

Book Video—The Evolution of a Marketing Tool

BY SHEILA CLOVER ENGLISH
CEO, CIRCLE OF SEVEN PRODUCTIONS

If you could go back in time and invest in this ridiculous idea of selling music through a visual medium, would you do it?

You *listen* to music. You don't watch it! Right?

For those old enough to recall the first year of MTV (Music Television) you know that the music was loud, the hair was big, and the videos were...well...questionably entertaining.

People scoffed. They said it was an idea that would pass. They said it was geared only toward one demographic: kids. How could a music video sell albums? (Yeah, it was still "albums" then.)

But now that "passing trend" is a multi-million dollar enterprise.

People wanted to see their favorite artist perform. But not everyone could make it to a show. So a video was the next best thing. It allowed the audience to visualize the story in the song. It captured the imagination and the hearts of millions. Not to mention the dollars.

Dan Goldberg, Chairman and CEO of Artemis Records, said in an interview with PBS regarding "The MTV Effect" in the '80s, "I think that the emergence of the music video has just expanded the palette of tools available to artists to connect with an audience."

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The evolution of video for the music industry can be seen as a template for the publishing industry. Video was not naturally a part of the music industry. It was a way to expand a demographic, offering a very entertaining way to capture an audience and sell a product at the same time.

What started as a single channel on August 1, 1981 now, according to Viacom, which owns MTV Networks, reaches over 480 million households worldwide.

Book Video Utilization

Book videos have taken the publishing industry by storm and by surprise. They have become an increasingly versatile marketing tool. They can be used as announcements in emails, viral marketing on the Internet, television commercials, and movie theater commercials. They can be put on DVDs and sent to booksellers, sales teams, the media, and readers. They can be used to expand your demographic, highlight cross-genres, and help with name-branding. They can be shown on your website, online social networks, online specialty sites, online bookstores, online magazines, played in bookstores, and used as video to cut away to during television appearances.

If your book video isn't doing any more than sitting on your website entertaining people who will, most likely, already buy your book, you've wasted your time, effort, and money.

If you're going to have a video, use it to its fullest potential.

What Should It Look Like?

A book video should be a representation of both the book and the author. It *Continued on page 14* ▶

Novelists, Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1989

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Address changes may be made on the website.
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Introducing

The following authors have applied for membership in Ninc and are now presented by the Membership Committee to the members. If no legitimate objections are lodged with the Membership Committee within 15 days of this NINK issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of Ninc. For further information or to recommend eligible writers, contact Membership Chair Holly Jacobs at P.O. Box 11102, Erie PA 16514-1102 or email holly@hollysbooks.com.

New Applicants:

HelenKay Dimon, San Diego CA
Brenda Williamson, Eclectic AL
Renee Luke, Antelope CA
Pat Van Wie, North Grafton MA
Julie Anne Long, San Francisco CA
Jennifer Crusie, New Richmond OH
Julie Caille, Spring TX

New Members:

Carrie Bebris, Dayton OH
Ann DeFee, Tacoma WA
Kim Watters, Cave Creek AZ

Ninc has room to grow...recommend membership to your colleagues. Prospective members may apply online at ninc.com.

Ninc Online

For numerous resources and a current roster, visit ninc.com.

For never-ending e-conversation—for members only—join Ninclink. If you have questions, email moderator Brenda Hiatt Barber at BrendaHB@aol.com

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Ninkcritique@yahoogroups.com is for members interested in finding someone to critique their current proposal or manuscript. It is NOT a critique group. A gathering of published authors willing to exchange critiquing with others of similar interest, we are very informal and usually not very active. Members with work they wish someone to look at simply post a description of the work (what genre, whether proposal or full, etc.) and give an idea of the type of critiquing they'd like (complete or a focus on particular details like historical research or pacing, etc). Members may respond off line or on, asking further questions. Members asking for help may choose one or all offers of aid, with the understanding that in the future, they need to offer their time in return. We are an open market for exchanging offers to critique. To subscribe: Send a blank message to Ninkcritique-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. — **Pat Rice, Moderator**

Before the Great Escape

You'd think a year as president-elect and a couple of months as president would have given me time to absorb this, but I'm still surprised to be here. *Here* in this spot in *NINK* and *here* as president.

Now that it's too late for you to reconsider, I have a confession. I had never been on a board before Ninc members made me president-elect. I'd purposefully avoided boards, declining without hesitation all previous invitations/requests/pitiful begging. Perhaps it's my journalism background, but I've felt my skill-set qualified me as a devil's advocate. Or, perhaps more accurately, someone standing back and seeing potential (good or bad). I knew I could use sharp scissors, but would I play well with others?

My first instinct when Jean Brashear called in the spring of 2005 was to say no, I couldn't consider being president until I was retired from the *Washington Post*—The Other Job besides writing. I started to say that, beginning with "If I have to give an answer now—" Jean interrupted and said, "No, no. You don't have to give an answer now. Think about it for a day or two."

Tricky woman, that Jean Brashear.

The next day, I spent hours on the phone, and most people I talked to, including editor and agent, asked if I was nuts even considering it—think of the time, the commitment, the headaches. A vocal minority, however, said Go For It. (That latter group had a high percentage of past Ninc prezesses. Because they know its rewards? Or because they subscribe to misery loves company? I'll let you know down the road.)

I'd already noted that my presidency would fall in 2007. It might not leap out, but 2007 is both a non-election and a non-Olympics year. Two events that otherwise would have me pulling down significantly increased hours at the *Post*. So 2007 might be a good year to be president, I thought.

Okay...that was raw rationalization. Factual, but still rationalization. What really happened was that the morning after the day after the night Jean called, I was in the shower, and I heard myself say out loud, "I wanna."

I didn't want to wait until I was retired. (What if you folks found out about the never-on-a-board flaw by then?) I believe in Ninc. I believe in what it is, and I believe in what it can be.

Keeping Ninc what it is takes a considerable amount of work. The mechanics of an organization, a conference, a newsletter, a website, a membership require the constant lubrication of care, effort, and imagination. I'm positive Ninc requires less than most organizations—because of the wisdom of its founders and the sanity of its members—but it still requires constant tending.

