

A very new format for a seminar workbook...

In a now very long past—decades—I must have literally copied and carted 40,000 seminar workbooks (sometimes a half mile, too often up stairs). Most of those workbooks were 12-20 pages long! Too late to complain: that was the way it was done. But yesterday technology finally removed my shackles—and perhaps my blinders!

Some fact-setting now, then a detailed explanation copy of the new format that you may be interested in modifying and using. Explaining the 40,000: I have given more than 2,000 four-hour seminars, most as college/university extended ed offerings, almost all in California. They rarely had less than 20 participants, which meant 24 or so workbooks in case last minute registrants were waiting at the door. Ugh.

But yesterday a different request opened my eyes. I spoke to the **NSNC** (National Society of Newspaper Columnists) in L.A. about "[Publishing for Profit](#)" and, even though I myself had been a columnist several times, I had no way of knowing what other writing experiences the veteran audience had nor which of the dozen or so suggestions I would offer and expand upon they might wish to pursue.

Nor did I want to schlep any workbooks nor published books to sell BOR. (The airlines made that impossible anyway by charging for baggage—and rubbing in more salt by starving me en route!) But I did slip a copy of eight different books into my suitcase to display on a side table so they could see that they actually existed!

I know, I could have run copies off of the workbooks once I reached L.A. But I'm doubly convinced now, the day after, that the new format is many times better and smarter for the

future, it gives the audience more options, and it reduces or eliminates the burdensome task of hauling products for sale. That's why I'm sharing it now, while the fire burns, in case it would help you too. (If you have already discovered this "new" workbook process, congratulations! I'm sure you double agree! Why didn't you tell me?)

The rationale: I knew that all of my attendees were writers, they used computers daily, understood how to find websites, blogs, and could figure out the free-book code. Therefore all I had to do was explain the media or means needed, where the items could be found, the links or addresses for each, and what the resource references referred to. I gave them the instructions needed in the first two paragraphs, where the program was going in the next two, and the broadest of explanations of what the four sections to be covered in the text that followed.

That took a minute or two to re-explain at the beginning of the presentation, but then I could focus on the most important ways columnists might earn more and live happier. When appropriate, I could direct them to one or several of the references and, in some cases, tell them the best subtitles to the critical step-by-step details. There must be 600+ printed pages in the three free books and 200+ in the other items. Thus, by knowing where the information is at hand, almost immediately, they can pick, select, or reject it as they wish—or go back later, if they change their minds.

The workbook: The two-sided page *is* the workbook. In this case the program was designed to show U.S. columnists how else they can share, market, and expand their written gems (now or later) into other lucrative venues or ventures. That is what I talked about. If they need the application guidance, the resources would then send them to the "how-to" support material.

Enough explanation. What follows is the "workbook" they

received.

Workbook as delivered to the NSNC presentation:

Welcome!

I'm Gordon Burgett. It's 2016, we're all experienced writers, and the airlines won't let me schlep boxes of handouts as baggage anymore, so I'm going to use the Internet to let you pick what specific information you think will be useful to you later. At that point, you can download what you want or need, if anything. The most important material is free, there's no shipping or tax, and it'll be in your hands almost immediately!

Thus you have no workbook or piles of paper to lumber through. Just sit back for the first hour and let me explain a sort of strategy and ways that should help you considerably increase your writing income, then I'll answer any questions you have during the remaining 15 minutes. If you have more questions later, please email me at glburgett@aol.com.

My task is to help you fill your coin bags and increase your second-life options by doing more of what you already do very well—and make even more money (heavens!) by doing it.

I think the more-mullah quest starts with you strategizing at whatever point you are along your moneymaking-by-writing trail. I'll address that.

The rest of our oral trek today roughly follows the other four sections on these pages. I've posted lots of backup resources here that you can download if/when you want or need them. The most important material is free—three full core books, three helper reports, four website articles, and 400+ blogs to pluck from. To download most of that information, use our order page

at www.gordonburgett.com/order3.htm

Here's how to download or see the resources: (1) find and separately order each **free book** on the order form—but *before* you submit each order write the coupon number [] in the coupon code box on that order form. Then submit the form, the price will drop to zero, and follow the download instructions that follow! (The freebies expire on 8/20/16.) Other items, unless noted, are from the order form and can be ordered separately or together at any time. They are also available from Amazon but if you want the three books free you must follow the instruction in (1). How to get the three **free reports** is explained below. See blog.gordonburgett.com for the blogs listed. Once there, find the SEARCH box, upper right corner under the Twitter logo. In that box enter either the topic you want to see more about (like query letters or niche) or the word I will give you. The **website articles** are from the direct website link location.

(I) **WRITING—[Travel Writer's Guide](#)** (free ebook)

Explains how to sell 75%+ of your freelance writing (mostly newspaper and magazine articles), how to triple your income by topic-spoking, how to earn more with sidebars, and how to organize profit-packed copy-, quote-, and anecdote-gathering trips...

Related resources:

“4 Proven Ways to Sell 75% of Your Freelance Writing” Go to **blog**, enter 4 proven ways

“How to Sell 75% of Your Travel Writing” (2 cassette program), \$20 + shipping

“25 Professional Query and Cover Letters” (ebook), \$4.99

“Reprints, Rewrites, Reprints of Rewrites, and Resales” (ebook), \$4.99

“The magic of topic spoking.” Go to **blog**, enter topic spoking

(II) **PUBLISHING–Niche Publishing: Publish Profitably Every Time** (free ebook)

A huge percentage of the risk-free, market-guaranteed book money is found here. We made \$2 million from dentists and are now following the same path from K-12 school administrators, supers, principals, and school boards. That process and business plan is explained in this book. If you write and publish, almost all the niche profits are yours. If you find experts in the field, you direct/edit, they write, and you publish, most of the profits are still yours but the fame is theirs.

