dafter. That will leave you–broke(r).

I hope this helps.

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.

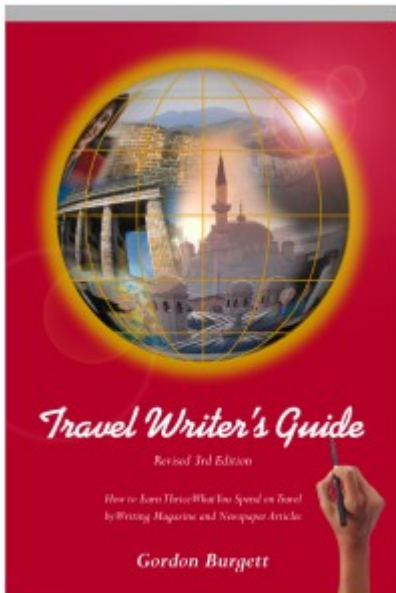
Those are also paths to “best sellerdom” for the unchosen. There are as many, or more, winning paths in non-fiction too. I suspect there are thousands of writers of wee books who are puffing with pride just having the best they can do available digitally or in paperback. They’d take the fame and chat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

How you can sell your articles 150% of the time...



I know, **150% of the time?**

Yes, it could be much, much higher, but it seems imprudent to scare you in the title.

Let's focus on magazines here, where the pay is higher and acceptances are harder to get.

(Selling newspaper travel is easier and the possible sales ratio is higher too, but the pay is very modest. The process? Find a fetching location with something new, write a 1200-word "second" article, don't send to the nationals, and keep the submissions 100 miles from each other. A photo or two sometimes helps. Write it once and submit it simultaneously, and since you wrote it once and if you sell it, say, four times, that's 400%. My [Travel Writer's Guide](#), available only as an ebook now, at \$10, tells all.)

With magazines there are no grapeshot submissions, the competition is tougher, the article space rarer, and you must change hats to earn that extra 50%—but often you can stick with the same topic!

Getting on their pages depends very much on how you ask. (If you don't ask the editor in advance—you just write something and send it in—your selling percentage plummets, or you're

selling wee items now and then for wee pay.) For a full article you must ask the editor if you can send your masterpiece (but don't call it a masterpiece). You need a "go-ahead," a positive response to get through the buying gate. A go-ahead isn't acceptance—yet. It says that the editor agrees to give your idea and its preparation full consideration for one of the 4-8 article slots still open for a coming issue. (The copy will probably be in print several or many months away). In other words, you write it and in the "let me see it" response the editor is saying "I'm interested enough to give it full consideration." Not an assignment but if you do it right it's almost a sale.

What is "doing it right"?

1. Probably half of your selling time is spent pre-query, the other half is sending on time what you promised in the query. (A day late, the ship probably hasn't sailed. No apologies, but scold yourself. Late a week or more, wave goodbye—and stay out of that editor's sight for 18 months or longer.)

2. Find a topic that is irresistible for that readership. Study earlier issues to 4-6 months back. What is the editor buying? Write down six topics. Find the cutting edge, new facts, new studies, trends about to break, laws changing, a look-back 100 years, celebrities or leaders the reader must know, what fits the season 4-6 months ahead? (Check to see that your choice wasn't on those pages in the past two years.)

3. Don't know much about it? Learn. You need facts, quotes, and anecdotes. See what others are saying—and aren't. Think like a reporter. Build a fact base, list people who are leaders in the field or are current bright lights.

4. Then write a one-page query letter that asks the editor, in essence, "Would you be interested in an article about?" Make the topic jump off the page, cite the experts you will quote or interview, tell what's new or different or what excites you

as a reader, include a short paragraph about your credits (if none, say nothing) and that you can have the piece in their hands 2-3 weeks after a go-ahead. (Check my blog **“Nothing sells more articles than a great query letter”** from 3/14/2011—write the date or “query letters” in the search box at the top of this blog.)

5. One precaution before querying: see if the editor ever printed humor. If so and it’s your style of writing, inject something funny in the query and in the final copy. If they don’t, don’t.

6. Write other query letters to other editors about other things while you await a reply.

7. If/when the editor writes back an eager response, study the last two issues, pulling apart at least one article in each. (The blog **“How to study a printed magazine article”** will help here. It appeared on 3/31/2011.) Get the idea and words together and write your piece like the authors wrote to be in print in the target magazine issue you studied. Stay in the same ballpark. If the editor gives you specific instructions or suggestions, do them. Edit and edit again: make it as light and tight as a drum. Then mail it off, as clean as a Dutch stoop. (If photos are an issue, get them off too. Ask the photo/art editor if there’s a submission protocol, and follow it.)

8. Then if that editor just can’t or won’t say yes, don’t worry about it. They can have 100 legitimate or ridiculous reasons. Find a similar magazine, remold your query to its readership, and query again. (But only one query at a time.) That’s why you don’t fully research and write the article until the editor gives you a go-ahead.)

