

Behind the Business Book Show

Season 1 Episode 2: Monkey C Media CEO Talks about Book Creation and Marketing for Business Authors

Tell us a bit of what you do.

I work with entrepreneurs and thought leaders who are already an expert in their field but they're looking to take their business to the next level and that often involves writing a book and polishing their brands. We sell our authors. We get to the bottom of what makes them unique and special.

You cover everything from everything from publishing consulting, cover design, interior layout, and author marketing, websites, and even book movie trailers. Tell us about how you collaborate.

We have a team of nine including myself. We have code monkeys. I'm the head monkey. I believe in teamwork. If you enjoy the people you work with, and you enjoy people you're working for, you're just going to do a better job. I love doing team-building exercises, and taking people out and just really talking about what we're doing. It's so critical for us entrepreneurs, who don't have really anyone else to talk about what we're doing, so books inspire and I think that's pretty awesome.

You have to make sure that the book looks professional. How do you effectively create a great book?

In a collaborative effort, the author helps make that cover better, because they're coming at it from a different perspective of feeling. We judge all brands – including books - at first glance. What we're trying to do is make it look professional, engaging, and not tell the whole story on the cover.

We try our best to guide authors to create something that's captivating and engaging and tells people what the book is about, but not too much. Most of the time it's about getting to know the author and their niche. What I do is translate it while looking at what's in the industry already, what's working, and what the audience is responding to.

For an author who either has a book or is in the middle of writing a book, what are the basic steps that you see successful authors take to create that whole platform around their book?

1. **First, we look and see what they've done for their platform as of now.** Typically, you don't start from zero if you're a thought leader in a particular area and you do have some sort of a following.
2. **Determine the budget.** How much money do they have?
3. **How much time do they have and what's their emotional budget?** Meaning, are you willing to blog? Write articles? Record video? What is comfortable for you? We don't want to create a brand and a plan around something that's really uncomfortable and you're going to hate doing.
4. **We find out where their particular audience is.** Are they on Facebook, or Twitter, or LinkedIn, or Instagram, or Snapchat or Periscope? It really depends on where their audience is, and whether they're comfortable being in that environment.

Hopefully, the emotional budget does allow for all those things because writing, blogging, and being top of mind with your audience is critical.



What about brand development?

One of the first things I do is figure out who your supporters are. There are three pieces to your supporters:

- The person who thinks you're amazing, who loves everything you do. We need that person because sometimes as authors it's hard.
- The person who keeps you honest and holds you accountable and makes you better.
- Thought leaders in your industry, the people who are already movers and shakers, who already have the audience that you are seeking.

You're sort of stalking them. You follow them on social; subscribe to their blog; watch their video podcast. You watch what they do, and then you see how people are interacting with them, and commenting, and sharing and engaging with them on social.

The question you need to answer is, "*Why is this person so successful in this arena and how can I also be successful*", or "*I think I can do it better and here's how.*"

Most of the things that I read about author marketing, and book marketing is it's really had to get from point A to point B. Your approach is really about identifying where point B is and then working your way back to point A.

It's a long road. The first thing I do with my authors is we put together one, three and five-year goals. The five-year goal is, "Where do I really want to be? What do I have to change or improve to get there? What kind of visibility do I need?"

That's the hardest part. It's very difficult for an author to admit they want to be famous, a bestseller, to effect change. Whatever it is, you have to be really honest with yourself if you want to get there.

Tell us about book trailers.

We've been producing book trailers for many years. I love book trailers because as a culture, we respond to video. But it has to be done right:

- Go for very short, 30, 45 seconds top; 30 to 35 seconds is the sweet spot of the attention that people will have.
- I find that the most successful book trailers are an interview with the author, talking about why they're passionate about it.
- For business books we really want to hear from the author or people who have learned something from the book, so a man on the street type of a thing that can be put into a book trailer.

It's such a short amount of time. We're sold to so much in social media, on the Internet, everywhere. If we feel like it's something that made us laugh, or that we can relate to in any way we're going to share it - that's the only way a book trailer becomes successful.

What is the substantial difference between a self-publisher versus an indie publisher?

Honestly, just that it sounds cool. It's someone out there who's professional, creating great music. They're doing it on their own. They have their own label. The music industry really mirrors the publishing industry in a lot of ways, so why wouldn't we also be indie authors?



There are plenty of places out there - some reputable, some not – whose business model is based on getting as much money out of those authors as they can. That’s not really the indie authors that you’re talking about.

I would agree with that. There are still plenty of companies out there that are taking money from authors. Then you’ve got hybrid presses too that I think can be good, where it’s a partnership.

Every author I’ve seen has spent so much money to get a cover that no thought was put into. Then, the distribution didn’t work and they couldn’t get their book ordered.

With print on demand you do the self-publishing through Amazon, Create Space, and Ingram Spark. If you just want to get your book out there, it’s a fantastic option. If you just want to see what happens, or if you just want to give it to friends and family, then it’s a great option. It’s inexpensive and the quality is getting much better with print on demand.

You also work with offset printers. What’s that process like, and what’s the difference between going to just any printer versus somebody who actually specializes in printing books?

First of all, it depends on your budget. We typically work about nine months in advance of trying to find a distributor.

If we have a business book and we’re designing the cover, we look at where it’s going to be sold and who the audience is. If we want it in the airports, we want that distribution model. We want to make sure we work with a distributor who has relationships with buyers in airports. We have to get the right price point because a distributor will not take on a book that’s too expensive.

Now print on demand. These are books that printed one at a time, but the price point is going to be a lot higher, so you’re not going to make very much money with that distribution model.

We put our POD authors into Create Space and Ingram Spark. Ingram is the big wholesale distributor. We do this because you want your book to always show as available on Amazon, and if Amazon has to order an on-demand book, then it shows it’s out of stock.

That’s the only reason we use Create Space.

Name one business book that you have read and would recommend.

Rework by the founders of 37 Signals.

What’s your favorite business book?

That’s my favorite because I’ve read so few. I read mostly literary fiction.

Recommend a book that you think that everybody should read.

I’m a big fan of being inspired. Judy Reeves helps people write memoirs, but her book is great for anyone. She has a book called, *A Writer’s Book of Days*. It’s a fantastic inspirational guide. Also, *The Business Book Bible*.





Here's where you can learn more about Jeniffer:

[Monkey C Media](#)

Episode references

[Rework](#)

[A Writer's Book of Days](#)

[The Business Book Bible](#)

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