

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.)

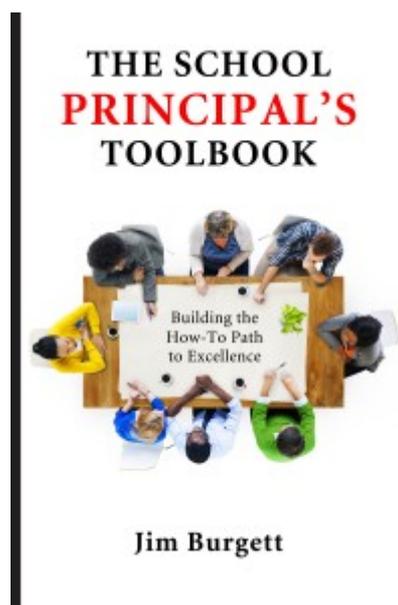
So I guess that really makes me a **pre-writing and empire-building coach** (if being an emperor or empress is your thing).

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

FOCUS BOOKS: Sell your entire book and its chapters at once



Congratulations! You **just printed your nonfiction masterpiece**—but what do you do next? As the adage says, “You’re all dressed up with no place to go”! In other words, how do you find and get others to praise your new book’s genius, especially to their colleagues and friends, while also getting muchos congratulatory pesos in your pocket—fast!

Let’s half solve your selling dilemma and also suggest a new way to simultaneously shake loose some key focus book pesos

too.

Most of a book's marketing solution happens before the book is created. Like identifying the buyers before the book is written, and also by figuring out how or where potential buyers buy books like yours. Doing that keeps most bookfolk free from having to sell on street corners and at flea markets (unless their book is about fleas or how fleas market).

It's also wise to determine what specific book your buyers most want or need—and then write a book about that. (It sounds obvious. Fortunately, the best way to identify those most-wanted books is also easy to do. Just ask the most likely buyers what they most need—or can't find.)

Let me suggest a bias here that makes the marketing hunt far easier: **zero in on a niche market first**, then offer your how-to brilliance in print directly to them. But that's another (or many other) blogs. In the meantime, see [Niche Publishing: Publish Profitably Every Time](#).

Whatever marketing or selling path you choose—often Internet and bookstore selling, through catalogs, by word-of-mouth, social marketing, radiant reviews (even dumb reviews sort of help), other digital machinations, a classroom text, an Oprah highlight—think of selling both the big book and its contents (perhaps as chapters or sections) all at the same time.

Let me share what we are doing right now so you will have actual examples of this to peruse and verify. (Who am I to share this innovation? I've been doing and teaching article and book prep, and publishing, since about the time Ben Franklin was mixing ink. See Google.) Mostly now, when I'm not talking to groups, I edit and publish books to the K-12 school administrator's niche.

That's doubly enjoyable because my younger brother has been a luminary in that field for 40 years, and my firm snagged him and his illustrious cohorts to write our much-sought books

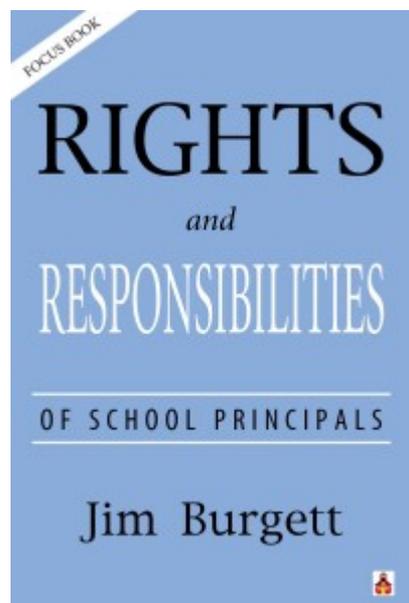
about their expertise. Let's look particularly at Jim's newest creation, **The School Principal's Toolbook**.

Our market isn't hiding. We can directly contact all of them, plus others who particularly benefit by having our book in school principals' hands: the superintendents (who usually select the principals), the school board (that usually approves the superintendents), and other school-related buyers. So to make the book visible the book's author speaks widely to the respective associations at conventions and gatherings about the new **Toolbook**, we send flyers to principals, the book is reviewed in the respective newsletters, and so on. Still, we want to make sure it is even more widely known. So we have created what we call our "**focus book**" program. That's how you "Sell your book simultaneously, intact and by chapters."

