



News & Views

▶ Empowering authors and publishers to create and market books

NOVEMBER 2009

NOVEMBER 11 MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Deciphering the code: marketing that makes your ISBN work harder

An ISBN number identifies your book to the world, but it can do much more than sit idle in the barcode on the back of your book. Learn more about the powerful Bowker database, where you can provide all the information that is essential to maximizing your bookstore, online and library sales.

The databases where retailers and librarians search for your book are an important complement to your online marketing presence. The “invisible-to-the-consumer” infrastructure where your book’s essential information exists can help you target your markets and provide useful “back-door” sales information to the very people who can hand-sell your book everywhere. It is actually under your control and all it costs you is the time you spend managing it. With a little planning, time and patience, you can:

- ▶ Target your markets
- ▶ Make it easy for bookstores to find your book
- ▶ Connect with librarians who place book orders and recommend titles to patrons
- ▶ Reach students and professionals doing research
- ▶ Connect with teachers looking for the best book to teach their course
- ▶ Feed your own selling copy and cover images to online retailers
- ▶ Compare your titles to others in the marketplace
- ▶ Track trends or adjust your pricing strategy

The BowkerLink Publisher Access System allows you to communicate your new release titles, as well as price and status updates to a wide audience of book, audio and video buyers. Bowker is the leading provider of bibliographic data and your titles are exposed to many facets of the book industry through this single Web application. You paid a lot of money to purchase your ISBN. Here’s your chance to learn how to make that investment work for you.

Join us Wednesday evening, November 14 at the Lodge at Des Peres. Doors open for networking at 6:30 p.m.; meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. The formal meeting concludes around 8:30 p.m. with networking continuing until 9:00 p.m.



Featured Speaker

Sue Sylvia, Staircase Press Design. Sue is a publisher/book designer who works with authors and small publishers to produce good-looking books that stand out at retail. She is passionate about mentoring her design clients on marketing strategy and development. She is an award-winning art director and 30-year

marketing industry veteran. You can see her work online at www.staircasepressdesign.com. 

Publishing fact of the month

Did you know that total sales of trade wholesale electronic books in the U.S. for the combined months of July and August of 2009 were \$30.6 million compared to \$13.9 to Q3 of 2008? The definition used for reporting electronic book sales is “all books delivered electronically over the Internet or to hand-held reading devices.”

Source: *The International Digital Publishing Forum*, www.IDPF.org.

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President's Corner by Lynette Schuepbach Untangling the bird's nest



It was a snow-filled sky in March on the banks of a clear stream in Montauk, MO. I "lucked" into choosing the only rod and reel with a nasty reputation. Every cast, the line poured out faster than the bait could fly in front of it. Every cast, a bird's nest of line tangled at the base of the rod. Too much, too fast!

Learning how to publish a book can feel exactly this way... too much, too fast. It's not that we don't want to learn or that we are incapable of learning. We just need to have details and opportunities explained to us in a slow enough manner that the "bait will fly out in front of us" to avoid a bird's nest of information in our heads.

This month we are going to learn about the ISBN number. The BowkerLink Publisher Access System can help us to use our ISBN numbers in ways that will give us the most for our money in marketing, sales, and promotion. It's a lot to absorb, but publishing pro Sue Sylvia will answer all of our questions and untangle the bird's nest of information.

My mom always said, "There are no stupid questions. You can appear stupid for a moment or remain ignorant for the rest of your life." She'd continue, "There is a difference between stupid and ignorant. Ignorance can be transformed by knowledge. There is no cure for stupid." Join us at the November meeting to untangle the bird's nest of ignorance and transform it with knowledge. 

—Lynette Schuepbach, President
President@stlouispublishers.org

FAQs about ISBNs and other codes

ISBN, LCCN, CIP, SAN. If you don't know what those abbreviations stand for or why they should matter to you, check out the FAQ section on SPAN's Web site. Every publisher should be able to "speak the code." In fact, an ISBN, LCCN, CIP, SAN and other alphabetical considerations impact your marketing and sales. **Get informed and visit:** <http://www.spannet.org/nextstep.htm>



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We welcome our newest members

David G. Lupo: dglupo@aol.com

David is a semi-retired attorney in the fields of estate and trust planning. He has been published in the Missouri Bar and St. Louis Bar association journals and recently formed the G. Pieri Publishing company.

