



A Successful Book Marketing Plan

By Gail Golomb

***The Kidney Stones Handbook:
A Patient's Guide to Hope, Cure and Prevention***
has been lauded as one of the best books its the subject.

Part of the book's success has been due to its marketing. For an inside look at how we approached its marketing, here's the plan that has helped get the book into the minds and eyes of interested people.

The marketing plan includes these sections:

- » **Similar Titles**
- » **Market**
- » **Author Bio**
- » **Promotional Plans**
- » **Editorial Description**
- » **World Wide Web**
- » **Newsletter**
- » **Upcoming Publicity**
- » **Sales Tip Line**

Similar Titles:

The Kidney Stones Handbook: A Patient's Guide to Hope, Cure and Prevention is unique because it is the only kidney stone niche book in the market endorsed by C. Everett Koop, M.D., former surgeon general, and written for the consumer by a patient who had kidney stones. The only other book on the market is by Wiley & Sons and is titled ***No More Kidney Stones***. That book was released October 1996. That book is geared toward an highly educated audience. My book is written for a 6th - 7th grade level of understanding medical terminology and concepts.

While we have a kidney stones site on the Web, Wiley & Sons does no Web promotion of their book. I called their publicity department posing as a health columnist and I asked for a media kit. They do not have one, and have no plans for one, so I don't feel they will be seeking media attention. In fact, since their October release, I have not seen one article on their book. Our book has had a strong presence for the past three years, a strong customer following, and we are well known in the urology field as we have had a heavy presence at the American Urological Society annual conventions for the past three years.

We are well-known within the field. Four Geez Press has an impressive media kit as we have had three years' worth of reviews from specialized urology journals. We have strong web presence and strong Web sales, for the past six months have been #2 or #3 on Readersindex.com "Top 10 Heavy Hitters."

While there are urology journals and books in medical libraries, these publications are written for the physician. Not only are they difficult for a patient to comprehend but the information is rarely accessible to the public in most regions of the United States and Canada. Our research involved medical libraries, government agencies, and public libraries throughout California and we have not found another book like this for the general public. A search of **Books in Print** also shows no other book, other than Wiley's, on kidney stones for the consumer.

A computer-based search of titles will turn up books on "kidneys." However, nearly all of these books deal with kidney disease which does not include kidney stones. These books deal with dialysis for patients with end-stage renal disease, not specific kidney stone information and prevention.

Market:

According to government and urologist figures, each year there are more than one million new patients who will develop a kidney stone. If a new patient does not receive adequate kidney stone prevention counseling, metabolic stone risk blood and urine tests from a physician, and info on dietary management, there is a significant recurrence rate. (Information from The National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Advisory Board, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, March 1990). Other research suggests there is currently an epidemic of kidney stones. Any other disease with more than a million new patients per year would be considered a crisis.

We have sold books throughout the world, and are considering selling translation rights to Turkey.

The entire subject has received little publicity and is always ready for a media campaign. This creates an on-going perpetual market. This book will keep selling as long as people keep producing stones. While prevention medications are available, patient compliance lags after patients stop producing stones.

Our market includes general nutritionists, hospital nutritionists, lithotripsy centers, patients who are bedridden, i.e., V.A. Hospital patients (their chances of developing a kidney stone are increased), medical libraries, public libraries, general practitioners, urologists and auxiliary members including pharmaceutical firms and nurses. Most of our audience are males, aged 20 - 65 (the age-range for stone production). Women's requests for books are on the rise as their risk for making kidney stones increases as they age. Patients are desperate for this information. There is a lot of "voodoo medicine" on the Internet on kidney stones. This book follows the National Institute of Health recommended guidelines for the prevention of kidney stones.

Also, there are certain regions known throughout the United States as "kidney stone belts." These areas include Tennessee, Arizona and Florida (most of the entire East coast) and other areas where there are increased incidence of hospitalizations. We have noticed heavy book sales on the East Coast. We are currently identifying these regions and will be doing specialized media kits to these markets. Current research shows that vasectomy increased the risk for stones. This means more males will produce stones in their later years.

In December, 1994 we went back to press for an a second printing 6,000 copies. Atrium (who has since gone out of business) ordered an initial 4,000 copies for distribution. The initial press run of 4,000 copies sold out within the first five months of publication date. Our advertising budget has been limited as we are owed considerable sales from Atrium. We feel the book has been undersold as with Atrium's problems, the book was never marketed past the first year. We have been fulfilling numerous "special orders" from Border's and Barnes and Noble, as well as many other bookstores throughout the United States and Canada. As of June 1, 1997, we are down to the last of 600 books, and we are working on a new, "revised" and updated book which we hope to have out by Nov. 1997. (This will have a new ISBN).

Author Bio:

Gail Golomb is a graduate (1975) of California State University Long Beach with a B.A. in journalism. After graduation from college, she worked at Bauer-St. Mary's Medical Center, Long Beach, in hospital public relations where she wrote many major medical stories and had a working relationship with major news, both TV & newspapers individuals.

Since moving to Northern California 17 years ago, she created a medical public relations firm. Her clients included Sutter Roseville Community Hospital where she continued writing medical stories for newspaper publications.

Gail Golomb also served as editor for the *Placer-Herald*, a community newspaper owned by the *Auburn Journal*. She wrote all editorial, including a weekly column.

For the past eight years, she has worked with Grant Gibbs in a publishing firm called Golomb & Gibbs based in Roseville. Together they have designed many successful books for authors. Golomb handled media publicity for several clients.