We think that any educator reading any of the book's 12 chapters will see why the principal needs to have at least the rest of this book, and probably all of Jim's other [five related books](#), in hand or on her/his desk at all times. (No vanity there. If we didn't feel that strongly Jim wouldn't have written the book and I wouldn't have published it if he did. I'm sure you feel the same about your book.)

So my idea—no doubt 100 other publishers have had it too—was to **take the most vital and needed topic, edit it to about 50 pages, and publish a focus book with the same words from the book as its content**. Thus from Chapter 1 of The School Principal's Toolbook we extracted [Rights and Responsibilities](#) and added **of School Principals** to it (so pile drivers, whiskey sellers, or accountants don't buy it in error—and want refunds!) Next, we had that text set (with a frill-less cover) to be sold in paperback and ebook formats. We also priced them at \$3.99 [digital] and \$6.99 [paperback] and made them buyable at **Kindle, Create Space, Nook**, ECU (that's us), and other outlets. (Incidentally, we also created a focus book of the fourth chapter of **Toolbook** and priced it the same. It's called

[How to Create the Best Staff Possible: Building K-12 Excellence from Hire to Rehire](#)—slightly reworded from the book so the public is, again, fully informed.)



We won't earn much (if we break even) at the low focus book prices, but we are certain many superintendents will buy a couple to dozens of copies for district meetings with their principals. So that will meet a future need since they will prefer paperbacks to ebooks, and we'll be ready.

The real purpose of the focus books—almost all will be ebooks here—is to have free sample copies to send (by email, as an attachment or download) to the superintendents to review (or skim), so they know the book exists, they have had it in hand, and they can validate the solid writing and expertise it contains. Most superintendents will be contacted by email or flyer (many may read about it in their respective state newsletters). It will also induce some associations to book Jim to speak to their gatherings where the books may be bought (in paperback) and given to all attendees.

The primary purpose of the focus books is to sell more copies of the “mother book,” The School Principal’s Toolbook; to draw attention to all of Jim’s other books; to provide a dandy and very useful focus book about particular topics principals need

to know, and to encourage speaking engagements for our five authors.

I hope by sharing this new process (at least new for us) you will see how a book with 12 chapters, like ours, can result in selling as many as 13 books, all promoting each other, your firm, and the author(s). The exposure and quality also solidifies your expertise, standing, and presence in your niche.

At this blog site I will keep you abreast of how this program, just begun, is working and how we will expand it. To read more about niche publishing or focus books, write "niche" or "focus" (no quotes) in the search box above. It will direct you to earlier blogs, in posting order, about both topics. Or email me at gldurgett@aol.com and I will try to respond as time permits. Please keep them short—and in English!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Selling one article topic to 5-8 different publications!

"Could you sell the same text, unchanged, to both magazines and newspapers?" is the most often asked question at my writing seminars!

I suppose you could, but I wouldn't because I wouldn't know how to unravel the rights issues. Anyway, it'd be far more profitable with a lot less work just planning five to eight sales from the same fact (and photo) pool.

Here's how I might sell one topic (in this case, the Chicago River on St. Patrick's Day) **as widely as possible for the most yield and the least amount of additional research, composition, and jpg taking?**

1. I'd first query the idea to the **highest paying magazines** (in order, one at a time). Then I'd write my lead article for the first editor giving me a "go-ahead." This article might focus on a St. Patrick's Day special, a big deal in the Windy City because at 9 a.m. that morning the Chicago River turns orange for a few minutes until (it's said) the leprechauns switch it to green so lush it puts tears in every O'Brien eye—and stupefies much of the rest of midland America as it flows in reverse to the Illinois River and the Mississippi to and past New Orleans! Some 400,000 visitors a year line the downtown Chicago bridges, then watch the St. Patrick's Day Parade march through the city that day at noon, rain or shine.

2. After that magazine article (sold first rights) appears in print, **I could sell it exactly as is to any other magazine as a reprint.** (If you sold the photos first rights too—or for one-time use—you could also sell them to the same [or other] reprint buyers!)

3. But since I've got a box full of facts and quotes, why not query, then write another main article about a similar happening that takes place the same weekend: the Flower and Garden Show at Navy Pier (nearby, on the same verdant river as it reaches Lake Michigan)? This is **a loose example of a rewrite** since you can slip in the key points about the concurrent St. Patrick's Day festivities. All you have to do is rewrite that used text, which you'd have to do anyway because it must be in a different layout for both publications. Or you could call this rewrite "Chicago's Greatest Gift: the St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Flower and Garden Show Side by Side!" (What a title!) Since this magazine piece is a first-rights sale, **why not sell this distinct**

offering to other magazines seeking reprints?

