

10 Killer Marketing Myths That Can Kill Your Book and Career (And Their Remedies!)

By Carolyn Howard-Johnson

Here are excuses many authors use not to promote, killers all. Each includes advice that will help a writer salvage his book and career from wrong thinking.

- "My book is doing well enough. My career is on an upturn. I can easily take a year off from promoting to write." **Advice:** Cut back if you must but slot in some time to keep the efforts you've already made at least at a simmer.
- "I hear everyone is cutting back on promotion so why shouldn't I?" **Advice:** Didn't your mother ever ask you, "If Johnny jumped off a cliff, would you do it, too?" Look at those authors. If they're selling lots of books, it's because somebody (their publisher, bookstores, their publicists) is promoting them. I'll bet, though, that most of the authors saying this aren't selling very many. Look at your situation. If you don't do it, who will do it for you?
- "I like Carolyn's *Frugal Book Promoter* idea so I'm going to only do things that cost no money at all." **Advice:** Hey! Frugal is one thing. Cheap is another. Some of the best things you can do cost some money. An example is American Booksellers Association Advance Access program. Find it at www.bookweb.org. Careful though. Always weigh the "rightness" of any program for your particular book.
- "I'm gong to examine everything I'm doing and only continue what I can prove is working." **Advice:** You may not be able to prove much, if anything. That's not the way marketing works. Judge how well your entire campaign is going only after you have given it plenty of time to work. If one thing is working well, maybe it is because your title or name is being seen elsewhere. Balance your campaign, yes. Try new things, yes. Cut back on a few only if you must. Keep in mind that book sales are not necessarily the most valid way to evaluate your promotion.
- "Nothing I've tried works. I'm giving up." **Advice.** You may be on the brink. Or maybe you've been giving up on each aspect of your campaign too early. Any marketing plan must be many-pronged, frequent and long-term.
- "If I cut back on promotion and find my sales slipping, I can always gear up again." **Advice:** Yikes! Good publicity and promotion build. It's like skipping rocks on a pond. With each stone, ripples wave out, out, out. Eventually, after you've skipped lots and lots of stones, the results start coming back to you in waves. If you stop whipping those stones into the water, the results dissipate. It will take a long time to get enough stones dancing across the water again to match what you've done and, once you lose momentum, you may never get it back.

Carolyn Howard-Johnson is the author of *The Frugal Book Promoter: How to Do What Your Publisher Won't*, *The Frugal Editor: Put Your Best Book Forward to Avoid Humiliation and Ensure Success* and an Amazon Short, "The Great First Impression Book Proposal: Everything You Need To Know To Sell Your Book in 20 Minutes or Less." Learn more at www.howtodoitfrugally.com.