



The Resource

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www.Meetup.com/Author-Books-Colorado

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Savvy Authors Who
Want Their Books to
Soar Think . . .

Author U

Author U stretches members to a higher level. Some will be publishers, some will not, but ALL will learn and grow.

Author U shows YOU, the author, how to be the best you think you can be . . . and then how to be even *more* than you thought you could be.

- If you want to become a publisher yourself, you will learn the ropes.
- If you want to head for NY, you will get strategies on ways to hook both publisher and agent.
- If you want to learn strategies for using the Internet and for other marketing techniques, you will find answers here.
- If you want to keep learning, meet terrific people, and achieve success, Author U is for you.

Success comes from hard work, careful planning, learning your craft, and being in the right place at the right time . . . Author U shows you how.

FOUNDER: Judith Briles

ADVISORY BOARD

Katherine Carol
Collin Earl • Greg Godek
Rick Frishmann
Brian Jud • John Kremer
Eric Kampmann

NEWSLETTER: Linda Lane

Author U Takes the Trauma and Drama Out of Authoring and Publishing

Judith Briles, Founder

Author U grew out of a phone call I received from a colleague who asked my opinion of an individual in the publishing community who advocated publishing/printing books without editing or fine-tuning—just get them out. He had created several Meetup groups around the theme of publishing and writing.

I was appalled. “This is nonsense!” I said. “I’m going to start my own group.” Our purpose: Reduce the number of crummy-looking, poorly written, error-filled books on the street.

So I called a friend who’s led a successful Meetup group, got the how-tos from her, and Author U was born that day. A general email went out from the Meetup folks that announced its formation. In one week, 40 members signed up—which created a bit of a dilemma for me. Now I needed to communicate with them or do something. Purposefully avoiding the weekends, I scheduled a meeting. We would get together mostly on weekday evenings with only an occasional Saturday thrown in.

The emphasis would be completely author-centric—established authors, new authors, and newbies who want to become authors would all be welcomed. Teaching the author the publishing ropes from the ground up became my goal. I wanted members to learn how to be successful on all levels, which included the financial and business sides.

Author U continued to morph. Our members wanted more info, so we created Winter Boot Camp. All about marketing, it garnered excellent evaluations. Its overwhelming success resulted in a plan for two similar camps a year. Also, we’re creating partner programs for Author U members with related professionals whose expertise will bring new ideas and products to us at a discount.

Significant changes will occur over the next few months as we continue to mature. We will transition to a paid-membership organization, but current members will be grandfathered through the end of the year before owing annual dues. Benefits will include the above-mentioned partnerships and discounts that other writing and publishing groups don’t enjoy and so much more.

We also have our own website, www.AuthorU.org (under construction but will be up by summer), and a regular online newsletter, *The Resource*.

Author U has settled on a regular day of the week—Thursday—and a regular meeting site at the Doubletree Hotel DTC. People are finding us through word of mouth, and our members come from all walks of the writing world.

Please spread the word—

Author U: Members Welcome!



Save the Date!

Saturday, June 19th

Book Distribution Boot Camp

with

Eric Kampmann

CEO of MidPoint Trade

www.Meetup.com/Author-Books-Colorado

Author-Wise Tips

Judith Briles

Every book has a starting point for its journey. Along the way, the author sharpens his ideas and gathers the tools to be successful.

#1 Be smart from the get-go!

Savvy authors learn quickly that books are a business. Creating resting places for cobwebs in your garage or basement shouldn't be an option.



Know what your book cost (*really* cost, not an estimate—that means you crunch the numbers so you have a true unit/book price). Know who your reader and buyer are (it is not everybody—get off that soap box). Know how to drill down in your market to become the whale in the pond (much better than the sardine in the ocean). Learn how to position yourself outside and beyond the traditional book sales path (the bookstore); this assures that you will move books.

#2 Get the right people on your team . . . the sooner, the better.

Creating and selling a book is not a solo operation. Whether it's assistance in the creation, layout, design, editing, marketing, the electronic world, foreign rights, or any of the other publishing avenues you find yourself in, don't go it alone. Learn from other's mistakes.