4. **We've still not sold to the newspapers!** I would significantly rewrite either of the magazine articles (or mix and match) in newspaper fashion, give the result a different title, and maybe try for a national newspaper sale first. Since this is a major set-date activity (like Christmas or Easter), most major newspapers look for event-related special articles. So I would query here several months earlier so it can get scheduled, then work out the special submission process with the travel editor.

5. Or if the national newspapers aren't enchanted by the Chicago Journeyman Plumbers' river magic, I'd **send it simultaneously to all of the Midwest newspapers** 100 miles away from each other to see if I can spin the special event one last time (this year), before the emerald is long gone.

6. And, of course, **I'd handle the photos myself so I could sell them as widely as possible** without messing up their rights!

By March 1, 2016 I will release **a brand new book** about this topic where each of the **resale means to magazines and newspapers** are explained in detail. Those are simultaneous submissions, reprints, rewrites, reprints of rewrites, rewrites of reprints, modified reprints, sidebars, overseas sales, and shorts. Check Amazon Books under Gordon Burgett for the still-undecided title and release date—or email glburgett@aol.com for specifics and cost.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Article you're submitting need a sidebar? Here's an example...

Typically, as I write a "go-ahead" article, I encounter some additional facts that are so spectacular or unique I think they would make an interesting sidebar or box, in or near the printed article, to excite the readers and add much substance to the article without changing its primary structure. So I write and send a sidebar cover note (see below) by email or snail mail to the editor, reminding him/her of the subject of the article of mine they are considering or just accepted. Here, I share some of the most exciting facts (for baseball fans) that apply to the first year that the Cubs (and the National League) were in existence: 1876. That's it. He/she will likely respond by email, a short yes or no, with a suggested content size.]

Sidebar Cover Note

Dear Ms So-and-So:

I doubly appreciate your giving me the go-ahead on the article "Wrigley Wouldn't Recognize His Field." I'm shooting to have it there within a week. But as I'm gathering current facts amid the cranes and disappearing bleachers, I wondered if you'd also want a Chicago-based sidebar (or box) about the earliest Cubs, long before P.K. Wrigley was in baby britches.

Here are some of the items it might contain:

1. The Cubs are the oldest team in the National League. They played from day one, in 1876—and won the first pennant by beating the Louisville Dark Blues in six games. Called the White Stockings then, they finished the year with a 52-14 record. (They didn't use the name "Cubs" until 1907.)

2. Chicagoans also gave birth to the term “out of left field” in their early years. The left field in the pre-Wrigley playing grounds butted up to a many-storied insane asylum, and when the crowds made too much noise the lunatics screamed out the windows and banged on pans. Their comments truly were “out of left field.”

3. Al Spalding (of later sports equipment fame) managed that team, plus he helped write the first set of official baseball rules. He also pitched in 60 of the 66 games they played in 1876, winning 47. (Spalding was also the only pitcher on the team wherever he played, winning more games in his six professional baseball seasons than any other player in the league.) Al was the first major league player to use a fielding glove. His total pitching record was 252-65 with a 2.15 ERA and a .313 batting average! He also owned the team for a decade.

4. Players had no numbers or names on their uniforms then so crowds only vaguely knew who they were or what they did. Spaulding’s solution one year was to assign each position a different color, and the player there wore a hat that was colored to match the position’s hue. The fans called the team the “Tulips.” Hats (and baseball gloves) were sold, of course, by Spaulding.

5. Ross Barnes took most of the rest of the honors that year, batting .429 in 1876, hitting the Cub’s first home run, and winning nine of the other 10 major categories that inaugural season (hits, RBIs, runs, and so on...) But he got the ague (a fever) in the Windy City after 22 games in 1877 and never fully recovered. Fortunately, “Cap” Anson was there to pick up the slack, and, later, Tinkers, Evers, Chance, Hornsby, Dizzy Dean, and Grover Cleveland Alexander.

That may seem like a lot of numbers for a sidebar, but what numbers! And those reading about Wrigley Field will be Cub fans eager to relive those golden days. They are also hoping

that the new playing grounds will bring the glory back.

If that interests you, on speculation of course, please let me know. It would help if you would indicate an approximate number of words you'd like in the sidebar.

