

Kristie T: Bulk Sales

*This self-published author landed a contract with a commercial house to take over her book—but she was sitting on a lot of inventory and wanted to move it fast. Thus, this marketing plan focuses on quantity sales.*

## Bulk-Sales Marketing Plan for **I Love My Life**

Prepared by Shel Horowitz

### Overview:

At a dollar a book, price is a no-brainer if you can show value. The approach must focus on the benefit to their members of reading the book, the edge (yes, I remember your old newsletter) it will provide them.

The other factor is the timeframe, and that's tricky. Normally, a large purchase takes several months to consummate and you obviously don't have that long. So the letter needs to be very carefully worded to first of all, persuade them that your book is a fabulous deal, but also that they have to compress the time frame. In general, the bigger the organization, the more copies they could potentially buy, but the slower the wheels of decision will grind. The letters should also offer a sample copy for evaluation.

If you find that the contacts you've been courting can't move fast enough, it might make sense to have your new publisher approach them to make a deal for later, though of course that will cost them much more than one dollar a book.

### Types of Organizations

National groups that could take the whole 10,000. I'm not aware of any equivalent for home-based moms-at-work with anything like the clout of, say, AARP. In fact, it's a relatively unorganized sector. But there are some few groups that at least reach a few tens of thousands of members, and might conceivably take the whole thing off your hands. One that I can think of is <organization name deleted>, a somewhat poorly-reputed member-based organization that offers a cheap and not-very-good health plan (I was a member for one year, and was not impressed). If you're willing to be associated with such a company, they might bite because they may well want to improve their image among their members.

Costco is another outfit that might want them all, but the problem there is they'll probably want them fully returnable. However, with the deep-discount price, you may be able to negotiate a non-returnable contract (if you can't, don't sell to them. The last thing you want is the books coming back to you once you no longer have the right to market them. Costco has a built in marketing mechanism, in that they could excerpt the book in their excellent monthly magazine.

While I suspect they couldn't move fast enough, it's certainly worth talking to the 800-pound gorillas of female-oriented network marketing: the national offices of Amway (now Quikstar) and Mary Kay.

There are a few other national self-employed orgs, but I'm not aware of any with some clout (i.e., large membership). Probably easy to locate on Google. And I'd certainly start with the HomeBasedWorkingMoms.com whose director endorsed your book.

Speaking of endorsers...Jim Daniels, Raleigh Pinskey, and Eva Rosenberg all have very large e-mail lists. They might, as I was, be willing to take a quantity for gift or resale. Jim and Eva at least reach many of your core constituency. And I believe you know Dan Janal; ask him if he'd put in an announcement on his list. There are probably several dozen newsletters that you read. Approach their publishers as a subscriber asking for help. If you don't subscribe to Joan Stewart's Publicity Hound and Lois Carter Fay's Brainy Tidbits, subscribe right away and submit to their Help This Hound and Help This Brainy Marketer columns for free advice. You also might get advice and maybe some nibbles from asking for help on SpeakerNetNews (weekly ezine, SpeakerNetNews.com). A backup strategy is to offer commissions or finders fees on sales above, say, 100 copies at a time.

#### Smaller Quantities

I suspect you'll get rid of most of the stock in batches of 100 to 500. One excellent category to approach would be Chambers of Commerce, especially in areas with a lot of small, entrepreneurial, home-based businesses. My own Chamber has actively pursued this market, and I'm sure many other Chambers understand that this is their future. So a membership incentive with a high perceived value but a very low price per piece might be very attractive.

#### Other possibilities

- Individual Better Business Bureau chapters. Similar approach to Chambers.
- Banks and credit unions, especially small, locally controlled operations that might be called on for small business lending. I don't think the bigger banks that don't even want to touch a loan of less than 50K or so are your market—but financial institutions making loans in the 1K-25K range should grab it.
- Associations of small home-based entrepreneurs: a natural if you can find them. My own area has one called Hidden-Tech, but the target population is not that good a match with your market.
- Local and national associations of businesses that actively seek home-based operators. For example, there's a guy in Florida named Frank Fox who runs trade associations for secretarial services and resume shops, both of which would likely attract a lot of home-based moms. And local Chambers or reference librarians may know of others that might not have any national affiliation.
- It strikes me as a great book for people *teaching* entrepreneurship, at local colleges, Lifelong Learning programs, Learning Annex, etc. Especially for the private, non-college-affiliated centers, the instructors have a lot of freedom to recommend and sometimes sell books. The really great thing about this is that if

they like the book, they can continue recommending the new edition once the old ones are gone.

- Another potentially large market would be career counselors, life coaches, and others who work directly with potential new entrepreneurs.
- There must be some kind of networking structure for network marketers across several different companies. Approach regional directors with a solid organization underneath and interest in helping their downline succeed. This strikes me as a very good market for you, especially if you can get to the Double Diamonds who might have downlines of 1000 or more. But even if you sell 50 at a time, the word-of-mouth buzz could get rid of books very quickly.
- Think about other businesses whose success depends on helping home-based and very small businesses succeed. Small, locally owned office supply stores, payroll services, accountants/bookkeepers...they might easily buy 50 or so as thank-you-and-remember-me-next-time gifts to clients and prospects. What about people who clean houses or do small home repairs? (Probably not the best market, with only a few sales per service, but still, if it's convenient to reach them, worth a shot.)

#### Chicagoland

You should be a media star in your own area, as local self-publishing (is this true? Your book refers to a publisher in Oregon?) success story who caught the eye of a traditional publisher, and by the way, has her original edition (sure to become a collector's item) to get rid of. Articles could be slanted in shopper-type media pretty easily to encourage bulk-sale inquiries. You could supply them with pre-written articles. But first, of course, approach the Sun-Times and Tribune, who will want to write their own stories (and would be deeply insulted by a sample article), as well as local radio shows especially any catering to the business sector.

Finally, I see the mention on your cover of your partnership with Paul & Sarah Edwards; is that still ongoing? You could offer the rapid distribution of the book as a case study, get it announced on-air and track the results with a report later.