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How You Can Become A Speaker At Events Like This

Bret: This is Bret Ridgway of Speaker Fulfillment Services. Our company provides back-of-the-room order processing services at various marketing conferences every year. And, in fact, it's handled several dozen events over the last two to three years.

As a result, I've had an opportunity to meet thousands of attendees at these events, as well as 100 or so different speakers.

It never fails, at any event, there are some speakers the participants love, and some that feel they could do a better job on the stage than the speaker himself did.

Maybe you are one of those people.

I have certainly been asked many times at these events how one becomes a speaker. There are always a number of people in the crowd who have the desire to be one of the chosen few in front of the crowd, rather than just being a part of the crowd.

So, I have cornered renowned speaker and seminar promoter, Fred Gleeck, to share his insights in how someone like you can be up on the stage at future events.

Fred has delivered presentations around 1,500 times for organizations like CareerTrack, and successfully promoted and delivered hundreds of his own events over the last 20 years. He has been in the trenches and knows what he is talking about.

Good morning, Fred.

Fred: Good morning, Bret. Thank you for taking the time to get together with me here.

Bret: I appreciate you sharing your time with us, Fred. I've been looking forward to helping you show your knowledge of the speaking business with our listeners. Are you ready to roll?

Fred: I'm ready to go. Let's start.

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Bret: Great. The first thing I would like to do is to have you give folks an overview of how the seminar business works. Obviously, two of the major players in this business are the promoter himself, as well as the speakers.

Fred, what is the role of the promoter in this process?

Fred: The role of a promoter, and I will just sort of touch on my background as we give this, is to fill the room.

The people are speaking at one's event, if you are a promoter, expect one thing, which is a room packed full of people ready and willing to buy.

So, the role of a promoter is to fill the event, number one, and there are also some, I guess, equally important things. But, that's the most important thing that the promoter's job is.

Also, clearly, the promoter is involved with all the logistics of setting up the hotel, handing the registration, doing a lot of other things that have to do with the seminar getting pulled off itself. But, the singly important thing is getting the bodies, and what we call "the butts in the seats".

Bret: Are there certain things that you are going to share with us on how you get those bodies into the seats?

Fred: Sure. We're going to talk about how you get those butts in the seats. But, I would think that one of the things that we want to start with first is an understanding that when people come to events and seminars like this themselves, they are interested in making sure that they go away with something that was much greater in terms value than what they parted with in terms of money.

They are spending their time and their money to be there.

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Now, in order to get those people to attend, we've got to have a compelling reason for them to be there. Usually, that reason is detailed pretty completely on a website that we drive people to.

So, the seminar promoter is responsible also for creating a killer website with killer copy in which those people who are driven to that site in a variety of means, get there, become convinced that this is an event that those participants must attend and sign up in droves.

So, that's how we are going to do it. Again, we can go through the particulars if you want with regard to how we get those butts in the seats.

Bret: Before we get into some particulars, why don't we give folks an overview of all the various things we are going to talk about in some sense today, without getting into any particulars on the individual things right now.

We are going to talk about how the seminar business works. We are going to talk about how to become successful in a specific niche, within a niche. And, I'm sure you have a lot more to elaborate on that as we get going.

We will talk about how to develop a line of great products in your specific niche, how to learn how to deliver great content up in front of the room, how to create great handouts to keep people involved in your presentation, how to develop products from the platform, and how to deliver presentations from the platform in the proper manner to generate the back-of-the-room sales for the promoter.

For yourself, we will talk about how to find seminars to speak at, how to get asked back to speak at events again and again and again — which obviously is very important — and how to do your own events.

So, we've got a lot of ground to cover. We can do this in any order that you want.

I know you are a big proponent of understanding how the money works at events, and you've got a formula that I'm sure you would like to share with people.

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Fred: Absolutely. When a promoter promotes an event, obviously their goal, among other things, is the maximization of revenue.

If we can't get the revenue maximized, then we have a problem.

So, the formula that I like to share with people on the seminar business is TR, which stands for "total revenue", is equal to SR, "seminar registration", plus PS, "product sales", plus CB, which can either be consulting or coaching business.

Coaching and consulting is differentiated by one done for an individual, the other is done for an organization.

So, we've got total revenue as a product of seminar registration, product sales and coaching and/or consulting business.

This particular formula is the most important thing to get going.

It's important to understand that seminar registration alone is not going to give you a real winning sort of formula in the seminar business.

It's just not going to happen because most of the people who are promoting events, oftentimes, will break even — sometimes even lose money — on seminar registration, but make it up big time on product sales and the coaching and consulting business.

It's a formula whereby a lot of people will give a two-step sales process where they will get people to come to a preview event.

This is done very, very often in the real estate seminar business. They will drive people to a preview meeting. And, at the preview meeting, the goal of the preview presenter will be to get people to sign up for the longer, more in depth program.

In my case, when I start promoting my own seminars at any point in time, the key to making this happen is to have not only good speakers who we are going to use at these events who have good lists, but also to have my best lists for me, which is my own in-house list.

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As a matter of fact, I have a number of seminars coming up as we speak, which I can briefly tell people about.

For people listening, just to see how that works, the process starts by having people, in my case, sending an email to Tips@SeminarExpert.com. That gets people started in my list to see how the function works, and it adds them automatically to my list, and does so in a manner that I don't have any data entry.

I think the key to making the seminar business work for you as a speaker, or as a promoter, is a massive number of people who can be contacted by email very quickly, cheaply and easily, soliciting them to come to an event with some great speakers.

Bret: Let me ask you a clarification question on your formula: $TR = SR + PS + CB$.

This sounds to me like it's primarily the promoter's formula as opposed to the speaker's formula. Is that true?

Fred: Yes, it is. It is primarily the promoter's formula because the speaker at an event is primarily concerned with a couple of things. Number one is delivering a presentation that gets people up and makes them want to buy what the speaker is offering.

Also, we want to make sure that the speaker is not vacuous in their presentation, and make sure they deliver some great content so that the audience members are excited about what that person did — that way they get asked back by the promoter.

That's the key.

The promoter is not solely, although primarily, interested in how great a product salesperson you are if you are a speaker at the event, but they also want someone who mixes well with the people, is approachable, and a number of other things.

So, that formula is primarily geared to the promoter, not to the presenter or the speaker at the event.

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Bret: So, the speaker himself, his revenue from the event is primarily going to be in back-of-the-room sales, unless he is a highbrow name like a Mark Victor Hansen or somebody like that who could command large speaking fees.

Is that correct?

Fred: That's correct. In most cases, if you are a promoter, it is a very dangerous thing to spend big money on big name speakers in hope that they will generate enough revenue and people coming through the door to make it worthwhile.

I have seen one person in particular, who I won't name, spent thousands of dollars to have one of those brand name speakers show up at his event hoping that this was going to be the draw to get people to come there.

In fact, this speaker ended up losing a boatload of money because they had a commitment to pay this individual all kinds of money to be there and they did not draw the kind of numbers that you would expect.

In most cases, presenters, speakers like me, will come to events where we know there will be a lot of people driven there by the promoter for nothing.

In fact, we are going to be willing to pay our own airfare and our own hotel bills in the hopes and aspirations of selling lots of products to those people and generating lots of future coaching and/or consulting business.

Bret: Now, in this scenario that you said, of course you meant the promoter is the one that lost his shirt there.

Fred: Correct.

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Bret: Obviously, if you have a large list yourself, you can make money on seminar registrations too, even though you are a speaker there.

Fred: Yes. In other words, if you are a speaker and a promoter... Is that your question?

Bret: For example, via affiliate programs or whatever. You, indeed, can make money on the front at these events, promoting other people's events that you are speaking at via their affiliate program.

Fred: Absolutely. Good point. Say, for example, I am speaking at someone else's event coming up 2 or 3 months from now, and I become an affiliate for their particular seminar. I drive my people to that site, and they end up signing up. Yes, I would make money on the front end with the seminar registration.

Usually, there is a split, normally 50/50.

So, if there is a \$1,000 event and I drive a bunch of people there and 10 people sign up, I would usually get \$500 per person so I might make \$5,000 with the seminar registration fee from that event.

It's a good point that we need to understand that not only as a speaker or a presenter are we making money on the back end.

But, we can, and should, if we have a decent size list that we can mail to, make money on the front end in the form of an affiliate commission.

Bret: You have a number of niches that you work within and speak at events for. How does one really determine what niche to attack. Because there are a lot of people out there doing a lot of things in a lot of markets.

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Fred: You and I have bumped into each other on many occasions at these Internet marketing seminars. And, to get to speak at an Internet marketing seminar, for example, one of the things you have to find that will be interesting and desirable for a promoter is a niche within that niche.

If you are just a generalist on Internet marketing, unless you are a really, really well known entity with a large list who speaks well, your chances of being invited to speak are low.

If you are, in fact, an expert on a very specific topic within that, let's say Internet marketing, then you are able, if you pass all these other qualification requirements, to get to speak. It's just a lot easier.

For example, within the Internet marketing space, we might have the subset or the sub-niche, if you will, of Google or Google AdWords.

So, someone may be an expert on Google and Google AdWords, I'm thinking of Perry Marshall, and therefore would be invited to speak on the concept of Internet marketing, but specifically as it relates to Google and Google AdWords which is, in itself, another niche within a niche within a niche.

Because the hierarchy would be Internet marketing, subset pay-per-click search engines and sub-subset, which would be Google AdWords.

Since Google AdWords is one of the biggest subsets of that pay-per-click search engine niche, you have now established yourself that you are the expert.

And, you've got to be able to prove that you have a lot of knowledge about that, have a lot clients in that field, and have generated people a lot of revenue using your techniques and ideas.

So, the first thing that anyone listening to this program should do is try to figure out where there is a gap or a need in the market for something that they know something about and/or can figure out how to know something about.

That's where we need to start, with that niche within a niche to try to get ourselves established.

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Bret: And then, they have to have some type of success within that niche, obviously, to get to the stage, so to speak.

Fred: Yes. Just the fact that you have book knowledge about a given topic is not going to be all it takes. You are going to need to have both book knowledge and practical knowledge and experience. Then, you can prove what it is you have done.

For example, I'm an expert in the field of information creation and marketing. I call myself, and I have the website, www.TheProductGuru.com.

Within any seminar in which they have people speaking on information products, I can get up there and say very proudly that I am The Product Guru.

Why? Because I have created literally over 1,000 products using audio, video, books or ebooks for myself and my clients.

Now, if you notice what I did there, Bret, I am taking the number 1,000. I have not produced 1,000 books, audios, videos, etcetera myself. I have produced probably close to 200 of all those things.

But, I can then sort of co-op some of the products that I have helped others prepare, which numbers over 1,000 people. I am invited to speak on the strength that I have those credentials and I have done that.

So, somebody listening to this program should be thinking about not only how much they know, but also about how much have they done and what kind of results have they produced.

That is key to being invited to speak at these events.

Knowledge of the topic is the beginning of the process, not the end, because we then have to prove to promoters that we can actually deliver the goods by getting up in front of these people, getting great accolades on the part of the people listening, but also selling a lot of product.

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Bret: Do you recommend that people keep a diary or something to be able to accurately report their story later on? How do they inventory their skills?

How should they go about this whole process?

Fred: That's a great question. And, the answer is absolutely yes. In order to substantiate and make your claims real, I would start to keep a diary.

So, if somebody is listening to this program today and says, "I really want to be a speaker in the XYZ area, and I am going to pick this niche within that area," what I am going to do is start writing down, as of today, what I did today, my movement.

Then, you will be able to document how you have been successful, what you have sold, how much you have sold.

The more documentation you can bring to the table when you talk to a promoter, the greater the chances of you getting to speak up in front of a group.

The promoter will not only want to know, hopefully, that you have become successful yourself in that sub-niche, but also that you have helped others and you can prove it with real dollars and real revenue.

So, your chances of getting to speak would be greatly increased if you were able to present the promoter with that data in the form of a diary, which gave all those numbers. It's a great idea.

