

# How to Outsell a *New York Times* Bestseller Without Breaking the Bank

Speaker: **John Kremer**

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Open Horizons, P. O. Box 2887, Taos NM 87571

575-751-3398

Email: [JohnKremer@bookmarket.com](mailto:JohnKremer@bookmarket.com)

Websites: <http://www.bookmarketingbestsellers.com>

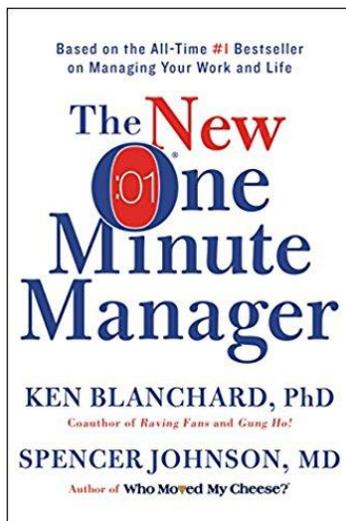
<http://www.myincrediblewebsite.com>

<http://www.infographicaday.com> and other sites.

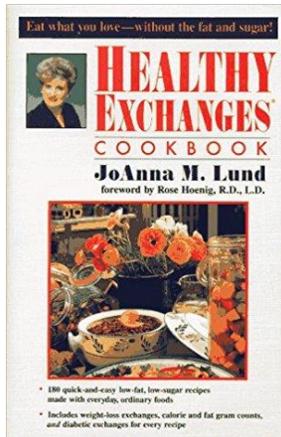
This audio presents a road map of the basic actions a writer or publisher needs to do to create a bestseller.

One of the greatest mistakes a writer can make is to think that everything needs to be done in the first week of a new book launch. Publishing a book is a lot like having a baby and raising a child. You have to work on the publication every day and build it step-by-step to maturity.

## 1. Start locally and let it build.

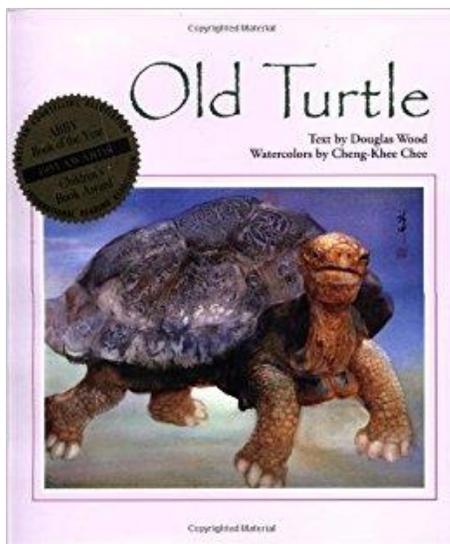


*The One-Minute Manager* was self-published and became a San Diego success because the writers wanted a certain format and price that publishers refused to do.



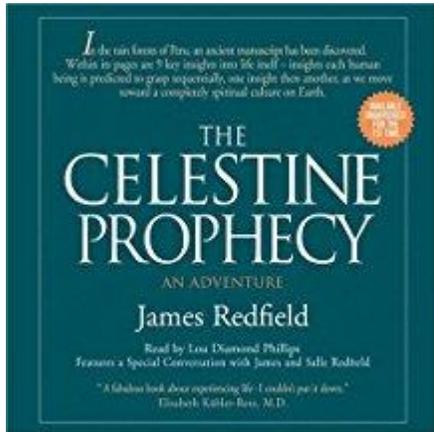
Joanna Lund, an Iowa housewife and insurance secretary who saw her son go to war, decided to lose weight so she'd be alive when her boy came home. She lost 120 pounds with recipes she created. She then sold 30,000 copies in Iowa alone. Penguin picked it up (and, in addition to generous royalties, they would pay her to do her own promotion). For many years, she was the bestselling book author on the QVC home shopping channel.

