

22 Insights for Writing the  
Right Book to Find New Clients Now!

# MARKETING

WITH A

# BOOK



FOR AGENCY OWNERS

HENRY J. DeVRIES

22 Insights For Writing The  
Right Book To Find New Clients Now!

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ISBN-13: 978-1-957651-23-1v

Library of Congress Control Number: 2022949579

Designed by The Book Designers, [BookDesigners.com](http://BookDesigners.com)

INDIE BOOKS INTERNATIONAL®, INC.  
2511 WOODLANDS WAY  
OCEANSIDE, CA 92054  
[www.indiebooksintl.com](http://www.indiebooksintl.com)

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# FOREWORD

**As an agency owner,** the quest to find new clients is always on your mind. My rise on Madison Avenue taught me that.

I got my start at the legendary Doyle Dane Bernbach, a \$1-billion-in-billings agency that helped inspire the TV series *Mad Men*. I went on to build Buckley DeCerchio Cavalier—a creative boutique featured on the cover of the *Sunday New York Times* as one of the top ten most creative ad agencies in America.

As EVP of Strategic Planning at the advertising agency McCann Erickson Worldwide, at the time the world's largest advertising agency, I founded The 14<sup>th</sup> Floor as McCann's entrance into brand consulting. It has been my privilege to be involved with creating and launching some of the most exciting and prominent brands of our time, including Snapple, Qwest, and AT&T Business, and rebranding such leading global companies as Exxon/Esso, Motorola, and Samsung.

I left to start BrightMark Consulting to broadly apply branding to build value across global enterprises, private companies, government agencies, nonprofits, and new ventures. BrightMark's clients have included American Express, the US Navy, GE, IBM, Sotheby's, Boston Children's Hospital, US Department of State, Havas Worldwide, and iRobot.

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Finding new clients has always been a key concern. Fellow agency owners can profit from the advice in this book to make business development regular, not random. I have served on the boards of the Pardee RAND Graduate School, Nemours Children's Health System, and the American Composers Orchestra, have taught as adjunct faculty at the Yale School of Management and NYU's Stern School of Management, and have been a keynote speaker at events and conferences. I have published a blog with podcasts called Overhead Space that reach over 50,000 leaders and professionals each month. Now, during these times of momentous cultural changes, spurred in part by the pandemic, global social activism, and climate change, I turned my attention to helping business leaders navigate this new world with my 2022 book, *The Enchanted Brand: The Human Side of Business in a World of New Essentialism*, which Henry and his Indie Books team published. The time was right to share my view of the world, and if you have not published a book yet I advise you to study these pages so you can share your wisdom with prospective clients.

If you have written a book, please heed Henry's advice: books don't promote authors; authors promote books. As a fellow author, let me say now is the time for us to get working on our second book. When it comes to books, thought leaders are not one and done. I wish you the best on your journey.

Jane Cavalier Lucas  
Brightmark Consulting

# PREFACE

## **Dear Small To Midsized Agency Owner:**

This is the book I promised I would write you when I began my research project twenty years ago into how smart agency owners attract right-fit clients.

Today, in these uncertain times, there is something that all agencies need: more new clients. These are emotional times and to connect with clients and become influential you need to be a storyteller.

Hi, I'm Henry DeVries, and as a Forbes.com columnist who covers marketing, I see how most agency owners talk about their work in the same drab way. But there is one hidden asset that will set you apart, something nobody else is offering: *your defining stories*.

When writing my international McGraw-Hill bestseller *How to Close a Deal Like Warren Buffett*, I discovered how Buffett uses stories to persuade, gain media coverage, and become a world-famous brand.

Currently, as the CEO of Indie Books International, and author and editor of over three hundred nonfiction books, I encourage agency owners to do what Hollywood does. Over the last twenty years I have trained thousands of agency owners and consultants on how to use storytelling to attract prospects, close the sale, and cement client relationships.

After twenty years of research, the results are clear on how to attract new clients: writing the right book is the number



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one marketing tool; speaking about the book is the number one marketing strategy. History has taught us this, from giants such as David Ogilvy, Al Reis, Jack Trout, and more.

Discoveries in neuroscience prove decision-making is emotional, not logical. So how can you persuade the emotional part of the brain? The answer is to turn testimonials into stories that prove how you take clients from problems to solutions.

Many examples (I would never be so boring to call them case studies) are in this book for your own R&D (rob and duplicate). Write the right book and you will be amazed at how you can turn prospects into lifelong business relationships.

Henry DeVries  
Oceanside, California



Photo by Jeff Emerson



**PART I**

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**The Why**

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*“McDonald’s says the key to happiness is you deserve a break today, but Fruit of the Loom says the key to happiness is nice undies. On the other hand, Coca-Cola says...”*

# 1

## Why Finding New Clients Is A Big Pain

**Startling statistic:** for three out of five agency owners, the number one pain point is finding new clients.<sup>1</sup> The 2018 HubSpot survey this factoid came from focused on hundreds of marketing agencies with five to two hundred employees.