Bret: What kind of tools do you use to keep track of your results so that you can substantiate your claims to promoters?

Fred: Well, as you become better known in the marketplace, your ability to get booked is going to be easier. But, what I do is I continue to keep a diary of, whenever I

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speak these days, the amount of dollars that I sold in product and how many people were at the event.

A promoter is looking for how many dollars per head or per person you can generate in sales. I actually added an addition to wrinkle to that with the help of Jonathan Mizel's formula. He said, "Not only should it be dollars per person, but it should be dollars per person per minute."

In other words, if you are given a lot of time up on stage, you should be able to close more people because you have had the ability to ingratiate yourself to your audience. Therefore, your ability to close them should be greater.

So, it's important that the people understand as they are putting their programs together and trying to get these gigs, speaking at various events, that they keep detailed records including, and most importantly, their product sales.

If you have a promoter who is only interested in the dollar sign of this equation, that is going to be their most important criteria in selecting or considering you as a speaker.

Bret: Do you have any thoughts on the value of being the emcee or additional duties besides your normal content delivery at an event?

Fred: The answer is absolutely yes.

If you are given the responsibility to be the headliner or the emcee, the emcee then becomes a person that the individuals who are at the event see repeatedly. And this gives that individual a chance to further ingratiate themselves to make themselves a better-known entity to the people who are watching.

So, if you have the ability to be that emcee or that host, it certainly will help your product sales. Now, that assumes that you do that job well. If you don't do that job well, it will probably hurt you.

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Again, it's a balancing act because if you are invited to do that and you do a bad job, you are going to be in trouble. If you do that job and do a good job, it will in most cases help your product sales.

Bret: Is your experience that emcee skills require a different set of skills than a regular presentation?

Fred: Yes. I think that emcee skills are very different than speaking skills because the emcee is really someone who moves things along.

They've got to have a sense of continuity and organization. They've also got to have some good timing in terms of their comic delivery.

Although those skills would be helpful and necessary to a speaker, they could probably pull off giving a great talk and getting a lot of product sales without those skills. So, they are 2 different skills.

They certainly are the exact same skills necessary to be successful as a speaker selling products in front of people.

Bret: Back to the tools, you said that you keep a diary.

Are there other tools that you use to measure your results or help you keep track of things that would be beneficial to a potential speaker?

Fred: I also track my own numbers and my own results within whatever niche I am talking about. So, when I am talking about, for example, being The Product Guru, I have to make sure and be able to tell people how many products I have created.

I don't really like sharing my specific numbers on how many I've sold.

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I also like to be able to point a promoter to all these different websites, each of which promotes a separate product.

So, if people listening on tape looked at a sight like www.SeminarExpert.com or www.PublishingBook.com, what I do is I have many different websites promoting individual products.

If someone listening wants to become a speaker, you should have multiple websites promoting multiple products, be able to prove to a promoter that each of those websites is selling a product and selling it well and have some numbers to justify it.

Keeping that data would also be very good ammunition for getting someone to book you as a speaker.

Bret: We've talked about becoming successful in a specific niche and used an example of using a niche in a niche in a niche type thing.

How does one pick a topic that's important but not being served? What kind of tools or analysis do you do to define those various niches?

Fred: The first thing we need to do is look at where our own background and area of expertise is. We want to look at what we have done professionally, what we enjoy doing personally.

We then want to take those, look at a niche and see where we might be able to already have some results that we can tout or to try to develop them from there.

So, let's say, for example, somebody is listening to this program and they haven't really gotten going and they want to be a speaker at some of these events. Let's say they have a background in the law. They have a legal background.

They see that within Internet marketing as an example of a major niche. They see there is no one speaking in the area of addressing the issues of spam and spam laws.

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Again, I am sort of taking an example of Shawn Casey as an example, who is a lawyer and has now cornered that niche.

You can take your background. Look within the Internet marketing business, realize that the issue of spam, since you have a legal background, is a very important area, create a product or line of products that have to do with that, then create an offer, and package that's sufficiently enticing.

So, when you get up in front of groups of people, they are going to want to buy this product in droves. That's where you go. You go to your own background.

I think a lot of speakers make the mistake of just sort of deciding what they are going to speak about without considering what their own talents are. And they look just for what the niches are within a niche space.

But, instead, they should combine with their own background and that is really helpful to figure out which way they should go.

Bret: At most of the events that I have attended, the seminar speakers have been primarily white males.

It seems to me that there would be a great hook for females, African Americans or other "minorities" to get into this business because of that very fact — that they are not white males.

Fred: I one hundred percent agree. I don't think that ethnicity is going to be the only or the primary consideration, but I'll tell you what, you are right. When we go to these events, we see a lot of white males speaking.

There are some great opportunity for females and those people of color, whether they be African American, Hispanic or whatever their ethnicity is.

Because I think the promoter has an interest not only in making money, but appealing to every in their audience.

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By having someone that meets and matches the background of those people in the audience is a great way to go and something that a promoter will definitely consider.

And, they will not consider it from the standpoint of making sure everybody is happy but from the revenue standpoint, it will probably be easier from someone of their ethnicity to convince them to buy products.

I think that is something that has to be considered.

Bret: In the various events that you have been to, has your experience shown you that promoters are more interested in speakers that A, deliver content or B, generate back-of-the-room sales? Or, is it some combination thereof?

Fred: You know, Bret, it's a good question.

I'd like to tell you that all the promoters out there are really, really concerned about making sure that everybody that speaks at their events delivers great content and the sales are secondary. But, that's actually B.S.

The major concern of a promoter is someone who can deliver a lot of product sales. So, I think that although your presentation will help you to deliver product sales, the only serious measurement tool that is going to be used by the promoter in your case is going to be how much you are selling and that is the bottom line.

So, if you can keep data on how well and how good you are at selling, that is going to be the major point that is going to get you in to speak at these events.

Bret: Obviously, that implies that somebody needs product to sell at these events.

Fred: You got it.

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Bret: How does one develop a line of great products in their niche to have to offer to these events as a speaker?

Fred: It's funny that you ask that question, Bret, because you are now on my area of expertise, which is product creation and development.

I think that it's really important that people understand something. For those who are listening and have heard me say this before, I apologize, but it's absolutely crucial that when you develop a line of products as a presenter.

You must understand the 4 modalities of learning.

Those modalities mean that some people like to read products. The problem with creating written material is that, in general, it's very hard to charge high price points for things that are just written like a book or a manual, although manuals can, in some cases, become very expensive items.

But, they are also expensive items to ship if you are shipping the hard copy.

The 4 modalities are written material for people who like to read, audio materials like we have created here which can also be transcribed so, now we have 2 versions of it, video materials and number 4 is experiential events.

Those events, under the experiential headline we've got seminars, teleseminars, etcetera. But, for the purpose of a presenter going to an event, they need to develop a line of products touching on all of those modalities of learning.

That way, when they get up in front of a group of people at one of these events and they make a pitch, they have enough material to charge a good dollar amount.

In general, the amount of money that you should be asking people to pay at an event should be somewhere around what people have paid to be at the seminar.

So, if somebody paid \$1,500 to be at a seminar, it is certainly not unusual for a seminar presenter, one of the speakers like people listening on this tape one day, to go to that seminar and have an offering of around \$1,500.

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It is crucial that you realize that you are going to want to understand the people.

I make this change all the time. If I am speaking to a group of people who have only paid \$35 to be in that room, I make a different pitch than I do to people who have paid \$1,500 to be in that room.

So, people who are listening, need to create a line of products using those different modalities of learning, put them together and have them available in a package that they can sell in part or in whole up in front of the groups.

Bret: I see a number of events where you have first time speakers.

In my opinion, they tend to offer too low price point of products, and they go more for capturing names and building the list rather than trying to generate sales of actual products at an event.

Fred: I think that's a valid critique. I think really the seminar presenter at an event that they are invited to has two goals: number one to sell as much product as they can and number two to get as many people to opt in to their list for future sales.

Now, the promoter, obviously, wants number one to happen the most. I understand that people who are selling a lower priced product are trying, primarily, to do a capture.

I think that you can do both.

You should let people know how to get in touch with you to get some kind of a little freebie that might relate to your topic by going to your website and downloading it in exchange for their email address. But then, you also sell a very, very decently, high-priced product, you can accomplish both goals.

So, the idea is to say something like, "Oh, by the way, anybody who wants to, you can download this tool at my website," and once they get there, they will

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have to give you their email address in order to get it — just make that sort of a side item that everybody would really like.

But, that side item is not meant to solve all the problems of the audience. Hopefully, their problems will be solved by the product that you offer, which should be much higher priced.

Bret: That raises a question, which I've seen debated time after time after time.

How much of your content should you deliver on the stage? Should you hold things back that are only in the product itself, or should you give it all up on stage?

Fred: There are admittedly different lines of thinking on this. There are some seminar promoters and seminar speakers who believe that basically your presentation in front of a group should be a sales pitch, even if it's a disguised sales pitch.

It really shouldn't be giving people a lot of content and should basically just be getting them all excited and frothing at the mouth in order to buy your product.

I frankly don't think that approach works nearly as well as an approach in which you deliver some good content and ask people to buy something.

I think that the people attending our events — I don't care what field we are talking about here — are becoming much more sophisticated consumers of the seminar products.

And, that means that these individuals have become very, very savvy at watching presenters and seeing what they do. And I frankly think it's like trying to sell a package based completely on a commercial, rather than giving people a little piece of the product to see for them to make a decision on it.

So, in my case, I choose to deliver a fair amount of content in order to get people to understand that my products will, in fact, have great content and great substance.

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The other way to do it is to just do a long, extended 90 minute or however many minutes you have in front of the group, sales pitch which tells them the benefits that they will receive, but doesn't deliver any content.

I frankly think that's going to start to ring, over time, very hollow for the people who are in our audience. And, the sales for those particular individuals will be going further and further down.

I think that what you need to do is, you can't give everything away, but you certainly have to show people what kind of content they are going to get when you are up in front of the group.

I try to deliver so much content so quickly that they just say to themselves, "Man, if there is this much content coming out of this individual now, and this is just a 90 minute presentation, imagine what their product is packed with."

So, I think that you walk a balancing act between giving things away and selling.

I think you should always make sure to give some indication of what it is you are going to deliver on the products rather than just a sales pitch.

Bret: Now, in talking about the development of the product, you have been telling us about the 4 modalities.

Do you have any tips or hints on how people can create their books or audio products, or any other methods of learning that they should have a product in?

Fred: Well, one of the things, Bret, is that you and I have bumped into each other at many, many events over the years.

One of the things you'll probably realize that very few of the speakers on the circuit have books, traditional books. Many of them have manuals and things like that.

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I really think that for the purpose of enhancing your credibility if you are an aspiring speaker, and also getting to speak at other people's events, that it's a good idea to create books.

The way that you do it, whether it's a book or any other kind of product that you want to create, is to start with a really, really good outline.

That outline should take whatever your topic is and create sort of major headings within that topic area. Come up with as many major headings as you can. Then, go back to it and say, "What are the subheadings under each of these?" And then see if there are any sub, sub headings.

With outlines, I'm always reminded of my 7th grade class, where we learned how to do outlining. You remember, we had Roman numeral I and underneath it, the large letter "A", and then, underneath that a small number 1, and underneath that if we really need yet another subcategory it was the small letter "a".

Before we start in the creation of the product, be it a book, ebook, audio or video, we create this long, detailed outline for ourselves.

Then, when we look at the outline we say, "Are there any supporting materials that we need that would help to really eliminate whatever we are trying to describe?"

In other words, if you are in major section III, subsection A, number 1, you talk about the need to have audio / video releases, well, you'd better include in the back of your product, in the appendix area, a sample of that product release or that video release.

So, the people either listening, reading or watching your program, in that modality, also have at the back, some samples of what it is you're discussing.

