



STAR TRACKS: Innovative Ideas for Publishing

From the Publisher

Thanks to all the experts and authors willing to share their tips for success, as well as their trials and tribulations, making *Star Tracks* the truly interactive newsletter it is meant to be.



AuthorsandExperts.com invites professional speakers and authors to submit industry-related, royalty-free articles to the A&E *Star Tracks* newsletter in exchange for the opportunity to have their work read by the 30,000 potential clients on average who visit AuthorsandExperts.com monthly and A&E professional presenters, published writers and media members who receive *Star Tracks* quarterly.

To help those who submit articles glean some free PR for their efforts, submissions may include a personalized byline, e-mail address, phone number and website link; however, articles may not be blatant sales pitches for services or products. In addition, keeping the articles royalty-free allows members of the media and social bloggers to reprint *Star Tracks* articles, thus increasing the contributors' exposure exponentially!

The deadline for the October 1 *Star Tracks* is August 1. Contributed articles are printed on a space-available and content-relative basis. Although not all contributions will be published; all good submissions will be held in reserve for future issues if there is not room in the current issue to publish them. To submit an article or be placed on an A&E *Star Tracks* deadline reminder list, send your article or request to info@AuthorsandExperts.com, or call 480-940-8182 for more information. To view past issues of *Star Tracks*, visit the A&E website, www.AuthorsandExperts.com.

Linda Radke is the President of A&E and Five Star Publications, Inc., which is celebrating the approach of its 25th year in business. Among her many accolades, she is author of The Economical Guide to Self-Publishing (a 2010 Paris Book Festival first-place winner in the "How-To" category and a Writer's Digest Book Club selection, now into its second edition) and Promote Like a Pro: Small Budget, Big Show (a Doubleday Executive Program Book Club selection). She is also a founding member of the Arizona Book Publishing Association, was named "Book Marketer of the Year" by Book Publicists of Southern California and received numerous public relations and marketing awards from Arizona Press Women.



Leads from Linda

When sending review copies of your book, be certain to include a great pitch letter. If there is a pending deadline, invest in sending it express mail or overnight. However, if you are just sending a general submission, consider sending the review copy "book rate" through the U.S. Postal Service, which can save you big bucks if you are sending books to many reviewers. Here are a few places to consider sending review copies, and be certain to send reviewers a "thank you" note if they choose your book!

Jim Agnew

Daily Picks column
2339 Hastings Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201

Note: You may also send Jim information about book awards, but make sure he first has a copy of your book.

Jennifer Le Brun

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Format preferred: Print and e-Books
Reviews will be placed in ChrisChatReviews

If you would like to have your book reviewed, send an e-mail to one of the reviewers above, with the following information: author's name, book title, ISBN, copyright (month and year), genre, brief description of the book. If you have a link to go with it, send that along, too. If your book is accepted for review, be ready to submit a jpeg or gif of your book's cover.

Discover the 'Open Directory' by Linda Radke

One of the top places to submit your URL is Dmoz.org, The Open Directory Project, which is a web directory of Internet resources run in partnership with AOL. One placement in this directory can lead to a plethora of referrals, books sales and visits to your website.

ODP is maintained by community professional editors who evaluate sites for inclusion. To submit your URL for consideration, visit the website, and click on "Suggest URL," where you will find complete guidelines for submission. Another clever way to use the ODP is to pitch organizations.

For the purpose of demonstration, let's take the Five Star Publications' book *As Nora Jo Fades Away*, www.AsNoraJoFadesAway.com. Lisa Cerasoli wrote this award-winning book about a loved one with Alzheimer's. It is an inspirational story, a love story and a story about caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's. The author brings Alzheimer's home.

To suggest her URL and glean leads from ODP for this book, Cerasoli would visit www.dmoz.org and do a search for Alzheimer's. She would then be provided with a list of URLs that fit the category. Example:

Search: **alzheimers**

Open Directory Categories (1-5 of 5)

1. **Health: Conditions and Diseases: Neurological Disorders: Alzheimer's** (19 matches)
2. **World: Svenska: Hälso- och sjukvård: Sjukdomar och åkommor: Neurologiska: Demens** (5)
3. **Health: Medicine: Research: Institutes, Departments, and Laboratories: Mayo Clinic** (1)
4. **Regional: Oceania: Australia: Health: Conditions and Diseases** (1)
5. **Regional: Europe: United Kingdom: Society and Culture: Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual: Organizations** (1)