Related resources:

“12-Step Pre-Test for Niche Publications” (ebook), \$4.99

“How to Test Your Niche Book before Writing or Publishing” (ebook), \$9.99

“How to Get Niche Articles in Print 75% of the Time” (ebook), \$2.99

(III) **PUBLISHING–How to Get Your Book Published in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days** (free ebook). If you’re not niching, use the “open press” revolution plus Create Space/Kindle [Amazon] and Lightning Source as your first or major paths to building your own empire. Publish here, then (perhaps) try the major publishers.

Related resources:

“Open Book Publishing: Almost a Miracle! (ebook), \$3.10

“When Would I Always (or Never) Self-Publish My Book?” Go to **blog**, enter self-publish

“12 More Ways to Turn Your Book into Many More...” Go to **blog**, enter more ways

“Focus books and Selling a Book by its Parts” Go to the **blog**, enter focus

“Sample Focus Book: Rights and Responsibilities of School Principals” (ebook), \$3.99

“Sample Focus Book: How to Create the Best Staff Possible” (ebook), \$3.99

(IV) BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER—Empire Building (O.P., no replacement book yet.) Ultimately, for big money, expand the perception of your expertise through related information dissemination means, like speaking, seminarizing, giving workshops or retreats, audiobooks, classes, consulting, social media venues, radio-TV, guest performances, and so on. Or create/sell little empires along the way. Or align your writing, researching, interviewing, and publishing skills with others’ empires. Or do it all.

Related resources:

“How to Set Up and Market Your Own Seminar” (4-cassette seminar), \$40+shipping

“Six Special Tools That Get Speakers Booked First” (ebook), \$9.99

MORE FREE REPORTS:

*Lifelong Wealth by Being
Indispensable*
*Finding Indispensable Article
Topics*
101 Niche Marketing Topics

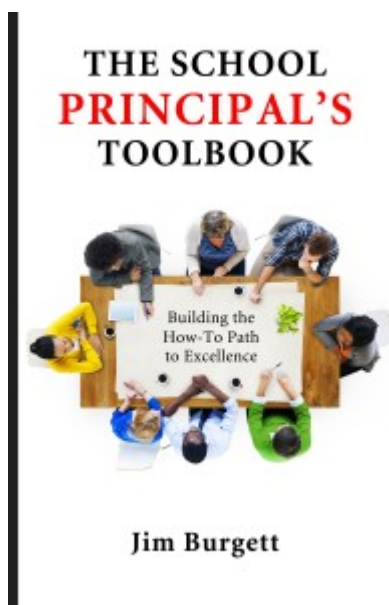
Just subscribe to my newsletter (seldom sent) at <http://www.gordonburgett.com/free-reports> and all three reports are immediately downloaded. Nobody else ever sees your address. Then if you want to escape my elist, just email me to be removed. I'm not offended—I forget names instantaneously.

That's it. If it helps, go to it.

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.

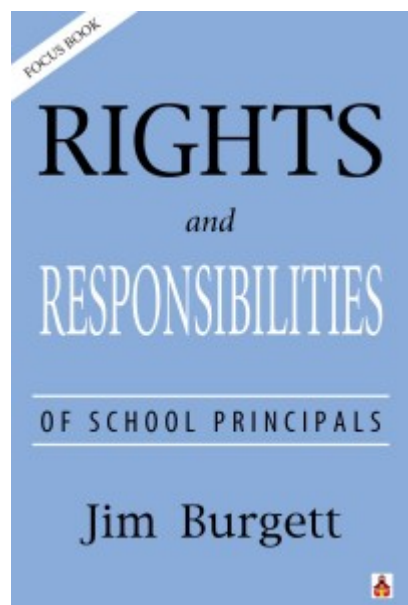
That's doubly enjoyable because my younger brother has been a luminary in that field for 40 years, and my firm snagged him and his illustrious cohorts to write our much-sought books about their expertise. Let's look particularly at Jim's newest creation, **The School Principal's Toolkit**.

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 **Toolkit**, 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 Toolkit 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 glburgett@aol.com and I will try to respond as time permits. Please keep them short—and in English!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Where might your bio and sales info do you the most good?

If you are digitally displaying your achievements and the products/skills that you have for sale, where might that be

shown to your best advantage? Even if it's only done to delight your kids, prove your prowess to your spouse, or put some strut in your aging parents' prance, where might they most likely (and logically) see it?

Maybe at your **website**, where you can hide almost anything in its most exquisite, self-defined detail?

Or, in miniature, in your **social media profiles**?

Yesterday I became convinced that at least for writers, speakers, and publishers maybe the best shout sheet would be at our **Author Central page at Amazon.com**.

I concluded that from a dandy multi-segment workshop given by three BAIPA leaders at the monthly (second Saturday) gathering in Novato, California. (BAIPA is the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Publishers Association.) According to David Cutler, Judy Baker, and Ruth Schwartz, we would be woefully derelict if we left anything unrevealed at that site.

