

The Author's ADVOCATE

Special Newsletter

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Jerry D. Simmons, Warner Books VP Authors' Conference Keynoter

One of the hot discoveries during my recent visit to Phoenix to represent **Infinity Publishing** at the **Women Writer's of the Desert Conference** was hearing the sizzling presentation about traditional book publishing by **Jerry D. Simmons**. The recently retired **Vice-President of Warner Books** gave the attendees a rare insider's look into the publishing business. His delivery was as hot as the triple-digit temperature outside!!! Jerry explained what a major mainstream publisher has to do in order to earn profits from the more than 1,700 books published by Warner Books each year.

Infinity Publishing is pleased to announce that Jerry has agreed to keynote the Friday evening banquet at our 7th annual **Express Yourself... Authors' Conference**, September 29 through October 1, at the Sheraton Park Ridge in Valley Forge, PA. He will also take part in the **Ask the Experts** panel on Sunday morning.

Jerry's career in publishing began in the fall of 1977 as a Sales Rep for **Random House**. In 1979, he joined the book division at **Warner Communications**, where he spent more than twenty years in sales and management. During that time, the company expanded to become the **Time Warner Book Group**. Their sales team distributed over a thousand titles each year from a number of large publishing houses, including **Little, Brown; Hyperion; and Disney**. Jerry has sold books to some of the largest independent booksellers and mass merchants in the country, as well as managing an aggressive sales force nationwide. He retired as Vice-President Director Field Sales in 2003.

Over the years, he was fortunate to have worked on books written by such best-selling authors as: **James Patterson, Nicholas Sparks, Michael Connelly,**

Robert Kiyosaki, Alice Sebold, Sandra Brown, David Baldacci, Nelson DeMille, Scott Turow, Robert James Waller, and Jack Welch – all #1 *New York Times* best-selling authors!

He was also fortunate to have worked on such huge multi-million copy best-selling titles as *The Bridges of Madison Count; Rich Dad, Poor Dad; Simple Abundance; Scarlett;* and *The Lovely Bones*.

Now living in Phoenix, Mr. Simmons spends his time writing, teaching, and speaking with aspiring writers about the importance of truly understanding the business of publishing by revealing many of the secrets of the largest publishers in the world. His goal is to help writers become successfully published authors by educating them about what happens to an author's book when it has been purchased by a major house.

Jerry is the self-published author of the book **INSIDE The Business of Publishing: What Writers Need to Know**, which explains the numbers-driven game publishing has become. He is the founder of the website for writers, www.WritersReaders.com.

Jerry was one of several publishing professionals who met informally with over two dozen Infinity authors, spouses, and friends participating in our Phoenix wine and cheese appreciation gathering held at the Hilton Suites on Friday evening on the eve of the **Women Writer's of the Desert Conference**.

Please visit www.authorsconference.com for a complete line-up of all of our authors' conference keynoters and presenters. Your early registration guarantees you a one-on-one consultation with the publishing professional of your choice.

Rolling Back the Price on Bulk Book Purchases by Authors

An increasing number of our authors are enjoying publishing success with back-of-the-room-sales (BRS) after a speaking engagement, at the conclusion of presenting a seminar based on their book, or as part of doing a reading and book signing event. We have seen positive indications of more direct sales by the author through noticeable increases in the bulk book purchases by our authors, who are ordering several hundred copies of their books at a time!!!

Therefore, on all future orders for 250 or more copies of an author's book, the cost per book will be at the same price as their initial book order. Authors will be paid a 10% royalty on these bulk purchases, which is in keeping with our standard policy of paying a royalty on each book sold – including purchases by the author. Also, in keeping with company policy, we pay for the cost of regular UPS shipping on all orders for 20 or more books that were ordered through us. All bulk book orders must be phoned in to Infinity Publishing for the author to benefit from this special pricing discount.

Book marketing experts **John Kremer** and **Dan Poynter** have both been strong advocates for authors maintaining a good supply of their books on hand to facilitate purchases of autographed copies directly from the author. A “ready-to-sell” book in the hands of an author is more of a certainty than an order that might or might not be placed at a later time.

Complimentary Promotional Books

We reserve the right to distribute, at our expense and discretion, a reasonable number of our authors' books, royalty-free, for promotional purposes. For example, we continue to encourage authors to only send brief descriptive correspondence about their books to potential reviewers inviting them to request complimentary review copies directly from Infinity Publishing. This is a far more professional method than having authors use the shotgun approach of just sending out lots of copies to any and all reviewers who might, *perhaps, just maybe*, eventually publish a review about the book. By first sending out personalized letters to qualified reviewers with a known track record of reviewing books similar to the submitted book, the author increases their chances of having the reviewer contact us for a review copy. We also send complimentary copies upon request to bookstore buyers interested in ordering Infinity titles. We occasionally donate selected titles to libraries and writer groups holding fund-raising auctions.

PMA / Book Expo America Networking, Walking the Floor

This year was the first time these annual publishing events were held at the Convention Center in Washington DC. In previous years, the host city rotated between New York, Chicago, and LA. The cost of exhibiting and its related expenses – regardless of where these events are held – could easily exceed \$25,000. Frankly, the minimal return on such a major investment to stage and staff a booth at the PMA / BEA doesn't warrant the effort at this time. Few books are sold at the BEA.

Once upon a time – several decades ago – publishers would joyfully exclaim that they wrote 60-75% of their totally annual sales on the floor at the ABA (American Booksellers Association, which then became the BEA). Every exhibitor offered discounted “show specials” on their titles to eager book buyers carrying blank purchase orders ready to take advantages of on-the-spot deals. The attendees wearing buyer badges were in the overwhelming majority, and they came from all over the nation to buy books to keep their shelves stocked with newly-released titles. Publishers freely gave out complimentary copies of all their A-list books – back then, most were hard cover, now many of their give-away copies are digitally printed trade paperbacks!!!

This was my tenth ABA / BEA and the overall attendance on Friday – traditionally heavily attended opening day – seemed more like a Sunday, which is always a low-attendance day. Buyer badges were indeed in the minority and actual book buyers were few and far between. Everyone seemed to be wondering where have all the buyers gone – gone out of business, one by one, in the spreading, clanking wake of chain stores, one by one, done and gone. Thousands of independent bookstore buyers have been replaced by a few hundred buyers representing the chains. They don't have blank purchase orders, but they all have specific instructions about what to look for to fill their valuable shelf space.

Infinity's focus at the BEA was for networking and connecting with other publishing professionals we deal with regularly but rarely have an opportunity to meet. The many networking opportunities at this annual event is really what it's all about for us. The best way to network is to walk the huge exhibition floor, seeking out the exhibitors we're interested in connecting with, and making new contacts. Next year the BEA is back in NYC which is as expensive as DC!!!

Take care and enjoy often...John