

KeyNotes

June 2009



Ideas, Inspiration, and News You Can Use to Write and Publish Your Book

Hello, Authors and Publishers ~

Fragmentation is an occupational hazard for writers and publishers. We do so many different things, switching gears in mid-flight as it were, and can end up feeling as if all the little pieces are falling apart.

Time to step back – or maybe up – and get that several thousand-foot view. What's the goal of all that activity? Is what you're doing taking you closer to that goal, or are you running around and ending up where you started? It's so easy to churn along with those things that "must" be done in a day, but when you are done, have you made progress? If not, then give yourself permission to stop running in that rut. Step out, be still, and refocus on what got you started in the first place.

That's better. Now that you can see the goal clearly, you know what to do to reach it, don't you?

The Best Part of My Job

It's the phone call – "They're perfect!" – when an author receives the first shipment of books. It's the photographs of the justifiably proud author holding the first copy out of the carton. Writing a book is hard work and takes longer than anyone thinks it will. To complete that, and then to actually publish the book, that's something to be very proud of.

Today I'm celebrating Tim Burrell's accomplishment. His book, [*Create a Great Deal: The Art of Real Estate Negotiating*](#), is one of the best I've seen on the subject. It's well written and has an eye-catching cover thanks to the design skill of his wife, Judy Burrell. It's already received a very good review in *Inman News*, the real estate news center, and [endorsements](#) from many of the top names in the business.

Tim knows a thing or two about marketing in addition to his formidable negotiation skills, and I expect this book will be a great success.

Yep, it's my favorite part.

Can I Quote You on That?

If there is one word that encapsulates the Book Expo America experience, it is "overwhelming." I felt it first when I visited BEA in Washington, DC a few years ago, and felt it again in New York this year. True, this BEA was a tad smaller, with many fewer galleys for the grabbing, but when you are on sensory overload it can be hard to tell the difference.

The next week there were many articles, blogs, and columns about BEA and the overarching question: Wither the publishing industry? Is paper passé and electronic the future? Then I read this in one of Robert Gray's articles:

*"Words got us here in the first place, and words will get us to wherever we're headed next, regardless of the vehicle we choose for their transport." **

He nailed it. People will always need, want, crave words. Whether we read a page of ink on paper or pixels on a screen, we will read.

*Robert Gray: A Few Words About BEA--Part 1 – Shelf Awareness, June 4, 2009 Read more by Robert Gray at Fresh Eyes Now.

My Word!

P-book. The first time I heard that it sounded somehow adolescent, as if it were shorthand for a dirty word.

Nope. It's a retronym, one of those words I talked about last March. Retronyms clarify words that have become ambiguous. Where there was a single term and a single meaning for it, technology or changes in society have made it necessary to be more specific. So p-book is the new term to differentiate a book printed on paper from an e-book, a book available in electronic form.

Do we need this new term? I'm not ready to accept that we do. Ask most people what a book is and they will describe the traditional form you can hold in your hand, leaf through the pages, and pass on to a friend when you are done with it. "Book" as a physical entity has intrinsic value in its form and content. "E-book" has value for its format but adds nothing to the content or quality.

Sure, I'll publish to the Kindle. But embracing the advances of electronic publishing does not mean you have to abandon the pleasures of curling up with a treasured book and losing yourself in the pages.

Featured Article – Publishing University 2009

If Book Expo America was overwhelming, then the term for Publishing University has to be intense. You've probably been to conferences that made you wonder when you were going to find all the good stuff they promised in the promotional materials. I tend to be skeptical about testimonials that sound as if they were lifted from an infomercial at 2:00 a.m., but Publishing University was all they promised and more.

This was the 25th year for the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) Publishing University. Scheduled in the days leading up to BEA, PubU brings together experts in all areas of publishing to share their expertise. From the opening session through the last moment of the Benjamin Franklin Awards ceremony, I was taking notes and scrambling to capture as much as I could from the flow of information. I filled one notebook and started a second with thoughts, ideas, and bits of intelligence gathered from the sessions

through two and a half days. If I implement even a third of the ideas and suggestions I received, my business will be miles ahead.

In this one place, I was able to meet and talk with experts in marketing, publicity, and design. The presenters were generous with time and advice, and even the "big names" in independent publishing were completely approachable. In a business where most of my contacts are through email and the Internet, being able to converse in person was a great treat.

I came away from PubU with five specific goals:

1. To put the marketing techniques I learned about into practice.
2. To learn more about and implement the opportunities in e-publishing.
3. To pursue outlets for my books other than traditional bookstores.
4. To build the brand for the Book of Days series, beginning with *The Cat Lover's Book of Days* this fall.
5. To attend Publishing University 2010.

That'll keep me busy for the next year!

The Keeper of the Keys

That's me, Peg Silloway. Lover of words and collector of books. Publishing is a natural outgrowth of my life-long love of writing, and now I'm pouring that love of wordcraft into creating books that have something to say, that can make a difference, and that help authors' publishing aspirations become reality. Mix that passion for the written word with a background steeped in business reality - accounting, project management, and small business management - and you have The Silloway Press.



Isn't it high time you published your book? Call me at 301-335-9368, or email me at Peg@SillowayPress.com. Together we can make it happen. **Write On!**

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