Why would Amazon be the prize listing site for our bios and the related exposition of products, services, and current or coming activities? Because far more buyers go to or through Amazon to buy paperbacks, ebooks, and audiobooks (plus batteries, kettles, and harmonicas, etc.) than anywhere else. And more eyes usually mean more buys of our printed or spoken gems! (You don't publish through Amazon? You can list all other products there too.)

What can you include there to prove to the hungry public that you know your stuff and that your knowledge is immediately (and wisely) purchasable? Your books (bound or digital), audiobooks, articles, blogs as they appear, a long introduction, photos, videos, events (present and future), plus more...

How can others review and use this well presented repository? You can link them [there](#), put a widget at your website, or they

can just put your name up at Amazon.com and your Author Central info will appear—if you create it, which is fast and free.

I know, others have to go through Amazon to reach it. That bothers me too. But I will simply explain to them that it is where they can find the best and most recent list of my publications and services—and give the link or widget.

That's it. I felt a bit stupid being all but unaware that Author Central existed despite the fact that Kindle and Create Space sell lots of my books (as do several other publishers, and us too). But I will use it often now. I'm interested having them hawking the existence of my words, wit, and (rumored) wisdom 24 hours a day, though I hope they keep that display some distance from the kettles and harmonicas.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. There's an obvious exception to the Amazon answer to this blog's query: if you are a **niche-oriented publisher or speaker**, the best location would be in niche-related places. You are unlikely to be selling through Amazon.com. Two very unlike business models! (See my blogs about niche publishing if this is unclear. Just write niche publishing in the "search" box in the upper right corner.)

Little things not to say when you're emceeding ...

There may be a million things not to say when you are in

charge of a program or ceremony.

Let me share a half-dozen wee comments that, in themselves, aren't going to get you hooked off the podium, but, done right, they will easily distinguish you as a professional who is comfortable and smooth...

For example, do you know anybody who wants to be introduced last (unless that spot is saved for the highlight of the show)? Even worse, "last but not least." Why not say "final" or "concluding"? Or if you are using numbers, like "first speaker," "second speaker," and so on, just use the number for the last? Like "Many of you may have heard our fifth speaker, ..."

Along the same line, "We've saved the best for last..." Hmm, if I was speaker #3 of five what goes through my mind? I must have bombed, or whatever one does who isn't the best...

Ever hear, "the one and only"? That does convey special esteem, but it also makes the listeners ask, "the one and only what?" Why not tell the audience why that person is held in such high regard, like "the fastest woman in the world, ..." Even there "the one and only" may be one race from being inaccurate. Consider something less transitory like "America's most rewarded Olympic Gold swimmer, ..."

How often have you heard that the speaker "needs no introduction," then they are introduced (usually in great length)! Two points here: (1) surely there are folks in the crowd who have absolutely no idea who the person is, so you have to say something about them or their prominence, and (2) if you are certain that the coming speaker is beyond introduction, prove it. Save the introduction.

But you can't just point at them and grunt or push the microphone into their hands. So a compromise. "_____ is well known to most of us..." and complete the introduction with a concise listing of their accomplishments or honors.

Finally, you must remember which is the podium and which is the lectern. You are standing on the podium, your notes are sitting on the lectern.

A very good emceeing guidebook full of solid advice is Dana LaMon's *Master the Ceremonies* (see www.danalamon.com).

Emceeing is lots of fun—it's also alarming the first times out. The most important thing to remember is that the audience isn't there to see or hear you.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. Want to be an emcee for three or four hours, probably alone and usually non-stop? Give full seminars! Details at "[How to Set Up and Market Your Own Seminar.](#)"

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.

A paid speech you can book at every association any year...

I call it the "state of the art" speech, but it could have lots of similar names. And if you do it right, the sponsor is very likely to ask (perhaps even beg) you to give it again and again! (You can even build your own empire around it.)

An example helps here. Let's say there is a Lighthouse Management Association, there are 50,000 lighthouses, and twice as many members who are involved in keeping the light lit and the coal stacked. (You can see what I know about lighthouses, born in suburban Chicago!)

The core of your "state of the art" lighthouse management presentation would **answer these three questions**:

(1) How did lighthouses and their management get to where they are now? That's mostly quick history, some "march of time" visuals, problems along the way, and their solutions. Call this **IN THE PAST**.

(2) It's 2015. How are the managers and lighthouses doing today? Numbers, budgets, the most common or most serious 5 or 10 current problems, plus visuals of several model

lighthouses. Maybe a summary of the best and worst job requirements for the chief honchos. A look at salary ranges, lighthouse-related courses in colleges, anything they want to know more about across the country (or is it shore to shore?) This is **RIGHT NOW**.

(3) **IN THE FUTURE** might be at set dates (5, 10, 15, 50 years from 2015), or in the near future and the far future (provide realistic time spans like 2020-30 and after 2030...). Here you focus on changes afoot now, possible need solutions likely implemented in the future, long-range needs decades away and how they might be met... If possible, maybe even some sketched visuals of how lighthouses might look in 50 or 150 years.

Compiling (1) is pretty much a history dig, some search tools, lighthouse history accounts and books, a few retellings of relevant "as it was" stories by the pioneers. Humor helps here, as does brevity. (Summarize it in the speech, but you might do full research and write "the" or "a" key book about it in the future. That's another foundational brick in your empire.)