To make Ninc what it can be requires exponentially more care, effort, and imagination. But to not work toward what it can be would be a criminal waste of potential.

What Novelists, Inc., offers multi-published authors that no other group does is a place to exchange information and ideas across the spectrum of the publishing industry. Genre-specific organizations offer deep, but narrow information on their niche of the publishing world. With our membership writing in most of popular fiction's genres and in a variety of markets, Novelists, Inc., offers members a collective view of the breadth of publishing.

Right now we have members on three committees looking across that breadth of publishing at ideas for Ninc's future—the Used Book Committee, the Outreach Committee, and the Advocacy Committee.

In last month's *NINK* the Used Book Committee gave us a report on a project they tackled last fall. There will be more reports coming up on what the committees are doing.

I know there are many issues you would ▶

But we also must recognize and appreciate the value of chipping away a few more feet on a tunnel that we might never get to escape through ourselves.

President's Voice

► love to tackle as much as your board would, but we all swallow the same strong doses of reality, starting with the fact that we're all volunteers with a number of priorities that come before this, including the priority that got us all into this in the first place—writing.

An additional and even harder reality is that many of the issues swirling around authors these days are matters that will take years, perhaps decades to resolve. That's not a reason not to tackle them. In fact, it's all the more reason for us to keep working at the projects that have been started and to take the first steps down the path on others.

Some projects can be accomplished within a fairly compact timeframe (never compact enough, in my opinion, but then "Pat" isn't short for "Patience"). Establishing a logo—to help brand Ninc and present a unified look to prospective members and the industry—and the soon-to-start Ninc Legal Fund are examples.

And we love those projects. If instant gratification wasn't wonderful, no one would have created Snickers bars.

Member to Member

Health Insurance Follow-up

An article of interest to those searching for health insurance appeared in January 27, 2007 *New York Times*, tinyurl.com/2dr6gg.

According to the article, Sara Horowitz, a former labor lawyer and a MacArthur genius grant recipient, has founded the Freelancers Union, which is open to all freelancers (artists, writers, consultants, etc.). Its primary function is to pool members in order to purchase health and disability insurance. The union currently has 40,000 members in the New York area; 14,000 have purchased health insurance through the union for about \$300/month. Horowitz is hoping to expand to at least 10 more states by the end of this year. Membership in the union is free; it pays its expenses from commissions it earns on the services (e.g., health insurance) it sells.

— Reported by Barbara Keller

But we also must recognize and appreciate the value of chipping away a few more feet on a tunnel that we might never get to escape through ourselves. We need to both find satisfaction in making progress and never, ever, stop moving ahead.

That's why I wanted to say yes to Jean Brashear—to chip away my little bit of the tunnel.

— Pat McLaughlin

Business Briefs

AP Had Reviews But No One Noticed: Book reviews will no longer be offered through AP's syndicated package. A dozen or so had been available per month, but when *PW Daily* surveyed book review editors few had been aware of the resource. Most editors took reviews from the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* when opting for a syndicated source.

Investing in the Publishing Industry's Future: Publishing Technology PLC is the combination of Vista International (office software for publishers) and Ingenta (online publishing technology). The new company will offer a broad spectrum of software products to publishers, which should help reduce expenses while creating new products and marketing them faster. Clients for this international group include Reed Elsevier, Random House, and Penguin.

Another Financial Firm Enters Publishing: Print on Demand publisher AuthorHouse was purchased by Bertram Capital. Over the past ten years AH published over 40,000 titles from 30,000 authors and turned out 6,000 in 2006.

What is Plagiarism? Check out Jonathan Lethem's article "The Ecstasy of Influence: A *plagiarism*" in the February *Harper's*. He examines why the terms copyright, piracy, and plagiarism need a new appraisal.

— "Briefs" compiled by Sally Hawkes

Peter Senese And Bookbeat TV



**Writer:
Beware**

It's not clear exactly what Senese is up to with Bookbeat TV, but in the words of the Suffolk County police detective who arrested him in 1997, "if he's involved, it's a scam."

BY VICTORIA STRAUSS

In January 2007 *Library Journal* ran a news item about a brand-new television show focused on writers. "Orion Entertainment this spring will launch a weekly book-based TV show called Bookbeat TV. The hour-long program will feature two authors weekly...Orion is soliciting feedback from readers on [which] authors viewers would like to see, the show's format, and more via a brief questionnaire on its website."

This news was picked up by a number of blogs and writers' email loops. Writers wondered whether Bookbeat might be a good promotional opportunity, and how they could get involved. However, a visit to Bookbeat's website immediately sent up some red flags. The formatting was amateurish, the text in-

cluded grammar and spelling errors, and there was no information at all on who was actually behind the show. Yet there was also that very legitimate-sounding name, Orion Entertainment. For anyone in publishing, it's likely to ring a bell. After all, there's a UK publisher called Orion Publishing. Not to mention the film/TV production company, Orion Pictures (now part of MGM/UA).

As it turns out, those Orions have no relationship to the Orion that sponsors Bookbeat—although the man behind Bookbeat wouldn't mind if no one realized that.

Bookbeat is the brainchild of Peter Senese, author of the "theological thriller" *Cloning Christ*. The book was published in 2003 by Orion Publishing & Media. Like Bookbeat, Orion Publishing & Media is a

"subsidiary" of the Orion Entertainment Group—which is owned and operated by Senese himself. The use of the Orion name (and also, in a blatant trademark violation, the Orion Pictures logo) is a deliberate ploy to deceive people into believing these various operations are legit.

Senese is no stranger to games of deception. In 1997 he was arrested in Suffolk County, NY, and charged with fourth-degree grand larceny for posing as a healthcare venture capitalist. The scheme involved offering insurance agents exclusive contracts to insure the lives of physicians whose practices Senese's bogus firm was supposedly acquiring. As a condition of the deal, agents were asked to pay cash up front for errors-and-omissions insurance. Once they handed over the money, they never heard from Senese again.

While on bail for the larceny charge (for which he was eventually sentenced to five years' probation), Senese flew to California, where he and his girlfriend posed as millionaires planning a lavish wedding, complete with a gourmet lunch at an upscale winery and a ride in a hot air balloon. The wedding went off without a hitch...thanks to more than \$70,000 in bad checks written by Senese. Arrested on felony charges, he brokered a plea bargain in exchange for pleading guilty and the dismissal of charges against his wife. In 1998 he was sentenced to nine months in county jail.

