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PR Therapy for Authors

Need a publicist? Look no further than Robin Blakely.

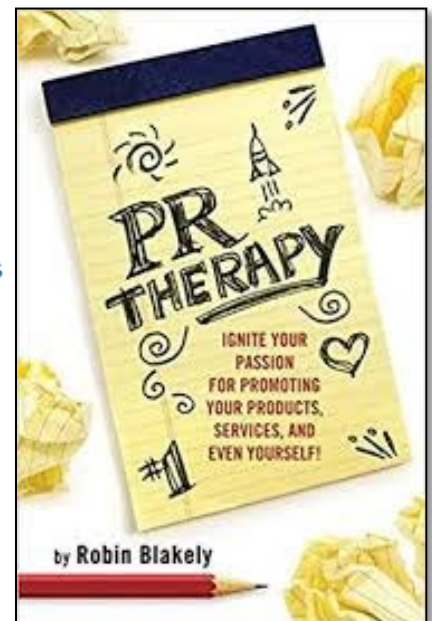
By Marcela Landres

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I became a fan of Robin Blakely after she proved instrumental in helping one of the books I published at Simon & Schuster become a national bestseller. She is the person who not only insisted I create my web site and this ezine, she gave me a road map showing me how to do it.

Robin is so much more than a publicist--she is a midwife to my career as a manuscript *madrina*. If you're seeking a publicist, you would be very lucky to have Robin Blakely. Read this month's Q&A to learn more.

Robin Blakely is the author of *PR Therapy* (2009) and the upcoming *Mojo Rehab* (2011). For more than a decade, Robin has worked closely with best-selling authors, renowned artists, CEO's, nonprofit leaders, educators, and creative talents from across the country. For more information, visit <http://robinblakely.com/>, [text](#) and <http://prtherapy.com/>.



Q: What inspired you to write *PR Therapy*?

A: Many people with passion, especially creative thinkers who love to write, have some common hang-ups when it comes to promoting who they are and what they do. I wrote *PR Therapy* to address promotional outreach issues that can make or break a person's success. *PR Therapy* helps people do promotional outreach that's rooted in authenticity, never artificial hype.

Q: Could you share some examples of authors for whom you've provided PR therapy?

A: It's my job to help align a person's true potential with their professional dreams and their real world opportunities. I help make motion or help people deal with being in motion. That means I live through some fabulously fun adventures with some incredibly talented people.

Examples? Once I sold a three-book deal to a major publisher for a client who hadn't yet written the three novels I'd pitched. I've had two clients with books turned into TV-movies; one was nominated for an Emmy, the other was made by Hallmark. Two of my clients, years apart, were eventually tapped to be Bedside Astrologer for Cosmo. Two of my clients had events in NYC on the day the Twin Towers went down.

I've worked on keynote placement or the media around prestigious events like at Harvard or the Baseball Hall of Fame or on Book TV, as well as all kinds of fun things like small-town parades and nonprofit fundraisers. Once I pitched four different clients and they all ended up on a panel together at a big event hosted by the Los Angeles Times. I helped plan and pitch a bunch of bloggers for Psychology Today. The spectrum is fascinating. I've had one author who appeared on stage after a Broadway production; another had a Broadway star sing--sans stage--at his bookstore event.

Sometimes, we deal with crazy stuff like missing books, lost limos, TV news crews in kitchens, and, once, a client got stuck in line during a bank robbery before an event. Along the way, many of my clients become lifelong family friends. I've worked with dozens upon dozens of writers and authors in virtually every genre from science fiction, mystery, romance, and young adult to self-help, psychology, business, and entertainment. I've also had a terrific opportunity to experience every stage of the publishing process from concept to editing to pre-launch to post-launch to re-launch.

These days, I am steering authors with entrepreneurial spirits through the e-book and pod process to build franchises. And, as many creative talents feel professionally lost in the sharp transition of the publishing landscape, I do a different kind of PR therapy--I provide special coaching to high achievers who have temporarily lost their mojo.



Q: In your experience, what are the top three hardships writers face when promoting their books?

A: The biggest hardship for most authors is that so many business lines are blurred that goals become muddled. For example, it's crucial to the development of an individual's brand to understand the difference between book publicity and author publicity.

The next biggest problem is the urge for the author to take his or her hands off the wheel of the career when it's time to focus on book promotion. They work so hard to get to the finish line of book production, but that's not the point in time to allow someone else--even the publisher--to be in the driver's seat of a writer's professional career.

They often lose sight of or never realize that the book can be more than a product and will be more profitable when utilized simultaneously as a marketing tool.

Three tips: 1. Don't be passive about planning your own book promotions. 2. Don't confuse book promotion goals with the goals for your career. 3. Don't forget that a key part of marketing yourself is building a core audience, so build relationships, not just databases.

Q: What are three smart tips you can offer to writers?

A: See yourself as an entrepreneur. Build a franchise around your brand. Cultivate your audience carefully. Understand that it's possible to utilize your book as a marketing tool as well as a product. Realize that your climb can be steep and many of the setbacks are everyone's setbacks, not just the world against you personally. Most of all, accept that you are living through the birth of a new era. Writers can succeed as pioneers right now. When you look at the death of giants like Borders and the emergence of Kindles and iPads, you can either worry about the way things used to be or head to the wild, wild West and make a name for yourself. If you decide to 'Go West', I'm a good guide and wingman.

Q: Other than your fabulous book, *PR Therapy*, which resources do you recommend to writers?

A: I believe that every person on the road to success needs to read these books. It only takes a few minutes because they are very short. *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss is one of the best motivational books written about overcoming the skepticism of the world and believing in oneself. *The Missing Piece Meets The Big O* by Shel Silverstein explains the concept every writer needs to know about finding personal happiness and joy.

The real secret of how to achieve marketing and sales success happens to have been written by the same guy who delivered the best guide to navigating your own career and life--check out the classic bestsellers Green Eggs and Ham and Oh, the Places You'll Go by Dr. Seuss. Next, I'd recommend these longer works by three more of my favorite writers who obviously love creative thinkers: Selling the Dream by Guy Kawasaki, If You Want to Write by Brenda Ueland, and How Editors Think by Marcela Landres.

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About Marcela Landres:

Marcela Landres is the author of the e-book How Editors Think. She is an Editorial Consultant who specializes in helping Latinos get published and was formerly an editor at Simon & Schuster.