Open Directory Sites (1-20 of 75)

1. **Alzheimers Disease** - Describes the symptoms, the causes, diagnosis, and treatment.
-- <http://www.aolhealth.com/conditions/alzheimers-disease>
Health: Conditions and Diseases: Neurological Disorders: Alzheimer's (19)
2. **Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center** - HealingWell.com - Medical news, information, chat, articles, books, message boards, and directory of related sites on **Alzheimers Disease**.
-- <http://www.healingwell.com/alzheimers/> *Health: Conditions and Diseases: Neurological Disorders: Alzheimer's* (19)
3. **Alzheimers** - Information om orsaker och behandling av **Alzheimers** sjukdom, andra demenssjukdomar och minnesproblem från läkemedelsföretaget Pfizer.
-- <http://www.alzheimers.nu/> *World: Svenska: Hälso- och sjukvård: Sjukdomar och åkommor: Neurologiska: Demens* (5)
4. **Alzheimers Disease Center** - Provides general information, services offered, staff directory, and free newsletter.
--
http://mayoresearch.mayo.edu/mayo/research/alzheimers_center/ *Health: Medicine: Research: Institutes, Departments, and Laboratories: Mayo Clinic* (1)

There are then two things that Cerasoli can do to promote her book. She can pitch her book to the sites listed in the directories of the search and she can find the directory that best fits her category and submit her URL.

If she clicks on one of the directory categories, Health Conditions and Diseases for example, she will be brought to a screen that shows a further breakdown in categories and additional organizations to solicit. Example:

Top: Health: Conditions and Diseases: Neurological Disorders: Alzheimer's (103)

Associations (28)
Caregiver Support (19)
Personal Pages (9)
Products@ (3)
Research (25)

See also:

Health: Conditions and Diseases: Neurological Disorders: Dementia (42)
Health: Conditions and Diseases: Neurological Disorders: Neurodegenerative Diseases (36)
Health: Medicine: Medical Specialties: Geriatrics (12)
Society: People: Generations and Age Groups: Seniors (976)

About Alzheimer's, Menopause and Memory Disorders - Frequently asked questions on prevention, and treatment of Alzheimer's disease; Menopause related memory loss.

Ageless Design - Your one stop for information on age-related conditions like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. Free newsletter, news service and ask the expert.

Alzheimer's Center - Mayo Clinic experts offer information, explanations and advice about treatment and care for patients with Alzheimer's Disease.

Alzheimer's Disease - A review of Alzheimer's disease with particular reference to Pin1 protein.

BBC: Early Alzheimer's signs detected - A new analysis may help detect the earliest signs of cell damage caused by Alzheimer's disease. (September 30, 2006)

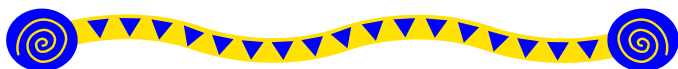
Volunteer to edit this category.

Notice at the bottom an opportunity to "Volunteer to edit this category." It's time consuming to explore this venue, but it could give you an opportunity to communicate with folks in your topic of expertise.

Tips for pitching organizations:

For starters, take the back door approach to getting your book in front of larger audiences by encouraging the organizations listed to add your book to their recommended reading list or resources directory. Offer a review copy, but keep your message short. At Five Star Publications, we often create 10-, 15-, 25- and 50-word descriptions in our media kits so we are prepared for any word requirement in an instant. Submission to Dmoz requires a 25-word description. When Five Star pitches organizations, we often include an image of the book cover, a 50-word book description and an image of the book cover.

Do not submit your book to organizations that have nothing to do with your subject. It's a waste of time on both ends.



COMING SOON

4 Mold the Message to a Specific Audience. Depending on genre, topic and type of demographics different shows are looking for guests that fit a specific profile. Seldom can one letter work for all. You will need to tweak the message for each media segment, while not diluting the appeal. Know the host and the show you are soliciting and tailor the pitch letter to the host, subject and the audience.