Senese next showed up in 2003, shortly after he self-published his book, *Cloning Christ*. Claiming that he was the cousin of actor Gary Sinese and that the book's film rights had just been bought by a major motion picture company, he contacted Christian booksellers across the country to set up signings, at which he promised that not just he, but the stars of the currently-in-production movie—Viggo Mortensen and another cousin, John Malkovich—would appear. It was all a lie, but many booksellers were dazzled by Senese's slick talk. They ordered quantities of books, spent money on preparations and publicity...and were left holding the bag when Senese failed to appear. So successful was this scam that Senese was the focus of an article in a 2004 issue of *Christian Retailing* magazine. Borders, also a ▶

▶▶▶ target of the scam, briefly considered pressing charges.

It's not clear exactly what Senese is up to with Bookbeat TV, but in the words of the Suffolk County police detective who arrested him in 1997, "if he's involved, it's a scam." Some victims report paying \$40 to enter the contest advertised on Bookbeat's website and getting nothing in return. Another was hired by Senese as a host for the show; she had quit her job and was preparing to move to LA when the \$30,000 check he gave her as a salary advance bounced. Still others were told they had auditions to be reporters for the show and never got a callback.

These reports come from 2005 and mid-2006, so despite the apparent newness of Bookbeat's website and publicity efforts, the scheme has been around

for a while. Clearly, Senese is still on the prowl for victims. However, despite his success in removing negative discussion of himself from the Internet, Senese's refusal to change his name makes him easy to track. With Bookbeat no longer operating in stealth mode, the word is out about Senese and his scams. Writer beware!

Victoria Strauss is the author of seven fantasy novels. She's also Vice-Chair of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America's Writing Scams Committee, and maintains the Writer Beware literary scams warning website at WriterBeware.org. She welcomes visitors to her own website: VictoriaStrauss.com.

A Solution for Old Manuscript Clutter

BY SYLVIE KURTZ

Got old manuscripts floating around? Here's a way to give them a good home.

Bowling Green University's Popular Culture Library is a non-circulating, research library that was founded to support the growing interest in the study of American everyday life. It's the largest and most comprehensive research facility in the United States dedicated exclusively to the acquisition and the preservation of primary research materials from the 19th Century to the present. The growth of the Popular Culture Library has been fostered by many gifts from collectors, scholars, and other private individuals. The Library's manuscript collections contain correspondence, fan mail, promotional material, manuscript notes, literary manuscripts, and galley sheets. In 1996, the Library became the home of the archives of the Romance Writers of America. RWA Members who are published authors have been invited to contribute their manuscripts and working papers to the Library.

At the Popular Culture Library you can find intriguing subjects from A-Z:

- Popular fiction (Romance, Mystery, Science Fiction, Western, and Adventure genres)
- Performing arts and the entertainment industry
- Graphic arts and mass communications
- Foodways and cookery
- Popular religion, the occult and the supernatural
- Teen culture and counterculture
- Folklore, wit and humor

For more information contact them at:

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Bowling Green State University, OH 43403-0170

Reference Desk 419-372-2450
bgsu.edu/colleges/library/pcl/pcl.html

Questions can be directed to Nancy Downs at 419-372-6054 or by email at ndowns@bgsu.edu or Katherine Najacht at 419-372-2322 or by email at knajacht@bgsu.edu.

Once you send in your gift, you will get a thank you letter acknowledging your gift, your catalog number (if you are a first time donor), an inventory of the materials you sent as well as a reminder that the IRS holds the donor responsible for the valuation, that library policy prohibits staff members from making monetary appraisals of donated materials, and that no goods or services were received by the donor in exchange for the donation.

As Sylvie first noted on NINCLink: "I usually send the copy-edited manuscript, a file of prewriting notes, promotional items for that book, copies of reviews, and a copy of the book. I put everything in an expandable accordion file and label it with the title, ISBN, pub date, my name, my collection ID, which makes it easy for them to file the stuff. They've been great to work with and sending them the materials has kept my basement (relatively) clean <g>." — **Ed.**

Internet Safety:

5 Ways to Protect Yourself

BY VIBEKE COURTNEY
DREAMFORGEMEDIA.COM

Authors are often told that to promote themselves in these modern times they must get a website. What you may not be aware of is just how many people on the Internet have the means and motivation to take advantage of you. Without some basic knowledge on how to protect yourself, you could all too easily put your privacy, your money, and your career at risk. By heeding the advice offered here, you could greatly reduce the dangers of the World Wide Web.

1. Guard Your Privacy

Most of you know to be extremely careful about giving out your personal information online. It's less common knowledge that when you register the domain name of your website, the information you give becomes a matter of public record. If you visit networksolutions.com/whois/index.jsp and search for your website address, you and everyone else are able to see the name and address of the domain registrant.

It's required by law that the information on website ownership be available to the public. However, there are a number of ways to reduce the risk of identity theft and protect your privacy:

Private registration. A number of registrars offer this option. For an extra fee (usually not a large one), your name, address, and phone number will be hidden from WHOIS searches with proxy information shown instead.

Use a business address. If you have a P.O. Box or other business address, use that instead of your home address. Or if your site designer or host has a business address and phone number, you could ask for permission to list those instead of your own.

False information. You could use a fake address and phone number, but this is illegal, so it's not recommended.

2. Viruses and Spyware

Viruses and spyware can cause a lot of damage to your computer. They can also be used to steal private information off your computer, including credit cards you use to make online purchases. You can avoid this by establishing just a few healthy online habits involving:

Email attachments. Don't open an email attachment unless it's something you were expecting to receive, not even when the email is from a trusted friend. Your friend's computer might be infected with a virus that is spread by automatic emails to everyone in your friend's address book.

Downloading files. Don't download anything unless it's from a major site you trust. If you get an unexpected prompt to download something, always refuse.

Protective software. Install virus and spyware protection. We recommend these programs:

AVG Anti-Virus Free,

Ad-Aware spyware protection,

Spybot: Search and Destroy.