When you are creating your product, the first thing is an extensive outline, then to be thinking as you go through your outline what kind of supporting material you need in order to support those areas that you talk about in the outline itself.

I really think that people should start with a book. For some people, it may not be practical. But, in most cases, I would recommend you start with a book and create it and make it look like a real bookstore book.

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Then, you can then expand into a manual, into an audio, into a video product. But, I think that the outline is where every good product begins.

Bret: Let me make a quick side note here. You talk about these tools and resources that may be in appendices. For the listeners of this product, Fred and I are putting together a seminar promoter's toolbox.

It will be a resource CD ROM or something of that genre.

If you want information on that, where you can get these various checklists and other tools that seminar promoters should have and should use, then just send an email to Bret@SpeakerFulfillmentServices.com.

In that email, just state, "I'm interested in this seminar promoter's resource CD ROM," and we will give you some information on that.

Fred: That would be a great additional resource for people to have who are listening to this program.

Bret: Now, you've created a book. And, I know you're about the only one I see who creates books in that format. I've heard you talk about that a number of times.

You talk about the book, and obviously, I know one of the things you've espoused many times is that your book is your business card.

Fred: Absolutely.

Bret: Do you want to elaborate on that a little bit?

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Fred: Frankly, a lot of seminar speakers don't write and create formal books because they are either lazy or they don't really know the process very well.

I submit to you that you can get to speak at a lot of events if you have books, especially books that get into the bookstores. Because then you will get a lot greater visibility in the marketplace and people will see you.

If they have a seminar or event, chances are they will want to talk to you about speaking at their event because you're a well-known entity in the marketplace.

With having a book, I use it literally as my business card. So, when someone says to me on an airplane, "Do you have a card," I instead reach into my briefcase and pull out a copy of the book that relates to whatever I think is the area in which we are most likely to have a match between me and the person I meet.

The book serves a number of functions for the aspiring speaker.

If somebody listening to this program right now went out, wrote a book and got it into the bookstores, and, for example, was talking to a seminar promoter who didn't know them said, "Well, why don't you go down to your local Barnes and Noble, look in the business section and you will find my book."

I think your chances of getting booked as a speaker, everything else being equal, would be much greater.

I think having that book is not only a great thing to have for yourself, but it is also a very, very important tool in getting to be able to speak at other people's events. It establishes you as with credibility and expertise. People can't dispute that.

Now, is that going to be the product that you sell at seminars?

This is important. I do not make my books available for sale at any of the events I speak at. This is a very important point.

I will sometimes use as a method, as we talked about earlier, to capture people's email addresses, to give them a place to go on one of my websites and download my books for free in exchange for their email address.

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But, I will not sell my books because the books are selling at a price point like most books do in a bookstore, between \$10 and \$30. We are never going to give people when we are at these events, an inexpensive way to get out of buying our products. So, we do not want to present the books.

The only thing the books are there for is for credibility.

Bret: Alright. So, the books, themselves, aren't really a moneymaker. They are just basically the lead into your funnel?

Fred: That is correct. And we haven't talked about the funnel on this program yet.

If we are talking about the traditional product sales model that we are doing on our own without speaking at events, we want to have a line of products that goes anywhere from \$10 up to \$1,000 or more.

This allows people to enter your funnel through whatever price point they are comfortable with and then trade them both up and down that funnel.

So, if you have a line of products that start with your book, and say your book is priced at \$14.95, you've got an audio program at \$99.95, and you've got a video program at \$297 and all these kinds of price points, wherever people enter your funnel, at whatever price point, we want to then trade them both up and down.

If they come in at the \$297 price point, there are a few items that they missed earlier on that we want to try to sell them at the \$14.95 and \$99.95 level. But, we also want to then upsell them from that point for future products.

Thus the need, and everybody listening on this program should realize that the creation of an extensive line of products is the goal of every seminar speaker.

Now, initially, you may want to just create a skeletal line of products and have one of each of those modalities of learning in your arsenal.

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But, in the long run, an example for me is one of my areas of expertise, and I get to speak at these events quite a bit, and that is the self-storage industry.

Within the self-storage industry, I have a line of 8 videos, 22 audio programs, a newsletter and a book. The book is in the form of a binder, and it's a \$99 book.

So, within the self-storage industry, which is one of my niches, I then can speak at these events and have a boatload of products for sale and legitimately charge \$1,000 as my price offering, or even more and get people to buy those products.

Bret: Now, you've talked about the book itself and the method for developing the book as a "business card". Any hints on the next phase or methodology of the modality of audio products?

Fred: Yes. I think that one of the mistakes that I see being made frequently among speakers — some of whom are very well known — is taking their book and reading it into an audio system or reading it into some kind of recording device and then selling that exact recording.

That, to me, is B.S. Because if you've already got a product developed in one form, you don't want to just turn around and develop it in the exact same form and act like it's a different product.

Let me give you an example.

Right now, we are recording this audio program. One of the things that people will get when they get this audio program is access to the transcripts which are an exact duplication of that material in a different form. That's okay as long as we don't try to represent that transcript as a different product.

I think that is what people have to understand. If you write a book, yes it would be easy to just sit down and read that book into an audio program and call that another product. But, it certainly wouldn't pass the smell test.

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It's just too much like the book itself.

What you might want to do is take someone like me or Bret and ask them to interview you on that particular product. Create your audio product based on your book that isn't an exact recitation and regurgitation of what the book is.

That's how we do the book.

Again, just like with the book, for the audio product to be successful, a very extensive outline and making sure that you put that audio program in a very specific order that people won't get confused as to what they have to do next. Step one, do all these things. Step two, boom, boom, boom.

That's the biggest mistake that I see being made by people creating products for sale. Those products aren't really done in a very specific "how-to" manner. And what happens is, if people buy one product, they won't come back and buy more.

I don't know if you know this, Bret, I think I may have shared it, but my average customer is worth close to \$500. Because once I get someone and once they buy one of my products, they are really pretty happy with the amount of information and knowledge that I share and the manner in which I share it.

So, they come back and buy more.

So, what we have to do is make sure that each of our products does not disappoint people because once sold to them, they will come back for more.

Bret: Obviously, we are creating an audio product here via telephone interviews. What other methods can people use to create audio products?

Fred: There are a few primary ways to create an audio product. One that I don't recommend is sitting down with a microphone in a studio or in your house and recording a product solo.

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The reason I don't recommend that people do that is because even very dynamic speakers have a hard time pulling that off and making that interesting for people to listen to for any period of time.

So, the first way that I would do it is in an interview form like we are doing here. It happens that this particular interview that we are doing is over the phone.

In order to do that, you need some fairly sophisticated recording devices to make it work well.

There is a guy who does that very well, a guy named Mike Stewart who is www.InternetAudioGuy.com. Mike will sell you all the equipment necessary for you to do a great audio program over the phone. That is one way to do it, an interview over the phone. You can also do an interview in person.

The third most likely way for you to put a good audio program together is to record a live event.

Now, if you are listening on this program and saying, "Well, I don't have a live event yet," one of the things you should do if you are an aspiring seminar speaker is certainly get 10, 15 or 20 people together and deliver a live program, both videotaping it and audiotaping it. So, you immediately have product.

How do you do that? You do that with a great list. But, you also do that with a great outline that helps you create that seminar and that seminar product.

So, those are some of the ways to create the audio program. But, it's really important as you create that audio program that you make sure and really think about it from a super, super simplistic and sort of dumb-down perspective.

What do people want to know? What do they need to know?

Make it so simple and so easy, and going way back to the basics in order to make sure that you don't leave anything out for those people in your audio program.

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Bret: Do you recommend someone just getting started to even do a program for free for 15 of their friends just to get the experience and possibly get a product out of it?

Fred: Absolutely. I think it's a great idea.

The only problem is making sure that when you do that program for free, people realize that this is actually a program they should be charged for.

That way, they don't show up there with a really lackadaisical attitude. Instead, they are actually there to get information. But, I think it's a great place to start.

Again, you'll need an extensive outline. People can create their audio and video products before their book is even done — the book is really the hardest part.

Somebody can sit down and create their product in an audio/video fashion by doing a seminar and getting 15 of their closest friends together, hiring a little video crew or getting a friend to handle a DV camera.

You can create a very credible product doing exactly that.

Bret: Let's talk about that third modality, visual with a video or DVD. This is, frankly, an area that in a sense scares me to death about the ability to do a polished, professional looking production.

How does somebody get into the video area, in terms of creating product, do it right?

Fred: It really is an area that unless you know exactly what you are doing, you've got to be very, very careful and learn before you do it.

I suggest that anyone doing it for the first time to go and find a friend who is a videographer, who will help them in this process. It's really important to understand that when you produce a video, there should be some visual components.

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If all you are doing is just recording an audio presentation, but having a talking head, that really isn't an effective video.

There has got to be something visual to make it work.

In terms of the tools these days, the tools have gotten incredibly simple.

I'm a MAC user, as you know, Bret. I just finished this weekend taking one of my recordings from a seminar that I did, taking a DV tape that somebody recorded and moving that onto my computer, editing an I-movie, which an 8th grader can do and then taking that finished, already edited program, throwing it into I-DVD.

And I created something that was highly professional, looks really snazzy and didn't take much time or effort on my part once I had the video recorded.

Now, that assumed, that in the video area that we have good video. And that is a result of a good camera or cameras and good lighting. The lighting cannot be forgotten. That is so important in terms of creating a product.

Unless your program has a video component, we don't even want to use video.

Bret: Fred, we talked about the books, the audios and the videos some. What information can you share with people about creating experiential events?

Fred: Experiential events are, again, an essential component of your entire product line and product mix. Experiential events primarily mean live seminars, live boot camps, as well as events like this one if we had people listening where it was a teleseminar.

The nice thing about those two items are that both of them have a value and an interesting reason for creation.

Number one, live events can generally command a lot of money and can give you a lot of dollars in terms of creation of them and the sale of those items.

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The teleseminars, on the other end of the spectrum, are not nearly as lucrative in terms of dollar-wise, but you can get a lot more people to show up because they don't need to travel. They don't need to go anywhere.

They are sitting in the convenience of their own home, and they are listening in on a teleseminar.

If you have a live seminar that you do, usually as a minimum you are going to charge somewhere around \$500 per day. Some people charge a whole lot more. On a teleseminar, on the other hand, usually the price point there is usually in the neighborhood of around \$100 per hour or so.

So, if you do a one hour or ninety minute teleseminar, it's somewhere around \$97, and it's got great material. But, some people go longer than that as well.

But, I think both of those, creating a live event for yourself to record and to sell is absolutely crucial, and having the other option, which is teleseminars.

Obviously, we both know, Bret, people will sometimes get started by attending a teleseminar given by someone at a low fee and then end up buying all of their other products and services and coming to all their events.

So, all of those are important.

Bret: We've had great success. I, with Alex Mandossian, have been doing a number of teleseminars with a low price point, \$39 to get in on the call.

But, maybe your purpose of the call is for product creation.

We are creating a product in increments and the beauty is, you get somebody upfront, almost like seminar registration, what it amounts to, before the product has even been created.

So, people are paying you to create your product which is a great bonus.

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Fred: I think it's a great example of how to do things. Your product creation is actually... You are being paid to do it. And, I think that really is a good way to do it.

For anybody is listening on this program, that is certainly the best way to do it. But, if for some reason, you can't get people to pay to be at your teleseminars to help you create your product that doesn't mean you shouldn't do them.

I don't want people to decide they are not going to do it because they can't get enough people on teleseminars to record one and make that happen.

So, I think that it's absolutely better if you can get people to pay for you to produce the product. But, it doesn't have to happen that way.

Bret: There is something I think you also see more of in the experiential category, which is the whole concept of webinars.

Fred: Yes. Webinars are a new emerging technology. In fact, at the last trade show that I went to for the MAC folks, I was asking a lot of questions.

There is something out there called "Web X". They are one of the biggest providers in that space right now. But, the prices are a little bit steep where everybody has to be paying X amount of cents per minute to be on that particular broadcast.