The association may be your biggest helper in **composing and organizing (2)**. It's always amazing how little most practitioners know about the larger field they serve. (They are busy doing what they do where they are at. To know more is probably why they are at the convention you would address.) Gathering the present-day facts is another blog. Lists are good: lighthouses and managers (or how to find them quickly), money in and out (global to wee beamers), personnel job descriptions, most common local and national problems (financial, political, directional, technical), equipment (present, problems, solutions), and so on. The listeners should know in 20 minutes the current state of the lighthouse art (where they are, why, how they are the same and different—you fill it in.)

Number (3), probably the last 10-15 minutes, **is the testiest**

because it's "maybe" stuff and usually anybody's guess. Of course the listeners will wonder if you are just pulling the guesswork out of the air—or their leg. One way to handle that is to say that you contacted 100 scattered lighthouse managers with a questionnaire, plus of course you asked the associationfolk and a dozen recommended "big names" in this field (you actually have to do it!) and here are the 10 trends or innovations or areas of most likely change they saw in the future. List the 10. You might place them on a horizontal "future line" with dates every 5 or 15 or 25 years when they would most likely be started or implemented. Then you discuss all 10, most in some depth (with source links, if available), a few shorter "who really knows but..." comments.

Why would associations or related sponsors jump at the chance to book this speech or seminar? Because it's exactly what the members want to know. And in a small part because you are objective and aren't likely to be pumping some company line. (The questionnaire will help you see what they do want to know. Just ask, "What do you really want to know the most about..." and "How will your lighthouse look in 50 (or 100) years?—or "ideally, how might your lighthouse (or your job) look in 50 (or 100) years?"

Why would they hire you to speak if you can't tell a lighthouse from a farm house? Because if you present yourself and the topic right, they need to share that information. It would be easier if you were a 40-year lighthouse manager, or at least a manager, knew lighthouses, were an association soul, were a federal officer dealing with lighthouses, were a futurist and you did "state of the art" speeches (preferably about lighthouse management), taught lighthouse history, and so on. But an experienced speaker with a long interest in lighthouses might be plenty. (Long might be relative. Perhaps long vertically, with book jamming your new passion.)

Where does the empire fit in for you? If what you say on speech day is a resounding (or even moderate with clapping)

success; it was honest, instructive, and even (heavens) enjoyable; it made huge sense to all listening, and they want a follow-up in two or three years (with more emphasis on (2) and (3), that's a warm roar telling you to write a book in the general lighthouse management area. And from that book you spread out with more books, more speeches (why not a next-year follow-up about technology, management, and lighthouses, another related need the following year, and on the third year, "state of the art" again?) By that time you're an "expert" in your defined ("state of the art in...") area and attendees eagerly fill your hall to hear about themselves again. Emperors or empresses open the door with expertise, then expand it (and add other information dissemination means to sell more of it, like books, a newsletter, blogs, workshops, public speeches (at lighthouses?), videos, and so on...) An excellent way to begin the financial fiefdom is by starting with "a paid speech you can book at every association any year..." (Just pick one you at least really care about!)

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. I'm half done with a how-to "state of the art" book. I will run an occasional blog on this topic too. If you want to know more or know a "state of the art" speaker whom I might interview, send an email (glburgett@gmail.com) or get on my free, every-two-month, easy-to-escape [newsletter](#) and I will add you to the "state of the art" elist and tell you when the book has seen light. You'll get a discount too!

4 proven ways to sell 75%+ of your freelance writing

MAGAZINES and NEWSPAPERS

1. Here is the two-item formula for selling nonfiction copy to **magazines** and **newspapers**: (a) You sell more than 75% of your freelance writing by writing *only* when you have better than a 50% chance of a sale, and (b) You have better than a 50% chance of a sale by either querying your prospective market, and writing *after* you receive a positive reply, or by writing to markets where you can simultaneously submit the same manuscript.

2. You can also increase your sales percentage and income by simultaneously selling **reprints** or **rewrites** of the published material—or **reprints of the rewrites**[\[Reprints, Rewrites, Reprints of Rewrites, and Resales\]](#).

3. **Fiction** is excluded from this 75% claim in magazines, newspapers, and books. Nonetheless, if points made on these pages seem appropriate to selling your fiction, try them, but know that the selling ratio in fiction is very low.

4. The most important tool for selling to magazines is the **query letter**. [\[25 Professional Query and Cover Letters\]](#) You do not query to newspapers (except to their magazines); you need **cover letters** to sell to them. If you are selling to big-house book publishers, at least a query letter is required. If you are niche publishing and pre-testing, you will need a sales letter, a small note, and a prepaid response mailer.

Items in orange are explained in far greater detail in blogs from blog.gordonburgett.com. Go to the blog and insert the highlighted word in the search box, upper right, title page. Often the search will bring up many blogs related to the topic or word you seek. For example, if you are looking for more information about “query letter” (a good thing to know about) and you type “query letter” in the box, it will probably bring up a five or ten full blogs, one after the other. Please use all of the information that applies.)

Items in magenta are the subject(s) of related products. The product title is in brackets after the reference. There is more information at www.gordonburgett.com/order3.htm.

For more assistance, see www.gordonburgett.com and glburgett@aol.com.

NEWSPAPERS

5. Usually the copy (and accompanying photos) sold to newspapers will be about travel [[How to Sell 75% of Your Travel Writing](#)], editorial commentary, food, reviews, and (very rarely) columns. That’s about all newspapers buy from freelancers. Mostly they buy travel.