[Complete URLs for these three programs at the end of this article. — ED.]

3. Password Protection

Someone could figure out your password. Yes, it happens. Some rules you should follow to prevent this from happening include:

Never share your password with anyone. It's the Internet equivalent of "Trust No One."

Use different passwords. Don't use the same password for everything. If you do, then if one of your passwords gets stolen, they all get stolen.

Don't use easy passwords. Avoid using your birthday, your name, any biographical information that's already connected to you somewhere (e.g., your "About Me" page), or any words that can be found in a dictionary.

Write the passwords down on paper, not in a simple file on your computer. Your computer can be hacked. If it's on paper, someone would ▶

Internet Safety

▶ have to break into your house to steal it.

Use encryption. If you must keep your passwords available on your computer, store them in encryption software such as schneier.com/passsafe.html or in an encrypted and password protected Word or Excel file.

4. Hide Your Email

It's almost impossible to avoid giving malicious-minded people access to your email address, but there are steps you can take to minimize the damage. The first thing to do is to hide your email from spam robots on your own website. Instead of using a plain email link, ask your webmaster/mistress to use this code (customizing the parts that are indicated in **bold**):

```
<script language=javascript>
<!--
var email = "YOU"
var emailHost = "YOURNAME.COM"
document.write("<a href=" + "mail" + "to:" +
email + "&#64;" + emailHost+ ">" + email +
"&#64;" + emailHost+">"</a>")
//--></script>
```

Another rule of thumb is to never post your email anywhere it will be seen by the public, including blogs and message boards. If you must give out your address, use a non-standard format, such as "suzy AT suzyauthor DOT com"—this will keep robots from thinking it's an email address.

5. Take Control

If you're daunted by anything to do with computers and the Internet, it's tempting to hire someone to take care of everything for you. In two areas at least, it's in your best interest to resist that temptation.

Domain name. The first and most important thing to do is to take control over your domain name. If you don't have a website yet, register your

domain yourself (we recommend godaddy.com), and do so right away even if you don't plan on getting a website for a while. If you already let your designer register your domain or you signed up for a hosting package that included domain registration, take steps *today* to get control over it. This won't be the easiest thing you've done in your life—at best, it's a multi-step process that is time consuming and a little confusing; at worst, your designer/host will be uncooperative—but it's crucial that you go through with it. You could save yourself a lot of grief. Go to godaddy.com and start a domain transfer.

Website. If you don't know the access information (username and password) to your website, ask your webmaster/mistress for it ASAP. You'll want to know how to access your control panel and your FTP (how to upload and download files on your website). Even if you don't need to know today, you might at some point, and then it could be too late to find out.

Finally, the first and simplest thing you can do to protect yourself is to download and use the Firefox browser: mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/. It's the safest browser and widely recommended by web safety experts.

Further Reading:

wiredsafety.org
georgedillon.com/web/security.shtml
staysafeonline.org/basics/quiz.html
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_privacy
dreamforgemedia.com/articles/domains.html
attackdenied.com/password_safety.htm
iatservices.missouri.edu/security/make-it-safe/
passwords.html
pcworld.about.com/magazine/2110p170id112042.htm
spam.getnetwise.org
tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Anti-spam

Internet Protection Software:

AVG Anti-Virus Free: free.grisoft.com/doc/5390/lng/us/tpl/v5#avg-anti-virus-free

Ad-Aware spyware protection: download.com/Ad-Aware-SE-Personal-Edition/3000-8022_4-10045910.html?part=dl-adaware&subj=dl&tag=top5

Spybot: Search and Destroy: safer-networking.org



WRITING is TAXING

To Inc. or Not to Inc.—That is the Question

Those who run any business, including a writing business, have a multitude of options when it comes to choosing the form through which to operate. The choices range from sole proprietorships and limited liability companies (“LLCs”) to S and C corporations (“S corps” and “C corps”).

A sole proprietorship is a business owned and operated by an individual, usually under the owner’s name. LLCs are a popular business form because they function with the flexibility of a sole proprietorship, yet also provide limited liability for the owners without the extensive formalities required for corporations. S corps are generally small, closely held corporations and are permitted a maximum of one hundred shareholders. C corps are often publicly traded, widely held, and can have any number of shareholders. Both S and C corporations are required to have bylaws, hold shareholder meetings, and maintain extensive books and records to document corporate decisions and actions.

The primary reasons business owners forego a sole proprietorship and choose to form a separate legal entity to operate their businesses are:

- (1) To enjoy limited liability protection and/or
- (2) To achieve tax benefits.

Many accountants, attorneys, and tax advisors recommend that their clients form a separate entity. However, writers beware. In many cases, the debate about whether to incorporate is “much ado about nothing.” Business advisors have their own interests at stake and often the primary benefit of forming a separate business entity for a client is to finance the advisor’s next vacation.

The Liability Issue

Although lawsuits against writers such as J.K. Rowling and Dan Brown have dominated the head-

lines, legal action against writers is still relatively rare. Nevertheless, nobody wants to face a stressful lawsuit and the potential loss of personal assets.

Forming a separate entity through which to operate a writing business can protect a writer’s personal assets from being seized to satisfy a judgment if the business is sued. However, because forming and running an LLC or corporation costs more time and money than a sole proprietorship, a writer should consider whether a real risk of liability exists before deciding whether to form a separate business entity.

For writers, the primary threats are lawsuits for copyright violations (plagiarism), defamation or libel, and invasion of privacy. A novelist is unlikely to face a lawsuit if the writer’s work contains only fictional characters and is entirely the writer’s own creation with no unauthorized “borrowing” from other works. Writers who produce unauthorized biographies, write true crime books, or reference real-life persons are at greater risk, especially if any juicy, sordid details about a person are exposed. Be aware also that simply being successful can pose a higher degree of risk to a writer. Those in search of a deep pocket to pick may set their sights on a high-profile, wealthy writer as a target for a nuisance suit, hoping the busy writer will offer a quick out-of-court settlement to avoid spending the time and money to fight the frivolous suit in court. Suits against Rowling and Brown were eventually dismissed for lack of merit, but not until time and money was spent to prove the claims were unfounded. Nothing like a frivolous lawsuit to ruin a perfectly good day, huh?

