

Give Your Book Away to Sell Your Book

Contributed by Ernie Zelinski
Monday, 09 October 2006
Last Updated Tuesday, 01 September 2009

Does it make sense to give your book away if you want to sell thousands of copies? It did for Marlo Morgan, who successfully sold hundreds of thousands of her self-published book. It also makes sense for the author of this article, who has used book-giveaways as a viable book marketing tool. Sound silly? Read for yourself...

Book Marketing Ideas

All things considered, word of mouth is still the most important means of marketing any book, and as you know, book marketing is necessary for an author. Word of mouth is created by getting your book in the hands of people who will appreciate it and will talk to friends and associates about it. The best way to get people talking is to give your book to key individuals - talk-show hosts, columnists, celebrities, and chat-line addicts - who are going to mention it to many people, who will mention it to even more people. This is book marketing at it's finest.

With the right book, the more you give away, the more you end up selling. I have now spent approximately \$40,000 giving away over 12,000 copies of my books. But let me not dwell on my own case because I have one that is much better. A few years ago, Marlo Morgan self-published a book called *Mutant Message Down Under*. Three years later, Morgan had sold 270,000 copies. This is a remarkable figure for any self-published book, but the most extraordinary fact was Morgan had given away over 90,000 copies of her book in three years. She donated the copies to prisons, women's shelters, and other institutions.

Giving away almost one hundred copies each day for three years straight is not something even major publishers would consider, but it paid off for Morgan. Her impressive sales were a result of the word-of-mouth advertising generated from the copies she gave away. Better still, when the book finally came to the attention of HarperCollins, the publisher paid Morgan a \$1.7 million advance to take over publication of *Mutant Message Down Under* (HarperPerennial, 1995).

Giving away your book for free may seem like a silly way to try to make a living. There is no better way to create word of mouth, however, as Marlo Morgan proved. Many people end up buying your book after hearing about it from someone. The key is to give your book to the influencers of this world. By influencers, I mean the "big mouths" of this world who know a lot of other influential people and will recommend your book to everyone they talk to.

In the same vein, you can get publicity about your book by giving free talks and consultations. You will establish yourself as an expert and publicize book at the same time. If you can create yourself as being controversial, you increase your chances of making appearances on talk shows, where you can rant and rave about your book. If you can't get publicity after sustained effort, likely either your book or you is not distinctive enough. Do whatever it takes to make your book or yourself more distinctive.

Be sure to download a copy of Ernie's book, *1001 Best Things Ever Said About Work*

About the author:

Ernie J. Zelinski is a world class author, innovator, and public speaker. Ernie is the author of the unconventional *Career Success Without a Real Job*, the bestseller *How Retire Happy, Wild, and Free* (over 100,000 copies sold and published in 7 foreign languages), and the international bestseller *The Joy of Not Working* (over 225,000 copies sold and published in 17 languages). This article is adapted from *Career Success Without a Real Job*. To learn more about Ernie and his books visit his websites:

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