



# THE SALES INFORMER

Association of Publishers for Special Sales

**A monthly e-zine dedicated to helping APSS members sell more books  
to more buyers, more profitably.**

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## Standard Written Materials

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There are standard written materials that every budding author can use to support his/her overall marketing efforts. These include a biography, news releases, articles and fact sheets. Let's take them one at a time, starting with the biography.

### **An Updated Bio**

A biography is not a resume. A resume is certainly useful for landing a new job or the preparation of proposals, but it is inappropriate for marketing.

A biography (bio) differs from a resume in that the bio is written in third person as if someone is talking about you, and it is not necessarily chronologically organized. A good bio is upbeat and lively, yet authoritative.

When and where do you use a bio? Bios should accompany any articles that you write, and may accompany any press releases about you. They certainly can be included with any other information that you send when in contact with members of the media.

Resumes are relatively boring reading. To submit a resume when a bio is called for is a strong indication to the receiving party that you are not adept at marketing.

My bio (see below) is constructed to accent my speaking service and then the books I have written. If any part of my bio is truncated when published, my most speaking credentials are still likely to get mentioned.

### **Press Releases**

Years back, I discovered the press release. Up until that time, I didn't realize that pictures and little blurbs that appeared in the paper each night about entrepreneurs, consultants and business executives were submitted by them. I actually believed that there was a roving reporter seeking out tidbits from the business and professional community!

The average person simply does not realize that the media needs them. Newspapers are constantly looking for

stories and press releases that they can run to fill their pages. Looking in the papers and seeing what others had sent in made me realize that every other thing that I was doing could also be worked into a news release.

Essentially a good news release contains the five W's: who, what, where, when and why, as well as how. It is written in a cone-like fashion or, in other words, the most important information is presented first and less important information down at the bottom. The release must be easy to read and snappy – no long sentences, or it will lose the editor's attention right from the start.

### **Article Writing**

Writing an article it is not nearly as tough as most people think it is. Many publications routinely edit your material. They are more interested in receiving interesting themes and interesting concepts submitted by people with the right qualifications.

You undoubtedly have information that will be of interest to your clients and prospects. Don't make the mistake that so many others make by thinking "who would want to read something written by me." With thousands of magazines, newspapers, journals, and newsletters in print, more than one million by-line articles appear in the U.S. alone each year. A significant number of those are by first-time authors. As our society becomes more technologically sophisticated, the potential to get an article published will increase dramatically.

### **About Fact Sheets**

Fact sheets have successfully been used by people who wish to highlight a particular service in a simple, cost effective way. A fact sheet is a one page list of data about a particular topic or service you offer. The sheets can be presented in question and answer format. The fact sheet represents an important element of a media or press kit and is particularly useful for getting on radio and TV.

If all of the above sounds like a lot of work, think again. You only need to devote about four extra hours a month over the course of a year to develop a full complement of these effective marketing tools.

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*Jeff Davidson is "The Work-Life Balance Expert®" whose passion is helping organizations achieve rapid progress for their employees. The premier thought leader on work-life balance issues, Jeff is the author of 59 books, among them "Breathing Space," "Simpler Living," the "60 Second Innovator," and the "60 Second Self-Starter." Visit [www.BreathingSpace.com](http://www.BreathingSpace.com)*