If only a small risk of liability exists, it’s likely not worth the time and money to form and operate a separate legal entity. On the other hand, if a writer is taking significant risks with her work, the writer may be wise to form a limited liability entity to protect the writer’s personal assets.

Now for the bad news. The formation of a limited liability entity such as an LLC or a corporation isn’t an absolute protection, thanks to a doctrine known as “Piercing the Corporate Veil.” This ▶

▶ doctrine allows a court to disregard a separate legal entity if the business owner has not treated the business as separate and distinct from the owner. To prevent the corporate veil from being pierced, business owners should not pay personal expenses directly from business accounts. Rather, the owner should take a draw or salary from the LLC or corporation and deposit these funds in the owner's personal bank accounts, then pay any personal bills from the owner's personal accounts. The business owners should also sign all contracts in a manner clearly indicating they are signing on behalf of their LLC or corporation as a representative of that entity—for example, “*AAA Publishing, by Suzy Q. Writer, President.*” Business owners who mix their personal and business accounts or sign contracts in their individual name only may find themselves facing personal liability despite the fact that they formed a limited liability entity for their business. Bummer.

Tax Considerations

The good news is that the income of LLCs and S corps is not subject to a separate level of federal income taxation. Whoopee! An LLC with only one owner can report its income on a Schedule C, just as if the business were a sole proprietorship. Could it be any easier? For S corps, a separate tax return must be filed (Form 1120S), but the form is simply an informational return and no tax is actually paid by the S corporation. The S corp's income flows through to the shareholder's individual income tax return, where it is reported on a Schedule E and taxed at the writer's individual income tax rates.

Unlike S corps, C corps are subject to tax at the corporate level. In some instances, the formation of a C corporation can save tax by permitting the division of income between the writer and the corporation and thus spreading income over the lower tax brackets for individuals and corporations. Unless the income of the C corporation is high enough though, the cost of paying a professional to prepare the separate corporate tax return as well as the costs associated with operating a corporation may exceed any tax savings. Moreover, the writer would need to be paid a salary from the C corporation, which would require payroll taxes to be withheld and reported and a W-2 to be issued to the writer for tax purposes. In some cases, the formation of a C corporation would unduly

complicate matters and impose additional expense on the writer. A tax pro would need to examine a writer's specific financial situation to determine whether forming a C corp makes sense.

Writers should also be aware that for state income tax purposes, the formation of a separate legal entity may subject their income to additional taxes the writers may avoid by operating as a sole proprietorship. In my home state of Texas, for instance, sole proprietorships are not subject to the state income tax on businesses, while LLCs and corporations are subject to the tax. Thus, forming a separate legal entity can backfire tax-wise, resulting in additional taxes and filing requirements and taking up more of the writer's precious time and money.

Other Considerations

Some writers want to have a separate business name and tax ID number because they either want to operate under a name other than their personal name or do not want to provide their Social Security Number to others for risk of identity theft. Fortunately, these writers do not have to go to the extreme measure of forming a separate legal entity to accomplish these goals. A writer can operate under an “assumed name” by registering a business name with the appropriate government office, which in most jurisdictions is the county clerk for the county in which the writer lives. In addition, sole proprietors may obtain a tax identification number different from their Social Security Number to use for business purposes by filing Form SS-4, available on the Internal Revenue Service website, IRS.gov.

The Bottom Line

The bottom line is that in many cases it's best to operate as a sole proprietorship. But if your writing is high stakes or high income, you should consult your legal or financial advisor to determine if forming a separate entity is right for you.

Got a tax issue? Email your question to Author@BlarneyBabe.com.

Diane O'Brien Kelly is a Certified Public Accountant, tax attorney, and humor writer from Texas. Visit her at BlarneyBabe.com

The Art of the Long View: Paths to Strategic Insight for Yourself and Your Company

**by Peter Schwartz • Currency/Doubleday
1991 (hardcover), 1996 (paperback)**

REVIEW BY PAT McLAUGHLIN

In my limited business-world reading I'd come across enough references to *The Art of the Long View* to know it was an important book. It wasn't until I held the paperback edition and saw the tagline that I realized how important. That tagline—which captured its message far better than the clunky subtitle, in my editorial opinion—is:

“Planning for the future in an uncertain world.”

Ah. Yes. Now, that's important.

The ability to plan for the future in an uncertain world sure is a skill every writer can use.

One proof of how the concepts of *Long View* have taken hold is that these days there is an entire field of study devoted to the topic it explores. Futurists and scenarioists are at universities and working for consultancies and in governments around the globe. Ninc's conference in San Diego this month includes a session devoted to horizon-broadening, imagination-stirring discussions of the possibilities that the future of publishing might hold.

With an original publication date more than 15 years old for *Long View*, author Peter Schwartz's examples can feel dated. (Though it's interesting to check them against what actually happened, since his future then is our past now.) But there is no expiration date on the concepts Schwartz expounds. Even more than the specifics of its scenario-building, the value of *Long View* is in encouraging us to kick down the walls of our narrow mind-sets, to keep a variety of potential roadmaps in front of us, and to stay balanced on the balls of our feet, ready to move in whatever direction we need to in the future.

Schwartz, co-founder and chairman of Global Business Network, emphasizes that scenario-building is not *predicting* the future. And it's certainly not picking one projected future and betting on it. Instead, it's about exploring possibilities responsibly and thoughtfully, connecting them into coherent wholes, then keeping a sharp eye on the horizon for indicators that the future appears headed more likely toward one scenario than another.

He likens this to rehearsing multiple plays for a repertory theater company. You have to know each

well enough to perform it, but in this peculiar company, you don't know which play you will perform until you actually walk on the stage. And even then, no one tells you the play being performed. Instead, you have to recognize which play you're in from the clues provided by the scenery and props around you.

To take his image a step farther than Schwartz does, scenario-building is also first writing all the plays you will be rehearsing.

Schwartz advocates lots of research before starting this multi-pronged writing project. His approach has some elements I suspect a lot of writers do by instinct—but it can be useful to have it spelled out.

He divides his information hunting and gathering into two elements: what to look for and where to look for it.