John Cummings: dicat25@gmail.com

John works as a newscaster and also gives presentations on motivation, performance training, business planning, and health and fitness. He is publishing the book *It's Performance That Counts*.

Joyce J. Turner: joyturnr3J@aol.com

Joyce holds an MA in communications from Webster University and writes African-American fiction and children's books.

Tony Johnson: tonyjohnson1010@yahoo.com

Tony is working on his first novel. He is a retired educator who was a radio announcer for 16 years and has experience in magazine publishing. 

November SLPA special election

Our first agenda item at the November meeting will be our annual election of 2010 executive board members to confirm the candidates that were announced at our October monthly meeting. All members in good standing are entitled to cast a ballot. Please attend and make your vote count.

2010 SLPA EXECUTIVE BOARD NOMINEES

President: Ligaya Figueras

Vice President: Bob Baker

Treasurer/Display Assistant: Sue Whinnery

Secretary/Asst. Membership: Linda Austin

Membership Chair: Christine Frank

Display Coordinator/Database Asst: Barbara Davis

Outreach Chair: Paul Brown

Communications Manager/Affiliates Liaison: Sue Sylvia

e-Marketing Manager: Ray Edge

Publicity Chair: Lynnette Schuepbach

Newsletter Editor: Maria Rogers O'Rourke

Newsletter Designer: Peggy Nehmen

Webmaster: Kevin Erickson

Special Projects Chairman: Natasha Moore 

What's ahead?

It is possible to build a flourishing publishing business if you write about something you love. At our December meeting, our panel of guest speakers will share the secrets and stories behind merging their passion with publishing. **Mark your calendar for Wednesday, December 9!** 

PUB LEGAL

Make your mark: An introduction to trademark law



By Jessica Hille for the St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts

A trademark is a word, symbol, logo or other distinctive mark that identifies the source of goods or services in the marketplace. A trademark helps consumers identify and differentiate Company A's merchandise from Company B's. Distinctive packaging, building designs, and sounds can also be trademarks if they sufficiently identify the source of a product. Because trademarks help identify the source of a product, trademark law prohibits competitors from using another's trademark without permission to avoid unfair competition. If consumers think your product is from a different company, you benefit from that company's advertising, reputation, etc. In the same way, if you have a trademark, you can prevent others from using it to their unfair advantage without your permission.

Unregistered trademarks

While there are legal advantages of registering trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), they do not have to be registered to receive protection. The letters TM in superscript (TM) designate a trademark, while an encircled R (®) denotes a registered trademark. Servicemarks are like trademarks, except that they distinguish services, not goods, in the market. A servicemark is designated with the letters SM (SM). In its most general sense, the term "trademark" encompasses servicemarks. Using TM or SM indicates to others that you intend to use and protect a mark as a trademark. Unregistered trademarks receive limited common law protection—that is, they are not protected by statute the way registered trademarks are. Unregistered trademarks may only be protected in the region or market where they are being used, not nationally. If you do not register a trademark, you generally have to be the first person to use the mark in order to have it protected.

Registration

Trademarks that are registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office receive national protection. If you use a registered trademark in St. Louis, you can keep someone from using it in San Francisco. For full protection, designate your registered trademark with the ® symbol once it is registered. Registration must be complete—not just pending—before you may use the ® symbol. You can choose not to register your trademark, but you will get more limited protection than you would with registration. Registration is also a good way to prove you own the trademark in question should you wish to

prevent someone else from using it. If someone infringes your registered trademark, you can sue in federal court and may have higher potential damages. Unregistered trademarks do not receive the same protection.