6. You are more likely to sell to newspapers (particularly in travel) if your piece is short (600-1500 words; 1200 words is a good target) rather than long (to about 3000 words). The longer feature articles are usually written by the section editor, or one from another publication.

7. You can simultaneously submit the same material (copy and photos) to newspapers (unless they tell you no) if they are not “national” newspapers—like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Newsday*, where you submit

to them one at a time—or where the newspapers overlap in prime circulation (usually within 100 miles of each other), where you submit to *only one* newspaper at a time in the **circulation radius**.

8. Study others' in-print newspaper articles in your target selections and write (and punctuate) like the original writers did to get in print. Focus on the **topics** [[Finding Topics That Make Your Articles Indispensable](#)], **conciseness**, **quotes**, **timeliness**, length of paragraphs, and the **writing voice** of the articles. The voice means: first person, I; second person, you; third person, he/she/it. (You mostly write salable copy in third person.)

9. Send your newspaper copy, ready to use, to the respective section editor with a cover note/page that tells the unique features in the copy, its timeliness, your **credits** (in a phrase: "I've sold 600 newspaper travel pieces"—don't lie, say nothing if it's nothing or very modest), any exceptional photos, how to get back to you—email and phone, and that you are marketing simultaneously (no nationals; to you solely within a 100-mile radius). If you are sending to a national newspaper, submit to one at a time (until bought). To national newspapers (or those few that insist), you are selling **first rights** to them only.

10. If you have the respective section editor's newspaper email address, send your submission digitally—the **cover note/page, text, and sample photos** or link to a sample photo page. If you don't, snail mail your submission to that editor, and include an SASE (stamped, self-address envelope). If that editor replies by email, you then have their email address. Remember to write out the full address to the photo links.

11. Assuming your **salable photos** are .jpegs, in your cover note (a) offer to send them if they want to review them, but you can briefly describe one or two extraordinary shot(s) in the note, (b) include a b/w or color page with samples of the

best 6 or so with the note, or (c) post the best you have, very best first, on a cloud or website page where they can link and peruse. Let them pluck what they want to use and pay as the piece and art are published.

12. There is no firm **photo submission protocol**, so use the publication's guidelines—or common sense. (Sometimes the guidelines are listed in *Google*—or the editor will tell you if you ask.) Let the editors decide if they will use the shot(s) in b/w or color. With the camera, seek clarity, get bright colors, focus on key items you wrote about. Remember, in newspapers, particularly for shorter submissions, the text is what they buy. (They might buy photo-first if you have an original shot of Napoleon—or something like that, or older.)

13. Newspapers pay from about \$100-225 for short items, \$200-500 for longer pieces. They pay after the submission is published. For photos, it may range from \$35-150. But some may pay less for the items above and some of the larger newspapers will pay more. You have no bargaining power here but if you sell often to the same newspaper, the editor sometimes increases the pay as your value to them increases.

14. **Do you see how selling simultaneously to newspapers lifts you well above the 75%+ goal?** If you send a sharp article to six cities all distant from each other and four buy it (some with photos), you have sold the article 400%! It's hard to top that sales ratio. What a shame that the articles themselves don't pay much more...

MAGAZINES

15. Magazines do pay more. You usually know their **pay range** (several hundred to a thousand dollars and up) and the **size articles** they seek because most of the magazines that you will

write for are found in the current-year *Writer's Market* (in print or online version). That and a ton more information is explained in *WM*, so you should have that source accessible where you write. Also, if you check *Writer's Digest Magazine* (in the library) it lists new markets every month—and updates current listings.

16. To get on the 75% magazine path find an idea you want to write about, then create a *feasibility study*. Think of the study as two boxes next to each other, both sharing the same idea. In one box you answer, "Is this topic feasible to write for X magazine?" In box two you answer "Is it feasible to sell an article about this topic?" If it's a "yes" to both, you will write a query letter to the #1 market. (See "*How to Prepare and Market Magazine Articles That Sell*.") [[Travel Writer's Guide, ebook edition](#)]

17. There is no need for a feasibility study for newspaper direct submissions because you will know if it's feasible to write because you will, in fact, write it and send the prose to one or many markets simultaneously. And if it sells, that's your answer to the second box.

18. To answer box 1, see if and *where magazine articles appeared in print* about your topic. Find copies of those articles and study what they contain. (See "*How to Study a Printed Magazine Article*.") [[Travel Writer's Guide, ebook edition](#)] You will likely need updated information, new quotes, or new examples to add to the information already in print. See if you have or can get access to that new information. If nothing has been in print, study the topic and list what readers would want to read about it. This should take several hours, not weeks or years. If you have a strong sense that if you queried an editor about that topic knowing what you can provide that he/she would say "yes, then move on to box 2.

19. "Who would buy an article about this topic?" is the focus of box 2. See the many categories of publications in the *WM*

table of contents and list those where your topic might appeal to its readers. Let's say there are six such categories; list all of them. Then go to the listed publications in each category and write down the magazine titles in that category where you think the reader's interest would be greatest. Let's say there are two magazines in each category, so you would end up with 12 possible magazines to query before you write.

20. Because you can only query one magazine at a time from your 12 possible candidates, you must **prioritize** the 12. Put the most likely first and the least likely last, and sort the rest in between. What criteria do you use to prioritize the list?