What to Look For

Science and technology. Especially trends or events that can change lives or spur businesses, which he calls perception-shaping events. He tells of reports of global warming starting in the 1970s, but not gaining much traction until testimony before Congress by a NASA scientist in 1988 during an exceptionally hot August. On an otherwise slow news day, it caught the attention of the media, was widely reported, and began to change perceptions. Mass media both reports and shapes perceptions.

Music. He says television captures what people are perceiving, music conveys what they are feeling.

The fringes. Yes, he acknowledges, there's no telling which fringes will forever remain out there and which will become something more, but picking up a sense of what's out there now will give you a head start when one of those ideas that looks wacky in the present turns out to be the new trend in the future. To Schwartz fringes include people, ideas, music, culture, technology...just about everything.

Where to Look

Remarkable people. Listen to lectures, read interviews, indulge in conversation and pay attention to their idiosyncratic ideas. ▶

The Long View

► *Seek out sources of surprise.* Particularly in books. Read widely beyond your area of expertise or even comfort. Try the local U.S. Government Printing Office for some rarities. He especially likes popular science books. (He writes that he loves to read novels but rarely finds them useful in scenario-building because the ideas are not surprising enough.)

Get recommendations from those remarkable people above.

Through filters. These are sources that help weed through the mass of information, to start focusing on what elements from the fringes might move toward the mainstream. He starts with magazines, advocating delving periodically into a broad range of specialty magazines. He also cites *The Economist* as the single best source of information on the world.

Check out speeches and symposiums at universities (just seeing the subject matter can help keep you abreast of new concepts). Talk with friends, talk with strangers. Listen to your own instincts (as long as your instinct isn't knee-jerk reaction based on a rigid mindset).

Immerse yourself in *Challenging Environments*. Travel. Don't stay in the Four Seasons. Talk to the natives.

Networked Sensibilities. Share with others doing information-gathering.

Now, what do you do with all this information you gather?

If I hadn't already been interested, Schwartz would have won me over with the sentence: "Don't worry about your files, worry about your perceptions." Take all of this in, let it seep into your thinking and broaden your field of vision. No need to keep neat files—that's my kind of research.

Scenario-builders faced with a specific question (for instance, say, what's the future of mass-market paperback fiction?) would then start working with what Schwartz calls the building blocks of scenario-building. Blocks might not be the best image since he emphasizes that they merge, overlap, and converge.

Driving Forces (The things we know we care about.) What we know we care about might not be what someone else knows s/he cares about. Schwartz said that's one reason he does scenario-building in teams: to draw in more perspectives. He always checks for social, technological, economic, political, and environmental driving forces, but there can be other categories, too.

Predetermined Elements (What we know we know.) Slow-changing phenomena, things in the pipeline, inevitable collisions (infrastructure being built or population shifts, as examples).

Critical uncertainties (forces of hopes and fears) "You find (critical uncertainties) by questioning your

assumptions about predetermined elements." The example Schwartz gives is particularly apt for us:

"The readership population is mostly predetermined—it depends on demographics. Increasing competition from electronic media is also predetermined. Literacy is also a crucial element—but it is far from predetermined. It depends on decisions made about education during the next few years. Thus the quality of education now will influence the print media market in the next 20 years. Yet how many book publishers have bothered to invest in improving education in any significant way?"

Working from these elements, Schwartz's scenario-building teams compose multiple plots—never just one. Although there are frequently additional plots (as well as alternatives where the main plots might intersect and overlap) scenario-builders almost always hit at least these three main plots:

Winners and Losers. The world as a zero-sum game, with no sharing in the middle. So, who wins and who loses. And how.

Challenge and Response: This one we should all know—Schwartz says the concept comes from script-writing—as the obstacle-reaction of novel structure. It's the what ifs, and their possible answers.

Evolution: Slow change in one direction. Think technology over the past decades.

Like writing fiction, two groups of scenario-builders could take the same material and come up with very different plots.

But that's one of its strengths. Because, again, the importance of taking the long view is not to bank on a single prediction. The importance is to familiarize yourself with the possibilities. In fact, one of the core benefits of scenario-building is that it forces you to recognize possibilities in the future that you might not want to see.

Once you've seen it, you can prepare for it and recognize it if it starts showing on the horizon...even while you hope it never happens.

This has been a quick introduction to what is a creative and skilled undertaking. Saying that you hunt and gather information, check with remarkable people, widen your perceptions, then take those pieces, throw them together in a plot or three and—voila!—you have scenario-building is rather like saying think up a few characters, have them do a few things, and—voila!—you have a novel.

As the title says, creating and taking the long view is an art.

It's an art we all can benefit from cultivating. Starting with reading the book, engaging in the discussion of the future of publishing at the conference and opening our minds to the possibilities for our future. ▲

NINK asked Eileen Hutton, Vice-President/Associate Publisher at Brilliance Audio, Inc., what she sees in the future for audiobooks.

The hottest news in the press these days is downloads. Columnists are trumpeting the death of cassettes and CDs—and heralding the advent of the media-free era.

Retailers have dictated the death of the cassette, to the dismay of the millions of people who want their audiobooks on tape. Bookstores—even superstores—have a relatively small footprint for audiobook shelving, and it's simpler for them to carry a title in only one format. Bye-bye cassette.

The CD may not last as long as the cassette did. For audiobooks, CDs have only been prominent for a few years, and downloads may soon render them obsolete.

As audiobooks shift more to download, your fan base is being hit with the same VHS/Beta dilemma that has plagued music downloaders from the beginning. In an effort to protect the intellectual property from widespread piracy, each file (read title: either music or spoken word) is embedded with something called DRM. Digital Rights Management is the code that prevents the consumer from burning what he just purchased to a CD, or moving it on to an iPod or other MP3 player, or moving it from the iPod to a new player. Currently you can play music from the Apple store on your iPod, music from the Microsoft store on your Zune, or music from the Sony store on your Sony player.

In short, DRM is frustrating the heck out of the consumer.

On February 6, 2007, Steve Jobs called for the end of DRM as counterproductive. He reminded the major music labels that CDs and MP3-CDs do not have that kind of “protection” and that people do move their CD libraries on to any player they own. I know many people who have moved their entire music collection onto their player of choice, and keep those purchased CDs as backups.