But, I think the future is going to have a lot of webinars happening where people will be able to both attend the event live and in person, and also be able to attend the seminar live on the web, and as a third thing, be able to buy the finished web products for their future consumption.

So, I think all of those items will be absolutely happening in the future.

The future is based on the speed at which we can get most people having broadband Internet access so that if they've got high speed access, their ability to successful attend and be happy with that product is going to be much increased.

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Bret: We talked about the 4 modalities that you should have products in. Obviously, one does not become a speaker overnight. It takes time to create product.

One can speed up the curve based on how hard they go at it. But, again, one does not become a speaker overnight. Eventually, you will get to the point where you have some products and you are ready to speak.

Well, obviously, you have to learn how to deliver great content up in front of the room. If you suck, the sales aren't going to happen.

Fred: Very true.

Bret: So, how does one go about the process of delivering great content when they are in front of the room?

Fred: It is a process. And for someone to expect to deliver great content their first time out, they are really kidding themselves.

So, what you have to do is number one, similar to the book, you need to start with a great outline. And, you really need to sort of construct your talk, your speech and base it on how long you'll expect to be able to speak.

Most people, when they speak at events, are given usually anywhere between 60 and 90 minutes. When you create your outline for this product, just understand that there may be times in which you will have to cut down, make short the amount of time that you're given based on time constraints by the promoter.

That's probably a pretty good place to start, though.

Start to put together a one-hour presentation. Now, with the one-hour presentation that you have properly outlined and you start rehearsing it, you will

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be able to either expand it into a larger format in terms of length, or to track it into a shorter format in terms of length.

You should always know what you can leave out.

As you are putting that together, remember that you are trying to accomplish two things. Number one, you're delivering a whole lot of value to people and making them convinced that you are, in fact, the expert in that field.

Number two, you are also then making sure that you are designing a presentation which gets people to buy your package that you offer.

So, as you are putting that program together, you are looking at both from the standpoint of delivering good content, but also looking at it from the standpoint of being a sales message. How effective will this be at getting people to buy?

Bret: That raises an interesting question. From your experience, and I've seen it done many ways at events, how important is it to credentialize yourself in your talk?

I see people slap up their ClickBank earnings report to say, "Hey, and look. I've done it." I've seen people read their bio from A to Z.

Do you credentialize or recommend that people credentialize themselves in any way when they are in front of the room?

Fred: I think that it's important when you get up in front of a group of people that, especially, you understand that there are X number of people in that room who know you are. I think there are really 3 levels of participants there.

There are people who have no idea who you are. There are people who know you a little bit. And there are people who know you well.

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Bret: Does the fact that you are in front of the room label you as expert without saying anything else?

Fred: It certainly starts you in that direction, but it is, by no means, the end point there.

You need to understand that you've got to credentialize yourself when you get up in front of people. The fact that you are there is no longer sufficient for people in your audience to believe that you are the expert. You now have to do more.

I don't feel that you have to necessarily start showing people specific figures and numbers, but you have to show them that through whatever means you have that you have actually done what it is you are attempting to show them how to do.

You cannot, for example, get up in front of a group of people, give a presentation on how to create information products and not have any information products to show examples to use.

It's crucial that you have those credentials. I have, in fact, seen people put up their ClickBank accounts and all the other financial credentials which is well and good.

I tend to stay away from that because I just don't think that that's, at least for me, the route that I like to go. I think that sometimes it looks...eh.

Money and figures can always be altered somewhat. Sometimes it can be effective. I don't know if it's the only thing that you want to use to credentialize yourself.

Just the fact that you are up there in front of the room is not sufficient. You've got to give stories and examples. Weave in things that we've ourselves have done. Give examples with clients.

Again, for people listening on this program who don't have those things, they've got to develop those items as quickly as possible so that they have examples which they can use.

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Bret: When you are up in front of an audience, how do you gauge what level they are at and where you should begin your presentation?

Fred: Again, when you start out, you should have your canned presentation. But, a lot of times, it's a good idea before you really get into the meat of your speaking to ask some questions of the audience and ask for a show of hands to see where the group is and at what level you should presenting to them.

I don't think that it's a bad thing at all to make sure that you are including everyone.

Because when you dumb it down enough that the everyone in the room knows exactly what you are saying, people are always worried that they are going to miss or upset people who already know certain things.

Well, not really. Because what happens is, if someone hears something that they know, they'll just pat themselves on the back and say, "Oh, you see, I knew that."

But, if you lay things out in a very sequenced manner making sure that you cover everything people need to understand from that particular product and that area, it makes a lot of sense to do it that way.

Remember, you've got to figure out where your audience is at.

I've seen many presentations, as you have Bret, where the people who are giving the presentation are either speaking well above or well below the aptitude and the knowledge of the audience.

That is really a bad thing to happen.

You want to try to make sure that you are challenging the audience a little bit with your knowledge and your material, but you aren't just going so far over their heads that nobody knows what the heck you are saying.

A lot of speakers that I have seen have tried to do that to try and create the feeling in the minds of their audience that they're such a genius that they should buy all the materials because you can't understand what they are saying.

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I don't think that's the route to go.

You've got to make it dumb enough and dumb it down enough that most of the people listening will understand.

Bret: I would think that would be a very difficult thing to gauge, particularly for a new speaker as to what the level of their audience is and how they should slant what they are presenting to that particular audience.

Fred: It's a good point. That is why you need, if you are a new speaker, to get with your promoter to try and have them help you understand who is in the audience.

Understand what level they are at and maybe even to run by some of the concepts in your presentation that you're thinking of delivering, and ask them if that is too high, too low or just about right.

It's important that you bounce those ideas off the promoter you're working with to make sure that what you have for audience members is at the appropriate level.

Bret: How often do you run into a situation where the promoter dictates to you what he wants you to speak about, versus you going in with your canned presentation?

Fred: If they are a good promoter, they should know what components they want you to deliver, and hopefully, they're choosing you because you fit one of those components that they want.

So, I think it works both ways here. You have a standard presentation more or less that you can customize somewhat around the edges for a presenter. And they have a need to have a speaker talk about a given topic.

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It's a matter of communication between the presenter and the promoter to make sure that we are filling the gap.

The last thing that you want at an event is to follow someone who just spoke before you and give the exact same presentation on the exact same topic.

Bret: That was going to be my next question. It's like going to a dance and having the gal wearing the same dress as the next gal.

What do you do? Because that's going to happen to you sometimes.

Fred: I think it brings up a very, very good point which is that a lot of less knowledgeable seminar presenters will leave the room, not be in the room, when they are talking. I think that's a bad idea.

I don't think you have to be there every single minute of every event if you are a presenter, but I do think it's important for you to know what has come before you at an event and what is going to come after you.

It is most important to know what has come before you, so you don't have that happen to you.

Imagine you walking in having not watched anything that was done before you. I've seen people deliver the same exact jokes as the last speaker because they weren't in the room.

I think, as a bare minimum, every presenter has got to be in the room fully for the presenter before them.

I recommend that they stay for all of the speakers before them so that they can make references to those people, and if need be, alter their presentation to concentrate on areas that weren't covered by previous speakers — making sure not to disappoint the audience.

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The last thing an audience member wants is have the same presentation done twice. It will not only hurt the evaluations that will hurt you with the promoter, but it will also hurt your product sales.

No one wants to hear you give the same presentation that was just given.

Bret: I can also speak from experience that the attendees at an event really appreciate the speakers that they know are there listening to the other speakers.

They tend to shy away from the guys that are hit and run, so to speak, at an event.

Fred: I agree. When people are that hit and run where they just come in for their own presentation and leave, that shows a certain amount of arrogance that those people can't learn anything themselves.

It also really isn't delivering the customized information and material that are needed by the audience members. I think that they know that.

If a presenter gets up there and starts to say, "Now, you know, what John said yesterday really builds on this. Here is how we can integrate that. And Tim, who spoke earlier this morning, talked about this," is a perfect way to show the audience members that you were right there present.

I think it will not only help your ratings and get you invited back as far as delivering good content, it will also help your sales.

That is key to making that happen.

Now, there are certain people that I have heard so many times and they give the same presentation. I know exactly what they are going to say so I can leave the room. But, if I haven't heard a presenter before, I'm going to sit in there and listen to them myself.

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Bret: That's a great point. You just can't emphasize to our listeners enough that if you are going to be a speaker, you really need to be there, to be part of the event, so that the attendees feel that you are in there with them.

You're not just putting yourself far on a pedestal above them that you can't learn anything and you can't dialogue with the people.

Fred: Not only that, but to be able to integrate the other information, I think, is imperative that you are that so you know what was said before you.

Bret: You talked about this outline, and you used it for your book development. You want to develop that same type of thing for developing your content for the room.

We talked about how much knowledge you should assume in the audience, and that it is really key to work with the seminar promoter to determine what the level of the audience is so that you can tailor your presentation to their needs.

How much of the given time you have should you plan to fill with content?

Let's say you have an hour. Should you have content for 48 minutes to give yourself time for unexpected things, technical breakdowns and PowerPoint problems? Should you allot time for questions and answers?

Fred: As you become a more savvy speaker, you should actually have less material than you have time. If I am doing a 60-minute talk, I like to have 45 minutes of material.

Then, I can handle anything that might happen within the presentation, and I can also expand it.

Now, this comes with practice. If someone is a new presenter, chances are, they are going to want to work everything out, at least most of the people, in very specific numerical order and in terms of their timing, have everything down just so.

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In the real world, that's not going to work.

You are going to have to become adjustable and able to move freely in terms of a little cutting of the amount of information given, expanding the information you give. But, you can never hurt yourself.

A lot of times though, there are some speakers who believe that this pitch that you give, that this talk you give, is essentially a sales presentation and you should never allow any questions or anything else. Because that will sort of ruin the pitch.

I can see that point. But, again, for you to sell the best, you have to see what works for you. And the only way to do it is try it.

I know that at one event, in which I asked my previous clients to get up and give testimonials, that tended to work fairly well because it was a really thrilling, great way to have other audience members see that these people are actually working with me and spent money with me. And they actually helped close the deal.

In fact, in the case I am thinking of right now, we actually closed with people we shouldn't have just because it was such a good sales presentation for the people sitting in the room.

Some of them bought who shouldn't have bought and were unqualified to buy. And then, we had some problems with sorting out who really should be in the program and who shouldn't.

In terms of timing, it's a matter of getting started with what you think to be the standard amount of time you are going to have, then adjust it based on conditions.

Bret: Do you believe a certain percentage of the talk time should be allocated to the "selling process"?

I understand the whole thing is a selling process, but the close, so to speak.

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Fred: I do. You should have a time that you have allotted to make sure that you have time to go over with people the exact offer that you have.

It's got to be long enough for you to present the offer clearly and succinctly, but short enough that people don't feel like the entire talk is a sales pitch.

So, you need to do both.

Bret: Now, that raises another great question and that is, how simple or complicated should your offer be? How many different options should you offer the people?

I've seen people have offers that were so complicated, nobody could figure them out. So, nobody bought.

How do gauge how many options you should offer and at what price point?

Fred: I think it is a really good question. You need to understand that some people believe that you should only offer people who want options.

Here is the option. Take it or leave it, and that's it.

I have played around with this. I certainly don't think you should offer more than 3 potential packages, A, B or C. That may be too much, as it takes too long to explain.

The A/B offer usually works pretty well. Here is package A and package B. Package A is much less expensive than package B. Here's how it works. And, you detail for people, if you get package A, I always call it the do-it-yourself package.

I say to people, "For those of you here in this room who are inclined toward doing things yourself, here is what I would suggest. For those of you who are going to be the kind of people that want more help and assistance, then you get this package."

I've gone back and forth with this to test my results. I usually like to present, in my case, an offer that is my A program, a do-it-yourself package. That's \$997.

