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Getting Your Book into the Chainstores Through Autographings

by Dan Poynter

With chainstores: it's the author, not the book

One way to get into the chains is through the backdoor. Go to a local chain store and offer a mini seminar on your subject. We used to call these "autographings." Then you must turn out the crowd. Remember, the store is only providing the venue. They want you to bring in new customers.

Send an announcement to everyone in your email address book and ask your friends, relatives and colleagues to forward the announcement to anyone they know (within driving distance) who will be interested in you or the subject.

Take books to the store. When you get there, proceed to the shelf where your book will be and look for other books very much like yours. Take them back to the presentation/autographing area. When you speak, take time to hold up the other books (puts your book in good company) and praise them. "This is the book that got me started in this business." "This is the book I keep next to my dictionary for constant reference," and so on. Your audience can purchase just your book or they can leave the store with three or four. Each person can spend \$20 or \$60. Sixty dollars will impress the store a lot more. And that store will want to stock your book.

Then go to the next chain store. Based on your prior performance, they will want you; they may even have heard of you already. After a few stores, the chain will want your book.

Do not be disappointed when the chain puts you in 300 stores instead of every one of their 850 outlets. Each store is profiled; they know what will sell there. For example, a business title will go into downtown stores

while parenting titles will be displayed in stores in the suburbs. Your books will go into the stores were it will move.

It's the author, not the book. Stores want authors who sell books. Chains know books don't sell themselves, authors sell books.

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Dan Poynter does not want you to die with a book still inside you. You have the ingredients and he has your recipe. Dan has written more than 100 books since 1969 including *Writing Nonfiction* and *The Self-Publishing Manual*. For more help on book writing, see <http://ParaPub.com>.

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Dan Poynter has written more than 100 books since 1969 including *Writing Nonfiction* and *The Self-Publishing Manual*. He is past-chair of NSA's Writer-Publisher PEG and the founder of the PEG newsletter. For more help on book writing, publishing and promoting, see <http://ParaPublishing.com>.

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