

Relaunch! How to Recharge Older Books to Boost Sales Today

by [Dean Klinkenberg](#)

[May 13 via Zoom](#)

I published my first mystery, *Rock Island Lines*, in 2014. It was exciting to see my novel in print and release my book into the world. I managed to get some media attention in the region where the novel was set, the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois. A brewpub in the area, in Rock Island proper, even hosted a book signing where I sold thirty copies in two hours. It was exciting!



Dean Klinkenberg

The reviews were good, mostly, and those early sales were encouraging. But I had a day job and no marketing plan beyond the initial release, so sales tailed off after a couple of months and didn't bounce back.

I published my second mystery three years later, *Double-Dealing in Dubuque*, and went through a similar process. The reviews were even better, but I followed a similar path for its release: good publicity for the launch, encouraging sales to start, then... not so much.

Now as I finish the third book in the series, *Letting Go in La Crosse*, I realize I have to step up my game if I'm going to actually sell these books. In fairness to myself, when I first started, I wasn't sure if I'd be any good at writing mysteries, or if I would even enjoy it. I don't feel that way anymore. I like writing mysteries and people seem to enjoy reading them, so it's time to get serious about marketing.

Once I committed to writing a series of books with the same core characters, I knew I needed to take a hard look at the first book, *Rock Island Lines*. It would be difficult to sell the subsequent books in the series if I couldn't hook enough readers with that first book. In the five years since its release, I've learned a lot about publishing and marketing. When I evaluated *Rock Island Lines* with a more educated eye, I realized that I'd made mistakes in three important areas.

First, there was no consistency in the cover design from book one to book two, (they even had different trim sizes)! The first fix, therefore, was working with a cover designer to redo *Rock Island Lines*, creating a defining look for the series.

Continued on page 2

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association at 7:00pm on Wednesday, May 13 for our monthly meeting on Zoom. As our featured speaker, Dean will describe his approach to relaunching and how those changes helped him. If you're considering an old book for re-release or want to review the core elements to driving book sales, this meeting is for you.

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS:

Sign-up is free. You can join from your smartphone, computer or tablet. If you've used Zoom before, it should connect right away. If it's your first time, simply sign up, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Click on this link for meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>. Meeting ID is 867 8214 4399. Password is 668448.

Use Amazon Advertising Like a Pro

by [Keri Barnum](#)

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on June 10 at 7:00pm for our next monthly Zoom meeting and learn how to "Use Amazon Advertising Like a Pro" featuring Keri Barnum.

What can you do to make your book stand out? It's true that paid Amazon advertisement will not work well for every book. However, savvy authors and publishers know that if a book isn't seen, it can't be bought. Don't let yours get buried under the competition. Discover insider tips and tricks from a book marketing expert to drastically increase the visibility of your book. Zoom Meeting ID will be provided on our website in June.

[Keri-Rae Barnum](#) is the Marketing Director of *New Shelves Books*. She is an expert in Amazon and social media ads, creating profitable ads that are high-impact and, more importantly, duplicable for clients to use in the future. Keri works with hundreds of authors and small publishers each year, helping them gain exposure in the online, library and bookstore markets. For more information, visit: newshelves.com/keri-rae-barnum.



Keri Barnum

UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

May 13, 7:00 – 8:30pm
Relaunch! How to Recharge Older Books to Boost Sales Today
<https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>
 with [Dean Klinkenberg](#)

June 10, 7:00 – 8:30pm
Use Amazon Advertising Like a Pro
 with [Keri Barnum](#)
 (meeting ID link will be posted on website in June)

"Relaunch" continued from page 1

Second, I wasn't happy with the book blurb. I'd written it myself and didn't think it was particularly good sales copy. So, fix number two was to commission a new blurb from a company that specializes in writing book blurbs.

Third, after I reread *Rock Island Lines*, I realized that while the story held up well, it needed polish. I had worked with a proof-reader but not an editor for its release, and it showed. The third fix, therefore, was to send the manuscript to my editor for a thorough scrubbing.

It's been eye-opening to go back and look at that first book with critical eyes. One by one, I fixed each of those problems, and I'm glad I did. I have an improved product that

I can market with confidence, one that will offer a better introduction to the world of Frank Dodge and promises to keep readers engaged for a longer ride.

Dean Klinkenberg, the Mississippi Valley Traveler, is a former academic psychologist turned freelance writer with an abiding curiosity in the Mississippi River. He has published six guidebooks for travel along the Mississippi and two Frank Dodge mysteries set in river towns. His work has also appeared in publications such as The National, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and the Minneapolis Star Tribune. For more information, visit: deanklinkenberg.com.

"If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl. But by all means, keep moving."

— Martin Luther King Jr.

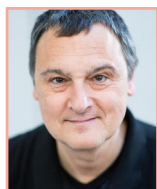


LAST MONTH'S RECAP: How Authors Can Connect with Readers and Inspire Sales Without Leaving Home

We hosted our first-ever virtual monthly meeting on Zoom with timely information on ways to connect while remaining at home due to COVID-19 restrictions. Special thanks to SLPA board member **Bob Baker** and our invited speaker **Lou Bortone**, who facilitated the



Bob Baker



Lou Bortone

meeting from Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Visit Bob at fulltimeauthor.com and Lou at LouBortone.com. If you missed the meeting, watch it on our [Facebook Discussion Group](#) page (posted April 9).

Using available technology such as video conferencing, social media, and your blog or website are great ways to connect with your audience. You don't need to purchase special camera equipment. Most smartphones and computer webcams have excellent recording ability. Just make sure you have adequate lighting and no visible clutter in the background. You can

customize your background to any image you choose if you have a green screen behind you.

Five P's of Video:

1. **Purpose**—establish your goals before you start recording
2. **Premise**—determine your message, share content
3. **Production**—your tools and equipment (social media apps)
4. **Platform**—your style and preferences (live video, audio, off camera presentations)
5. **Promotion**—sharing and distributing your content (repurposing existing content)

Catch Your Target Audience

You don't need to be active on every social media platform. Find the ones your desired audience uses the most and choose 1-2 of those plus your website or blog. Many platforms are free or low cost. Start simple. Record a short video, save it, then post. Remember to always direct viewers back to your website or blog.

Post. Promote. Repeat. As mentioned several times during the meeting, "Done is better than perfect!"

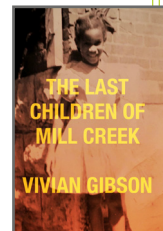
KUDOS CORNER

SLPA Member: *Vivian Gibson*

After her retirement, Vivian began organizing photos, keepsakes and notes from her childhood. What started as a personal housecleaning task progressed into an essay included in Belt Publishing's *The St. Louis Anthology* and evolved into her newly released memoir *The Last Children of Mill Creek*, narrating her time growing up in the historic Mill Creek community. Located in the central corridor of St. Louis—from St. Louis University to Union Station—Mill Creek was demolished in 1959 for urban renewal.

She was interviewed in [April on St. Louis Public Radio](#) and her memoir is recognized locally in [Left Bank Books'](#) "Top 10."

Visit: www.vivian-gibson.com.



Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month

In-person gatherings for monthly meetings are suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions. All meetings will be held online until further notice.

Monthly Meetings Admission

- FREE for Members
- Annual Membership — \$60 per year

THE HEIGHTS: Richmond Heights Community Center

The Argus Room • 8001 Dale Ave.
Richmond Heights, MO 63117

SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

Editor: [Kerri Holloway](#)

Designer: [Carolyn Vaughan](#)

Webmaster: [Kevin Ericson](#)