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Then, the B package is a down payment of \$5,000. So, I'm offering a package that basically either \$1,000 or \$5,000. I say to people, "If you are this kind of person, this is what you should get. If you are this kind of person, this is what you should get."

Bret: I want to elaborate a little further on the issue of questions and answers. Do you recommend that a new speaker shies away from these entirely?

You've got to be pretty quick on your feet to handle Q & A, I would think, in a professional and polished manner.

Fred: That it is an area in which a relatively new speaker should be a little bit careful. Handling questions and answers, if you don't know your topic cold and you haven't been used to getting a lot of questions, might be a tough area.

I would recommend that initially, those people that are new and just starting out, and aren't really that comfortable, handle questions after the talk itself.

Ask people to approach them one-on-one, for those particular areas. So, I would say yes, that would be the area.

Bret: We talked about questions and answers. Now, a good thing for people to do and a recommendation I would have for them, is to develop their own FAQ.

Anticipate in advance what questions you might be asked and have your response already tailored or written out so that you can know how to respond to these questions and not be caught off guard if you do get into a Q & A session.

Fred: Bret, I'm not surprised with your engineering background that you are doing that, which is a great idea for people.

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That is to make sure that you know and anticipate what some of the standard questions are and have good answers for them.

I think it's a great idea because generally, as you start to do this, if you are a presenter, you will get the standard questions asked over and over again and you should be prepared to handle those.

For any of the standard questions, you should have standard answers that you know will probably come up.

Bret: You've talked about the outline already. Let me ask you a question related to that.

When you are in the front of the room, do you recommend that the speaker have a copy of their outline there, cue cards? How do you work from the front of the room?

Fred: It varies based on the speaker and what they are most comfortable with.

In my case, I am usually going through the outline with the participants point by point to make sure that I cover everything that's on the handout.

Some people are using a PowerPoint presentation or some other kind of visual presentation that relates to the handout. But, I think it should obviously be in exactly the same order so nobody gets confused.

I also don't think this handout should be so long as to make people think that there is no way that you can cover all this information.

So, I will stand up there in front of the group with the handout in front of me, with my own little side notes on each of the sections.

I have the handout that goes to the participants. That's one thing. And the handout that I keep for myself sort of has my own little notes on it of things I want to make sure to cover as we are going through.

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Bret: You've brought up the issue of handouts.

Do you recommend that the handouts are all inclusive about what you are speaking of, and do you think they should try to involve the participants in some way by filling in the blanks or anything like that?

Fred: It's good to have the handouts be somewhat interactive but not to the point where they are just blank pages. It's great to allow people to get involved with this handout and to add and fill in the blanks as people are going through it.

If you are talking about a handout at an event, then that handout should be marginally, at least, interactive. If it's a handout that is then given to people with a product, maybe then it needs to be filled in rather than to leave it interactive.

There are 2 levels of philosophy on that.

A handout at an event should be at least marginally interactive to keep people involved. If they look at the handout and it seems to have everything filled in, that makes the participant feel like they don't have to pay as much attention.

If they are not paying as much attention, then they are not going to get as much out of the program and they are probably not going to buy as much.

I think that the handout should be marginally interactive, but not a blank page.

Bret: Another type of handout that people are going to have to deal with, obviously, is order forms.

Fred: The order form is very, very important because that's where you make your sale.

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Bret: When do you recommend that people hand out their order forms?

Fred: The first thing is, those order forms should not get into anyone's hands until just before the person up in front, you as the presenter, is going to make their pitch.

You should have people waiting in the wings. Think about this in advance, especially if you large room, have everybody ready to get this handout into people's hands quickly and easily and have enough people to make that happen.

But, you should do it right before the pitch.

We should probably talk about what should be on that order form.

Bret: Sure.

Fred: Remember that this order form, in most presentations that people listening on this program will do, they are trying to get people, obviously, to buy now.

So, this order form should be constructed in such a way as to make it clear that this offer is a special offer and it is good today and today only, or until the presentation or the conference is over.

I like the idea of giving people some additional incentives if they order today or if they order right after the presentation.

Like, "If you fill this out and get it back to Bret in the back, let me give you these 2 additional items. If you order before the end of the conference, you will get this pricing, but you won't get these 2 additional freebies."

So, you give your people a reason to buy now. Because chances are, by the end of the conference, people will have been presented with X number of different offers and they only have so many dollars to spend.

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Now, I am going to an order form which has 3 components or pieces to it. One is for, let's say, if you, Bret, were working the back of the room at an event and we would have one for the participant, one for you and one for me.

So, it would be a 3-part NCR form. That allows everybody to get a copy.

The person who ordered the product gets a copy, the speaker gets a copy and you, as the person who is working the back of the room gets a copy.

Bret: I would highly encourage everybody to do this triplicate type of form because almost all attendees forget exactly what it was they ordered.

They want a copy to know that they are going to, indeed, receive what they ordered and a listing of what is included in that.

Fred: Right. And, I think that the other thing is, on that order form, we want to make sure that we present the details very clearly and concisely. And what I like to do is to do it in a bullet form.

Let's leave off what is at the top of the order form for right now. We have 2 different options. We would put a little line there it would say, "Yes" ...

And, by the way, Bret, what we should probably do is include as part of this program a sample of my order form to give people a sample of how I do this.

Bret: Sure. We'll include that in the manual with the PDF transcripts of this call.

Fred: You got it. So, now what happens is, people get this order form in their hands and they are listening to you as you go through it.

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I think the key here is to make it simple and easy to understand. So, on my order form, I've got option A which is, "Yes. I would like to have Fred help me in creating my information products. But, for the most part, I can do it myself."

And I offer people the \$997 option, which includes a number of teleseminars, some email customer support and things that go on for a year.

And then, my other program is the Lifetime Coaching program which has \$5,000; \$15,000 deferred out of those things.

So, I give people 2 options.

One is what I call the "Fred pass for a year" to come to all of my events, to attend all of these teleseminars, to help them really make a go of the process of creating their own information products. I gear that to the people who are the do-it-yourselfers, the people who want to do it all on their own.

The second option there is the Lifetime Coaching Client Relationship, which is geared to people who really like to have their hand held and to feel that they are going to be supported all through the entire process.

Now, in both of these options, what I do is I detail in bullet form exactly what will be covered and how it works.

I also make sure and put on there that it is the responsibility of the person who ordered to call me. For example, when I say, unlimited phone support, I will put on there, "I will not be calling you. You will call me when you have questions."

Then, I make sure to detail to the people that that means they can't call me every day just to say "Hi". They will call me as often as they want, get their marching orders, get those things done and then move on.

I carefully describe exactly how this works so that nobody has any confusion as to what it is they are buying. But, I also try and make this pitch rather quickly.

The other thing is the provision of guarantees.

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A lot of presenters do not provide guarantees or they don't talk about them when people have an order sheet in front of them.

If we think about this, Bret, it's a real psychology to understand what the buyer or the person sitting in the group is thinking as you are going through this.

Their first question is, "Can I afford it?" So, you want to overcome that.

There are some objections they will have and we want to make sure and clear those up either during our presentation or when we are making our product pitch, to clear up all the objections that someone has before they even arise.

Some of the common ones are: Number one, "Can I afford it?" Well, if you are going to show people how they can make back this money quickly, and make it so that basically, 30, 90, 120 days they will be able to get their money back, you can show them that. So, money is an issue and that might be one.

The other issue is one of time. "I don't have enough time."

You have to make sure that you build all of these standard objections into your presentation before your pitch or during the pitch. It will handle all of those items.

Bret: What is your guarantee? And therefore, what will be the guarantee for this particular product?

Fred: With this particular product, what I always say is, I offer in all the cases of all my products, a lifetime, money-back guarantee.

In the case of the lifetime coaching arrangement, I am very careful as to who I accept into that program because you are entering into almost like a partnership.

In my lifetime coaching arrangement, I take sort of a piece of the action after they make double what they paid me.

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So, I am very careful about who I select for that program.

Therefore, the lifetime coaching clients, if I ever have someone drop out of that program, it usually happens before we even get started. They realize that that program is not for them. It's too expensive. It's not the right thing.

But, with this program, we will have a lifetime guarantee because it's a physical product that I am selling. I always offer a lifetime guarantee.

For many, many years, Bret, I could count on my 2 hands and my 2 feet the number of returns I have gotten. Since I have started marketing a lot more online, I have noticed that my return ratio has gone up.

That is because when you offer that kind of guarantee, you will get more returns.

Does that mean that you shouldn't offer that guarantee? Absolutely not. I think that if you can put a strong guarantee with your products, you are going to have much higher sales.

But, if you don't deliver when you do the products, you are in big trouble.

Bret: Obviously, the key is that the much higher sales has to more than compensate for the increased rate of returns that you may get into.

Fred: Correct. And that is usually as a result of having a really good product.

So, in almost every case if you've got a great product, I will put a very, very strong guarantee, in my case I put a lifetime guarantee.

A lifetime guarantee is as good as a one-year guarantee.

Once you get past one year, people aren't going to return the product. So, you might as well call it a lifetime guarantee.

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But, you are right. You will get more returns. But, you will also make more sales if you've got a good product. And the only way to know that is to test it.

Making sure you have a good product is the ultimate defense.

Bret: Now, back to the order sheet, any additional tips or techniques you want to pass along on how this order sheet ought to be laid out for folks?

Fred: What I put at the top of my order sheet is, "Mentoring Application". I don't make it look like, "Hey, here is something for you to buy."

I actually make people feel from the top of my order sheet that this is where they are applying to be considered.

I just think that we've got to make people who are looking at this order sheet understand that not everybody will be accepted, which will make it sort of an even more desirable product.

Again, in any given room, at any given time, based on a lot of factors, things will change. But, you want to try and create an order sheet in triplicate, like we said. You don't want to say "Order Form" at the top. Because "Order Form" is going to look a little bit like, "Now is the time to give the money."

I like the idea of saying an application.

Bret: Enrollment.

Fred: Enrollment form, something that says that. You've seen lots of these enrollment forms or basically product sales pieces.

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I'd like you to chime in as well, Bret. What do you think should be at the top of these order forms? You've seen a lot of them as well.

Bret: It certainly depends on the price point of your product. If you're talking about a very expensive coaching program or something like that, then I think "Application Form" or "Enrollment Form" is entirely the way to go.

Now, if you were selling a lower priced product, then I've seen many forms that have nothing on the top at all, which looks fine.

But, the key thing is, you have to have an irresistible offer and very explicitly lay out the bullet points about what they will receive as part of that offer.

Fred: I think you said it with bullet points. Because when you have things that are set like in paragraphs, it's very difficult to read and to understand.

Chances are, people are going to make a decision on whether or not they are going to buy your product right there as you pitch it.

Some people may make a decision a little bit later on in the conference. But, for the most part, that's your time that you have to close. And you've got to make your offer irresistible.

Also, what you want to do is to make your offer in such a way to make people feel like they are not really spending any money.

For example, when I say to people, "This program is going to cost you \$997. But, unless you make \$997 or \$1,000 within the next 90 days, I want you to return it and ask for your money back."

So, basically, I'm not saying that you should give me money. I am saying you should give yourself or give me a loan for that amount.

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I've seen other people pitch products in such a way that they say, "Well, this program is going to cost you \$1,500, but I'm going to give you \$2,000 in free..." to make it look like they are really not having to pay for the product at all.

That is key in getting people to make a decision right then and there.

Bret: There's something else that I've seen work well, to plan in the mind of the potential purchaser the thought that they are investing in your thing.

So, rather than saying something costs something, say, "Your investment is..."

Fred: I've got a book called *Selling Products From the Platform* which really gets into this.

I think if you can convince people that the amount that they should give you, whatever that amount is, will be repaid to them within a matter of... If they can get that money back in 90 days, they are going to be excited.

When I do the lifetime coaching program, that is obviously a different kind of a sell. But, with a standard offer, you should make sure that you can justify to people how they will be getting their money back.

