



Social Media is King, But . . .

. . . Offline Matters, Too: 7 Old School Marketing Tips That Work

By Debra Ayers Brown

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Focusing on offline may seem strange for your first training session on social media, but it matters. I even have to remind myself occasionally because most of the relationship-building portion of my day seems to revolve around likes, shares, comments, tweets, retweets, favorites, pins and repins. Online rules. But it is important to pay attention offline, too.

Case in point: Meredith and I attended a favorite author's book launch with our friend, Joyce. We couldn't wait to get to the event. The best-selling author, known for Southern fiction with quirky characters and an almost personal connection to the reader, was dressed to the nines and positioned behind a table at the back of the room. The guests appeared to be true fans, many clutching books to their chests. But they stood alone while a publicist raced from one "dignitary" to the next, snapping photos.

Amidst the flashing cameras, our excitement moved us to the book display tables and on to check-out to finalize our purchases. When we reached the author, we had no one waiting behind us. But she rushed us through with a quick signature and little conversation or eye contact. We tried to engage her. Nothing. We mentioned we'd met her before. No connection.

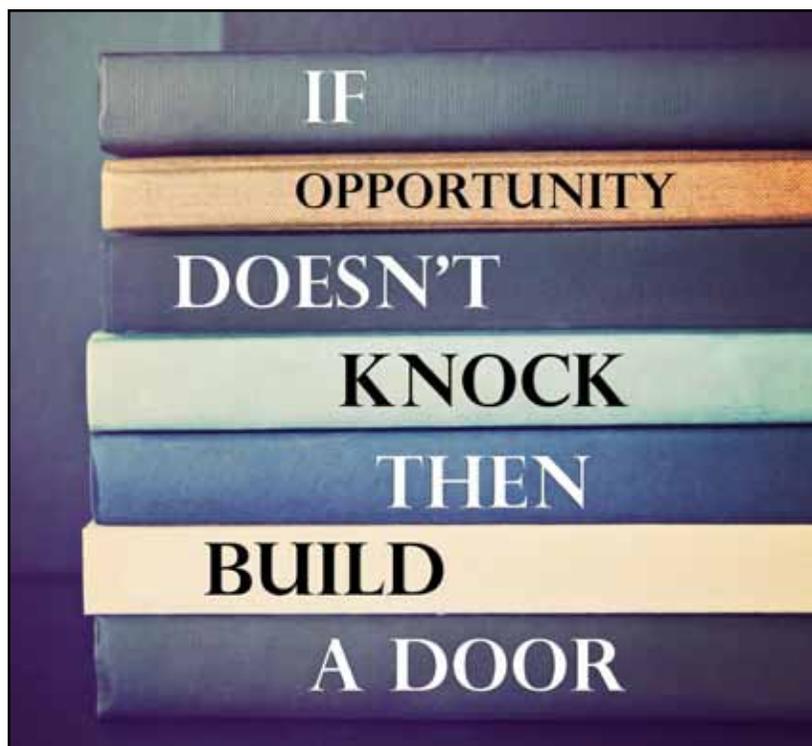
As we left, Joyce said, “Well, that was odd.” I agreed. Meredith added, “I wish I’d just downloaded the e-book.” Over dinner, we discussed how let down we felt after the event. “I guess I’ll continue to read her books, but I won’t be as eager to do so,” Joyce said, summing up our feelings.

The book launch plagued me. What happened? How had an elegant event at a trendy hotel with free wine and appetizers turned three fans into readers who might not even buy the next book? It puzzled me—until I realized the formal ambiance didn’t match our expectations. We picked up on a subliminal disconnect from the warm, chatty tone of the books to the coldness of what we experienced that night. This scenario reminded me how one misstep could cost an author many fans and customers.

Mistakes don’t happen only at live events. A disconnect occurs with a lack of consistency between your online (website, social media sites, video blogs) and your offline presence (business cards, brochures, fliers). Your branding suffers. Plus, you miss added sales opportunities when you ignore all of your marketing options.

Following are *offline* marketing tips to enhance your branding and sales efforts:

1. Reach out to friends. Friends provide support, encouragement and an honest critique of your work. They’re invaluable, so don’t let friends slip away.
2. Evaluate and use your business card. Does it have a current photo? Correct contact info & website? Is the font easy to read? Do the colors coordinate with your online brand? Once you’re happy with your cards, use them. Post your cards on bulletin boards, hand them out to people you meet, drop them in a contest jar, etc. Get the word out about you and your work.
3. Participate in speakers’ bureaus. Let clubs in your community know you are available to speak on your area of expertise. Take your books along for a book signing before or after the event.
4. Volunteer at community/charity events. Meet new people who may not know about your book. Donate a book or a basket featuring your book. A door prize or auction item receives a lot of attention.
5. Develop media connections. Be the go-to person when a reporter



Annette Shaff

needs information or an interview. Prepare a media kit with your bio, book description and area of expertise for your favorite journalists.