21. If you want to top a 75% sales plateau, then when the editors of those magazines pay for articles is the most important criterion. So put all of those that "**pay on acceptance**" (this information is in the **WM**) at the top of the list. Paid freelancers only query editors who pay on acceptance since that means if they accept your manuscript, you will be paid right away or within a month (when they churn that month's checks). The other editors "**pay on publication,**" which means your finished manuscript (and photos) will sit in that editor's "to use" pile until it fits, and then you will be paid after it sees print, which means another additional 60 days to get your reward. Even worse, those that pay on publication usually pay less, and a rare few forget to pay at all.

22. So once you know when your 12 possible markets pay, list the pay on acceptance publications on top (say six of them), with the remaining six that pay on publication on the bottom. Now ask the second question, "How much do they pay?" The highest payer of the first six candidates goes to the top of the list, the lowest payer is #6. (Don't worry about the last six on the list right now.)

23. There are two more criteria that could move your target

markets up or down. One asks, “What **percent of freelance material** do they buy?” The other, “**How many issues do they publish a year?**” Clearly, you’d rather be considered by an editor that uses 95% freelance copy than, say, 5%. The same with a magazine that comes out weekly rather than annually—it buys 52 times more copy! Resort the top six into their most desirable order—for you.

24. Now you are ready to query. You will write a **full-page letter** asking the editor of the top magazine on your prioritized list if she would be interested in an article about _____. (The query letter will make the topic jump with excitement and the editor jump with hope to get your writing genius on her pages.) If, in truth, the editor says “yes, let me see it,” that’s almost as good as putting the money in your bank because the “**go-ahead** (and write it)” is given seriously, with the expectation that you will provide ready-to-go copy that fits in the slot saved for you. But if the editor says “no,” however kindly, you will move to #2 on your list, read its write-up in the *WM*, and send its editor a query letter (often adjusted some to meet that new readership’s needs). You keep moving down the top six until you are out of “pay on acceptance” rejecters.

25. Why not just continue down the list of publication editors for this new article? It’s not worth the time for the risk involved. You will sell your reprints (or reprints of rewrites) to the bottom six. That’s what they often, sometimes only, buy. Better yet, you can sell reprints (or second rights) simultaneously as long as you tell the others that yours is a **second rights** sale.

26. A couple more points. Let’s say the first “acceptance” editor wants your article. Have you lost the buying potential of markets 2-6? No, just approach the topic from another slant or create another article idea from that topic, and query about that possible article. In other words, you can **rewrite that first topic** and query letter and start it down the

selling ladder to those “pay on acceptance” editors that are still uncontacted. And what if you do that all six times and all six editors buy their own unique articles? Bingo, you just sold the same stretched idea 600%, rather than 75%. (And you’re still not done because each of those six articles can be sold as reprints of the rewrites! Heavens, you may get rich with just five or six different, fecund ideas!

27. But we are getting the cart in front of the horses. All we have done is have a kindly editor say that he/she wants to see our article—on speculation, which means, no obligation. So we still have to write one or many excellent articles that the editor(s) must embrace, buy, and use. Still, a “go-ahead” from most editors means a sale as long as you provide (in the article) what you promised by the date agreed, and perhaps also with the promised photos.

28.. Which means enough late-night oil, interviews, facts found and verified, anecdotes generously inserted—whatever is needed to make the article hum in print. It also means close scrutiny of the target magazine to see what that editor wants on his/her pages before you write. Thus, if this query-led system is followed, **almost all magazine articles suggested and written will be sold** since you will not write them without a prior “go-ahead.” And with the reprint and rewrite fall-back sales, you should be **far ahead of your 75% goal.**

BOOKS

29. It used to be that selling any percent of your freelance writing through book publishing was as likely as having your books come out of a cloud. Guess what? Now it’s simple to publish 100% of your freelance book writing—you can just do it yourself. And it can sit in a cloud to sell once it’s written

and prepped. Who knew?

30. Less than a decade back the chances of the Big 8 or 5 or whatever the number was of the big-house publishing firms picking up a random freelance book was like 1:1000. Even with agents or even with a solid writing reputation. Then you sent query letters with attachments.. You may as well have been sending pick-up laundry chits.

31. These days it's hard to figure any strong case for going first to the big houses (which simply aren't so big anymore nor are they so appealing). They pay poorly, it can take months or years for the book to appear, and their bookstore allure has faded as the bookstores themselves have disappeared. It's kind of upside down now. **Freelancers publish the book themselves** [[How to Get Your Book Published in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days](#)] and they earn a fast and decent return. Then if it smells of success the big houses will get in line to pay for the product—and often all the additional products that writer/publisher can create. So why would a freelancer go back to the earlier days when a big-house sale meant a meager royalty, poor sales, payment a couple of times a year, and no control?

32. If we are talking sheer percentages, you write a book that others want to buy; get it **proofread**; hire artwork and covers and some selling postcards; **get the book designed**; print some in-house stock to sell directly; save the final copy in .pdf, and send it to **Create Space** and **LSI** to get it **POD** printed and sold commercially through their giant selling machines, like **Amazon** and **Ingram**. In the meantime, you convert the original text into .epub, modify the covers a bit, and you create an ebook to sell yourself, at **Kindle**, Nook, Kobo, **Smashwords**, and elsewhere. And all the while you worm your way into the social media world to churn up some fan interest.

33. There are two ways to sell 75%+ in the regular book world now. The new open publishing world I described in 29-32. And

you can do it the old way too. You sell the book to the big houses or other publishers pretty much the old way: you send queries and packages and proposals, alone or agent-aided, and you don't write the final book until you are contract-protected, then you wait for the book to appear. **That's a 75%+ approach.** Hard to imagine 25% of the publishers wouldn't honor your contract.