So, what's the problem? The problem is that DRM is hindering the growth of download distribution by making it too difficult for the buyer to use the content he's purchased—at least, in ways that make sense to him. Jobs informs us that the most popular iPod holds 1,000 songs, and that the average iPod is nearly full. Given the sales of iPods and of songs through iTunes, only 22 out of those 1,000 songs (or 3% of average iPod content) is protected by DRM. The rest are from regular CDs. He claims that fewer than two billion DRM-protected songs were sold worldwide by online stores in 2006, while *more than 20 billion* songs were

sold on unprotected CDs. Theoretically, each of those 20 billion songs could be uploaded to the Internet and downloaded for free all over the world. It's just not happening.

In fairness, I'll report here that Paul Kedrosky of the *Wall Street Journal* has expressed skepticism about Jobs “conversion” to the anti-DRM forces. He reminds us that Apple is under a great deal of legal pressure from the Europeans to “untangle iTunes and iPod and open up the music market.” Kedrosky claimed that “There is pretty much zero chance that the music industry will eliminate DRM.”

Within a day of reading the *WSJ* article, I received an announcement that one of the Big-4 music labels, EMI, is in talks with several online retailers about providing the entire EMI music library in unprotected MP3 format. If it happens, this will put pressure on the others to forego DRM. We'll see.

A recent Consumer Electronics Association poll showed that a good percentage of young people don't even bother to purchase and hold physical media. As long as they can get what they want online, they're very comfortable buying all their music (and audiobooks) as digital files. So, this DRM v. MP3 thing is very important.

Currently, most audiobooks licensed for download come with DRM, and that's frustrating the consumer—your fans. So, I want you to think about it. Seriously. The average audiobook listener is educated, relatively affluent, a regular online buyer, and in his mid-40s. This is not the demographic that started Napster. This is not the generation that thinks stealing is cool. Would your audiobooks be at risk in any real sense if they were downloaded without DRM? Really? I mean, that would allow me to loan mine to my daughter when I'm done listening—but I do that now with CDs. And so do you. Is that so big a risk if it finds you a new fan?

I'm not asking you to make a decision now. But you—and your agent—should be watching this issue closely. You should make an intelligent decision about DRM, and whether or not to require it in your contracts. You cannot make that choice based on fear and scare tactics. You need to be sure you will get paid for every download as a sale; but, on the other hand, you cannot afford to alienate your fans, or there won't be *any* market for your books on audio.

Opinions? I'd like to hear yours. Email me at ehutton@brillianceaudio.com. ▲

Book to Video

Continued from page 1 ▶

should be as unique as the imagination of the author.

Book video production starts with asking the right questions. The first question I ask a client isn't "What's your book about?" My first question is "What do you want to do with your career?" The questions I ask help me determine what the book video will look like. Clients who request a consultation prior to having a video made should be prepared for a 60- to 90-minute session. About 20 minutes of that time will be used to discuss the book.

There's no doubt that a great book with a great hook will capture the attention of readers. It is important to identify some of the key elements unique to the story so they can be highlighted in the video. The video script should not be a reiteration of the back copy of the book. It should be an enhancement of it. Most readers will watch the video and, if intrigued, go to the author's site to read the excerpts and back copy.

Videos shouldn't be more than two minutes long. Less is more. At two minutes, you're really pushing it with download times. People with a dial-up connection may get discouraged. Keep it to 60 seconds or less and more people will get to see it.

The format you choose will also be important. We offer both Quicktime and Windows Media Player formats. When we upload to a site like YouTube, we have a Flash version as well.

Too much text and too many pictures make for a bad video. They start to compete against each other for the viewer's attention. Keep it simple. A really long line of text should fade up a little at a time. This makes it much easier for the viewer to both follow *and* understand what he's reading.

Who Will Watch a Book Video?

Based on five years of experience in the book video industry, I have noted that there are two main groups of people: those who are traditional readers and those who are not.

Traditional readers are more likely to use the back cover blurb, an excerpt, or reviews to choose a book. They are established readers. They don't need a video to get them to pick up a book. Although many will watch them to see what's coming up. And, to them, some videos are really just announcements that the book is out.

Non-traditional readers usually watch TV, go to the movies, play video games, and spend far too much time downloading to their iPod.

You have to really reel them in to get them to pick up a book.

With more and more competition for the entertainment dollar, the publishing industry must expand its thinking beyond traditional advertising and marketing. We must evolve to create and nurture new readers. But first, we need to find them. eMarketers, an online marketing research firm, did a study in August 2006 that said 70% of all Internet users are using Broadband, which makes viewing online video easier, and that by 2008, 137.2 million online users will be watching online video.

In order to capture these online users, you must speak to them via a medium to which they have grown accustomed. That medium is visual. Games, movies, and special effects are all becoming bigger and better across every segment of the entertainment industry. How is the publishing industry supposed to compete with that?

Both Nielsen/NetRatings and the Online Publishers Association agree, from research done in 2006, that 52% of the online video viewers are male, with a shift predicted for 2007 that will balance the gender scale. They also both agree that the highest concentration of viewers is between the ages of 35 and 49.

Whether or not you like them, or even use them, if book videos bring in more new readers, aren't they a wonderful tool?

Of course, there will always be those of us who love to go to our local bookstore, touch the pages, read the back copy, and enjoy the unique smell of coffee and books.

Are They Effective?

Increased web traffic, name recognition, book recognition, back list sales, rising book sales, and better placement on important bestseller lists are all possible.

Book videos are a tool like any other promotional tool. They work, if you know what to do with them. They should be well researched, well produced, and well placed. They should be as engaging and entertaining as the book itself.

According to Web Designer Chris Tong of Enchanted Websites, Christine Feehan, the first author to utilize a Book Trailer®, has seen a 600% increase in traffic to her website since she started using video.

According to Liz Dubelman, CEO of VidLit, the VidLit for Ellis Weiner and Barbara Davilman's hit book, *Yiddish with Dick and Jane*, was seen by a million people leading to sales of more than 120,000 copies. The VidLit for *Jewtopia* by Bryan Fogel and Sam

Wolfson has been seen by about 50,000 people (it's a much newer book) leading to sales of about 45,000 copies. VidLit's website allows viewers to buy directly from the site, thus enabling VidLit to follow sales.