## 2. Roll out a bestseller city by city.



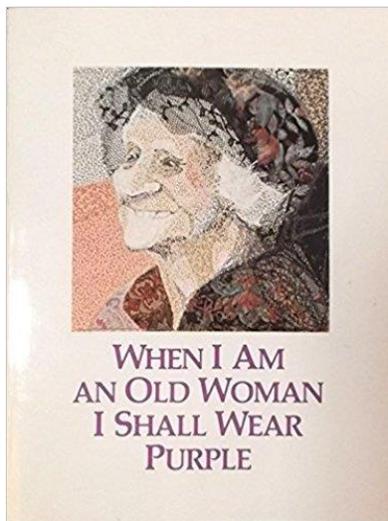
The children's book *Old Turtle* was done that way. The publisher hired a publicist to organize a tour of one major city for one week every month. The author drove to the city in a Volkswagen Beetle decorated like an old turtle. The author did dozens of interviews, bookstore talks and signings, school appearances, and more. Voted by booksellers as a favorite book to hand-sell, *Old Turtle* hit the bestseller list and sold several million copies.

That's a good strategy, city by city, and you can do it without a big budget. You can do it cheaper if you work with family members, etc, and can write off all your visits to those cities.

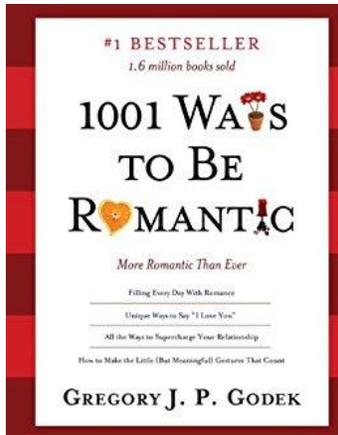


James Redfield originally self-published *The Celestine Prophecy* and drove from city to city doing publicity, speaking, and selling thousands and thousands of books. After a year of self-promotion, he sold the rights to a large New York publisher — and the book was soon a *New York Times* bestseller.

### **3. Build slowly. Do it over several years.**



Sandra Martz self-published and sold 4 million copies of *When I Am an Old Woman, I Shall Wear Purple*, a collection of short stories and women's poems. Sandra marketed the book to middle-age women via book talks, speaking, networking, and publicity. Two years after the book was published, it hit the *New York Times* bestseller list and stayed there for many months.



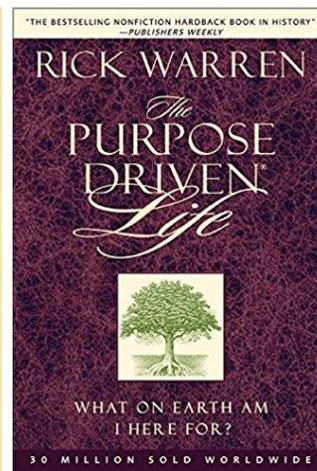
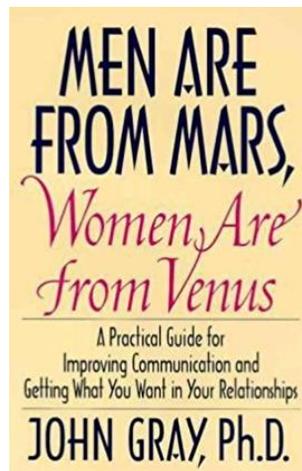
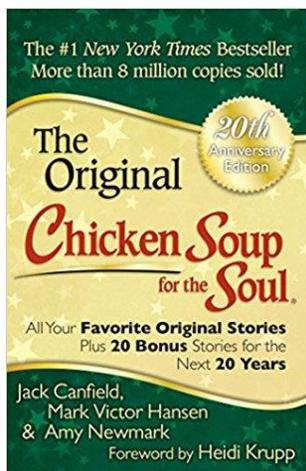
Greg Godek self-published *1001 Ways to Be Romantic* and spent \$25,000 a month marketing the book little by little. He was soon selling 50,000 copies every month. Over 1.6 million copies have been sold thus far.