6. Update your giveaway items. Everyone likes to get a free gift so it is ideal for branding or to promote your book.

7. Critique your promotional materials with branding in mind. Do they work together on a book signing table? Your business card, brochure, flier and giveaway items should be in the same style and color with a consistent message — your brand.

As far as the Southern author goes, we decided to give her the benefit of the doubt. We gave her kudos for a great effort (free wine and appetizers, duh?) and blamed her shortcomings on having an off night. It happens. But we learned a valuable lesson. Fans expect you to be genuine. Customers demand it. Your offline and online presence must reflect your personality, image and message. If they don't, there's a disconnect. Your customers and fans will feel it, even if they don't understand why.

Homework: Go online and search your name. Click on the first item listed that refers to you. What is your first impression? If the first item isn't you, then you have more work to do. Then look at the next few items. This is your online brand. Does it reflect who you are? Is the look consistent from one site to the next? If not, this is where you start working to have a more professional brand online.



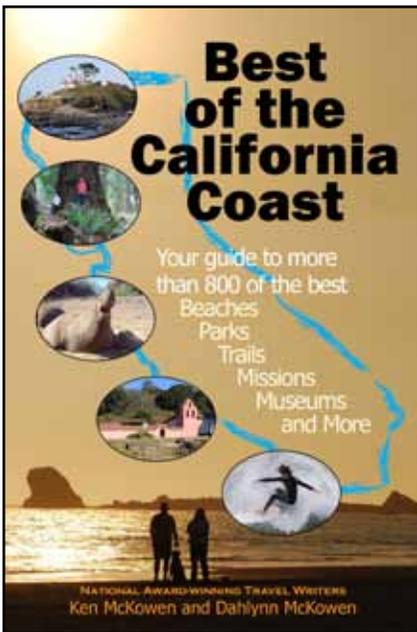
Meet the mentors!

Debra Ayers Brown (top photo) and her business partner/daughter Meredith Brown (bottom photo) have partnered with Publishing Syndicate to provide social media, branding and social selling training. We have known Debra since our Chicken Soup days, and she is a frequent contributor to the NYMB series. We also have seen these two in action, attending their presentations on social media. Couldn't believe how much we learned at these sessions when it came to the ever-changing world of technology; we instantly thought of you, our Publishing Syndicate family, and how valuable this information would be to all of you. Debra is being paid a small stipend for her articles, which will appear every few months in this newsletter.

Visit Debra Ayers Brown and Meredith Brown's marketing boutique at www.YourWritePlatform.com.

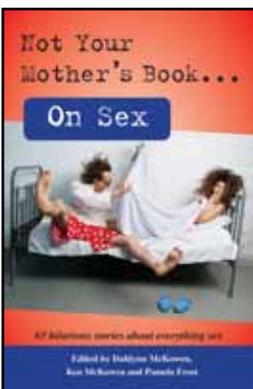


Book Updates

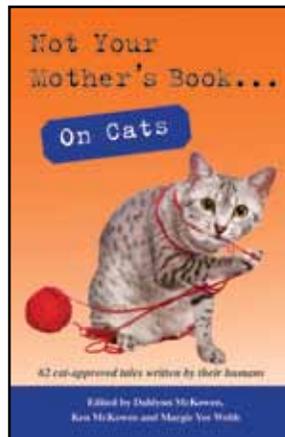


Best of the California Coast: The book is in final production, 360 pages, 120,000+ words, 330 photographs, all covering 800 destinations found along California's 1,100-mile coastline.

This book has been a labor of love...our first love, which is travel writing. Available this coming fall.

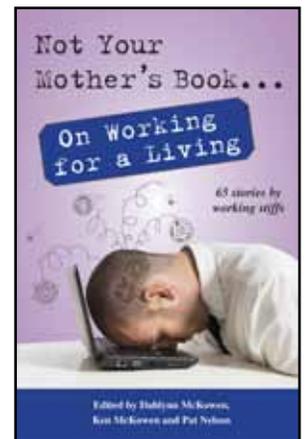


NYMB...On Sex: See page 5 for update



NYMB...On Cats: The September release date has been bumped to October 7th. We are very excited by this upcoming release! If you buy directly from the PS website, you will also receive a kitty toy made by Dahlynn!

NYMB...On Working for a Living: The book is in copyedits right now and galley will be going out within the next 10 days.



