

Explains the what, why, and how of book endorsements.

The Endorsement Quest

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The Endorsement Quest

Introduction

You hear it all the time: Don't expect your publisher to spend any money promoting your book unless it becomes a huge success. I was prepared for this fact. I'm continually brainstorming new promotion ideas and ways to get my book titles out to my audience.

The publisher's lack of investment begins before the production. This was made clear after I'd submitted my book, *50 Fabulous Gay-Friendly Places to Live* (Career Press, 2005; ISBN: 1564148270; www.FabCities.com), when I received the following Email from my editor:

"Gregory: We're working on your cover design. Who do you have lined up for endorsements?"

I stammered at the Email: "Huh?"

Yep, right there in my book contract was the legal black and white: "Obtaining endorsements is the sole responsibility of The Author."

I pulled the how-to books off my [Writer's Bookshelf](#) and searched desperately for information on endorsements. While several of my favorite how-to books mentioned them, they didn't answer my questions. What are they, exactly? How to I get them?

I'd seen them before of course. We've all seen those wonderful and witty comments on book covers and in promotional advertising praising the book as something we have to buy to solve all our problems. I somehow had this idea that those came from media

reviews after the book was published. I've discovered that such follow-up reviews will come, but that endorsements and early reviews need to be obtained before publication, too.

Since the books on my [Writer's Bookshelf](#) didn't answer my questions, I turned to the Internet and began Googling. I couldn't find any help. No one had created a method or procedure for obtaining those all important, yet illusive back of book endorsements...No one willing to share it anyway.

The next step on my personal endorsement quest was to contact my author friends and ask them directly: How do I do this? Luckily, my friends and colleagues were all quite helpful and willing to share their experience. Yet, it turned out most of their quotes came from friends and colleagues and involved a lot of printing and mailing expenses. There was no single way or method, no model to follow, to get to people I didn't know. And, frankly, I didn't feel like I knew that many people. The other disadvantage I faced was a small budget. OK, that's not exactly true. I basically had NO budget for this important project.

Armed with a little knowledge and my own, trusted instincts I set out on The Endorsement Quest. When I was done, I'd spent under \$100, obtained some great quotes, and my publisher was quite happy with the positive results.

I shared my own successful quest experience with my writing friends and noticed they all picked up their pens and took notes while I spoke. I asked why? What is it they were so interested in? The answer is this eBook: *The Endorsement Quest*.

The Endorsement Quest explains what endorsements are, why you need them, and how to get them. Along the way, you'll discover helpful tips for choosing, finding, and contacting potential endorsers. Plus, there's a sample Endorsement Request Letter and sample Endorsement Reply Form to get you started.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you do, I'd like to hear from you. Also, I'd like to hear your own endorsement quest tips and success stories. Send me an Email at: Gregory@Kompes.com

Now, let the Endorsement Quest begin!



What are Endorsements?

Pick up any book off your bookshelf, at the library or bookstore and turn it over. There, on the back cover or book jacket, there's probably a quote by someone other than the



book's author. That's an endorsement. Look at any printed advertisement or television commercial. Do you recognize the actor or professional? That's an endorsement. Listen to radio commercials. Do you know the voice? That's an endorsement.

Endorsements, sometimes called "Blurbs," are those quotes that show up on the back covers of books, on websites, and in promotional materials that praise or promote a book, eBook, piece of software or any other product. These quotes range from one or two words to full-page testimonials. Pretty simple, right?

In the commercial examples above, there's a difference, the actor or famous face or voice was probably paid for their endorsement. Actors, musicians, and sports figures are frequently paid large sums of money to act as endorsers or spokespersons for products and companies.

This is where the world of book endorsements veers away from commercial endorsers.

As a rule, book blurbs are unpaid endorsements. That's not to say that endorsers don't receive some type of compensation for their time, words and participation. But, the compensation is rarely large and almost never directly financial. (See The Endorser in "[Why You Need Endorsements](#)")

Why You Need Endorsements?

Endorsements serve different purposes for everyone involved. Let's look at who benefits from endorsements.

The Readers

Endorsements show potential readers what others think of your book. The reader knows the book's author is prejudiced. Of course the author thinks the book is wonderful, but what do other's think of the book?

It's true that anyone can provide an endorsement, but the goal of endorsements is to find credible people who will endorse and recommend your product. If the back-of-book endorsements are from the author's Aunt Josephine and Grandpa Jo the potential reader may chuckle as they remember all those elementary finger paintings and gold-stared test papers that lived on their refrigerators until they yellowed and turned to dust. Of course the author's aunts and grandparents think they're wonderful. That's their job.

Authors need to find endorsers who add credibility to their work. This isn't to say that comments from Aunt Josephine and Grandpa Jo don't have their place. Endorsements from friends and family make us feel loved and supported. And, there are great places these types of endorsements come in handy and help sell books. (See "[Family Endorsements](#)")

The Endorser

In return for adding credibility to your book or product, the endorser receives several benefits of their own. Providing an endorsement promotes the endorser as an expert. This is important in the endorser's own ongoing product sales and personal branding.

The endorser is also receiving free publicity. Go back to those books you first looked at. Under the endorsement quote is the endorser's name as well as their book title, company name, website address or some other information about them.

While not required, it's a nice gesture to offer or give your endorsers a small gift. This doesn't need to be, nor should it be anything extravagant or expensive. Many authors offer endorsers a signed book of their choice from the collection they've written. Others will send small, useful gifts such as food baskets, scarves or neckties that relate to the endorsed book in some way.



Whether you send an inscribed book or gift, it's in good taste and professional to send a handwritten, thank you card.

The Media

Many members of the media will look at your endorsements and reviews to determine if they should spend time reviewing your product themselves. If important, respected and well known people have endorsed your book, others are likely to follow suit. Include your list of endorsements and blurbs in your press kit and promotional materials.

The Author

Authors need endorsements for different reasons. First, there's the impact mentioned above on the readers and the media. Both of these populations are essential if you're going to sell your book and develop a positive, personal brand.

There are other immediate and long-term implications to obtaining positive endorsements. It's human nature to respect someone we don't know if they're respected

by others. This is especially true if those who endorse an author are industry experts, people with famous names, or high-level media outlets.

Like most things in life, the first time you do something is the most difficult. As you move on to your second book and additional products, as you yourself become branded as an expert in your field, obtaining endorsements because of your positive track record and previous accomplishments will become easier. In short order, you will be sought out to endorse the books and products of others, increasing your own expert status and branding.

Endorsements are Win/Win

The great thing about endorsements is that everyone involved in them benefits. Readers know if this book is right for them, the media develops respect for the author, the endorser expands their credibility and gets some free publicity, while the author expands their branding and networking, obtains potential promotion value, and hopefully, sells more books and products.



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