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Increase Your Book Sales: When a Book for Sale is No Longer a Book for Sale

By Catherine Franz

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Do you have books sitting in your garage that you haven't sold yet and looking for ways to move them? Then you will want to know about these five outrageous ideas that aren't difficult and can be just plain out fun.

Dede Hall, author of The Starving Student's Cookbook had very poor sales for her books. Then one day an outrageously light bulb moment appeared. She added an inexpensive skillet with the book and shrink-wrapped them. Then she took 150 of them to two stores that she thought wouldn't sell them. Yes, to her surprise, all 150 sold in two days. Dede stumbled on an outrageous idea and it worked out big time. She sold over 100,000 copies in a few months. Where did she sell them? Thought you would never ask. Price Clubs and Kmart.

Do you have a book that could be packaged with something else and create outrageous sales for yourself? It's Christmas time and no it isn't too late. But before you dart off to come up with an outrageous idea for your book, continue reading so that you can get all the facts.

Another cookbook was repackaged with a scarlet ribbon and some imported cinnamon sticks and then sold at department stores in the housewares and gift sections. The book couldn't sell at \$5.95 but flew off the shelves at \$10 and went into second printing in 30 days.

Would your book sell well in a three-ring shrink-wrapped binder? Why not create an audio or CD version of the material. Just read directly from the material. You do not have to be fancy. Add "read by the author" language to the outside in big letters. Or maybe "F*R*E*E Bonus, Limited Time Offer, Free Audio read by the author" in big letters.

Another key is to look for an item that makes the package larger than the book. This requires a larger space and then bigger visibility.

What about a book on money? Add a mug labeled,

"Millionaire" and watch it fly off the shelf. Do not forget the second part of the formula -- the place you are going to sell it. When you add the mug, it is now considered a gift item. This opens the doors to more stores and places.

Try all the independent gift shops, especially at the airport. They are always looking for these type of unique combinations.

Have an exercise book? Add a "walking meter" with it. The one that measures how many miles you are walking. Have no clue what they call those things but I have bought three over the past few years. Again, now it is a gift item. How about contacting a sports equipment vendor and selling them copies of your book that would be a freebie for a limited period with a purchase.

Get the store to add a sign, "limited quality" and watch them go even faster. What is great about this angle is that gift stores, department stores and similar stores are much more open to add things to their shelf. They will work with you much better than a bookstore.

Now that your brain is going a mile a minute with ideas, best wishes for selling many more books!

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How to Organize a Book Sale

By Joseph Hogue

How to Organize a Book Sale

Book sales can be a great way to raise money or spread awareness for your favorite charity. They give the charity the opportunity to reach people at every step of the process. They can also be a lot of fun for the volunteer and a chance to meet a lot of people. It is best to have a few friends to help out, but one person can manage them with a little time. If you would like to host a book sale in your community but would like more information or help organizing the sale, contact us at

To get started, you'll need some materials from the charity to show people while collecting and selling books. They let people know a little more about the cause you are supporting and may even help to find a few people to help with the sale. For our book sales we use flyers, bookmarks, and brochures. This is also a good time to start finding a place to hold the sale. Your local shopping mall is a good start, but anywhere there will be a lot of people will also work. Your charity can help contact a place in your community or you can go directly to the management. Explain to them that you'll only need enough space to set up a few tables and your sale will attract visitors to the mall. Finding a location for your sale early allows you to let people know about it when you are collecting books. A Saturday or Sunday, or both days, usually works best. Plan on holding the book sale for at least six or seven hours as this will give people time to work it into their schedule.

Now you are ready to begin collecting books to sell. There are a number of ways you can do this. The easiest ways are contacting businesses and churches in your area. Explain that you are hosting a book sale for a charity and would like to place a book donation box in their lobby or cafeteria. Usually, they will want to see some materials from the charity and will need to talk it over with someone, so you may have to call back a few times. If they will permit you to place the donation box, thank them and find an area where it will be noticeable but not in the way. Staple some informational material on the sides and make sure you check it for books at least once a week. You may also go door-to-door to collect books. This also gives you the chance to pass out flyers and bookmarks about the charity.

Plan to collect books for at least a few weeks before the sale. As the date of the book sale nears, contact area churches, businesses, newspapers, or radio again. They may be able to advertise the sale or may even offer a donation to the charity. Remember, it really isn't about the book sale but about raising awareness and donations for the charity so use every opportunity to do this. The day of the sale, remember to get there early to set everything up. Place your brochures, flyers, and bookmarks on the table along with the books.

You can name a price for your books or really draw a crowd by having a 'name your price' book sale. Often, people will offer more for the books because the money is going to a worthy cause. Of course, any rare or expensive books would be an exception and you may want to limit the number of books any one person can buy unless they are willing to buy them for a reasonable price. Be sure to gather everyone's contact details (name, email, telephone, address) so an official receipt can be sent to them for their donation. If you have books left over after the sale you can always sell them to a used

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bookstore or save them for a future sale.

After the sale, you will need to ship the unused marketing materials and donations back to the charity.

Feel free to distribute the remaining flyers, bookmarks, and brochures, but if you don't plan on doing so, sending them back to the charity can save them a lot of money in printing costs. You will not want to send cash through the mail so it is best to buy the necessary postage before buying your money order to send to the charity.

If you would like more information, or would like to host a book sale, contact us at

Books and Dreams seeks to improve the quality of life for the millions of impoverished and neglected children of Latin America. We conduct literacy and basic education programs and support libraries with books and educational materials across Central and South America.



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