This just in from www.WritersMarket.com:

WritersMarket.com lists hundreds of magazines for writers of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, writing for children, and more. Here are three markets open to freelancers:

- Academy Chicago Publishers publishes 10 titles per year. They publish literary fiction and nonfiction. Submit a query with 3 sample chapters and outline.
- Chronicle Books publishes 90 titles per year. The editors say, "We're always looking for the new and unusual." Prospective authors should submit a cover letter with a proposal package.
- Lee & Low Books publishes 12-14 titles per year. The house currently emphasizes fiction and nonfiction for 5- to 12-year-olds. Prospective authors should submit a complete manuscript by postal mail.

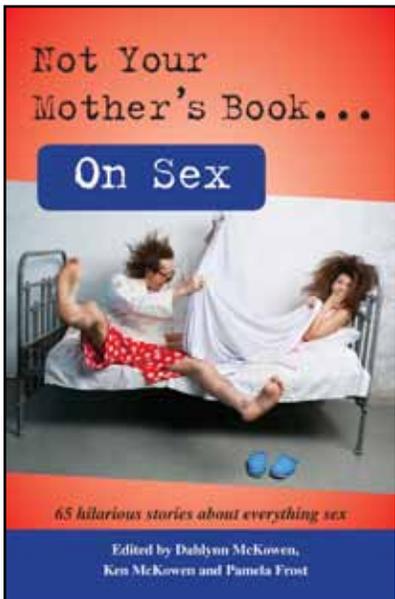
WritersMarket.com lists more than 8,000 publishing opportunities, including listings for contests, magazines, book publishers, literary agents, conferences, and more. Log in or sign up today to start submitting your work. www.WritersMarket.com



Last Page! Last Page! Last Page!

Not Your Mother's Book . . .

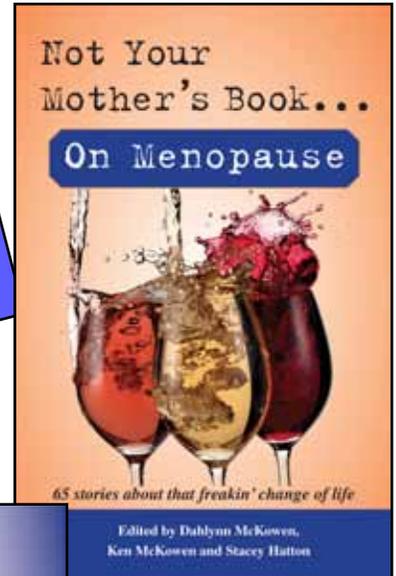
NYMB caters to mature readership, thus, submissions must be written by people age 18 and older. **Click on a book cover** for more info or visit the PS website.



On Sex:

Thanks for sending in so many great stories! This book will go into production as soon as *On Working for a Living* is sent to the printer. So there is still time to submit your story!

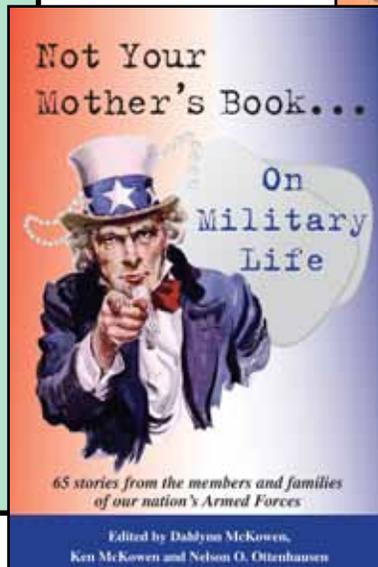
Submission guidelines at www.PublishingSyndicate.com



On Menopause:

Submissions due by January 1, 2015

Contemplating 2015's production schedule for NYMB. No decisions as of yet; it all depends on holiday book sales. If they are great, more books will be created. Sales stink? Down to one or two NYMB books a year. So please be sure to add NYMB to your holiday gift giving, or receiving, lists! And please tell your fiends and family to do the same. Thanks!



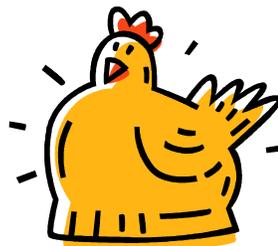
On Military Life:

Submissions due by January 1, 2015



From www.ChickenSoup.com:

- *Thanks to My Mom*, Deadline: September 30, 2014
- *Hopes and Miracles*, Deadline: October 30, 2014
- *Dreams*, Deadline: December 31, 2014
- *Living a Life of Purpose by Volunteering*, Deadline: December 31, 2014
- *Support for Therapists/Mental Health Professionals*, Deadline: December 31, 2014
- *Time to Thrive*, Deadline: December 31, 2014



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