If there is one key market for your book, work on it. Send the people in that market something every day. People become more aware during repeated exposure to you.

#### 4. Get out and speak.

Speaking is especially effective for spirituality, mind/body/health, self-help, romance and relationships, business, how-to, and religious titles (as well as memoirs and children's books). 95% of the *New York Times* bestsellers in these categories gained a lot of their sales momentum from the authors speaking over and over again.

Examples: *The Chicken Soup for the Soul* series, *Conversations with God*, *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, *The Purpose-Driven Life*, etc.

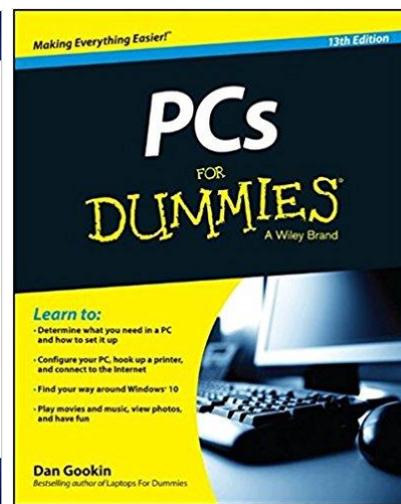
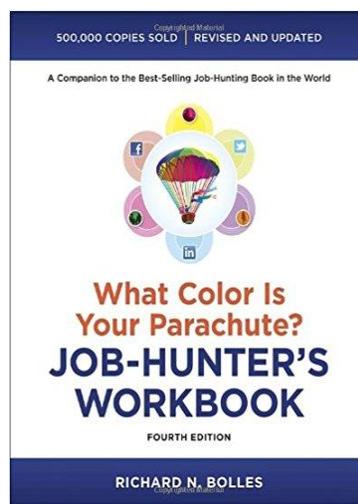
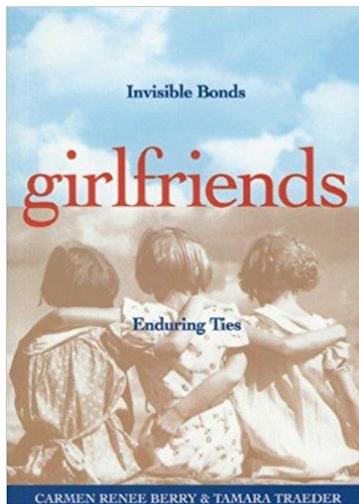


Read the newspaper of the towns you go to, that will give you ideas as to how to best sell books in that town. Libraries will pay to have you speak. Some authors make more money speaking vs. book sales. Workshops, speaking engagements, professional associations, etc., create lots of opportunities to sell a book.

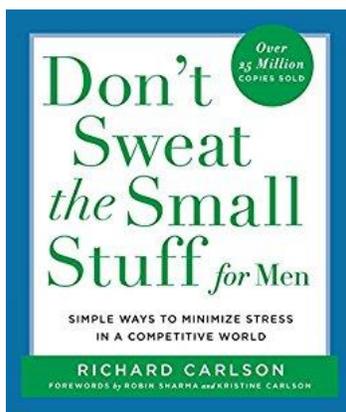
## 5. Package and brand your book.

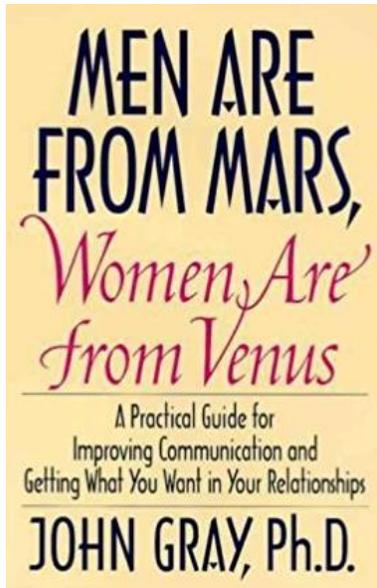
Some books you pick up and don't let go; it's hard to describe why but the phenomenon is very real. You have to try to do that: does the book "feel right?" The cover design, title, content, and interior design are all important in creating a bestseller.