Many thanks,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. This is an excerpt from my book **Profitably Resell Your Copy Again and Again (and Again)...**, *with the subtitle **Magazines, Newspapers, Reprints, Rewrites, Modified Reprints, Sidebars, Sales Abroad, and Other Copy Resales.*** Available from Create Space and Kindle after March 10. Or contact [us](#) for details.

Here's how to submit changes to your book at Kindle

Here's a comment/question that I get too often: "I published my book on Kindle but I don't know how to make changes in it. Help"!

So let me **list the steps** that will let you tinker or rewrite or clarify your book. Whatever you want to change, the train always takes the same simple track.

Your book enters the Kindle publishing brainworks through **two files**, one for the cover, the other for the interior copy and artwork. Let's assume the interior copy was prepared in Word and that you have it stored on your personal computer (or you

have access to it). You or another person submitted both of those files at KDP.Amazon.com. And as the publisher you also opened an account at Kindle, which is how you got through the publishing gate.

Let's say that the book being displayed on Kindle says, on page five, "I am the greatest writer alive." But others (including the greatest writer alive) told you that claim should be corrected (or painfully censored). So now you want to substitute "After having been the greatest writer alive, I am now number two." You want to modestly set the record straight.

Get or find the book's interior copy file, make a digital copy of that file, and set that copy aside, for old-time's sake. Now go to page five and replace the offensive boast by erasing and retyping a correction. First check to see the font and font size that copy was prepared in. For example, if it's Century Schoolbook 11-point, make your correction in the same font/size. Give this new file a new name (say, from Book 1-1 to Book 1-2) and save it. **That's how changes begin. Find the original file, change it, and save it with a different name**—or you will drive yourself, Kindle, and us batty. Then here's how to put that "corrected" file inside Kindle so it will appear on monitors (or like devices).

Assuming by now you have a Kindle publishing account, open it up and do the following:

1. Go to the Dashboard, then the Bookshelf.
2. Find **"Your Books"** and the title of the book you want to change.
3. On the far right side along the book title line find a shaded box with three dots on it, near **"Book Actions."** Push **"Edit Details."**
4. Go down to #6, **"Upload Your Book File."**
5. Open **"Browse."** It will take you back to your home files. Find Book 1-2 and open it.

6. Kindle will start downloading the corrected version of your book right away.

7. It may take a few minutes to download. When it's done, it will invite you to look at the changed book by going to #7, "**Preview Your Book.**" You will see how fast one can plummet from being the world's greatest writer to the second greatest.

8. If that's what you want your book to say (and how you want it to look), check the orange "**Save and Continue**" box at the very bottom of that section.

9. That will open the #8-#11 section. Below #11 is a wee box that you must check. Read the text you just approved, and confirm it again in a yellow "**Save and Publish**" box on the lower right.

9. You're done! But Kindle isn't. If your book is in English it will take about 24 hours for your changed book to reach eager readers and buyers.

That's it.

Congratulations on having a book or good news to share at Kindle!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. This is an updated submission version from my [How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days.](#)

Author of Self-Publishing

Manual, Dan Poynter, has died...

The author of the best-selling **Self-Publishing Manual**, Dan Poynter, has died. We were “in the trenches” writing friends and I already miss him, in part because it was Dan’s turn to buy lunch. So will thousands more whose lives he touched and changed. He had been quite ill for a while, seemed to be improving, but, instead, Dan passed away a few days back.

Poynter wrote almost 100 books but he was best known for his **Self-Publishing Manual**, now in its 14th edition. Many of us exploring the hinterlands of “doing-it-ourselves” publishing, with our starter books (rarely sought, even more rarely bought), pounding away on clunky typewriters and wading in rubber cement, wandering through the last days of the past century, when up popped his how-to gift. The **SPM** was a light from heaven. It answered questions we didn’t even know we should ask. As Dan learned more, the book kept getting better and bigger. In short order his grateful fans, hat in hand, too often bruised by the titans from Gotham and other bookstore bulk buyers, turned his manual into a huge seller...

Dan was a close friend of mine for lots of decades. We’re a few weeks apart in age (he would never admit it), I lived about 20 miles away, and we seemed to wander into the same ersatz gatherings and adventures, befriending many of the same odd people, and we quietly joined the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA)—Dan helped birth it—and the National Speakers Association (NSA).