5 Making Sure It Has All the Right Elements. In structuring a compelling pitch letter that makes them say “Yes,” you must have certain key information. These elements should be included in the order noted:

- An attention-grabbing lead
- Subject introduction/reason for interview
- Your credentials (keep these brief and pertinent)
- Benefits to the audience. Specifically state or spell out what will be learned by the listener
- Brief review quote from an endorser or reviewer, an objective party. In some cases you may want to state where you have been booked before. (Not on a competitive show, however.)
- Offer a copy of the book or product, and ask the host to advise if he/she would like one sent
- Provide contact to call for interview
- Restate in one line why you’d be a great guest and the benefits.
- Close and provide signature
- Keep it to one page

6 Create a Great Interview Packet. A radio interview packet is different from a general media kit. It has certain elements directed specifically to make it easy on the host to prepare for the interview. Your Interview Packet should include a release on your product or book, your biography, talking points or bullet-point summary of the content you want to cover, a brief two-paragraph introduction of you and your product that you want the host to read to the audience when introducing you, a list of things you want to promote (book, website, coaching program, upcoming teleseminar for example), a list of suggested questions that you are offering the host in the event he/she chooses to use them and a JPG photo of yourself in case the interview is promoted on the show’s website.

7 Test Your Pitch. Before sending it everywhere, test it on a few shows. See whether it’s effective. Tweak it a bit, or try a different approach altogether until you find one that resonates with the hosts and producers.

8 Perfect the Follow Up Call. Now that you’ve sent the e-mail, fax or letter, it’s time to make the follow up call. Try not to blow it here! After all, if you are dull and verbose on the query call, why should they book you for a full interview? So get to the point, don’t rattle on, and keep it to a 30-second sound bite. Don’t over introduce yourself. They don’t need all of your credentials, just why you are the proper person to present this subject. For example, keep it to a description like, “I am the bestselling author of…” Sound

exciting; but not excited. Be professional; but not monotone. Practice your pitch in advance on others to make sure you have it just right and can get it out without tripping over yourself. Leave your number twice – once at the start and once at the end of the call.

9 Don’t Overlook Internet Radio. You can take advantage of Internet Radio in a way you can’t with mainstream. Internet radio show hosts may not have as big an audience, but they have a more targeted audience and will let you aggressively and enthusiastically sell your product or service. You get more plugs over an extended amount of time. Internet radio hosts tend to be better educated and more focused on the subject matter. They often will post the interview as a podcast where it will get more listeners afterward, and can be provided to you for your website. Many times you can arrange other business ventures with them to market your products. Some will post your book or product on their site so that listeners can immediately click through to your website or to Amazon.com. Most importantly, Internet radio hosts are accustomed to letting you drive listeners to your website for newsletter signups, free e-books and other incentives to get people on your opt-in list.

10 Hire a Pro. So once you realize the amount of work it takes to create this kind of appeal and then research the thousands of radio shows that are potential portals for your message, you may find it easier to retain an agency that has a special Radio Media Tour, an exclusive turn-key agency package that strategically positions the spokesman for the marketplace and then connects with radio shows across the nation to arrange interview bookings.

Jackie Lapin, partner in BookstoMarketNow.com, creates Radio Media Tours especially for authors, speakers and coaches by offering them to an exclusive list of more than 700 radio hosts who seek interviews with leaders in the personal development industry. For more information go to www.personaldevelopmentradiomediatur.com or www.bookstomarketnow.com. BookstoMarketNow.com is the company that offers à la carte and packaged services to authors including publishing, distribution to major book outlets, book marketing consulting, social networking, digital book uploading and specialized radio media tour for sell-through.

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Glaring Grammatical Mistakes First-Time Authors Make (and How to Avoid Them)

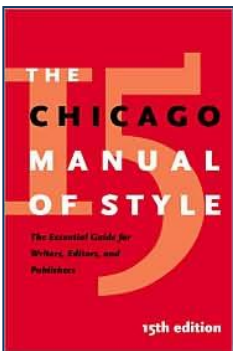
by Sandra Wendel

The author says the manuscript is squeaky clean. “I don’t need an editor,” they always say. Somebody’s cousin, an English major, had read it and made some changes here and there. Oh, boy, for any author and would-be publisher, that’s trouble waiting to happen.

Sadly, independently published books are often “under” edited. I’m being kind. When you examine the nuts and bolts of the words themselves, and take a hard look at the punctuation, grammar, and layout, your worst fears are often confirmed. This book needed a professional edit. The glaring mistakes just jump off the page, embarrassing both the author and the publisher.

Better to fix the problems before the finished books arrive from the printer. Otherwise, once those glaring mistakes come to light, nobody will want to buy that book.

Mistake #1: The manuscript is not given a professional edit. The best person to edit a book is a book editor—not your high school English teacher or somebody who bought a copy of the *MLA Style Manual* for a college thesis. However, your high school English textbook is a darned good resource.



