**The Equation for Book-Marketing Success**

**By Brian Jud**

When authors are told they must actively market their books, many say, “I don’t like to promote. I only want to write.” However, when a book is published the author becomes a salesperson running a business. It is an abrupt, and in many cases unwanted transition that is usually not handled well. But it doesn’t have to be that way. I created a formula to help people make the transition from author to marketer. It is not a scientific, qualitative equation, but a quantitative method that is adaptable to any author’s personality and genre.

The equation should lead to Success (S) by manipulating five controllable factors to an individual’s personality and circumstances. These are Quality (Q), Fit (F), Knowledge (K), Attitude (A2) and Rigidity (R). As the equation below demonstrates, a higher value of S (as defined by the individual) will result from increasing the parameters in the numerator (Q, F, K and A) while decreasing the denominator (R). Here is the equation, followed by a description of each constraint.

S = (Q x F x K x A2)

 R

**Quality (Q)** is defined in several ways. First, it is production quality, including content and editing. Also, the composition, layout and cover design should be done by a professional. Test different cover designs with target readers and buyers for their opinions.

Quality also reveals itself in marketing. A properly printed and priced book distributed through bookstores (and non-bookstore retailers) by a credible channel partner is essential. Promotion should be implemented with strategies for long- and short-term exposure and sales all directed to the needs of target reader and buyers.

An author may put vast amounts of time into the writing, production and marketing tasks, but the quality of time invested is critical since action is not the same as accomplishment. There are many marketing tasks that should be performed before and after the book is launched that lead to achievement of S.

**Fit** (F) is the way you organize the interactive parts of publishing and marketing as you would a jig-saw puzzle, creating your vision of success. Initially, match your dreams to reality. Run the numbers to see what is necessary to reach S. Create a cash-flow document for a better idea of where and when to invest your time, money and attitude. Similarly, match your efforts to your definition of S which could be book sales, a legacy, or to build a consulting or speaking business.

Create the fit between your content and your target readers’ and buyers’ needs. Many authors define them as, “Everybody who likes (my topic).” Be more specific by describing the Five Ws: **W**ho they are (demographically), **W**here they shop, **W**hen they buy, **W**hat they buy (printed books ebooks or other form) and **W**hy they need your content. Apply the same questions to prospective buyers in non-retail segments such as in corporations, associations, schools, government agencies and the military.

Match your marketing actions to your personality. There are many things that can be done by introverts and/or extraverts. The latter group may perform on television and radio shows, speak at large programs or conduct retail-store events. Introverted authors could do more social media including networking, blogging, SMS communication and selling off their website. Both groups could write articles, send targeted press releases, conduct interviews in print media and implement direct marketing (snail mail and email) campaigns. Remember to maintain the quality of each effort.

**Knowledge (K)** entails an understanding of the craft of writing, the business of publishing and the art of marketing. Learn all you can about these crucial aspects of success. Join writers groups. Join and participate in [local](http://pro.bookapss.org/partner-organizations) publishing groups and national associations such as APSS and IBPA. Learn all you can about book marketing. Read books and [articles](http://www.bookmarketingworks.com/index.php?pg=articles.htm). Attend seminars and workshops and take courses from the experts at [Book Selling University](https://booksellinguniversity.com/). As Brian Herbert said, “The capacity to learn is a gift, the ability to learn is a skill and the willingness to learn is a choice.”

Know your competition, too. Before I published my first book (a career guide titled *Job Search 101*) I went to bookstores and searched their career section. The books were arranged in alphabetical order by author. Noting where Jud would be, I evaluated those nearby for content, size, cover design, colors and pricing. That knowledge helped me publish a better book and eventually sell over 600,000 copies.

One common lament among authors is, “My book is published. Now what do I do?” You can be more effective and efficient if you organize your knowledge in a plan. It should describe how you will manipulate your knowledge of the 4Ps of marketing: the product, pricing, place (distribution) and promotion.

**Attitude (A2)** is squared in this equation to emphasize its impact on any publishing endeavor. Without a good attitude not much else matters. Attitude is like a bouncing ball. Each bounce is a little lower than the last, and if unattended it eventually stops bouncing, rolls for a while and stops. Authors begin their marketing trek with high expectations and enthusiasm, but experience many obstacles, disappointments and low periods that reduces their bounce. A good attitude throughout keeps the marketing ball inflated and bouncing. It keeps you motivated as you experience “The REs:” rejection, returns, rescinded orders, reality and reviews that are not good. Learn from them and use their lessons to keep yourself bouncing.

**Rigidity (R)** is doing what everybody else does without considering options. The ramifications of that position are important to consider because the larger the amount of R, the lower S becomes. Decrease the value of R with flexibility of thought and action. Do not get caught up with doing what everyone else is doing: the beaten path is comfortable and safe but is the most crowded.

For example, many authors think the only way to sell books is through Amazon.com and bookstores. They believe returns are inevitable and social networking is the major way to market books. However, rigidity acts like blinders keeping people from seeing many other ways and places to sell books to non-bookstore buyers -- non-returnable in many cases. As Diane Grant said, “It’s better to walk alone than with a crowd going in the wrong direction.”

Consider another adage: “If you do what you always did, you get what you always got.” Are you satisfied with the degree of success you always got? If not, work through this equation to increase the parameters in the numerator (Quality, Fit, Knowledge and Attitude) while decreasing the denominator (Rigidity). The value of your S may increase significantly.

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Brian Jud is the Executive Director of the Association of Publishers for Special Sales (APSS – [www.bookapss.org](http://www.bookapss.org)), and the founder of Book Selling University ([www.booksellinguniversity.com](http://www.booksellinguniversity.com)). He is also the author of *How to Make Real Money Selling Books*. Brian offers commission-based sales of books to buyers in non-bookstore markets. Contact Brian at brianjud@bookmarketing.com or www.premiumbookcompany.com