

# The Secret of Book Marketing Success with Pyromarketing

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What is PyroMarketing, and why should you care? This marketing technique embraces the idea of niche marketing, something all book marketing experts agree is important. Read more about PyroMarketing from book marketing specialist Scott Lorenz.

PyroMarketing, Book Marketing, Passion, and a Purpose-Driven Life

Book marketing professionals know the secrets of success that drove the sales of Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life* to a chart-busting best-seller and Mel Gibson's *"The Passion of the Christ"* into a huge cinema phenom. Those of us in the business understand that sales of both blockbusters were driven by techniques outlined in a new book called *PyroMarketing* by Greg Stielstra who gained fame in book publishing circles when he served as the marketing director for *The Purpose Driven Life*, the best-selling hardcover book in history.

PyroMarketing embraces an idea that really has been in use for some time - niche marketing. That tool is well-known and used every day by marketing pros but Stielstra lays out the niche marketing principles with a new, crystal clear message that is so compelling that it is a must-read for anyone who wants to promote an idea, service or product.

In a nutshell, PyroMarketing involves finding the "driest tinder" (customers most apt to buy), touch it with a match (customers experiencing a benefit), and fanning the flame (customers'word-of-mouth marketing), and save the coals (keeping a record of customers).

As a book-marketing expert, Stielstra found the driest tinder when the Rick Warren organization tapped into the Christian faith community in America to market *The Purpose Driven Life*. An initial six-week campaign for *Purpose Driven Life* involved 1,200 people who read the book each day, listened to sermons each Sunday, and met with friends each week in book study groups. At the end of six weeks, 400,000 people were intimately familiar with the book. Within four months, 2 million books were sold. More than 5,000 churches signed up during the fall 2004 campaign.

"From the first campaign and for the next couple years," explains Stielstra, "it seemed that for every book sold at a discount to someone in a church-based campaign, five more books were sold through retail stores. By focusing on the driest tinder within the church and encouraging them to spread the word, we were rewarded with many more sales to people beyond its walls. Fanning the flames didn't just double the campaign's impact, it multiplied it by a factor of five!"

In an exchange I had with Rick Warren, the author emphasized that his personal pre-existing contacts with pastors and church leaders was key in creating initial interest in his book. That very limited, specific market was the driest tinder, the book study groups was the match which produced customer benefits, and ministers and study group members talking up the book was the all-important fanning of the flame. The bookkeeping function of saving the coals by recording customers into a database is a sometimes-overlooked step which promises to deliver repeat customers.

Early on film producers wouldn't touch *"The Passion"* and so Gibson employed PyroMarketing techniques to generate \$500 million to become the top-grossing R-rated movie of all time. By the fifth day alone, the film had earned \$125 million in box office receipts against only \$45 million in combined production and marketing costs.

While it is amazing when you look at the success of Warren and Gibson, PyroMarketing techniques are not a collection of hidden secrets suddenly discovered. In my own practice, I find it helpful to re-evaluate all my processes to make sure all elements are followed and to look for new angles to pursue. Part of this constant evaluation of how I meet customer

needs involves keeping up on what's going on in marketing, promotion, public relations, and publishing. To accomplish this I am reading constantly to keep pace and better understand how my colleagues are thriving. That's why I recommend anyone read Stielstra's book, *PyroMarketing: The Four Step Strategy to Ignite Customer Evangelists and Keep Them For Life*. I have experienced success promoting authors using the same basic principles Stielstra spells out in his book and found that discussion to be a very helpful check-point.

In book marketing, a book cannot be promoted without first identifying who the readers are in advance of a single sale. When we find the reasons why that reader will read that book, we then craft the most effective message to be conveyed to the information sources that reader relies upon. We don't bombard the market with propaganda but send out promotional information to selected streams that reach specific persons. That approach has always worked and always will. Salesmen know that you can't sell a refrigerator to an Eskimo because he has no need of one, but you'd have a shot at selling him thermal underwear.

So in drawing up a promotion plan for a client, I first find the niche(s) the client can go after and determine how that specific media can be pursued. Getting media coverage is all about creating interesting angles. I try to find out everything I can about the author using a questionnaire that even asks about fraternities or sorority membership, roommates in college, and other tidbits about them personally and about the book itself.

To successfully market a service, a new produce or an invention Westwind Communications determines who will use it and then targets that media directly. By way of example, one of my clients has published a book of poetry. Now the average person won't buy a collection of poetry. However, certain people love poetry. So we aim our book marketing efforts for this client to poetry magazines, poetry web sites and poetry societies who are the "driest tinder."

The reason most authors seek book reviews is that the people reading them represent the "driest tinder." You don't read book reviews unless you are looking for a book to read or give. So, it makes sense to target reviewers at media outlets. Furthermore, people will tell their friends about a book review they read in a magazine or newspaper, see on television, or hear on the radio because the media is a third party, disinterested source disseminating the information. That's why getting book reviews is so important in starting the "word of mouth" every successful author desires. The challenge is that these reviewers are bombarded with hundreds or thousands of books every year and it takes skill to cut through the clutter to get a book reviewed.

For any author, we make sure galleys and the finished books are sent to the reviewers at major publications and broadcast outlets. We write and send press releases, pitch letters in an electronic press kit, and make follow up phone calls to media outlets encouraging reporters and reviewers to write about our client's book. Being reviewed by *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *USA TODAY* are major goals. In fact *USA Today* has 4.3 million readers every day. Furthermore, it gets more notice from the other media than the other four newspapers combined. That's a major reason why we will make a concerted effort to get our authors noticed by *USA TODAY*.

We also contact national magazines and others that may be interested in the author's personal story. Sometimes the media is more interested in the author than the book itself and that is just one more angle we'll use to promote our client's book. We contact TV and radio outlets. Every day thousands of interviews are conducted on TV and Radio stations across North America and several hundred are with authors. We have developed relationships with many producers over the years and those contacts combined with well-thought-out pitches produce results.

I regularly attend major media events in New York City for face-to-face meetings with journalists, editors, writers and producers from top national magazines, newspapers and radio/TV programs. I have successfully pitched such media outlets as *20/20*, *Prime Time*, *CNN*, *People*, *Good Morning America*, *Newsweek*, *Time Magazine*, *Dateline NBC*, *The View*, *Oprah's O magazine*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Fox News*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Newsweek* to name a few.

Details on Stielstra's PyroMarketing approach are given at [www.pyromarketing.com](http://www.pyromarketing.com). Learn more about Westwind Communications' book marketing approach at [www.westwindcos.com/book](http://www.westwindcos.com/book) for a copy of a review I wrote on Stielstra's book, or for more information on book marketing and book promotion contact me by email at [scottlorenz@westwindcos.com](mailto:scottlorenz@westwindcos.com) or by phone at 734-667-2090