See if you can find a used copy of the *Harbrace College Handbook* on Amazon and place it on your editing desk right next to your well-thumbed and Post-it Note–stickered copy of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

It doesn’t matter which version of a handy grammar book you find at a used book sale. Some stuff never changes. Think of punctuation marks as standard road signs. Periods still go

inside closing quotation marks (the instances when they don’t are so rare, you may never have to look this up).

Nonrestrictive clauses starting with *which* are still set off with commas, just like your eighth-grade teacher said. Independent clauses separated by a conjunction are always set off by a comma, and this sentence is an example of that.

A couple more common and glaring errors involve city and state names. There is always a comma after the city and state in text, and please spell out the name of the state (an example: Pasadena, California, is the site of the Rose Bowl.) Two-character, all-cap postal state codes such as CA are used only in addresses.

There’s no negotiation on the basic rules of grammar, but a recent best-selling novelist ignored this rule, and the publisher heard about it (from me).

Simple mistakes like these make your author look unpolished, and the author’s message may not be taken as seriously.

The fix: Find a trusted book editor. Ask authors and publishers who they use (or is that *whom* they use?)

Mistake #2: There is no continuity of style. So let’s refer to that copy of the *Chicago Manual of Style* or CMS. It’s the bible (yes, bible is lowercased here). If an author, for example, talks about six-year-olds and then says John is 6 years old, that’s inconsistent. CMS would suggest you spell out numerals. There are some exceptions, of course, such as using numerals when talking about percent, so don’t follow this rule 100 percent of the time.

Likewise, you’d want to be consistent about capitalization. One author and his editor decided to always capitalize the words *Mob* and *Mobster* because their book was about, well, mobs and mobsters. This is a perfectly acceptable decision as long as it is followed consistently.

Again, inconsistency says to the reader that the author (and publisher) were sloppy.

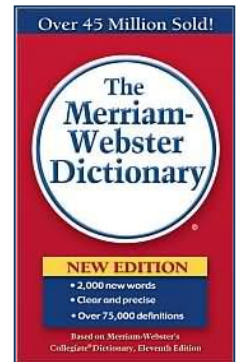
The fix: Whether you follow CMS or just use it for reference or to win bets about points of grammar and style, create a Style Guide. The Style Guide is a listing of special treatments for words unique to the manuscript you are publishing. It reflects decisions the author and editor have made about how to handle numbers (in other words, will you spell out numbers or just spell out numerals one through nine), capitalization, hyphenation, and treatment of words (for example, *health care* or *healthcare*). Make decisions up-front and then follow them using your Style Guide.

Add to your editorial resources a current Merriam-Webster dictionary or use the online version at www.m-w.com. Use a current version (not the one you had in college) because otherwise you won’t be able to find new additions to our language such as *e-mail* and *Web site*.

Many publishers set up a house style and ask their authors to follow it and refer to CMS when there’s an issue.

P.S.: CMS is available online at www.chicagomanualofstyle.com for a modest annual subscription fee.

Mistake #3: You rely on spelling and grammar checkers to do the job a sharp editor can do better. If you’re going to spend the money to put ink on paper, spend a little more to have an editor’s trained eye examine your words. One author referred to his job as a *manger*. He was, of course, a *manager*. Microsoft Word’s spell checker missed that. Authors (and, eventually, editors) get too close to the words. The brain fills in what it expects to see. You won’t see your own errors.

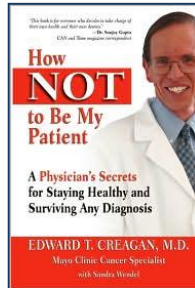


AUTHORS AND SPEAKERS

Online spell checkers only see words as words and not in context. The grammar checker is no better. In this article alone, the grammar checker flagged all the sentences of just one word and hated sentences beginning with *and*. Don't rely on this software.

The fix: Of course, hire an editor. And if you really want to show the world you care, hire a proofreader to eagle eye your page proofs and use the Style Guide you set up as a reference.

Sandra Wendel, editor and writer, teaches classes in how to write and publish a book at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha with her colleague Lisa Peltó of Concierge Marketing (www.conciergemarketing.com). She has assisted many micropublishers and self-publishers in writing and editing their books. She specializes in health writing and is coauthor of *How Not to Be My Patient* with Mayo Clinic's Dr. Edward Creagan. Contact her through her company, Write On, Inc., at (402) 334-2547, www.health-eheadlines.com or publisher@health-eheadlines.com.



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