**MiPA March 2025 Member Meeting: Partner for Promotion: Teaching Your Authors (and Yourself) to Build Market PresenceTop of Form**

The meeting covered various aspects of author education and marketing strategies in the publishing industry. Julie Trelstad, an experienced publishing professional, shared insights on creating effective author education programs, building author communities, and implementing cross-promotional activities to boost book sales. The discussion also touched on specific marketing tactics, the importance of literary citizenship, and advice for both established publishers and new authors in navigating the evolving publishing landscape.

**Announcements**

* Upcoming events include the Rosemont Writers’ Festival and the IBAP/MBPR/MiPA Networking Event (Thrive in 2025) at Open Book in Minneapolis on March 20th.
* Our April 8th Membership Meeting presenter will be Dan Miller, whose topic will be “Copyright in the Age of Artificial Intelligence.”
* MiPA Members who register for IBPA’s Publishing University can use the discount code from the MiPA website to get 20% off their registration

**Author Education and Publishing Challenges**

Julie discussed her experience in publishing and the importance of author education. She explained how her own publishing company failed after Borders went out of business, highlighting the challenges of being a small independent publisher. Julie then worked at Writers House, the largest literary agency focused on book publishing, where she ran their self-publishing program and supported authors with digital platforms. She found that many authors, even those with big book deals, were unsure how to promote themselves online. This led Julie to leave Writers House and focus on independently helping authors navigate the publishing landscape and build their careers.

**Author Education Programs in Marketing**

Julie discussed the importance of author education programs in book marketing. She outlined a four-step process to create such programs: assessing author needs, overcoming barriers, promoting literary citizenship, and implementing the program. Julie emphasized that authors need a clear understanding of their role in marketing, skills development, confidence, and community support. She suggested surveying authors to assess their comfort level with marketing, previous experience, concerns, time availability, and desired support. Julie also identified different types of authors, including reluctant promoters, eager but scattered marketers, and newbies. She addressed common reasons why authors resist marketing and suggested reframing marketing as reader connection rather than self-promotion. Julie recommended starting with small, achievable tasks to build author confidence and skills, and emphasized the power of authors promoting each other's work.

**Building Author Communities for Cross-Promotion**

Julie discussed strategies for building author communities and cross-promotion within publishing houses. She emphasized that the number one reason people buy books is familiarity with the author, and the second is word-of-mouth recommendations. Julie suggested creating author communities where writers can support each other, share successes, and participate in cross-promotional activities. She proposed various levels of engagement, from simple email sequences to comprehensive programs with in-person events, depending on the publisher's resources. Julie also recommended using tools like Google Workspace, Slack, and Canva for low-budget options, or more advanced platforms like Kajabi and Activecampaign for higher budgets. She outlined a 90-day plan for implementing such a program, starting with surveying authors' needs and ending with a pilot rollout.

**Author Education Programs for Publishers**

Julie presented a case study of a successful author education program with Wattpad, which resulted in increased participation in marketing efforts and a 43% increase in sales. She suggested that publishers of different sizes can implement author education programs through various means, such as monthly Zoom workshops, dedicated portals, or author relations teams. Julie advised publishers to start by surveying their authors, creating a shared resource, and connecting authors who can help each other. She emphasized that author education can be a small press's secret weapon, as it increases message repetition without additional marketing costs. For nonfiction, Julie recommended focusing on the subject matter and creating marketing assets around the core content of the publishing company. She also provided advice for self-publishing programs and new authors, suggesting they study successful authors in their genre before engaging in marketing efforts.

**Marketing Strategies for Authors and Publishers**

Julie discussed various marketing strategies for authors and publishers. She suggested creating digital assets like 3D cover images, Canva templates, tip sheets, postcards, bookmarks, and social media graphics for authors to use. Julie emphasized the importance of continuous promotion, even for older books, as they don't "go bad." She recommended developing a marketing practice, such as monthly co-working sessions, to help authors stay consistent. Julie also advised publishers to invest in author training, as it pays off with subsequent books. She encouraged creativity in marketing approaches, questioning traditional publishing rules, and tailoring strategies to independent publishers' resources.

**Additional Opportunities and Information from Julie**

Julie is excited to offer all attendees of her "Partner for Promotion" presentation an exclusive opportunity to transform their author training programs. For the next two weeks (until March 25th, 2025), she’s providing a limited number of 45-minute Publisher Strategy Calls at a special rate of $197 (regularly $375), where publishers will receive a customized assessment of their current author support systems, a practical 90-day implementation plan, and ready-to-use templates. During these focused sessions, she’ll draw on her three decades of industry experience—including her work with StreetLib and Publishers Marketplace Buzz Books—to help publishing professionals develop effective author training that drives marketing results while reducing team burnout.

Interested attendees can book their session at <https://paperbacks.kit.com/9c9d0c427f>. (They can also use the session as an individual author).

Additionally, everyone is welcome to sign up for Julie’s newsletter to receive a free copy of her guide "The Problem with Traditional Book Marketing and What to Do About it,"  packed with actionable tips for leveraging AI in author community development.