



*Marketing links
the products
with the intended
audience.*

Create the Link

Every book is unique. It is a new presentation of ideas and concepts, packaged for public consumption. However, every time a book is published, its potential readers do not know that it exists. If they have heard about that particular book, they do not know they want it or that it will meet their needs. Marketing is all about creating a link between potential readers and the book.

One way to create the link is via traditional promotion tactics, such as general magazine advertisements. This is not always best. A lot of money is wasted by Christian publishers in the United States this way. They buy advertising in general magazines, trying to reach 300,000 readers, rather than using a targeted promotion to recommend the book to the 20,000 readers most likely to buy it.

It is very difficult to reach the right readers by mass market means unless the title is truly universal (mass market), just as it is difficult to evangelize or disciple people with a “masses” approach. Most people come to Christ through very personal, direct contact. They do not accept Christ through a general presentation of the gospel but are much more likely to accept him when they hear a message they perceive as personally relevant to their own circumstances.

The challenge we have as publishers is how to identify and communicate with the audience for whom the book is intended. We want to create the link between each book and the readers it speaks to, the ones for whom the message is timely and relevant. Few books are for everyone.

Most books are more appropriate for a targeted readership.

One way to create the marketing link is to focus your publishing. Make sure your titles are aimed at a targeted readership. Work with the ministries that serve that audience. Ask yourself, what ministries or movements can I cooperate with in my country? Cook Communications Ministries wants to publish resources that bridge the church and home. It wants to equip parents to teach their children to be disciples, not just on Sunday at church, but every day of the week. Therefore, we seek partner organizations who share our vision. This is one way to create the marketing link. Marketing is not just promotion—it is strategy.

Another way to create the link is to get the book to venues where the user and product meet. This is why distribution matters. When books are sold on the streets, in supermarkets or in mass market outlets, the goal is to reach the segment of the audience that never sets foot in a bookstore. But the book must be accepted more widely than 80-90 percent of all books published to justify such distribution.

Each one of your books is unique and can transform lives if it reaches the intended audience. This is a great opportunity we have as publishers. However, the challenge is getting these right books to the right audience at the right price. Developing strategies that create this link is key to financial viability and effective ministry in publishing. ❖

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InterLit

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