



## But It's Not A Bookstore!

The Author of *Beyond The Bookstore*

By Rusty Fischer

Selling a self-published/Print on Demand book can be a daunting task. Finding your way into the mega-bookstores, as nearly anyone can tell you, is a Herculean effort that doesn't end once your book gets placed on the shelf.

So how does a self-published author rise above the depressing statistics and make his book one of the rare success stories? Simple: Stop thinking of it as a *book*. This may be a difficult task for the literary professor who has just published his treatise on French Aristocrats in Turkish Cinema, but for the rest of us, it gets a little easier every day.

Yes, you are proud of your self-published book. The cover makes you smile, and seeing your name on the spine is a dream come true. But what you what you may be overlooking is that it is also a "product," something to sell. Like soap or perfume, seashell sculptures or hand-crocheted potholders, you have produced a consumer product. So why be content with pawning it off on a few mega-bookstores and leaving it at that?

Branch out, explore, and you are sure to find a wealth of other venues where you can sell your self-published book. Here are five suggestions to help you get started.

### **Home Is Where The "Start" Is!**

Don't overlook your humble abode when starting down the long and winding road to self-publishing sales success. Whether you're a bona fide recluse or a verified party animal, you're bound to have some visitors, whether it's crazy Aunt Zelda or the bug man!

Place a consumer-friendly table in your foyer or visiting room, and display or stack eight to ten of your books in an attractive, inviting manner. Invest in a simple receipt book (for tax purposes) and place this in a nearby drawer or under a seat cushion. If your book bears the price near the bar code, explain that this is negotiable, and don't be a hard sell. Any family member, delivery person, or Bible salesman who buys your book is simply icing on the cake; be willing to negotiate a little. After all, anything you make over the printing price is profit, and perhaps you can turn the profits from your living room sales into a better display rack somewhere down the road!

### **Cubicle Customers**

Why limit yourself to retail outlets? You've got your foyer cash register set up at home; why not establish one at work! Invest in yet another attractive, lightweight and simple display case, and always keep a stock of eight to ten copies of your book on hand, with more in a file cabinet if this idea takes off.

Clear it with a supervisor or boss first, and then designate space on your desk or file cabinet for your display rack and receipt book. Make inexpensive posters for the cafeteria or break rooms, and you might even want to go so far as to create cut-off "coupons," giving employees a 10 to 20 percent discount off the regular sale price. Depending on the size of your company, this could be a real winner for you.

### **Gas Attack!**

Individually owned and operated gas stations or auto repair shops are another alternative to bookstores. Waiting rooms are full of antsy customers tired of the Sports page and battered Field & Streams, and placing a display case in a popular spot, such as near the complimentary coffee machine or television is a great way to develop customer demand. Just make sure you have an agreement with the shop owner concerning customer theft, and you could find that car repair customers turn out to be some of our more avid readers-and hopefully-customers!

### **Get Fit!**

Depending on your body type, and type of book, the local gym or fitness center could be a great place to rack up some very "healthy" sales. Anything to do with food or fitness, fashion or sports would have

a great chance of picking up extra sales between the sauna and the shower, and even books that specifically appeal to men or women, such as adventure stories for the former and romances for the latter, can be offered along with the spandex and headbands in the gift shop.

Whether the gift shop is just a greasy sales counter or a stand-alone storefront, don't overlook this great place to offer your self-published book.

### **Reunited (And It Sells So Good!)**

Are you planning to attend a family reunion anytime in the future? If so, be sure to bring a carton of books and have them ready for quick sale. If you haven't had a family reunion in a while, why not plan one? Your family members are some of the only built-in customers you'll find anywhere, so you might as well take advantage of them. After all, not only will most of them buy a copy, but also many will want to buy copies to sell to their friends, or even give away down at the Moose Lodge or retirement home. After all, nothing's worth more than bragging rights to a loyal family member! And signing your books ahead of time makes them keepsakes to treasure for generations to come.

Rusty Fischer is the author of *Beyond The Bookstore*

TGS PUBLISHING  
[HTTP://WWW.TGSPUBLISHING.COM](http://www.tgspublishing.com)  
22241 PINEDALE LANE  
FRANKSTON, TEXAS 75763  
903-876-3416