Examples: *Girlfriends*, the Mars/Venus books, *What Color Is Your Parachute?*, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, the *Dummies* series, *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff*, and *The Worst-Case Scenario Handbook*.



*Don't Sweat the Small Stuff* now has separate editions for teens, work, love, women, your family, men, fathers, teachers, friends, new parents, and more.





The *Mars/Venus* books did better when John Gray stayed with his new brand.

*Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*

*Mars and Venus in the Bedroom*

*Mars and Venus in the Boardroom*

*Mars and Venus Together Forever*

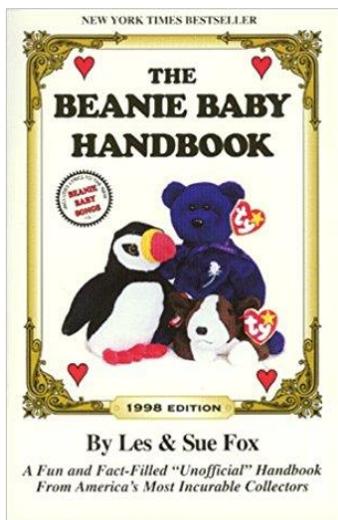
*Venus on Fire, Mars on Ice*

*The Mars and Venus Diet and Exercise Solution*

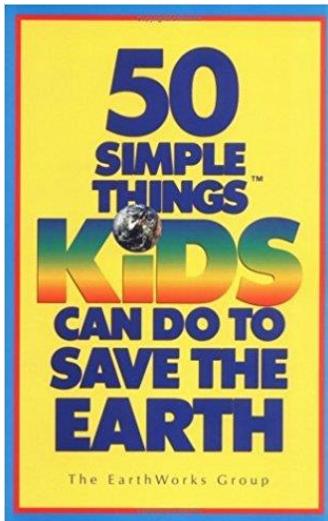
*Why Mars and Venus Collide*

*What Your Mother Couldn't Tell You and Your Father Didn't Know*

## 6. Timing is everything.



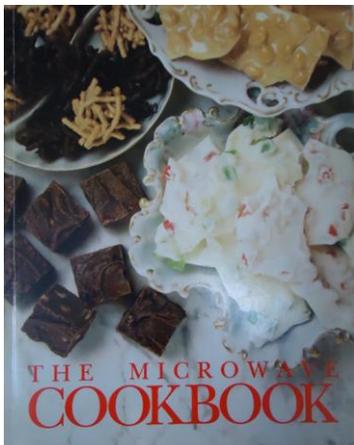
Smaller publishers can get a jump on most new market trends. *The Beanie Baby Handbook* was a bestseller by a self-publishing duo. The self-publishers were the first to come out with a book on Beanie Babies right as the Beanie Baby craze hit hard and then kept their book so updated that no other publisher could compete.



