

Author YOU: Creating and Building Author and Book Platforms

Judith Briles

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Successful authors need a good business foundation, and Briles shows exactly how to build one.

Judith Briles' authoritative guide to business strategies for first-time and seasoned authors is a well-written, charmingly illustrated, and handsomely designed book. Briles, an authors' consultant who has written thirty books of her own, points out that truly successful authors work on the right "platform"—a foundation that includes "financial sustainability, marketing strategies, action plans, and the ability to fine-tune and reassess as you go along."

Briles organizes her book into thirteen easy-to-read chapters that combine advice with inspirational interludes and, most importantly, guided "activities" that lead an author through what amounts to a comprehensive self-assessment. In her third activity, "Finding Your Book Platform," Briles asks questions such as, "What would your book look like if you concentrated on your Passion?" and "What if turning your Passion into reality became your measure of success...what does Book Success look like to you?" Questions like these are not easily answered—in fact, answering them may be quite a challenge for some authors—but are part of a larger exercise Briles has designed to get an author thinking about the business, financial, and marketing implications of writing a book.

In addition to activities, Briles liberally shares her own writing techniques, aiming to increase a writer's efficiency. She includes, for example, her "visual game plan" methodology, neatly illustrated as a series of colorful stick-on notes. She also explains an intriguing "book mapping" process that she used "as the basis of my Platform, Plan, and Pitch to others." Briles claims book mapping ultimately led to "over \$4,000,000 in cumulative speaking engagements, books sales, consulting, and corporate sponsorships over a thirty-year period."

Briles covers many areas that will be of interest, especially to beginning authors, including developing the vision for a book, making the time and financial commitment, identifying the appropriate audience, dealing with distractions, and raising money. The author adds valuable information about using the Internet and social media, augmented by a list and description of social media and technology tools (some not widely known) that should be particularly useful to authors.

One of the great benefits of reading *Author YOU: Creating and Building Your Author and Book Platforms* is the book itself is proof positive of the skill of an accomplished author. It is carefully targeted to a very specific audience and written in the language of that audience. It utilizes relevant exercises, makes ample use of pertinent examples, and imparts valuable information that will improve an author's chance of success. And it is executed in a high-quality package that is delightful to read and a pleasure to leaf through. It isn't surprising that Briles has achieved success as an author—she is following her own advice.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (July 15, 2013)

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