He was a tall, quiet fellow who gave freely of his knowledge. Many know that he was President of the Parachutists Assn as well. He joked that he married the thrill of descent (he was a life-long bachelor), and was faithful to the end.

In fact, rather than using his law training Dan set up and ran a loft in Oakland. His publishing career (and life) started when he couldn't find a book about parachute knotting that his clientele needed, to get licensed. "I knew as much about publishing as some poor soul tapping rubber trees for a living," he told me. So he contacted every company however involved with knotting and made copies of the diagrams and instructions they sent back, pulled them into a \$40 three-ring instruction manual, wrote the conjunctive copy, then bought a dandy house near Goleta (Santa Barbara) from the profits. It overlooked the Pacific Ocean east of the UC Santa Barbara. From his front porch you could see the only American mainland target attacked by the Axis in World War II, an oil tank sighted by the misdirected Japanese Navy.

I first met him at a free lunch where Xerox was showing their brand new copiers to a bevy of hungry writers (becoming publishers). We passed on the street a couple of times but we didn't really meet again until he tried to kill himself (inadvertently, he claims) by falling 100+ feet straight down and almost impaling himself on a volleyball net pole on East Beach. He had written (or was writing) a book about Parasailing (or was it Paragliding? He also wrote a pile of other weird books). There was a slack in the tow rope and he found himself stalled in midair! Alas, the pause was miraculously timed—a gaggle of bone doctors taking a break from a convention happened to be playing volleyball when he dropped in on them! He was nearly killed. A few days later, in the weakest voice hearable, he called and asked if I'd take his newest book to the ABA in Los Angeles the next week. I did (when I found out what the ABA was), and that started a long string of lunches, Gold Coast meetings (a sort-of branch of NSA), and so on...

Dan had a sense of humor, much of it hoarded internally. He didn't have time (or much patience) for editing would-be books sent for his help by adoring fans. He threatened to farm them

all off to me, and rarely he couldn't help himself: I would get a DOA bundle (with a spine) in the mail with a note daring me to make sense and save the soul of the hapless scribe of the offending manuscript. The note usually mentioned that I was the only person who could get the author in print since the bundle was so much like my own books!

A final story. Dan gave weekend gatherings for book creators at his palace. The couple of times I spoke there he would hold up one of my early books and tell the attendees that it was certainly not how to design your own cover—and that he had bought a couple of copies of the book so he wouldn't run out of such a pitiful display. I told him I was hunting for some hole in one of his books, the table of contents lost in the index, upside-down chapters, or something equally egregious for revenge. But I never found anything out of place—and now he's left before me and the fun is gone.

Dan Poynter was a smart fellow and already is a much missed friend.

Gordon Burgett

With a novel, why not cash in with five more wee books?

With a novel, why not cash in with five more wee spin-off books?

The easiest way to get more people to buy your novels is to tell a super tale, then expand that with even better tales, inflating your reader's enthusiasm and their caring for your characters, their loves and travails, for their dreams or

fears.

But you hardly need a blog to tell you that.

So let me suggest five more ways, spin-offs really, that can help you expand and deepen your buyers' eagerness to buy more of what you write.

That is, add five or more small books that will increase your readers' curiosity and sense of shared involvement, significantly increase your books' sales, be gentle on your reader's purse, and keep you and your readers continually communicating on the same track. **Consider "wee books" (or focus books).**

These "enrichment" books can be as long as you wish, but I suggest that 50 or so pages may be enough to sprinkle bonus and p.r. magic and still leave room for possible later sequels—wee book or focus book sequels.

Alas, the books can't be produced too early unless you create a thorough, detailed, long-range strategy and outline that carries your books well into the series.

(1) one of the wee books might feature the whole portrait of the main protagonist;

(2) a second book could be about the other key protagonists (even a hint about characters to come);

(3) a third, about the focus of action, the setting, as it is currently in the book, its change over the past 50 or so years, how it differs from nearby sites, and how it fits into the other homes and towns and locations in that region;

(4) a fourth might be more a map of where the physical structures lie in relation to each other—or maybe three maps, of how it is in the current books' actions; how it was, say, 20 years back, and again at some even earlier time, and

(5) a fifth book might tie in other books about the same general place and period, both fictional and nonfictional, providing a partially fanciful resource where the interested can learn what other novelists and historians are saying about the setting you are drawing from. That might even provide an opportunity to “fess up” on where your characters are true to fact, as true as you can imagine, or properly portrayed to their historical role as offered on your pages.