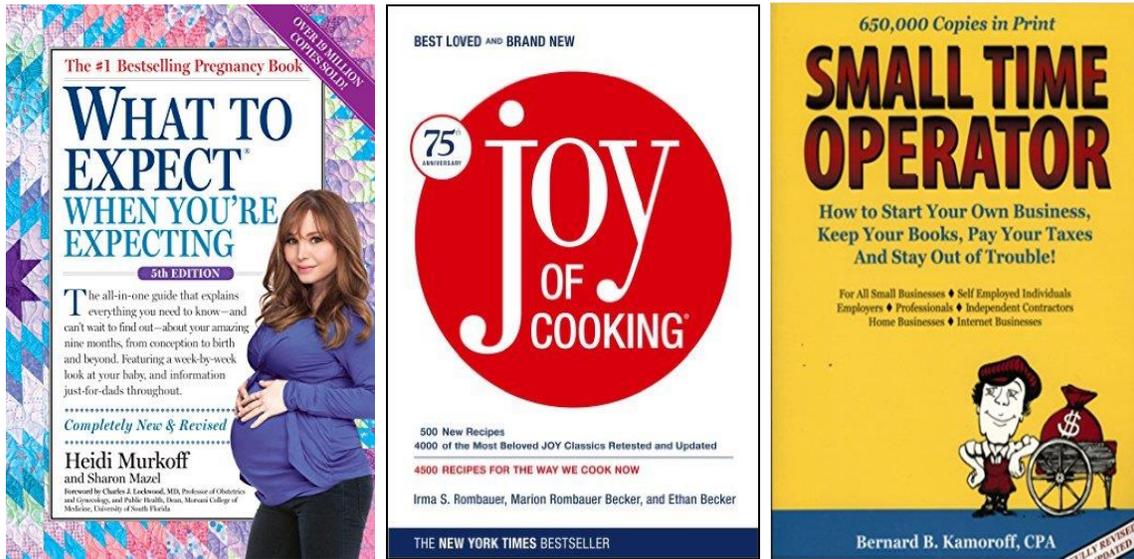
*50 Simple Ways to Save the Earth* beat the 20th anniversary of Earth Day by 6 months. The self-publishers did it early and had the only books available when the media wanted to write about it. They got a lot of coverage. If you're going for a significant date, get it done early.

## **7. Pick a perennial topic.**

If you want the topic to be current 10 years for now, pick a perennial topic. *The Microwave Cookbook* sold over 1 million books. Every time the self-publisher had to go back to press, she printed 50,000 more copies.

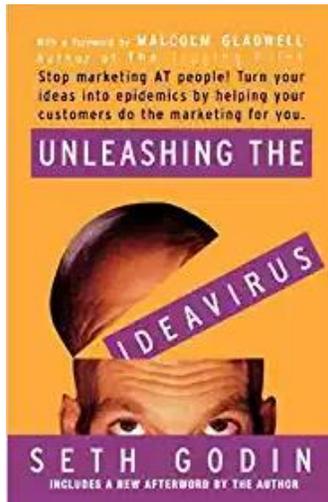


Other examples: *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, *1,001 Ways to Be Romantic*, *The Joy of Cooking*, *The Small-Time Operator*, etc.

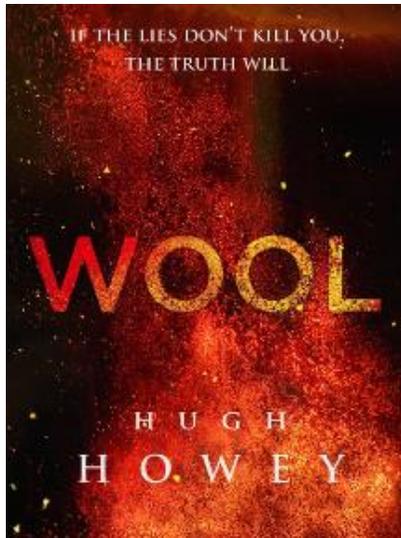


## 8. Use the Internet to create word of mouth.

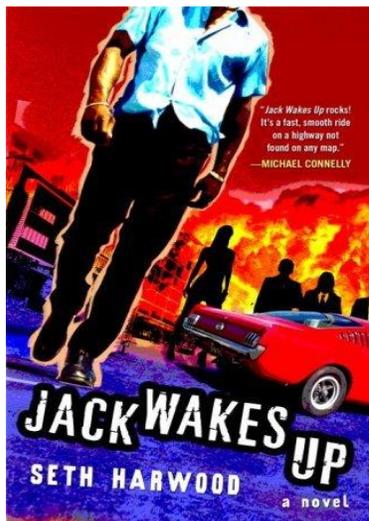
If you have a novel, one of the best ways to promote it is to give it away as an ebook or PDF. It doesn't cost you anything to give away an ebook and it builds incredible word of mouth (if it's good!). Note: Don't ever give away a bad book.