But if you score a bulls eye, super. You go the gilded nod. Write and rejoice. You only write the winning manuscript once—that’s your 100%. Query letters are door-knocking.

Congratulations! You've done it like the pro's do. Neither you nor they have time to do the full prep without having at least the 50% chance you get with the query and go-ahead.

The other 50% (which is really 100%, 200% or 500%)?

There are two paths (and a combo) into this post-sale heaven: (1) you sell the very same article described above (after it has appeared in print) as a reprint (also called second rights), (2) you significantly redesign the just-sold article (again, after it has appeared in print), then you rewrite its query letter so you can submit your redesigned article after you get a "go-ahead." You can rewrite the subject as many times as it can be configured into a distinctly unique article. And (3), you can sell reprints of the rewrites too.

The reprinting and rewriting can actually be more profitable than selling the original article, but it's seldom as exciting!

Let me share the specifics about the **"Profits from reprints, rewrites, and reprints of rewrites"** in a blog by that title printed here a few days back, 2/7/15.

I know that all of what I'm telling you works because I put two sweet daughters through grad school, plus fed several suffering wives, by doing it. Now it's your turn!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

How do you find interviewees for your articles?

You almost always need **at least one interview** for a magazine or newspaper article. But it makes much more sense to get three or four, and even many more if you plan to rewrite the original piece again and again. (And if **Reprints, Rewrites, or Reprints of Rewrites** are your plan: bravo. My \$2.99 Kindle book, just out, by that name should help.)

Most articles need more than quotes, of course. They need facts, quotes, anecdotes, and artwork (photos, drawings, charts, graphs, and so on). Sometimes no artwork, sometimes no anecdotes, but if you also leave out the facts and quotes it's hard to keep that word house from tumbling down or blowing away from skeletal inadequacy.

The people you will interview might be those who know enough about a topic to be an expert. Or a celebrity, a person with a new idea or invention, someone who was a first-hand witness. If your article addresses a two-sided argument, you either get the strongest proponent of each side, plus another person or two that each suggests. Or just one side of the issue.

Beyond what the interviewee says, **there's another solid reason for getting quotes**. Those interviewed give your facts a source of origin. Readers want to know first-hand information from a person who knows first hand, or is at least considerably closer to it than they are. If your piece begins, "Melinda Moore saw a sailor levitate for almost two minutes at Benny's Grog House last night," you must mention that Melinda is the daytime bartender at the Grog House. Then you find anybody else who can attest to the same levitation, with details about the incident, plus where they live or work or what they do. Your questions will mostly be about the levitation, how long the sailor has been doing it, did he float anywhere as he

levitated, how high did he rise, how long he was he air-bound? You might also ask about the sailor's (and the witnesses') sobriety at the time. It will sound like a fish tale if you don't also interview the sailor. Who is he, how long has he been levitating, how did he do it, what did it feel like, and on what date (and at what time) does he plan to repeat the happening?

The example of Melinda and the sailor is fairly obvious. But in truth, it's no more difficult finding the best people to interview for almost any article. Ask yourself, what would you (or the editor) want to know about the topic or incident? Who knows about that best? You're half way home!

If you interview your postman or a gas station employee, those are easy to get. But the more famous your interviewee is, the more likely they are to ask, "**Where will it appear?**" So if that's likely to be the first (and major) hurdle, query first, get a "go-ahead" from the editor of the target publication, then the article has more than a 90% chance of being used on those pages.

Is it easy to get a person to agree to be interviewed? It's never easy, but with the correct explanation of where it will be used and the benefits it will bring to the person and the editor, it's not hard to arrange.

Four tips: (1) ask the question that must be answered, but make it the second question—unless that question is a door-slammer ("Is it true that you rob the poor box in every church enter?"), then you ask it last. (2) don't talk about yourself in the interview. The editor won't buy an article about you. (3) you don't have to prearrange most of your interviews if the person featured is an everyday person. (4) I've never paid for an interview.

A few thoughts about the **scariest thing for newcomers in article writing:** the interview.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

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

[How to make editors vomit...](#)

I'll tell you how in a second. A more important question is, "If you're trying to put your kids through college by churning out magazine articles, and hoping to sell a couple of reprints from every original piece that you got in print, why in the world would you even put "editor" and "vomit" in the same hemisphere?

But that's exactly what I did. Worse yet, that editor used me and the heinous article idea for years to show new writers what not to do if they wanted to make a penny by appearing on his pages!

This must have been 40 years ago (surely before you were born). Even then I was the world's worst sailor because I got seasick in bathtubs.

So you can imagine my delight when I read about a new medicine about to be released that stopped motion sickness dead in its tracks—if the secondary effects didn't kill you first.

In those days I wrote about anything that interested me, then I matched it to publications likewise pervasively affected. I figured there must be a zillion flatlanders with my affliction, so I smelled a windfall in sales from a zesty article about the newest motion sickness medications, fattened with anything I could find about how effective earlier "potions" already on sale were.