When might you do this—and why?

When? The wee/focus books could begin after the first book is out (you might start with book three or four numbered above) and they could be released between subsequent books as the grand tale grows in depth and spread.

The why is straightforward: you want your readers to turn into literary junky mice ensnared by your Piperish enchantments. Help them know more, faster, about the scenery, forests, pets, mores, history (that is too basic or distant to work into your plot), the cloth and dreams that cover and flesh out the bodies, souls, and spirits you create.

Casual readers become fervent fans when the all-embracing back story adds third and fourth dimensions to the words and actions you provide as your series unfolds. They will also spread their increasing enthusiasm to their book-reading friends.

In nonfiction, our firm’s wee or focus books (for K-12 school administrators) are secondary, support books 6 x 9, fast readers (ideal for ebook format), \$3 digitally, \$6 in paperback. (See an example just released, [Rights and Responsibilities of School Principals](#).)

In fiction, the wee book concept presumes that the author has the empire to follow well designed, the actors fully envisioned, relationships known, and the locale and history well in hand—that is, the author has a book of prep material

well developed before the first full novel appears.

Then it's more an act of letting the horses loose to carry a growing horde of breathless readers from book to book. Plus a few, occasional wee/focus books to add more color, a greater sense of connectedness, a pass to actually walk the land, and a more immediate peek through the family fence.

Sound like far too much work, particularly for just a few bucks? It is more writing, for sure, but since you have a wagonload of facts, quotes to invent, and anecdotes for motion and purpose, it's a shame to have the material at hand (or as created) and not share it, profitably, with the brave souls who want to read your fiction. If it's well done, the more you tell the reader, the more she or he will want to know...(and buy).

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. In my coming **newsletter**, out the second week of September, I will dwell in far greater detail on nonfiction wee/concept books and how they can add considerable buy-in and interest in the core book they relate to. If interested, [subscribe](#) free.

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

Also use Nook Press to publish your own book–free!

I've been selling my e-books through Nook Press for four years and it's **a good way to get your book posted for sale at Barnes and Noble**, which runs it. (Its platform was earlier known as Pubit!)

It's probably **the easiest free ebook press site to use**. (The others most used are Kindle and Smashwords.) Simply go to Nook Press.com and there are three choices: E-Book Publishing,

Print Books, and Help Services. If you want to publish and sell your books through them, go to the first. If you just want them to print your books, the second, and if you need help putting the book together, the third.

Just follow the submission directions in the publishing section, (My book, [How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days](#), will ease your march through the steps, if needed.)

There are usually **two perplexing areas** in the free publishing formats: (1) **who you can talk to**—actually talk to, or at least type to and have them immediately type an answer back, and (2) **how many copies have you sold**, when, and when will those royalties be paid.

(1) **Live assistance is great at Nook Press.** If you have questions it will tell you where to go and how to do it immediately.

(2) **Easy enough here too**, if you remember that you get paid 60 days after sale and you are paid for all of that month's total sales. For example, if you sold a book in March, you will be paid at the end of May. (They will send you an email telling you it is en route [to your bank account] at that time.) So if you sold \$42 worth (say six books) in March, you will be paid the \$42 at the end of May. Go to the SALES button and it will tell you the number of books sold the present month, how many were sold last month, and you can go down a list of previous months and it will tell you specifically which books were sold during those earlier 30-day periods. (There's also a graph on the SALES page telling the number of books sold each of the past six months.)

I need that by-the-month information (in our example, for April) because it tells me exactly which six books were bought that month. That's important to you if you have more than one ebook published by Nook Press. For me, I own a publishing

company and I submit the books written by my five authors (see www.meetingk-12needs.com), plus me. So I need to know which books by which authors (and the royalty for each) they are paying. That's so I can pass that royalty on to them.

That's it. **Consider adding Nook Press to your selling force.** If nothing more, it's another publisher in your growing in-print domain. **Your kids will shriek with delight.** So will your spouse when those additional royalties get heavy in your account!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. If you want to **read other comments**, usually how-to, in the 400 or so blogs at this site about any of the "open publishing" sites, go to the **SEARCH** box at the top, right, of the first page of this blog and type in the publisher's name (one at a time). The blogs will be lined up for you to read! What are the other related publishing outlets you might want to know about? Try Nook, Kindle, Smashwords, BookBaby, Create Space, Amazon, Lightning Source, Lulu, Scribd, Blurb, iBooks, and Kobo.

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