**Give away content to get word of mouth.** Seth Godin gave away ebook copies of *Unleashing the Ideavirus*. By the time he was ready to publish a print version of the book, he had given away half a million copies with the help of a lot of online friends. When he published the book, it flew up the bestseller lists within days.

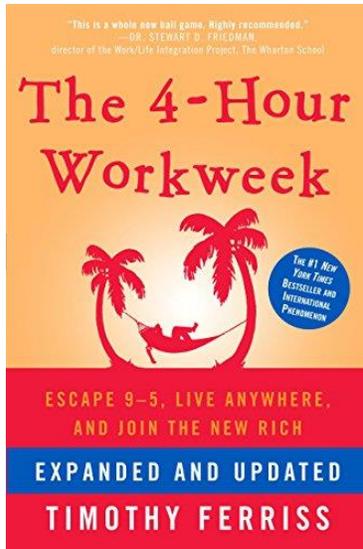


**Sell your book a piece at a time.** Hugh Howey did this with his *Wool* science fiction series. He serialized his novel as Kindle ebooks at a very low price — and then sold the five-book series in an Omnibus edition! His novels sold millions of ebook copies and hit as high as #1 on all of Amazon. The book has been translated into 40 languages and is now being made into a movie by Ridley Scott.



**Podcast your book**, page by page or section by section. Seth Harwood, a mystery novelist, podcast his first novel as he was writing it. By the time he was done writing the book, he had over 80,000 people subscribed to his podcast. And they were knocking down his door to get the dang novel finished.

Breakneck Books published *Jack Wakes Up* in March 2008 and it quickly jumped to #1 in Crime/Mystery on Amazon.com. In May 2009, Three Rivers Press, an imprint of Random House, released a trade paperback version of the novel.



**Build partnerships** to help you launch your book. Tim Ferriss did that with *The 4-Hour Workweek*. For two years prior to launching his book, he attended dozens of Internet marketing seminars and conferences. And he asked everyone he met: How can I help you?

#1 *New York Times* bestselling book (and on the list for 4 years)

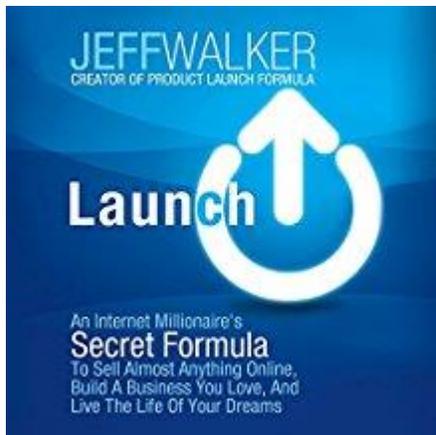
#1 *Wall Street Journal* bestselling book

#1 *BusinessWeek* bestselling book

Sold more than 1 million books in the U.S. alone

*Wired* magazine called him the best self-promoter of all time

200 million podcast episodes have been downloaded



**Launch your book via JV partners** like Jeff Walker did for his *New York Times* bestselling book, *Launch*.

## **9. Work with bookstores to sell more books.**

Buy up-front space or end-cap display space in the chains. The chains won't sell it to you unless the book will succeed there. Learn how to make use of in-store merchandising to sell more books, especially with the chains. Also bookstore catalogs, newsletters, etc.

Work with booksellers to reach out to book clubs, reading groups, media, local clubs and associations, etc.

## **10. Keep knocking.**

Develop your Kremer 100 list and work it every month. Build relationships.

Do something every day for the books you love.

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John Kremer  
February 12, 2018