Be creative when designing your trademark. A trademark must be distinctive to be registrable. Generic words naming the product cannot be registered as trademarks, and a mark that is merely descriptive of the product must be shown to have acquired distinctiveness through extensive use in the marketplace before it can be registered. By contrast, a mark that is fanciful, arbitrary, or merely suggestive of the product is inherently distinctive. A trademark should reference the source of a product, not the product itself. A book, for example, might be considered too generic for a mark representing a publishing company, whereas a dancing banana would be more whimsical, more likely to be inherently distinctive, and more easily registered.

When you are creating a trademark you wish to register, first search the USPTO Trademark Database at www.uspto.gov. Checking the database helps you ensure that your trademark is different enough from existing marks to be registered. If the mark is not already registered and it does not appear anyone else is using the mark, you can begin using it, designated with TM, before you register and while your application is pending. Once you register your mark, you can use the ® symbol. For example, MARK!TM becomes MARK![®]. You can also apply to register a mark you haven't used yet, but you must use the mark before a registration will issue. While paper forms are available on its website, the USPTO strongly encourages online registration using the Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS), at <http://www.uspto.gov/teas/index.html>. Registration fees range from \$275 to \$375 depending on the type of application you use. Different forms have slightly different requirements. Filing by paper (rather than online) is the most expensive type of registration.

A registered trademark can be protected indefinitely, as long as it is still being used to distinguish products in the market. To keep your registration up to date, you must file an Affidavit of Use between the fifth and sixth year of use after the initial registration, and continue to file affidavits every ten years after the date of registration. For trademarks registered after November 10, 1989, the term is for 10 years. All forms are available on the USPTO website. 

Jessica Hille is a legal intern for the St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts. ©VLAA. All rights reserved. This article was written for educational and informational purposes only and is not legal advice or a legal opinion. Only your attorney can advise you about which laws are applicable to your specific situation. For more information, visit www.vlaa.org.

Self-publishing your book? Five reasons why you need a good copy editor

By Karen S. Ramsey

Aspiring authors often have a difficult time getting established publishing companies to look at their manuscripts, which is why many choose to self-publish. The problem is that in the interest of saving money, many self-publishers eliminate a key element from the publishing process—skilled copy editing. That is why there are thousands of poorly-written self-published books on the market, and one of the reasons the literary world has traditionally looked down on self-publishing.

Think about it: you spent hours researching and writing about your subject. You believed in yourself and your project, were enthusiastic, highly-motivated, and willing to do whatever it took to put your book into the hands of the reading public. But then you sabotaged all your hard work by failing—usually in the interest of saving money—to submit your manuscript to a copy editor prior to submitting it to the printer.

There are a few things serious self-publishers must realize. **First and foremost, self-publishing is a business.** Not only are you marketing the book you have written, but you are marketing yourself. Therefore, preparing for your “grand opening,” which in your case is the day your book hits the shelves at your local book dealer, is key to your business’s success.

Second, it is important to recognize your limitations. Writing a book makes you an author, but not necessarily a writer. Nearly every high school graduate can string enough words together to be understood. But great, even good, writing requires a strong knowledge of grammar and a consistent, painstaking commitment to practicing the craft. The rich and famous know this, which is why they often hire writers to help them pen their memoirs. That doesn’t mean that only skilled writers can and should write books; what it means is that if grammar and spelling aren’t your strong points, you should hire a copy editor to proofread your manuscript.

Other reasons copy editing is essential to self-publishers:

1. Good copy editing lends credibility to your work.

Credibility gained on your first self-publishing endeavor creates a following of loyal customers for your next project.

2. Good copy editing makes you look like a good writer.

You may not have great writing and grammar skills, but a copy editor’s job is to make you look like you do!

3. Good copy editing sells more books. No one wants to spend hard-earned money on a poorly proofread book. Remember, you are in business to sell your product.

In the past, self-publishing was viewed as being strictly for amateurs. But with the recent success of best-selling self-published books like *The Shack*, attitudes are steadily changing. One of the ways self-publishing can gain respectability is for self-publishers to view hiring a copy editor not as an unnecessary expense, but as a crucial factor in their publishing success. 