Don't be afraid to ask other authors. Who have you worked with and would you want to work with them again on another book? Did they create stress . . . or de-stress the process?

#3 Get the wrong people off your team immediately . . . today.

If a consultant, supplier, vendor, representative, or seller isn't working, dump him. Books usually don't get second chances; neither do authors. If someone is the wrong fit, open the door and move them out. Don't let loyalty to someone because you like them (or were referred) create a hazard. If it isn't working, get off the bus.

Judith Briles, founder of Author U and author of 26 books, is known as The Book Shepherd. She and her partner, Katherine Carol, work with a select number of authors each year. Their website is www.TheBookShepherd.com. Her next book, Show Me About Publishing, will be available in the fall.

Technology & Tips Toolbox

Kelly Johnson

Advances in technology offer multiple ways to save time and discover valuable online tools and resources to help grow our businesses; reach out to our target audience; and let the world know about our books, products, and services. I continually search for programs, services, and tools to help clients and colleagues be more efficient and productive. Each issue, I will share an online tool, resource, or tip for you to explore and evaluate for implementing in your business.



Social media allows us a great platform to share our expertise and announce our professional activities. However, in publishing updates through tweets and posts, you may be devoting a significant amount of time in logging into your Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts in order to post content.

Want to save time and have your updates posted to all of your social media accounts through one service? Consider HootSuite: <http://hootsuite.com>, a free online service that allows you to manage multiple social media profiles (Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn), monitor keywords, and schedule messages.

You create a "tab" in HootSuite for your social media accounts so you can track posts, publish your tweets to send to your social media profiles, and re-tweet content from people you are connected to or follow. Another valuable feature is the ability to schedule tweets.

In addition, you may use HootSuite to

- Find new people to follow on Twitter.
- Track people discussing your brands/products/services.
- Add links to your tweets using HootSuite's Ow.ly to track how many people click on that link.
- Send an @ reply or direct message.
- Embed an auto-updating Twitter feed search on your website or blog.
- Send your blog updates to Twitter by adding your blog's RSS feed in your HootSuite account.

Explore HootSuite to see how it may save you time and benefit your business.

Kelly Johnson works with authors to manage technical, creative, and administrative projects for their businesses and books. She's an article writing coach, does blog and website maintenance, knows how to implement an online shopping strategy, and is the principal of Cornerstone Virtual Assistance. She can be reached at KJohnson@VACornerstone.com, and her website is www.VACornerstone.com.

Branding & Beyond

Annie Harmon

When you are ready to design the cover of your book, no doubt you are thinking, “Phew, we are nearing the end of the process.” Sorry to burst your bubble, but the cover is just the BEGINNING and the foundation of your branding and marketing strategy.



Branding is defined as the emotional and psychological relationship you have with your customers through design. Nothing defines your brand better than your book cover—

in essence, your product. Strong brands elicit thoughts, emotions, and sometimes physiological responses from customers. A good brand

- Is easy to remember, spell, and pronounce
- Is relevant to the product
- Evokes positive mental image and emotion
- Is consistent throughout your marketing campaign

Have you thought about “What’s next?” prior to working on your cover?

Three steps for creating your brand:

1. Brainstorm and research.

- Analyze what you are currently doing.
- What is your mission statement?
- Who is your target audience?
- What are your goals?
- How committed are you to the marketing process?

2. Create your brand.

- Brand elements – Includes logos, slogans/taglines, color palette, images, fonts, etc.
- Theme/style – Your cover is a starting block for your theme and style. Use your theme/style in your website, fliers, powerpoints, cards, and promos.
- Feedback and testing – Survey your target audience and get their feedback. What you love isn’t necessarily going to speak to your target audience.
- Standards guide – Create a document that shows exactly how your brand should look in relation to other products, on different medium, in black and white vs. color.

3. Implementation and integration

- Advertising/Marketing – All your efforts can’t be seen without proper advertising and marketing. This can be through
 - ◇ Printed items, including bookmarks, post cards, fliers, posters, banners or ads,
 - Web-based items, including website, email blasts, email tile ads, and social networking;
 - ◇ Public Relations – When creating press releases or any communication with the media, consider your stationary, headers, footers, etc., to be an extension of your brand.