Yes, agency owners wake up in the middle of the night thinking of how to find enough new clients, and not just any clients. You want right-fit clients. Let me share some hard truths about that quest:

**Hard truth: The surest and fastest path to get impact and influence is to write the right book, which is no easy task.** But wait, agency owners are great communicators? Ironically, many agency owners feel writing and publishing a book is too time-consuming, expensive, or undignified. Even if they tried writing, most agency owners are frustrated by a lack of results. They even worry if marketing with a book will ever work for them.

And no wonder. According to former Harvard Business School professor David Maister, the typical sales and

marketing tactics that work for retailers and manufacturers are a waste of time and money for agencies because these tactics actually make them less attractive to prospective clients.<sup>2</sup> But agencies willing to write the right book have found it gives them more impact and influence with prospective clients. As evidence, this book is filled with examples.

**Hard truth: Offer research, not rehash.** You cannot just spew the same old advice to create the right book. To find new clients, the best approach for agencies is to demonstrate expertise by generously sharing valuable information through writing and speaking. The secret ingredient is to conduct research that shows prospects how they compare

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to their peers. For agencies this is what I believe with my heart of hearts: the number one marketing tool is a book and the number one marketing strategy is a speech. Research shows agencies can fill a pipeline with qualified prospects in as little as thirty days by offering advice and research to right-fit prospects on how to overcome their most pressing problems.<sup>3</sup>

**Hard truth: Effort must be regular, not random.**

Random acts of kindness are good, and random acts of

marketing are bad. What should agencies do to find new clients on a regular basis? First, understand that generating

## WHY FINDING NEW CLIENTS IS A BIG PAIN

leads is an investment and should be measured like any other investment. Next, quit wasting money on ineffective means like brochures, advertising, and sponsorships. The best marketing investment agencies can make is to leverage the content in the right book. This includes sending out copies of the book, doing showcase speeches for no fee, creating informative websites, hosting persuasive seminars, booking speaking engagements, and getting published as an industry expert columnist. In a phrase, thought leadership. Thought leaders are people who write and speak about a subject and are quoted by others.

**Hard truth: Your stories are a hidden asset.** You might start by writing how-to blogs and articles. Those articles turn into speeches and seminars. Eventually, you gather the articles and publish a book through a strategy called print-on-demand independent publishing (we've done it in under ninety days for agencies). You have hidden assets no other agency has: your client mess-to-success stories that you helped make happen.<sup>4</sup> Hint: you are not the hero in these hero-quest stories; you need to accept the role of the mentor character. You are Yoda, not Luke Skywalker.

**Hard truth: No investment, no return on investment.** Even if you believe in the Marketing With A Book Model, how do you find time to do it and still get client and administrative work done? No agency owner ever believes they have too much time on their hands. Here is a statistic that is not startling: according to that 2018 HubSpot survey previously mentioned, the second biggest pain for almost half of the agency owners is finding time to conduct business development. This is ironically referred to as Cobbler's

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Children Syndrome. Here is how therapist Ben Dattner, PhD, described it in *Psychology Today*:

*In many organizations I have encountered during my consulting career, people have complained about “Cobbler’s Children Syndrome.” Like the proverbial children of the shoemaker who go without shoes, I have consulted to technology companies that have outdated computer systems, marketing firms that don’t market themselves in any way, and consulting firms that fail to put into practice for themselves a single theory or model upon which they have built their businesses.<sup>5</sup>*

The cobbler’s children never found that fable amusing. Neither do your agency employees find it amusing when the agency owner does not do enough to market the agency.

Nothing worth happening in business ever just happens. The answer is to carve out the time for writing a book. You need to be involved, but you should not do this all on your own. Trial and error are too expensive of a learning method. Wouldn’t it be better if someone helped you who knows the tricks and shortcuts? Find someone who can show you how to leverage your time and get others to do most of the work.

**Hard truth: Amazon changed the game.** The good news is you do not need to get past the gatekeepers of traditional big publishing houses; you can independently publish the book. There are challenges, of course. Because print-on-demand paperback books are not typically stocked on bookstore shelves, agency authors need to do an excellent job of marketing through publicity, direct mail, and social

media. But if you are willing to be a self-promoter and your book targets an identifiable market, then independent publishing may be right for you.

**Hard truth: Better to write than get it right.** Done is better than perfect. Any book worth writing is worth writing a first draft that sucks. We call it the sloppy first copy. The magic is in the rewrite. What about the writing? If you can author articles, then you can write a book. And if you can't, hire a freelance ghostwriter to help you do it. The only aspect you cannot outsource is the insights. You need that supercomputer that sits on the top of your neck to come up with the insights that will prove to prospects you are worth talking to about how you help companies like theirs. Agency authors tell me repeatedly that the book effort clarified their thinking on their expertise. In the words of author Joan Didion, "I don't know what I think until I write it down."

Nobody said finding new clients was going to be easy. But it can be done. Many other successful agency owners have blazed the trail. The next chapter tells you how to follow the path.



## Marketing With A Bookism

AN AGENCY WITHOUT A BOOK IS LIKE A  
MOVIE THEATER WITHOUT A MARQUEE.