A study was done in 2006 to check the overall effectiveness of using book videos to advertise on television. A Book Trailer® created for an ebook was chosen for the study. No other advertising or marketing was used during the study period. The video was played on television for one week and the website traffic was monitored. The first day the video was played there was an increase of 20%. By the third day, cumulative traffic had increased by 90%. We are now waiting for the publisher to supply us with sales figures for that week and for the subsequent week. The results of that study will be released by a group of book video makers including Circle of Seven Productions, VidLit, and Expanded-Books in a White Paper during BEA this year, along with other studies and statistics.

Authors using book video have reported higher ranking on important lists such as the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and many of the booksellers' lists such as Amazon, Borders, and Barnes & Noble. Susan Kearney reported that her book *The Ultimatum*, which had a Book Trailer® that was distributed online and shown in a single region of California on television, made #101 on the *USA Today* list. This ranking was the best one of her books has done outside of a Star Trek book she was commissioned to write. "Since I've been doing book trailers with Circle of Seven I've noticed a huge increase in web site hits," says Kearney.

Douglas Clegg had never made any of the lists, even though one of his books had been made into a movie. *The Priest of Blood* hit #26 on the *New York Times* list. "It also hit B&N and Amazon's preorder bestseller lists," says Clegg who couldn't recall the exact numbers. "Additionally, for several independent bookstores, both online and off, it hit the top end of their rankings, too.

"The single-most effective promotional, marketing and advertising strategy ever done for one of my novels, creating news and attention for my novel, *The Priest of Blood*, would not have existed without COS Productions."

This marketing concept has cumulative effects. The longer it is out there the more the public will see and accept it, not only as a form of advertisement, but also as a form of entertainment itself, much like movie trailers. With the evolution of technology making online marketing a fast growing opportunity, it makes sense for the book industry to utilize its potential.

The bottom line is that book videos are not merely a passing trend. They are an evolution in marketing for the publishing industry.

Costs

The number one question associated with book video is "How much does it cost?"

The adage "You get what you pay for" holds true with any product. You can make your own video by purchasing editing software or using Windows Movie Maker. You may have a natural ability for such creative endeavors. But, even then, what will you do with it after it is made? If you have a marketing and distribution plan, then give it a try. Make your own! I've seen some that were pretty good. An individual often has limited resources to get the video played or picked up by the media, but it isn't impossible.

There are many book video makers out there: Circle of Seven (COS) Productions, VidLit, Expanded Books, ScrapFaries (BookPeeks), and more. Each offers something unique. VidLits, one of my personal favorites, is more animation based. Expanded Books specializes in author interviews. But distribution, marketing assistance, and media connections are important as well. You need to know what to do with your product once you have it.

COS Productions' videos range from \$250 to upwards of \$5000, according to what the client wants. All products come with distribution. You can have something simple, or you can have a full television commercial shot on film.

Book Video in Review

The evolution of marketing has brought book video to the publishing industry. Much like the music industry of old, video seems an odd fit. But, used correctly, it can be a valuable tool that can bring in potential readers you couldn't reach before.

And do they work? Yes. Yes, they do.

Kensington's Editorial Director Kate Duffy said of JoAnn Ross' *Bad Boys Southern Style* video, "I would run, not walk, to the bookstore after seeing this. Beyond superb!"

Welcome to the evolution.

A publicist and CEO of Circle of Seven Productions, the premier creators of Book Trailers®, Sheila Clover English has created a niche in the book industry with creative promotional and marketing ideas. In 2006 Mrs. English won several international film awards for her book videos.

Do's and Don'ts...see overleaf ▶▶▶

Do's and Don'ts of Creating Your Own Video

Do . . .

- Keep it short (30- 60 seconds).
- Create a mood that reflects your genre.
- Be clear in your script on what the story is about.
- Always license the music or photos you use.
- Make the text readable.
- Include your website URL.
- Include your book cover at the end.

Don't . . .

- Use music or photos without permission.
- Use so much text viewers can't enjoy the visuals.
- Have so many pictures they can't read the text.
- Use light colored font on light colored pictures (you can't read it).
- Use special fonts that are difficult to read.
- Use photos so graphic that online sites won't allow them.
- Just use your video on your own site.

URLs Related to Book Video

cosproductions.com
myspace.com/cosbooktrailers
vidlit.com
expandedbooks.com
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bookstandard.com
harpercollins.ca/trailers/
betweenyoursheets.com/gallery/index.php?cat=2
theromancezone.com

Business Briefs

Dorchester Launches "New" Genre: The Shomi imprint will aim at "younger, hipper" readers. While romance is the basic premise, it will be coupled with paranormal, futuristic, or fantasy elements. The publisher implies a darker edge with the term "noir-like narrative voice" with female leads trapped between worlds. The imprint, with manga-style covers, launches in July with Liz Maverick's *Wired*, followed by Marianne Mancusi's *Moon Gazer* in August, and Eve Kenin's *Driven* in September.

Yack It Up With Your Readers: Yes, that's Yack, *yack.com*, that wants to connect readers to discussions, critique, and recommend books and, hopefully, expand reader interest. Dubbed a "social networking site," the website includes groups, blogging, instant messaging, interactive Q&As, and weekly chats with authors. Launched in November by author Lawrence Ross, it has 400 registered members with an eye on 1 million by the end of this year. Participating authors include Dave Barry, Eric Jerome Dickey, E. Lynn Harris, and L.A. Banks. Ross is actively contacting publishers to invite their authors to join. Each author can have a personal page, add events, blog, and chat directly with readers. Ross wants authors representing all genres and levels—from those just starting out to seasoned bestsellers.

LC Enters the Online Public Domain Market: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation awarded the Library of Congress a \$2 million grant. The grant's main focus is "at-risk" public domain titles where the hard copy is falling apart and volumes dealing with American History. The project is called appropriately "Digitizing American Imprints at the Library of Congress." This will be an interesting development in comparison to what Google and others are offering. ▲

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