

NCBPMA News

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NCBPMA September Program GO GOOGLE BOOK SEARCH!

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by Christine Walker

There's a reason the company Google has become synonymous with the verbs "search" and "find." A tally of Internet searches worldwide attributes 61.3% to Google. With over 9,000 employees, 20 offices worldwide, and proprietary technology for scanning books and viewing content online, Google is in a position to fulfill its ultimate mission: cataloging, organizing, and making all the world's information universally accessible. At the NCBPMA September lunch, Laura Driussi, Strategic Partner Manager for Google Book Search (<http://books.google.com>), revealed ways publishers benefit from partnering with the world's largest search engine.

Ten years ago it was hard to imagine that online bookselling would account for 13% of overall sales, as it does today in the United States. That figure will continue to increase as more titles become available in digital form and more people seek information and entertainment online. Google Book Search helps users discover books, while keeping content protected and driving book sales for publishers. Users may conduct full-text searches or limit their search to titles or author names, and they are introduced to books while performing regular Google searches. With Google Book Search, users find detailed information and books they wouldn't have found otherwise, and publishers have options for generating sales, whether buyers to order books from the publisher, buy from an online retailer, or visit a local bookstore.

Book browsers want to see what they're buying. Google scans the full book, but makes only a "limited preview" visible to users. If the publisher or author is participating in the Google Book Search Partner Program, users can browse a sample of the text. Publishers or authors have control over how much of the book is viewable to users, from a minimum of 20% all the way up to 100%. Save, download, and print are disabled. Google will next give publishers the option to try an Online Access model where users can pay to view the entire book online. Publishers will control the pricing and receive the majority of the revenue and will be able to set different prices for different rental periods. This will give users more options: a quick look into the book, a one-time read, or long-term reference access.

Google already drives a huge amount of traffic to online booksellers—60% of Amazon traffic, for instance. One important advantage for publishers of Google Book Search is that Google supports a publisher's branding. The publisher's logo, name, and website link appear on the page, along with links to major online retailers in every country, giving the customer sever-

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OFF-BEAT AND ALTERNATIVE HOOKS FOR YEAR-ROUND HOLIDAY PITCHING (and several good reasons to take the day off)

By Adrienne Biggs, BIGGS PUBLICITY & EVENTS

Books are published with seasons in mind. “Important” books are published in the Fall, “new year/new you” books in the Winter, Lifestyle books in the Spring, and “beach reads” in the Summer. Likewise, the media expect to receive pitches for “serious” books for Fall, holiday book pitches for December, romance and relationship book pitches for February, Mothers Day book pitches for May, Dad and Grad book pitches for June, and BBQ and Grilling cookbook pitches for Summer. And every publicist knows a good hook is important. But how do you set your holiday book apart from the competition, or how do you turn your non-holiday book into a book worth celebrating?

There are hundreds of date-specific “holidays” that invite unusual pitch ideas and which provide unique hooks for publicists, media, and retailers. For example, everyone knows most new diet books are published in January but you may not know that January is also National Hobby Month, National Soup Month, National Hot Tea Month, and that the Today show and The Simpsons both premiered on January 14, in 1952 and 1990, respectively. Lots of people know that April is National Poetry Month, but who knew it was also Alcohol Awareness Month, Child Abuse Prevention Month, Dog Appreciation Month, Month of the Young Child, National Garden Month, National Welding Month, National Fresh Celery Month, and National Anxiety and Stress Awareness Month? The biggest holiday in July is Independence Day, but did you know that July is also National Anti-Boredom Month, National Peach and Blueberries Month, National Tennis Month, and Tahiti and Her Islands Month, and that July 3 to 9 is Nude Recreation Week, or that July 11 is World Population Day (the anniversary of the day our planet became home to 5 billion people)?

A few years ago I discovered these gems in one terrific book: *Celebrate Today* by John Kremer, which features 3,200 special days, weeks, months, and anniversaries that publicists can use to promote their books (or find an excuse to take the day off). At the time, I was assigned to do publicity for *The Cheers and the Tears*, a book about youth sports and sportsmanship, and I was having trouble coming up with a good “hook”. The book was coming out in early March, after the springtime youth sports season was already in full swing, and although the author had top credentials there weren’t any relevant news headlines

to connect the book to. I had to get creative if I wanted this book to catch the attention of the media. I started to wonder if media response would increase if I hinged my pitch to a specific holiday or unusual historic date. And I became curious to find out if a holiday existed in early March that might tie into the theme of the book.

Sure enough, in the index of *Celebrate Today* I discovered that March 7 was National Sportsmanship Day, a day designed to encourage athletes and others to discuss ethics, sportsmanship, and fair play on the field and in the classroom. The day is celebrated the first Tuesday in March at more than 7,000 schools nationwide. I had hit a home run! I used this date as my hook, expanded my media list beyond parenting publications to include sports columnists and sports radio, and the media was very receptive—I even secured a feature in a nationally syndicated newspaper column read by millions of people. The publisher was pleased, the author was ecstatic, and the book sold through most of its first print run. And then Oprah and *The New York Times* called.

So the next time you’re looking for a creative promotional hook for your book, why not shake things up and offer the media a holiday or season tie-in they don’t expect, when they least expect it? And when you’re daunted by having to make a heavy load of follow up calls, or in the middle of leaving yet another voicemail pitch message, remember to be grateful for the answering machine (which was invented September 27, 1950!).

RESOURCES:

Celebrate Today: Over 3,000 Boss-Proof, Tamper-Resistant, Undeniable Reasons to Take the Day Off by John Kremer (Open Horizons Publishing, c 1995; book and Special Events Data File available by calling 505-751-3398).

What Happened When: A Chronology of Life & Events in America: An Essential Collection of Facts & Dates From 986 – Today by Gorton Carruth (A Signet Book/Penguin, c 1991)

A Dictionary of Dates by Cyril Leslie Beeching (Oxford University Press, c 1993)