34. But here's the problem, even if you freelance and produce one book and you have another produced by an established publisher under contract (which is 75%+ twice), there's no guarantee that any of that will make enough money to keep you fed, much less famous and prospering. So despite the fact that you bat 100% selling the copy that you create, and you do it many times with paperback and digital versions, all sold by **six different publishers** (plus you), most of the self-published general market books don't make much money. They don't even do much to imprint a perception of your expertise. Stir in platform-building, branding, You-Tube, Facebook, and all the rest and can still be a big disappointment.

NICHE (BOOK) PUBLISHING

and EMPIRE-BUILDING

35. Let me share the **best way to sell 100% of your freelance book writing** and make reliable money **while you simultaneously build an empire** that will feed, clothe, and support you very well for a long time. It can be built around your book or books—or you may not have to write much copy at all. You might use others' expertise and writing, plus your editing, managing, and publishing skills, as the core of his **niche publishing**. [Niche Publishing: Publish Profitably Every Time]

36. It's not the writing or publishing, per se, that distinguish niche publishing. It's the existence of a **niche**, or tightly-linked group of people, that share common needs, interests, and lifestyle. For example, Chicago Cubs fans are a long-suffering niche. So are dentists, Norwegian ancestors in Wisconsin, and meat cutters. The niche often has a vocation, hobby, focus of interest, ethnic bond, social communality (like octogenarians or octogenarians in Tulsa), an ailment or cure (like prostate cancer survivors), or membership (in the Moose or in almost any thing or group.)

37. This might be easier to envision by using an example. To keep it simple, let's use ultramarathoners, and let's make that nationwide. And let me invent typical components of a niche and ascribe them to the poor sore-legged ultramarathoners (who share in common long-distance running, longer than a marathon, often 50-mile or 100-mile runs). They can be done by either sex and any age, though it's not likely they are teens or under or very rarely 65 or older.

38. What makes niche publishing profitable is that members of the niche and supporters about the niche topic can be easily contacted. Core ultras, let's say, are members of a national association (UOA, Ultramarathoners of America) and smaller associations in, say, 40 states (Minnesota UOA, etc.) The associations have a national convention, 18 have state conferences, and they informally gather at the dozen major races a year. They also have a national newsletter, office holders in the larger units, a **membership address list** (digital and standard direct mail) and a surprisingly large group of ultra aficionados and supporters who sell products and services (like special shoes, attire, diet and health additive programs, insurance, and much more. And as long as I am creating a model group, let's say there are 25,000 members and possibly 2,000 others who sell products and services to ultras, plus many thousands of marathoners who regularly show interest in expanding their own running challenge.

39. To show you what a niche published book might be like in this niched setting, let's say Bob has been an UOA member for 10 years—and, in vocation, he's a life-style nutritionist. Over the years he has created an ideal diet-supplement-training program that has been very enthusiastically used by a dozen of his local group members, plus it has become widely applied by marathoners in his region. Let's just call it the DST for Ultramarathoners (or DSTU).

40. Bob wants to write a book, sell it to ultras and marathoners nationwide (he calls it DSTM for marathoners), and he'd like to expand the book into **classes**, perhaps **podcast/video** components, a practice logbook and **workshops**, **speeches**, and **breakout sessions**. He would also like to **expand his product base** to include distance-running shoes, attire, special caps, and related diet and supplement components.

41. His **strategy** is to create the book first, and in its distribution (and early promotion) he will quickly expand into making his video/podcast programs and logbooks available. From his niche book he will roll out his **empire** to include speaking widely once the book is printed and promoted, and from speaking spread into workshops and classes. As he creates his buyer contact base (mostly through free subscriptions to a bi-monthly ultra newsletter) he will promote his product base. His long-range goal is to expand these activities into the DSTM group, for marathoners nationwide (even perhaps worldwide).

42. An aside here. Bob in our example can both be the expert writing the key book that helps practitioners meet important needs or solve frustrations and then build his own empire from the expertise recognition that his book brings him. Or if Bob wants to create his own empire doing the other activities we've mentioned, including publishing the book, he can hire an expert to write the book (that Bob might also edit and distribute) that his new ultramarathon publishing and product company can grow from. Thus Bob wouldn't really be

using his running expertise—freeing any niche publisher to do the same about any topic. In fact, Bob could publish a string of ultra books using as many experts as members of his publishing family. How would the experts earn money? They would receive royalties (often 10% of the net received) plus they would get the speaking fees, and perhaps a special discount on their own books (or all the firm's ultra books) sold **back-of-the-room** at the programs. A last thought, he could run parallel publishing programs in the ultra and marathoning fields, allowing him to double or multiply his empire-building base while the experts create the core books.

43. But the most appealing element of a niche publishing book is that it can be **pre-tested** (the format, price, contents, author, and **purpose**) on a sample list to guarantee its financial viability before any part of it is written or major production expenses are incurred. [[How to Test Your Niche \(Publishing\) Market First](#)]

44. Bob sees that the size of the ultra market (its contactable members) is 25,000, and that the three other ultra books have cost \$19.95, \$24.95, and \$49. He decides to conduct a direct mail pre-test with 210 Nth-selection addresses from the ultra association mailing list. He figures that the entire pre-test might cost him a maximum of \$700.

