

Maryanna Young: Author, Professional Business coach and Publishing Advocate

February 4th Writers Speakers Meeting

Notes by Fran Milsop

Maryanna Young was the guest speaker for this month's Boise Nonfiction Writers Speaker Series at Rediscover Books where over 25 people came to hear her speak about, "Taking Your Publishing Dreams from Vision to Reality."

Ms. Young is president of Personal Value Coaching, a published author, and an advocate to individuals wishing to turn their manuscripts into a published reality. She has written a 'how to' manual entitled *Blank to Book: from Idea to Amazon in 150 Days* which was offered for sale at the event at a discounted price, *Don't Miss Your boat: Living Your Life with Purpose in the Real World*, and *Your Exceptional Life Begins Now*.

To motivate the audience – for that is what Ms Young is all about – motivation and turning dreams into realities – the event was an interactive one. She drew on her past sports coaching experiences and expertise to show people just how effective positive thinking, goal setting, and defining ones end results were all about. As her reference point, she used the wheelchair Boston Marathon event as an analogy to those writers doing something really good, but not knowing the game (publishing). Her point of reference involved two spectacular wheel chair athletes, Jean Driscoll and Louise Savage who competed against one another in this event.

Jean Driscoll was her client. Louise Savage was a viable competitor and threat to Driscoll's victory. As the race proceeded and Driscoll came to the fore, everyone thought Driscoll was a sure winner of the event. Suddenly, however, Savage came from behind and in 100th of a second, beat Driscoll at the finish line. The point being, you have to know what the rules of the game are and what kinds of scenarios are out there that could potentially through your game off and ultimately beat you, and lastly, how to overcome these through strategic planning, research, and careful negotiating.

Rules of the Game

- Take what you have produced and get it into print – what you have produced, or are in the process of producing is a legacy piece.
- Understand what you are up against but do not get discouraged, in the past you had a 1 in 10,000 chance of becoming published – now there are other ways to get it done.
- There has been a revolution in the publishing industry and now there are alternatives such as: author publishing and selling your book through sources where 65% of the books sold come from outside the traditional bookstore venue.
- Large corporations and government agencies purchase books in bulk quantity.
- Check out resources like *Beyond the Book Store: How to Sell More Books to Non-Bookstore Markets* by Brian Jud which is available at Amazon , used, for \$39.95 + shipping.
- Hook yourself up on as many social media outlets as possible (Face Book, Twitter, etc); create a fan club of your own, get attention, hype your book, create a following , etc. just like the author of "Still Alice" was able to do. The author created a blog, partnered with the Alzheimer's organization and then went on to publish her own book and was able to sell thousands of copies until a publishing entity picked her up and paid her \$500,000 advance and sold 250,000 copies.

- Self-publishing allows you to retain your rights and create a viable product that ultimately traditional publishing venues might pick up – make sure your topic fills a niche and that it is targeted to audience of at least 200,000 individuals initially.
- Check out guru.com where you can find assistance with your project, post your project, etc.
- Design your cover – NOW – and write the back jacket copy (potential buyers spend an average of 15 seconds reading this) – NOW. Make it real. Keep it in front of you to inspire you.
- Here are some statistics to inspire you: Books consultants published increased their opportunities by 380%; realtors who published gained 132% increase; and motivational speakers who published increased their business by 180%. Get the picture!
- If you have a bunch of papers with writing on it, it's called a manuscript and it stays a manuscript until you get it published; the same content with a cover wrapped around it, offered for sale becomes a book and you become an AUTHOR.

Ms. Young invited audience members to participate in a 'white boarding' process and to offer up questions they would like to have answered. These were the questions:

- How do you market your book?
- How do you use self-publishing to get your book out?
- How do you find editors?
- What is Hybrid publishing?

How do you market your book?

Research. Research. Research. There is no way around it, you have to do research. You will have to network with people, ask questions, check out web sites like Gorilla marketing.com or others that offer lower rates and options than traditional venues . Basically, if you go the traditional publishing route, you will face a lot of hurdles like manuscript rejection, losing control, low advance payment, long lead time to print and publicity, but if you score, then the marketing will be taken care of, as will the book art and copy, they will have lots of distribution options, and you could possibly negotiate a 15% royalty, provided you are savvy and understand your rights. Bottom line: do your home work before you leap into this category and check out alternative options like..

Author Publishing (self publishing)

By utilizing authoring publishing or self publishing techniques, you will be able to: control the quantity of books printed, preserve the rights to your book, control the distribution chain but you will also have to pay your own expenses, purchase the inventory (# of books), find a fulfillment house to take care of your orders and set up an LLC or corporation to protect yourself. Check out windblown media.com or type in, The Shack which is the NYTimes bestseller with 6 million copies and counting that was self published. There are some interesting points on this site about publishing, about printing, about cost, etc. that might be useful to you.

What is Hybrid publishing?

The hybrid publishing format is new. Check out www.hybridpublishers.com or www.morgan-james-publishing.com; www.hybrid-publishing.ca; www.createspace.com or www.findyourpublisher.com . these should give you some insight.

Some short facts:

- You can get a 30 day in/out contract in the hybrid sector as opposed to long commitments
- Favors authors – whoever invests is the publisher

- Usually has really good distribution chains available
- Usually responds back to authors within 2 weeks to a month
- If you partner with a hybrid publishing outfit, you both own the product
- Submission requirements and categories posted on site
- Usually can provide designers

Ms. Young's note of caution: make sure you do your homework before committing to anything.

Miscellaneous Suggestions

- Do an outline containing 10-15 of the most important things your audience (make sure you have defined who your audience is and remember the 200,000 rule) needs to know about your topic (e.g. background, symbolism, controversies, history, etc.).
- Set a deadline for your book
- Define the 'must have' aspects by answering whether or not people (1) need the information; if (2) it will solve a problem, or (3) if it is going to entertain audience.
- Define what your plan is and how you will get there.
- 81% of people believe they have a book in them but many do not follow through – make it happen. Get a book coach like Peggy Jordan (www.workingbizwords.com) to prod you along.

But most of all, believe in your self and that you can do this – write that book and get it out there too. Don't forget to network with other writers and writer organizations in the area. Good luck!

Note: there were three hand outs distributed during the discussion. **Maryanna can be reached at maryannayoung@gmail.com. Blank to Book can be purchased at www.blanktobook.com.**

The Boise Nonfiction Writers group does not make any endorsements of the web content or suggested publishers provided within this text.