The recently published *See It. Say It. Do It!* is an example of a brand that was created, starting with the book cover, and used consistently throughout all integration into the market.



You are wasting your marketing dollars if you don’t brand. When your marketing is too complicated, you lose your audience. Judging a book by its cover has true merit and meaning when you relate it to representing your strength in brand. Take a strong look at *your* commitment to the brand of *your* book. Remember, your graphic designer is your partner in creating a strong marketable product for you.

The first Creative Manager for the Denver Broncos, Annie Harmon put her stamp on all Broncos publications and managed the team photographers. In 2008, she opened Harmony Design, LLC and is thrilled to make a positive design impact in Denver and the community at large. Visit her at <http://www.harmonyd.com/>

Grooming Your Book to Sell

Linda Lane

Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition, defines “groom” (the verb form) as “to clean, make neat and tidy, etc.”

When we're raising horses, we know that grooming consists primarily of cleaning and currying the animal and is an absolute essential for show horses and those who participate in competitions.

When we're writing books, grooming also means “to clean, make neat and tidy,” and is an essential element for “show”—aka, the marketing of our books.

The initial grooming of a manuscript comes in the form of self-edits/rewrites that are performed after completion of the book. Unfortunately, nothing can make us truly objective in evaluating our story. Why? We're too close to it, too familiar with the information, too aware of all the details that didn't make it onto the printed page. Bottom line: our most careful self-edit will never find all the flaws—and believe me, they *will* be there.

Horse breeders and trainers know the importance of *regular* grooming. In fact, the quality of the grooming may account for nearly half the score earned by an animal in a competition.

“How does this apply to my book?” you may ask.

Your book is in competition with literally hundreds of thousands of others, some of which are very good and

some of which are published by large houses that have publicists and advertising budgets. They also have in-house editors who curry, brush, pick, and trim the words until they are fit to compete with the best in the marketplace. They are groomed to sell.

Are you grooming *your* book to sell? How do you do that?

After making it “neat and tidy” to the best of your ability, you call in a qualified trainer to take up where you left off. In this case, the trainer is the *professional* editor. Just as no ungroomed show horse would ever be entered into a competition, no unedited book should ever hit the marketplace.

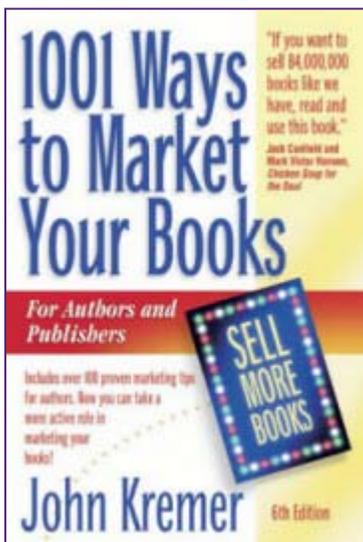
So where do you find a competent professional editor? That's a valid question, considering that almost anybody can hang out an editing shingle and be in business. In the next newsletter, we'll explore this issue.

Editor/fiction writer Linda Lane has released her second novel, Treacherous Tango. Owner of Pen & Sword Publishers, she offers writing/editing workshops to teach editors to edit effectively and well. Her goal: set standards for self-published books.



BookSmarts

Resources are critical for any author. The good news is that there are plenty of them; the bad news—there are plenty of them. Learn to discriminate, buying only the resources you will need to refer to on an ongoing basis.



One that belongs on every author's bookshelf is John Kremer's *1001 Ways to Market Your Books: For Authors and Publishers*. As Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hanson said, “If you want to sell 108,000,000 books like we have, read and use this book.” Now in its sixth edition, it is chock full of ideas to create, tweak, and customize a marketing plan for any book—fiction or nonfiction.

It doesn't matter if you have published your book under your own umbrella or are connected with a publisher, you need Kremer's book. Hundreds of marketing tips and an array of websites and portals are revealed. Don't forget to sign up for his free eNewsletter at www.BookMarket.com.

Warning: don't use this book for “light” reading before turning out the lights. You will end up with too many ideas—much better to get a good night's sleep . . . then befriend what's going to become one of your closest allies in marketing and selling your book.

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