And, if you can show them how they are going to get their money back in 90 days or less, you are going to have a good chance of selling a lot of people on your program. Because they do look at it as an investment.

It's a temporary putting out of money to get money back.

Bret: Do you believe when you're selling products from the platform that you should put your product out on the table in the back of the room?

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Fred: It's probably a good idea to put your products out in the back of the room after you've made your presentation and not before.

So, if you have physical products, I don't mind having them back there. But, I don't want to have them out there before I speak.

I like to be able to sort of guide people through the products and what they are before I allow them to see the product themselves.

Bret: In essence, you want to pre-sell the content of the product before they have a chance to browse through it and pre-form opinions before they've heard you talk.

Fred: Correct. In the case of this product, for example, you were going to have this product available on your table as you do other people's events.

Now, it's interesting because let's say, for example, that you have this product sitting out on the table and I am a presenter at one of the events that you're doing the speaker fulfillment services for.

I don't see that as a problem because I will not be pitching that as part of my product set. So, maybe we use it as incentive.

But, I don't think that I would have an objection to you having this product out there given the fact that the package that I was going to sell had nothing to do with that particular program.

Bret: Obviously, we have crossed paths many times at events. But, you've also been to a whole lot of events that I've had nothing to do with. How do you get the people at the back of the room to push your products versus all the other speakers?

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Fred: The people at the back of the room who are working the events, number one, it's a lot easier if they like the speaker. If they like the speaker and think they are a good person, they are going to be much more able to help that person.

But, if you like the speaker but you think the material is pretty weak, you are going to have a hard time as someone at the back of the room promoting it.

If you are really interested in the material, it's going to be tough to do.

So, I think that there is a definite combination of two things. Number one, making sure that you are friends with or make friends with the person that is at the back of the room and not treat them sort of like the hired help.

Number two is to have content that they know is good so that when somebody says, "Well, what do you think of this program?"

I think that somebody at the back of the room can say, "It's great. It's good stuff. I've seen it. I've heard it. I know that he gets very few returns and people like the programs that he or she has."

So, those two components, making sure that they like you and number two, that they know you have good products, are really key to making it work.

Now, there is also an initial thing there, which is there is nothing wrong with saying to the person at the back that there's a certain incentive there if they sell some of their products just sort of as a thank you.

I don't think that a promoter would appreciate seeing you create a context in which that person is able to want to only sell your products because you are going to stiff them, if you will, a lot of money.

But, that certainly would be permissible, to give them a little incentive.

Bret: As an addendum to that, I have certainly seen at events a speaker's ability to close, particularly when they are talking about higher priced product price points

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or coaching programs. They need to be there. They need to be networking with the attendees, explaining things in a little bit more detail.

A lot of people need that comfort factor. If you are going to hit and run a room as a speaker, you can forget about your possibilities of selling a higher-priced product.

Fred: I agree. I think that you've got to be there in order to provide the feeling that...especially with a higher priced product, the person is going, "If you are just going to be a hit and run kind of speaker, be in there and be out, well, how much support are you going to be providing me on the back end?"

As a buyer, I would be concerned as well.

So, yes, especially when you have a higher priced product, you want to be in a position to answer questions from the people that are in your audience that need questions answered and give them any of the particulars.

Bret: Just a quick summary, Fred.

We have an understanding of how the seminar business works. We know we need to identify our specific niche — maybe a niche within a niche, to be more specific.

We understand that we need to develop a great line of products for that niche. We've talked about how we deliver great content up in the front of the room and some of the particulars of that; the handouts.

We've talked about selling from the platform and all. All that is fine and dandy. I'm great. I'm raring to go. How do I even find seminars to speak at?

Fred: Now that you've got everything prepared, you've got to find places where people are doing this. The obvious way to do this is to go online and search for whatever

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topic that you want to speak about. You can start to hunt down seminars and presentations that are being made in your field.

Chances are if you are in a field already and you have a niche, there are trade and professional organizations who meet.

Those are naturally places where you want to start.

Let's take my example. I do a seminar every year in the publishing industry. www.PublishingSeminar.com is where that website is.

And, by the way, Bret, for every seminar that I do, and most seminars that are out there, there is a site that deals with that particular event.

So, if you are interested in the publishing industry, if you put in Google or one of the other search engines the term, "publishing seminar", that is why I reserved that specific URL, because people might type in and get it.

The publishing seminars are found by going to one of the search engines and putting in "publishing seminar" and seeing what comes up.

From that, you will branch off into the other areas and start to network with all the other people in that industry to ask, "What else is out there? Who's out there?"

People who are listening to this who are already heavily involved in their niche will know exactly when these events are. Within every niche, there are presentations that are being made both nationally, regionally, locally in all of the different niches.

All of those places have speakers. The question becomes whether or not they will allow speakers to sell products. So, you have different kinds of events.

And, by the way, before somebody even gets involved in a niche, they'd better make sure that that niche will support a speaker being able to sell products.

If the niche won't allow people to sell products, or certain venues won't, then I just wouldn't even do the event.

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So, I think that where you start is, you take a look online. You put in your niche, space, seminar and then see what comes up and go from there.

You also go to your industry association or trade group and start asking around of the people who are at the heads of those associations and groups.

They will be able to direct you.

Bret: Will the seminar or the event promoter tell you up front honestly whether you can or cannot sell?

Fred: Yes. In other words, what I always ask is, "Is this the kind of presentation where if I am a speaker at this event, will I be allowed to sell my materials?"

Now, before they answer that, I usually say, "By the way, I'm not one of these really pushy sales people that is only up there to sell my products." That's the concern. In most cases, they will have a policy as to whether or not you are allowed to pitch from the platform.

If they allow you to pitch from the platform, they will be a little bit leery about yes to that unless you can assure them that you understand that before you pitch anything, you'd better deliver a lot of good content first.

Their concern is you are going to get out there and basically do a 60 or 90-minute sales pitch. Make sure that you tell them you know that's not the right way to do it.

Bret: One of the niches that I personally work with is in the Plant Engineering and Maintenance market. Obviously, there are a lot of trade shows in that arena and they have learning tracks associated with the trade exposition.

My experience is that those are generally speaking opportunities, but they are not allowing selling from the platform in that venue.

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Fred: Right. So now, in your particular field there, in your niche, are there any opportunities where they allow people to sell things from the platform?

Bret: I have not run across it to much of an extent. But, keep in mind we are talking about a market that is not a “marketing market”.

People aren’t attending an event to learn how to market or sell their products or services. They are in a function within a facility where it’s a day-to-day operation type thing as opposed to a creative marketing type thing.

Fred: Let me ask you this, Bret. Within that market, does anybody sell any software?

Bret: People do sell software. Certainly.

Fred: Okay. Then, are there any of the people who are software vendors who are asked to speak at those events?

Bret: Certainly, a large number of the speakers you get at an event of this type are people who are vendors in that industry.

Fred: Who have products to sell.

Bret: Who have products or services to sell. And obviously, you are going to get some objections from some attendees that some of the presentations are too “salesy”.

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Fred: Right. And, I think that those people who make those arguments, certainly we want to make sure that we are salesy, but we do sales in a manner that makes people not feel uncomfortable and don't feel like they are being sold.

But, I think in an example of an industry like yours, usually these are held around trade shows. Right, Bret?

Bret: They are.

Fred: So, what happens is that people then hear a presenter and they can walk the trade show floor and find that particular presenter's booth and they are then selling whatever that product is that they just talked about up in front of the group.

It's a matter of whether or not the organization allows you to pitch from the platform or basically pitch to get them to the trade show floor to then buy the product.

Bret: In the instance where the speaker maybe doesn't have a booth at the exposition part of the event, they need to evaluate it from the perspective of A, can I do this presentation in a way that I put people into the funnel in some way.

Fred: Yes. But, I'll give you an example that relates very much to the question that you just raised from your industry, which is in the self-storage industry.

One year when I spoke, I said, "Look, one of the conditions of my speaking here is you give me a booth for free" and they agreed to that because they had done that for all the major speakers who were speaking.

Now, the nice thing about this was that when I made my pitch, I said, "Look, folks, anybody who orders right now, before you walk out the door, I am going to give you 2 extra bonuses. But, whether your order right now or whether you

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come by the booth, I am going to have the packages there. But, the people who hand in the orders right now are going these 2 freebies that they wouldn't have gotten. And I am going to give those to you as we leave the presentation."

So, they handed in the order sheet to me. I gave them the 2 bonuses and all of the people came by the booth that I had to pick up their packages.

I don't think that it's completely ineffective if you are in a trade show kind of environment in your niche that you can do that sort of a multi-step approach to selling your product.

Bret: I just think you have to tweak how you are doing what you are doing.

Now, also, if you are a new speaker, then it's an excellent opportunity to hold your presentation without the worry maybe of screwing up a bunch of sales.

You can polish your content up in that venue if you can.

Fred: Again, I think that one of the things that we should mention to people is that I do a seminar twice a year and people go to www.InfoProductsSeminar.com, we show people how to create these info products.

And then, www.SeminarOnSeminars.com shows people how to do their own seminar and events. And a portion of that is actually speaking at these kinds of venues, how to do that and how to maximize product sales.

But, I think that every single person listen has got to realize that their industry or their niche is going to be a little bit different than every other industry.

There are industry in which they are very, very comfortable and used to people getting up in front of groups of people and pitching them.

One of the ways you can do this, Bret, which we haven't mentioned yet, is to kick back the association with part of your product sales.

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If an organization is reticent to let you pitch products and you get up there and close \$50,000 worth of orders, and you are kicking back \$5,000, next year when they have you speak, they will be delighted to pitch for you.

In many cases, you end up making their association or organization money by pitching the product.

Bret: Great point. Now, do you find that most of these organizations are more than receptive to that?

Fred: You know, it's funny because there are some that have become used to it.

There are others that are fairly stodgy and feel that pitching products is so gauche and shouldn't be done at a presentation and they have a problem with it.

But, in most cases, organizations, like individuals, are concerned about, "How do we maximize revenue for our organization?"

Show them how they can make money with your product sales, as long as they don't get any bad reports going in like, "That stuff I bought from Fred really sucked."

If they don't get that kind of comment, they are going to be pretty amenable to helping you promote your products, especially if you are there sort of year after year and they are getting a piece of it each time.

A lot of what we are talking about in this program has to do with showing up and speaking for free. We should talk about what that arrangement is for the speaker.

But, I've been places where they paid me \$5,000 to speak at the event and by the end of the event, they ended up getting my fee back in terms of product sales.

So, what ended up happening is that the arrangement that I worked with the association made it so that I became a free speaker. And given that I was the only one to do that, they definitely had me back the following year.

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Bret: Do you have any other hints for people on how to locate events to speak at?

Fred: One of the other things is, obviously, to go to all the trade publications that are within your market.

If you go to the trade publications within your industry or within your market and get online, take a look at all the books that are out there, you are going to find quickly enough most of the big presentations that go on out there.

You may miss some. I mean, there have been times where I've been operating in a niche and I had no idea that a given seminar was being done every year.

But, the key is to talk to the people within the industry, particularly the people who are the heads of the associations for that industry. They usually know.

If you are listening to this program and let's say your niche is bicycle riders, I am sure there are 3, 4, 5, or 10 different trade publications that you can go to. And there is probably an association of cyclists.

Now, you can go to that association.

You can call them up and usually people at the association are very helpful and able to give you some answers.

Just say, "I'm thinking about doing this presentation. I was just wondering. What are some of the yearly events that we have in the bicycle industry? I'd like to make sure that I haven't missed anybody so that I can contact these folks."

You'd be surprised. Remember, there is usually more than one association. What has happened is, one association started. Then, somebody got teed off at someone and started their own association.

The storage industry is a perfect example of that — 2 competing associations.

So, you go to those associations. They will give you who it is.

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You go to the trade publications. You go online. And pretty much with that, you will be able to discover basically everything that is out there in your field.

Bret: A couple of additional ways that people can ingratiate themselves to these associations is write articles for their publications for them.