Then the Internet was probably used for fishing. The first research you did was in the library, where I sniffed around for several hours, first to see who else had beaten me to the idea and was already in print. If there weren't too many of them and they had usable facts, that was a blessing. It was a time-honored tradition to build (or borrow) from your competitors' printed material.

Nothing in print! I could hear the cash register clanging. So I took to the telephone to find "experts," some self-declared, who were on the front line of action to get the needed quotes and cutting-edge, state-of-the-art facts that editors so loved (as long as you paid the dime, yes dime, to do the phoning.)

Most of us who worked magazines, with newspaper spinoffs, took the same path: a good magazine sale, two or three magazine spin-offs with different slants, some newspaper simultaneous submissions, maybe even a book if the topic was electric. (Most weren't, and books took forever to write. Anyway, spending months wading through seasickness was a no-go for me.)

Somewhere I had gathered enough checkable truths and found several related ideas for by-product shorts or follow-up pieces. The linchpin in this big-money-making scheme was an electric one-page query letter that made the editor virtually

beg me to have it to her in three days (that never happened). But if she said, "Let me see it," that was tantamount to a sale, and usually the first firm step to several offshoot pick-ups. (I could call my daughters and tell them to buy their textbooks.)

So I wrote up a dandy, hot-in-the-hands one-page query and sent it to the first editor of the six or so on my marketing list. I spent time on that list. Who were most interested in preventing motion sickness? In-flight magazine editors. The biggest lines paid the most. Off went the gilded query...

Usually it would take a week or two for the reply. (There was no rush because the stamps were only three cents.) But this reply had wings. He couldn't wait. I could almost feel the big bucks in my hands! He was probably holding up the next issue so he could slip it in.

I can almost remember reading his reply word for word: "Is this a joke? An article about motion sickness in an in-flight magazine? It almost makes me vomit just thinking about it. Rest assured that if any of our passengers got past the first paragraph the pilot would hear a chorus of retching clear up to the cockpit." And that was it. No thank you, no best wishes. I guess it was a no. He didn't even suggest that I send it to his competition!

There was a point there but it took several shocked days for me to start laughing!

When you draw up your marketing list you have to think: why would the editor of those publications want to share your spine-tingling prose and gripping revelations with their readers?

So if there's even the faintest whiff of nausea in the air, you'd best just save your 3-cent (or 49-cent) stamp!

P.S. But I did sell it to two general-interest magazines and

one newspaper. I don't think the anti-*mareo* medicine worked either. I kept my eye out for it, for obvious reasons, but it seemed to have faded, as did my million-dollar windfall from anti-seasickness articles.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Find a new, streamlined website domain among 600 choices!

Trying to find a **grabber website domain** ending in “.com” that contains less than an arm's length of letters is a near-fruitless treasure hunt. You probably can't use “.org” and will anybody come if it ends in “.net”?

The hunt is over. Last February, the ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), an international non-profit charged with overseeing the Internet's infrastructure, modestly opened the namegates for website owners. Its **600-some new web domains** are dramatically changing the face of the Internet by providing more tailored domains beyond examples like “.com” and “.net”.

I'll give some **examples below**. According to Ray King, CEO of Top Level Design, in bookbusinessmagazine.com, publishers (or anybody) can capitalize on the domain expansion to make their websites and products more accessible to readers (by adapting) secure, short, and succinct web URLs that are specific to their work or aims.

These new gTLDs are **not limited to publishers**. Any person or firm can get one of these new URLs.

Instead of bestbusinesspracticesinorthopedicdentistry.com, a mouthful, I might try bestorthopedicbusinesspractices.dentistry—which, as I read it, is about as bad. Here are much better examples. Children Slay Monsters.com might be ChildrenSlayMonsters.book or ChildrenSlayMonsters.fiction.

Or perhaps Boiseflower.shop or stepmother.consulting?

You can check out the 600 new gTLDs at [Go Daddy](#), [enom](#), and [Network Souldtions](#). I used [marcaria.com](#) where you can also see a long list of choices, with annual costs. It's **first-come, first-served**. Registrars will also “hold” a name for a yet-to-released extension so it's yours when that happens.

Is anybody “big” doing this? Google itself applied to manage 101 new gTLDs.

Do annual fees vary? Of course. In my niche:

K-12schoolboard.expert costs \$50

K-12schoolboardexpert.com is \$13

K-12schoolboardexpert.us is \$5.

Service might vary too. At least you want to use ICAAN-accredited domain registrars. According to Ray King in his recent blog *“Publishers Can Boost Discoverability with Newly Released Web Domains,”* you can also use other non-Latin script, like Arabic and Chinese.

Here are a few **extensions already available** that might interest self- or giant publishers: guide, report, institute, consulting, education, reviews, training, university, services, and book.

Will this distinguish your firm or improve your online outreach? Can you target your title better? Or can you

reassure your clientele that you are almost kin in their niche? Check the list and play around with new combinations. A more streamlined, simpler name **might be the key to the new you!**

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

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