Four Geez Press was established in 1993 with their first book on kidney stones.

Because of the book, Golomb is now a consultant to a major medical laboratory in their kidney stone division. She has helped this major pharmaceutical company establish a patient education division.

Promotional Plans:

Our promotion has included review copies to major health book reviewers, and newspaper writers with health-related columns. We are working on excerpting the book for magazines as well as health newsletters (i.e., *John Hopkins Health Newsletter*, *Berkeley Wellness Newsletter*, *Mayo Clinic Newsletter*). Direct mail will be sent to all major hospitals with consumer libraries. Other mailers will include hospital staff members. We have sent press packets to newspapers, and continue to promote to national radio, and TV. We do media tie-ins including National Kidney Week and any other media-angle we can conceive of. We have been represented at the American Libraries Association annual meeting, now for the past two years, and the American Bookseller's Association convention. In 1994, and again in 1996

we participated at the Northern California Bookseller's Convention where the book was widely displayed.

Golomb continues to do public appearances in hospitals, bookstores and at writers conferences where she addresses the issue of medical writing and small press book selling on the Internet.

The book was not only best of the backlist, but also #9 for Atrium's Top 20 Best Selling Books on Health and Cooking; by the Summer 1995 Atrium catalog, the book was listed in The Top 40 of all books distributed by Atrium, and the subsequent Fall catalog listed the book as #4 in Top Ten Books sold by Atrium. For Spring 1996, the book was listed as #12 in Top 20 Best of the Backlist. The book has received favorable reviews in *Urologic Nursing* as well as the *American Medical Writers Association*, *Urology Times* and *Sacramento Medicine*. The book is now part of The National Library of Medicine for inclusion in their national data base of available urologic/kidney stone resources. The National Kidney and Urological Diseases Information Clearinghouse, through the Department of Health and Human Services, has included the book in its resources available to patients needing information on kidney stones. The book is also used by the American Lithotripsy Society as required reading resources for the exam for lithotripsy certification. The National Kidney Fund and the National Fund for Urologic Diseases sends all kidney stone patients to our 1-800 phone number.

In addition, we promote the book through our quarterly newsletter. The newsletter, with book information, is distributed not only through our company, but is heavily used by pharmaceutical firms and distributed to urologists and nursing staff that we normally would not have contact with. We believe the newsletter has helped increase our "Special Orders" from both independent and large chain ordering. The newsletter is "The Kidney Stones Network Newsletter." The newsletter has been promoted on both radio, and in *American Health* magazine with good results.

We now offer Physician Referral. All of these avenues are used to market the book.

Editorial Description:

This book, as Dr. Woods writes in his foreword, not only offers hope for the patient with kidney stones, but also suggests numerous ways to lessen the chances for repeat or preventable kidney stones. The book includes the author's own experiences with numerous kidney stones, several hospital

emergency rooms, the importance of catching a kidney stone, and details of two lithotripsies (a non-surgical procedure where the kidney stone is "smashed" into tiny pieces). The book includes the only (from what we've seen in our research) complete lists of food to avoid listed by type of kidney stone (we received permission for the food lists from Mosby Publishing). Several new medications are described throughout the book as well as the benefit of vitamins. Both stone risk assessment laboratories are included as well as information on prescription medications to reduce stone risk (The information on vitamins should assure its finding its way into health food and nutrition stores). Nutri-Books Distribution has been one of our largest book purchasers.

The Kidney Stones Handbook includes the most recent discoveries from major medical research in centers around the world specializing in kidney stones and information on how to prevent this most painful condition.

The book is written in language which is easy-to-understand for the consumer and encourages the patient to become as knowledgeable as possible about their own kidney stones so they may work as a team alongside their physician to prevent future stones.

World Wide Web:

In September 1995 we made our appearance on the World Wide Web. As of March 7, 1997 we have received 41,659 web visits (average 79 per day) from throughout the world. For patients researching kidney stones, our Web site has been scored #1 by many Web providers' search engines. We have sold upwards of 12 books/day from the Web alone at full price. We continue to be listed WEEKLY in the Top 10 Heavy Hitters Web Sites for Readersindex. Our address is <http://www.readersindex.com/fourgeez/>.

Newsletter:

In December, 1996 we produced an 8-page newsletter full of articles written by the nation's leading stone prevention urologists. The newsletter helps provide information to the media and is a marketing tool used for further publicity for the kidney stones book as well as a subscription for patients. The newsletter is produced 4x a year. We continue to impact the consumer health libraries and public libraries.

Upcoming Publicity:

We are the featured book in the Spring issues of *Consumer Connections* which is the official publication of the Patient Health Information Section of the Medical Library Association. This should appear in March. Also, we were recently interviewed for Women's Day magazine, and a health column for the *National Examiner*.

Sales Tip Line: (Two Tips!)

This is the only book out on the market written for the millions of current stone sufferers and the projected one million new patients who will develop a kidney stone(s) in 1997 - 1998.

Rich in resources, ***The Kidney Stones Handbook*** includes the latest medical information on preventing future kidney stones, including complete nutrition charts on foods to avoid, and written by a kidney stone patient herself -- who has not passed a single stone in over five years since writing the book!

© 1997 Gail Golomb

GAIL GOLOMB is an acknowledged expert on kidney stones. For more information on her book, *The Kidney Stones Handbook*, visit her Web site or e-mail her at xxxxxxxx

TGS PUBLISHING
HTTP://WWW.TGSPUBLISHING.COM
22241 PINEDALE LANE
FRANKSTON, TEXAS 75763
903-876-3416