Fred: You got it. I do that every month in a couple of them.

Bret: When you start contributing to their publication, they'll be delighted to have you as a speaker because you're a participating partner with them.

Fred: Unless you've done something like what I have done which is, in the self-storage industry, they now no longer allow me to speak in that industry.

The reason for that that they gave, Bret, very interestingly enough, was they considered me too aggressive a marketer. They said, "You are too aggressive in your marketing approach."

You have to be really careful if you are going to keep in the good graces of an association. Understand that you speaking at that event is, in part, related to how good your information is, but also is, in a large part, a political thing.

In other words, the people have to like you.

In this case, what happened was, I believe that they think that I sold too many products, and I made too much money.

I believe that they thought it was unfair somehow. So, that's one of the things you have to look out for.

How You Can Become A Speaker At Events Like This

Well, now, in the case of that particular niche, I am now figuring out ways in which I can actually show up at this hotel and hand out my materials to get people to buy my materials even though I'm not a speaker at those events.

I am also working on having my own events where I promote them myself.

Bret: Fortunately, that's probably a rare event where you are deemed too successful by them to want them to purchase things from you.

Fred: Also, it is a matter of personalities and stroking. There are 2 parts to this.

When you are getting to speak at an event where you can sell your stuff, not only do you have to be successful as a salesperson, but you have to be easy to work with. If you are not easy to work with, people aren't going to want to have you back.

Bret: Another thing that people can do, in addition to writing articles for the associations, is to contribute to them in some other way.

Write tips, booklets or other things that they can give to their members as a value added, that can also serve as a front end funnel for you.

Fred: Absolutely. Anything that you can do to support their efforts to help build their membership, you will be looked at in a much more favorable light.

Tips, booklets and contributing to any kind of a program that they have in which your expertise would be valuable are great things.

Like you said, fill your funnel.

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Bret: Okay, so you've gone online and you've checked through the trade associations and the journals and all that to locate appropriate events.

What do you have to do first? How do you prioritize things to form a plan of attack?

Fred: Well, let's assume that after listening to this program, you figured out what niche you want to attack.

You have a lot of knowledge about that niche. You've started writing your book on that niche. You've created a line of products in that niche.

Now, you are going to approach the people who have these events and these seminars and you want to find out who it is that actually books the speakers.

Don't be disappointed if you can't get on the program this upcoming year. Chances are, many of these events book their speakers well in advance.

You want to contact the people who are involved.

Explain to them what your topic is and what you do, and again, that niche within a niche. Send them a copy of your book. Send them a copy of your product that is already available. Again, this will impress them.

By just calling up and saying to someone, "I've written a book. Let me send you a copy of it," there is a pretty good chance you will get to speak at those events.

So, you have to identify where and when the events are and who is responsible for selecting the speakers at each of those events.

You do that by making a phone call.

Bret: Do you recommend any type of formal publicity packets?

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Fred: Your formal publicity package, if you want to call it that, should include your finished book or a finished audio or video program, if you have those, to show your credentials. Also, the promoter needs to be able to hear you speak.

The most important thing when someone is planning a meeting and deciding on who is going to be speaking there is to have heard your possible speakers before.

I have made many mistakes in the past, as a seminar promoter myself, where I have allowed people to speak at an event having never heard them before.

That is deadly.

So, the promoter who is doing these events will probably want to see a sample of your speaking and a sample of your entire presentation, and the pitch.

They want to make sure number one, that you have a good content and number two, that your sales presentation isn't going to be disturbing to their members.

Again, if we are dealing in a very entrepreneurial space, like Internet marketing, the only thing that people care about there is, can you do a presentation and can you sell a whole bunch of stuff. So, that's their presentation.

But, in most of these niches that people listening might be going after, you're going to have to make sure that whoever is selecting speakers believes 100% that you've got the credentials, number one, in the form of a book or your products.

Number two, he has seen you speak.

Bret, I don't know if you've seen it, but I have seen it many times, where somebody who has written the book on a topic is just a terrible presenter.

Bret: I've seen it many times.

Fred: It's unbelievable.

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I remember seeing this guy one time who gave a presentation on customer service. He gave a 45-minute presentation and had a 6-page handout. I thought, "How is he going to get through this?"

He didn't even get through the first page, and he was just awful.

So, again, how can you hire people and how can people decide to let you speak as a speaker without seeing you do your thing? A major component to that is a sample of what you have done in the form of a video.

Bret: Let's review that real quick though. It's a chicken or the egg type thing. I want to speak at events, but I haven't spoken before. So, how do I have a video?

Fred: That's where what we do is, we create our product.

In the process of creating our product, we are doing so in such a way that if we videotape them and record them, we now have the ability to show them, at least a sample of what we have done up in front of a group.

That will be a fairly simple way for them to see us in action.

Now, will it be us in action in a presentation that is exactly like the one they're going to be doing? No. But, at least they can see you up in front of a group, even if it's a small group, doing your thing.

A lot of times, people have gotten a group of their friends together, turned on the video camera and tried to dress a set to make it look like it's an actual presentation, and deliver their presentation in order to create this sort of demo video.

If I am a promoter of an event and I have never seen or heard you before, I will not let you speak at my event unless I see you actually giving a presentation, whether it is in video form or if I see you live somewhere.

How You Can Become A Speaker At Events Like This

Bret: Alright. I've had success, and I've landed my first gig.

What do I do next once I've got that gig?

Fred: Now, you haven't presented at a gig yet. Right?

Bret: That is correct.

Fred: Okay. You've had success. You've landed that gig. So now, what do you do next?

You want to make sure that you understand exactly who is going to be in your audience. In understanding who your audience is going to be, it's important that you know what those people need, what they are missing.

You want to know who the other speakers are so you can tailor your presentation and your product pitch to be exactly tailored to that particular group.

I would want to ask my seminar promoter, if I can talk to 3 to 5 of the participants who will be coming to understand their needs also. Then, in the course of giving that presentation, I will now be able to really talk to some of the people directly.

For example, if I am allowed to speak to 4 or 5 of the members or participants who are going to be in attendance, I can say, "Well, you know, just last week, I spoke to Jim..." and you are talking from the platform and mentioning people.

So, I am able to actually connect with people before I get to the event and know exactly what some of their needs are and use them in my presentation.

Bret: This is a sidebar, but have you ever had the ability to pre-mail or pre-present things to people before they came to an event?

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Fred: I have been able to do that where I said to an association, “Look, I am going to be speaking at the event. I wanted to give your participants something before they even get there that would be helpful to them and help them to gain maximum value.”

I was able to do that and what happened was, they actually included it in their newsletter because they booked me as a speaker 8 or 9 months in advance.

So, twice in their newsletter they made reference to something that I was going to be doing. This allowed me, actually in that case, to give a couple of free teleseminars to them to get them sort of primed for the actual event.

This wouldn't be a bad philosophy to try in general.

Bret: I'm sure it had a positive impact on your results from that event.

Fred: It did. The reason was because those people already felt like they knew me.

They turned out in much larger numbers than what was expected because I had sort of pre-sold the event.

Bret: Do you typically promote where you are going to be speaking at to your own list?

Fred: I do, if it's relevant. For example, if I am going to be giving a presentation to the National Automotive Association and my list is primarily composed of entrepreneurs who have no interest in that area, I don't really think it makes any sense.

But, naturally, if I am going to be speaking to that particular organization, I am going to make sure that I have products that are relevant to those groups.

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So, at this point in my career, I have a number of generic products that I can then take and customize or change for that particular niche. But, if it's a group of people that has no relation to what my primary niche market is, there is no need for me to mail them and let them know if it is not related to them.

Bret: Alright. Now, you've done this first event, and you've had success.

Do you have a formal process that you utilize for dealing with a promoter, not only before the event, but after the event?

Obviously, the objective is to be asked back.

Fred: The first thing is, when you are dealing with a promoter, and you know actually Bret, this gets into some stuff here that probably is a good idea for us to cover.

Bret: We are talking about the important aspect of getting asked back to speak at events again and again and again.

Obviously, your long-term livelihood in this arena will be based on repeat business.

Fred: You've got it. Repeat business and I think that everybody listening should understand that you definitely want to get to be a speaker at events.

You also, probably long term, want to start promoting some of your own events.

So, it's key that, number one, if you are asked to speak at an event, you make yourself... There are some speakers, as a promoter myself, who are an absolute joy to deal with. There are other speakers who are impossible to deal with.

My desire to ask those people back is really affected if they are difficult to deal with.

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By easy to deal with I mean, as soon as I am asked to be a speaker at an event, my first question to my promoter is, “Hey, how can I help you to build and really increase revenue and registration for this event?”

In doing that, I am now setting myself up as a helpful promoting individual.

Again, what can I do to help? How can I help before the event? Once I get to the event, do you need me to do anything?

Most speakers just sit back and act like everybody should cater to them and the needs. Instead, I am there to help the promoter to be as active as he or she wants me to be to make this event a success.

So, I just want to make myself available and helpful if need be.

Bret: Now, what are the keys, from your perspective, of getting back to an event again and again?

Fred: Let’s say, before the event, we volunteered our services, done whatever the promoter wanted us to do.

When we get to the event itself, it’s important that number one, we understand that at that time the promoter is going to be extremely business and frenetic running around trying to take care of all the details.

We don’t want to come in there and talk to them and disturb them unless we have very, very specific questions that need immediate attention.

The only thing you want to do is try to make it as smooth as possible for that promoter. Don’t be constantly nagging them, “What about this? What about that?”

You should have provided them with exactly what your needs were in terms of a project, a flip chart or whatever it is you needed in advance.

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All of your handouts and materials should be decided in advance so that there are no surprises. The promoter is dealing with three things as far as you as a speaker.

Number one, did you sell a lot of stuff? Number two, did you make the audience happy with the content that you delivered? And number three, were you easy to deal with as a presenter?

If you score 8, 9 and 10 on all three of those, you will be asked back to speak at their next event. Plus, you will probably have a good chance of speaking at other people's events as well.

Bret: Many events like to provide their participants with a workbook in advance, the various handouts and other things that the speakers might be covering.

I can tell you from experience that by and large, speakers are very weak on providing these types of things to the promoters...

Fred: In a timely fashion.

Bret: ...in a timely fashion. So, if you want to set yourself apart from the crowd, as Fred said, just be responsive to the promoter and get them what they request from you when they request it.

Fred: Right. They've got time frames they've got to deal with. They've got deadlines. They've got to get stuff to their printers by a certain time in order to have it all done, to have it delivered to that event.

All those things are very, very important.

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Bret: Another thing that Fred touched on earlier which can't be emphasized enough is, be flexible. Some speakers will run over on their time.

Time frames will get changed around. You thought you were going to speak at 2:00. You end up speaking at 4:00. You thought you were going to speak at 4:00.

You got kicked back to the next morning at 8:00. You've got to adapt.

Fred: Yeah, you do. And this is where you see a lot of speakers showing primarily how they are in the way that they behave.

It is absolutely essential that you understand that the promoter's goal is run a great event, have everybody happy and make a lot of sales.

You happen to be one small piece of that puzzle, and they are not catering to you. They are catering to their attendees and making them happy. If you have to speak at a different time slot or speak a little bit less or a little bit more, that's just how it is.

Those are the rules of the game.

Bret: That raises a question, though. Once you've presented things several times and you're known as a speaker, obviously, you have a little bit more "clout", so to speak.

If you have any input to the promoter on where you want to speak on a program, whether it's a one, two or three-day program, where would you suggest to get yourself slotted in the agenda to increase your chances of bigger back-end revenues?

Fred: That's a really good question. In general, if I am given my choice, on a one-day event, I don't want to speak first, and I don't want to speak last.

My preferred slot is the slot right before people go to lunch.

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Then, I give my presentation. Hopefully, it's a great presentation. Everybody sits with me at lunch who is interested in the high-end program that I offer. They ask me any questions, and I can close them right there.