45. For the pre-test he needs a clean-looking **one-page information sheet** (with a reduced book cover on it) that includes the book's title, subtitle, table of contents, a small photo to accompany Bob's bio, an fact box (with ISBN, format [cloth bound], and the estimated number of pages and cost), and selling content copy that explains the book's purpose and its benefits to readers/users. He also prepares a **one-third page greeting note** and a **return postcard** with two key questions, each followed by yes or no: would the card receiver be interested in purchasing a book about... and if so, would he pay \$ X for the book. In this case X would be three different prices: 70 packets would have \$19.95 on their info

sheet and on its mail-back postcard, 70 would say \$24.95, and 70 would say \$29.95). The postcards would be addressed back either to Bob or (better) the name of his new niche publishing firm (like Ultramarathoning Publishers of America). Bob would also prepare a #10 envelope for each packet, stamp them, and adhere the direct mail address to the outside of the packet.

46. So Bob mails all 210 packets and in 20 days he has almost all of the replies he will receive. By day 20 he has received the following responses from each of the three price levels sent 70 recipients: 13, 10, and 7. So the potential buy income would be, respectively: \$92,768, \$81,196, and \$74,875. (The calculating example in the 10-buyer case would be $10/70=14.3\% \times \$24.95 \times 25,000 = \$81,196$).

47. The most profitable rate would be \$19.95 which would bring in \$92,768. Thus, if the preparation of the book and the mailing of the full 25,000 packets cost 50% of the gross income (here, \$92,768) this book would result in a profit of \$46,384.

48. It would be a modest empire with a kitty of \$40,000 or so. But remember that Bob intends to expand into classes, videos, logbooks, workshops and speeches, ultra accoutrement, and diet and health additive programs. Plus a **free digital newsletter** to control his customer list and for bi-monthly promotion.

49. But what isn't visible here is a huge market sitting right below the ultras: the U.S. marathon market, where indeed his book might apply as is or rewritten, and the other items should also be salable. How big is the marathon market? There were 541,000 finishers in US marathons in 2013 (despite the terror attack at the Boston Marathon). And the average entry cost is \$75, but trending up to \$100. A determined niche publisher might tooth on the ultramarathoners to test the market and response, then quickly back into the marathon world—and keep both going if there are common themes.

50. That's it. **How you can sell 75%+ of your freelance writing.** At least three systems (or four, depending on how you count them) that will keep you off the no-income paths and close to where money can be earned and multiplied by wordsmithing. All of this stuff works—if you do!

My best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

Sample evaluation sheet for seminars and other programs

If you are sponsoring or giving seminars you want to know what **the attendees think** of the presenter's presentation skills, the worth of the information offered, and how that topic might be offered better.

The **speakers want to know the same thing.** (I have given 2100+ paid programs so I think I have distributed and reviewed almost every kind of evaluation imaginable. The worst (least informative, at least to me) were those that just fished for praise for the sponsor.

Actually, **the simplest evaluations were the most informative,** in part because they were most often completed before the attendees left. Let me offer a sample of this evaluation. But note that it is designed to capture the two prevalent kinds of responders: (1) those who just want to check boxes and flee!, and (2) those for whom the choices were never quite right and

they felt compelled to add commentary as well. Two of the most important points simply had to be answered in written responses: "What did you find most valuable?" and "Suggested improvements..." They are wisely scattered in the middle of the questionnaire.

The last two items also require prose responses. I put them last because many leave them blank and I wouldn't want that to set a precedent. Anyway, I suspect they don't know what else the speaker can talk about or can't think of what wasn't said—probably because it wasn't said. Still, if they do respond to them what they share is often very helpful.

I recall speaking one sultry day to about 40 dripping listeners. Three people made the same suggestion: in essence, "get your glasses fixed. It drove me nuts when you kept sliding them back into place." Who knew? But that would have driven me batty too, so the next morning I went to the glasses booth at a mall megastore and asked the helper if there was any way I could stop my glasses from sliding down my nose all the time. It took her about 20 seconds to make the free repair! A wee thing but not to listeners who had to witness the sliding glasses for minutes or hours.

Here's the **model sheet** that I think works best.

EVALUATION SHEET

Title of the program: _____
(City or School) _____
(Date) _____

We very much appreciate your responses. They help us determine whether this program meets your needs and interests—and what we can do to make it better!

(1) **Your evaluation of the SUBJECT:**

excellent
 very good
 good
 fair
 poor

Comments:

(2) Your evaluation of the SPEAKER:

excellent
 very good
 good
 fair
 poor

Comments:

(3) What did you find most valuable?

(4) Your reaction to the COST:

The cost of the seminar was...

about right
 too high
 too low

Comments:

(5) Suggested improvements?

(6) Regarding LENGTH, the seminar was...

the right length
 too short
 too long

Comments:

(7) How did you hear about this seminar?

_____ newspaper
_____ flyer sent by us
_____ told by another person
_____ radio/TV
_____ other: _____
_____ other: _____

(8) What other program(s) would you like (the speaker) to offer?

(9) What haven't we asked here, and how do you feel about it?

Adjust this evaluation as you wish, of course. It's a good starter form to build from.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. If you want to read more about this topic, my program "[How to Set Up and Market Your Own Seminar](#)" might also interest you. (The evaluation form is excerpted, and modified a bit, from that program.)

**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. `ChildrenSlayMonsters.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](http://GoDaddy), enom, and [Network Solutions](http://NetworkSolutions). 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 Toolkit](#). 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