Karen S. Ramsey, is an adjunct English instructor at Tri-County Technical College in Pendleton, SC and the owner of A Second Look Editorial Services <http://a2ndlooker.com>. Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Karen_S._Ramsey

Annual St. Louis Jewish Book Festival returns in November

Held annually during November in celebration of Jewish Book



Month, the St. Louis Jewish Book Festival has the largest attendance of festivals in the country. It is the only event of its kind in St. Louis and is open to the entire community. This year’s event runs November 1-12. Most programs will be held at the J’s Staenberg Family Complex on the I.E. Millstone Campus in Creve Coeur.

The 2009 keynote speaker is award-winning actress **Helen Hunt**. For more information, visit www.stljewishbookfestival.org.



ShawGuides for writers

Looking to improve your writing? ShawGuides offers users free access to their online database of creative career programs including writers conferences, workshops, and writers’ residencies and retreats. Check out their comprehensive listings at <http://writing.shawguides.com/>. ShawGuides have been recommended by many national and international publications, including the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *USA Today*. 

SLPA Announcements

► Only two more learning modules left

At our November meeting, SLPA vice president Natasha Moore will conduct a ten-minute learning module about editing and illustrations. In December, there will be a short informational session on how to use feedback, reviews and testimonials. The learning modules are held at the start of each meeting, so be sure to arrive on time. It could be the most beneficial ten minutes of your day!

► Watch for SLPA member survey

Do you have an idea for a meeting topic? Is there something we could be doing better? We want to know about it! **Watch for the SLPA membership survey to arrive via e-mail in mid-November.** The annual survey tells us what you want most out of your SLPA membership. If you are a member in good standing (paid and current) you are eligible to participate. Let your voice be heard!

► Get LinkedIn with SLPA

Are you a member of LinkedIn? Connect with the SLPA online by joining the St. Louis Publishers Association on LinkedIn.



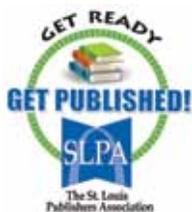
The group is open to anyone—members and nonmembers, so spread the word, share insights, and gain a broader understanding

of the state of independent publishers in our area! Here's the link that will land you on the SLPA LinkedIn page: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=2233330>. Special thanks to SLPA secretary Linda Austin for creating this group.

► SLPA publishing contest deadline nears

We've been talking about the inaugural SLPA publishing contest for months and the deadline is just a couple months away.

How close are you to getting published? The SLPA "Get Ready/Get Published" contest is open to all SLPA members (18 years or older), whether published or unpublished. Manuscripts, however, cannot be previously published.



The winning author will see his manuscript transformed from raw words into

saleable product. The grand prize, valued at \$8,900, includes editing, proofing, design and other production services, ten copies printed by Lightning Sources, a reading by industry professionals, layout of sales and marketing promotional materials, a one-year SLPA membership, and much more! Complete details and downloadable entry form are available at www.stlpublishers.org. **Deadline for submission is January 20, 2010.**

SPAN Web site and online community is resource for publishers

SPANnet, the new SPAN Web site and online community, has just entered the testing phase and will be up and running in the next few weeks. The improved SPANnet will have many new resources to help publishers and authors improve their publishing and writing. The site will present the basics of book production and marketing through articles, FAQs and a glossary in addition to the print newsletter and e-zine that keeps members abreast of publishing issues and trends.



SPANnet will also feature forum and discussion groups dedicated to specific topics that will allow members to both learn and teach. The community will bring experienced publishers and authors together with those new to the industry, and the technology will provide the platform to solve problems. Site features such as "friends," blogs and profiles will help everyone learn more about the new world of social media.

If you are not a member of this nonprofit trade association that is dedicated to serving small and independent publishers, the outstanding resources that SPANnet will offer you is one more reason to join SPAN. For more information, visit <http://www.spannet.org/>

You are invited to submit items and articles to *SLPA News and Views*.

Next deadline: November 21
Don't be late – no kidding!

Get your news and articles in EARLY! Send your information, articles and announcements to Editor@stlouispublishers.org.

Questions about SLPA?

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