So, my preferred slot is right before lunch. That's A.

If we are dealing in a multi-day program, for me, I want to get to people before they have spent all the money on their credit cards.

That means, let's say it's a two-day program, I prefer to speak on the first day rather than on the second day. At a three-day program, I'd probably prefer to speak on the first or second day, rather than the third day.

Again, I'd rather speak not first or last. I'd prefer speaking right before lunch in one of the earlier sessions, rather than in a later session.

Those time slots are fairly highly coveted. Most speakers understand where the best slots are. Plus, the presenter will be putting together their presentation based on where they think it will be most beneficial for them.

They're not thinking of you. They are thinking of themselves and where you are going to be the best use to them.

You have more clout if you become one of the top salespeople where you present.

Bret: Obviously, the keys are, like you talked about, are being accessible to the participants, listen to them, have lunches with them, etcetera.

The seminar promoter is so busy during the time, if there are people who are potential problems, do you think you should take the time to point them out to the promoter?

Fred: Yes. If it's going to be useful information to them.

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For example, if you know that a given individual has a tendency to disrupt events and to help themselves to speaker products without putting them back on the table, those are things you might want to let the promoter know.

Also, if the individual has developed a reputation outside of this event that you know about, I would just pull the promoter over and say, "Just to let you know, this individual over there..."

You just point them out, "Here is what I know about him. You may want to keep your eye on him."

I think that's very helpful information.

Bret: What about post-event? Are there any things that you do formally, post-event, with the promoter, attendees or whatever to maximize the long-term benefit of your having been there?

Fred: Yes, especially with the promoter. One of the things that you want to do, which I've done on multiple occasions with the promoters, in addition to having put money in their pockets with the split, is I offer a kickback of 10%.

By the way, when I speak at associations, occasionally they not only pay me a fee but they allow me to sell product, and I get to keep all the money because associations don't really get it.

But, the normal split, when you're dealing with these entrepreneurial kinds of events that you and I are sometimes at, Bret, the speaker's compensation is purely based on a percentage of product sales.

Say, for example, I am going to go to a few seminars over the next few months, I show up there for free. I don't charge them a fee. I am paying my own airfare, my own hotel bill. And then we do a 50/50 split based on the gross sales of the product. So, if I sell \$10,000 worth of product, I've got \$5,000.

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In associations where you get to speak, oftentimes they will not only pay you to speak, but they will also give you all of your product sales. And that is why I offer to kick back 10%. And at 10% they are actually delighted.

One of the things that I do after the event to make sure that they like me and they ask me back is to thank them. Not only to thank them verbally, but to thank them with a little card. Oftentimes, a little gift won't hurt either.

If you follow up before, during and after the event, you are going to be remembered.

The promoters will know, "That guy not only helped us before the event, they helped us during the event, they helped us after the event. Their sales were even average. We are probably going to have them back."

Now, as it relates to the attendees, it is giving people ongoing help in the form of letting them contact you by email or whatever. It also sets up an opportunity for those people who didn't buy from you to become buyers.

Bret: Let's back up a little bit to the issue of the split again. Because we haven't really talked about this in detail.

As a new speaker in the arena, you're telling me that I am typically going to expect to pay my own expenses, and I am going to split product sales 50/50 with the house.

Fred: Yup. And chances are, the first few times you do this, you may not make a whole lot of money. Because even if you've practiced quite a bit on your own, the actual process of doing this live, in person, in front of a real group is going to be touch.

So, you should consider this part of your seminar speaker learning curve. When you get out there, you're probably, for the first few times, going to end up spending more money than you make.

How You Can Become A Speaker At Events Like This

Bret: Alright. A couple of questions. If I am offering hard product, does the cost of the hard product duplication fulfillment come out of my 50% or the house's 50%?

Fred: If you are there at the event, it is expected that you will pay for the cost of the product itself. In other words, the split is purely based on the gross sales price of the product.

Bret: And, the credit card fees are typically absorbed by the house?

Fred: Typically, the credit card fees, depending on who processes the order, are subtracted out, but that is one of those things that you see vary from location to location.

So, it's whatever the deal is. The only thing that you should expect is that you will not get any better deal than any of the other speakers.

Now, occasionally, you will hear about one speaker having a preferred arrangement with a promoter. If that's the case, in my opinion, it's the promoter's mistake. But, I don't think you should be pointing that out to the promoter complaining about it, "So and so got this and this."

There are cases I've heard about where, with any event, someone has actually been given a better deal than the other speakers. That should not be done.

Bret: A related question which we haven't really talked about before, and that's to back up in relation to the order forms and all that, do you believe that you should offer payment terms to the participants to increase sales?

Fred: Ah yes, one of Bret's pet peeves.

How You Can Become A Speaker At Events Like This

Bret: No, just one of the realities that we deal with.

Fred: Obviously, in an attempt to get people to buy a program, we oftentimes, as presenters and as speakers, will try to let people get in with a payment plan.

In getting people in with a payment plan, you may and you probably will increase the number of sales that you get. But, you will also increase the amount of headache for yourself or for whomever is processing the orders.

I think that what you need to do is understand that if you can show that using a payment plan system will substantially increase your sales, then it is worth doing it.

For example, when I am offering my program of either \$997 up front or \$5,000 up front, I basically am asking people to put that money out up front, the full amount.

There are a number of people, and Bret you may want to tell people listening what your experience has been on the success of people that offer payment plans versus those who don't. I'm curious to hear your response. Because I've gone to a model where basically, it's all of this or nothing.

How do you see that?

Bret: It really varies from event to event and speaker to speaker as to whether the payment plan increases sales. There are so many variable involved in the back-of-the-room success and the individual speaker.

It's hard to put your finger on one thing and say, "Hey, payment plan was the difference" or "it wasn't the difference."

It's a difficult question to answer. Overall, I certainly think the higher priced tickets that you have, you've got to offer the option of a payment plan to maximize your chances of success.

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Fred: In a case like mine, where I am saying to you that I've got a do-it-yourself program at \$997, and then a \$5,000 lifetime coaching program, it would be good to offer a way to give people five monthly payments of \$1,000 a piece.

That way, they can be part of that program.

Bret: As an organization who provides the back-of-the-room services at these events, we will work with the speakers.

It's their call on what they want to do and we will work within their framework.

So, if you are a new speaker into this arena, the main thing you have to do is test. You've got to test different formats, different offers, different payment plans, and see what works best for you, and then go from there.

Fred: Absolutely. I think that someone like Bret, if you are listening on tape, is in a position to handle those orders for you and will be delighted, even if you broke it up into payments, if lots of money comes in.

I would try to have you restrict your payments to no more than three.

I know that Bret has handled a couple of situations where he has had a series of twelve payments. That's a little bit too much both for you and for your speaker.

Now, in the case of what I was describing with the \$5,000 program, I could conceivably understand how it might be worth it to break that up into five chunks of \$1,000 each. And in doing so, that would help sell the program.

Bret: But, keep in mind, your promoter wants his money now, too. So, the more you stretch out your payments, the longer deferred payments he is going to get.

Some of them live with it. Some of them aren't so keen about it.

How You Can Become A Speaker At Events Like This

Fred: By the way, just since we are talking about it, one of the program that I have is called Web Marketing Magic. And www.WebMarketingMagic.com is a great program for handling your own sales of your own products and services.

I use Web Marketing Magic for everything that I do in terms of my product sales, both product sales and seminar registrations and everything else.

And that system, Web Marketing Magic, gives people a real ability to handle some of these issues, like whether it's a recurring billing or whatever.

So, if you sold things yourself at your own events, or set up your own websites, Web Marketing Magic would be a helpful tool.

Bret: Another key, I would think, to getting asked to speak at various events, is to get to know the other speakers and seminar leaders, etcetera. Is there a formula or a tool that you use to generate referrals from other seminar leaders?

Fred: I think there really isn't a specific formula or tool. But, one of the things you have to do is to make sure that you realize that the people that you are working with, and working with as colleagues, are well aware of what you do.

They see how good you are, etcetera.

It's just great to make sure that the people that are around you as speakers, you try to support them. If you get up and badmouth another speaker or presenter, that's not going to be too good.

If you help them make sales, certainly they are going to help you try and get gigs.

And, I know that we've got maybe 5 more minutes left on this program. I think that it's really important that you understand that getting the promoters, as well as the other speakers, to tell other people about you is very, very important.

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Sometimes, somebody will tell someone about you and you will go to a gig that may not work out. Just recently, I had a good friend of mine who is another presenter recommend me.

I made my airfare, reservations and everything else, then the seminar was cancelled.

Well, it's not their fault and I didn't get down on them for that. It's all part of it. It's gaining relationships with people, gaining trust and saying to them, "By the way, if you know of anywhere else I could be speaking, please let me know."

Bret: Another key here, obviously, is that many of these speakers in seminars are also promoting their own events.

So, they are looking for talent and people to bring into their own events.

Fred: Absolutely. So, chances are, your fellow speaker at one event may be a seminar promoter at the next event and you have to think about that and make sure that you understand that they are another source.

You can be speaking at another event and it may be their event.

Bret: One thing we haven't talked about yet, which you may want to touch on for a couple of minutes is about doing your own events.

Fred: Again, doing your own events, if you can do them right, turns out to be one of the most lucrative ways to do it.

Most of my revenue is generated every year by my own events and the sales and products at my own events, and promoting my own events.

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Like I said earlier, for those people who want to learn how to do that, www.SeminarOnSeminars.com is a good place to start. You could also go to www.SeminarExpert.com.

Promoting your own event is something that can be very, very frustrating. But, if you get the system down and get all the components down, it's easy to do.

For example, I work with the same hotel every time here in Las Vegas. I work with the same hotel back in the New York City area where I give seminars. And I give primarily seminars in those two venues on my own.

I also like working with some of the same speakers again and again. Although, if you keep doing the same event, you want to bring in different people. Therefore, you will always looking for new talent.

Doing your own events can be the most lucrative way to do this.

And that, in itself, is a whole other program that we could spend hours talking about. But, yes, doing your own events is one very, very lucrative way to generate business for yourself as a speaker.

Bret: We shared some great things today, Fred, and I really appreciate the time that you've given. Any final words of wisdom for our speakers-to-be?

Fred: I would just say that this is a really, really satisfying place to be if you enjoy getting up in front of groups of people and you enjoy making money from the creation of the sale of products.

I think that everybody has got to understand that I've been doing this now for twenty years. And it doesn't happen overnight.

So, if you are frustrated. Oh, it's going to take me so long, well, get started now and it really isn't going to be as long as you think to make all of this happen.

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You've got to go back, listen to this program again and again, take the steps, write your book, create your products, establish your relationships, start understanding how to promote your own events and speak at other people's events.

Get a lot of practice.

In saying that, I would just say, yes, go for it. Do it. But, remember that it isn't going to happen overnight.

You've got to be patient and it may take a while for you to succeed.

Bret: Thank you very much, Fred.

Fred: My pleasure, Bret, and we will talk soon.

WEBSITE RESOURCE LIST

Some of Fred's sites that may be of interest:

- ✓ www.SeminarExpert.com
- ✓ www.TheProductGuru.com
- ✓ www.PublishingBook.com
- ✓ www.SeminaronSeminars.com
- ✓ www.PublishingSeminar.com
- ✓ www.InfoProductsSeminar.com
- ✓ www.WebMarketingMagic.com
- ✓ www.SelfPublishingSuccess.com
- ✓ www.ProfessionalSpeakingSuccess.com
- ✓ www.ConsultingExpert.com
- ✓ www.DirectMarketingExpert.com
- ✓ www.CreateYourBestseller.com
- ✓ www.StartYourOwnAssociation.com
- ✓ www.GetYourOwnRadioShow.com
- ✓ www.RunYourOwnConferences.com

Some of Bret's sites that may be of interest:

- ✓ www.SpeakerFulfillmentServices.com
- ✓ www.TWIPress.com
- ✓ www.InternetMarketersToolbox.com