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## **Publishing University: My Journey Continues**

By Patti Kerr

I arrived at The Roosevelt Hotel after twelve days on the road. I was slowly making my way home from Wisconsin to New Jersey after my first 'real' road trip with my book. I'd been a keynote speaker in Green Bay, Madison, Verona, Wisconsin Dells and Milwaukee and had been interviewed in bookstores and on radio stations around the state. I was also given the opportunity to finally meet, face-to-face, with some of the caregivers I'd interviewed for my book, as well as other caregivers who were still on a journey with a loved one and Alzheimer's.

### **Overwhelmed**

I was returning home with a suitcase full of business cards and names of individuals who wanted me to e-mail them a copy of my caregiver newsletter. (*Did I mention that I don't have a caregiver newsletter yet?*). I was going home to an overflow of requests from people who wanted to connect on LinkedIn and Twitter. (*Did I mention I don't know how to Tweet?*). What I wasn't returning home with was an entire case of my books, which were lost somewhere between here and Wisconsin. (*I'd say it's time to finally figure out shipping and distribution options*).

This is my first book and my first venture into the world of publishing and book marketing. The questions and concerns I had when I arrived at The Roosevelt Hotel that day are probably simplistic and naive to many of you. But for me, they were overwhelming.

I arrived at The Roosevelt road-weary, homesick, and with a head filled with questions. I was hopeful that Publishing University would shorten my learning curve and help me get answers to at least a few of my questions.

I not only got answers to my questions, I got answers to questions I wasn't even aware I had.

It would be impossible to cover everything I learned at Publishing University, so instead I'll begin by sharing some tidbits of genius that were passed on by some of the presenters.

## Tidbits of Genius

*Some of which I knew...some I didn't...some I needed to be reminded about. Session name in parentheses.*

*From Dave Marx, [www.passporter.com](http://www.passporter.com) (Marketing 101 in the Digital Age)*

- ✧ “The line between marketing and promotion is thinner than ever.”
- ✧ “It’s all about awareness – “touching” potential readers/fans/buyers, frequently.
- ✧ “Seven Positive Impressions – buyer has to have seven encounters (via ad, word-of-mouth, reviews, bookstores, etc.) before they buy”

*From Todd Bottorff, Turner Publishing (Marketing 101 in the Digital Age)*

- ✧ “You can outsell your competitors if you understand marketing.”
- ✧ Don’t spread yourself too thin. Determine what you can do and what you can pay someone else to do.”

*From Brian Jud, Book Marketing Works (Marketing 101 in the Digital Age)*

- ✧ “Begin working from the standpoint of what your reader/audience wants. Then use PIE: **P**lan what you’re going to do, **I**mplement the Plan; **E**valuate. Repeat.”

*From Lisa Pelto, Concierge Marketing & Publishing (Q&A With Publishing Service Professionals)*

- ✧ “Keep in mind that the buyer and reader are often two different people. “
- ✧ Authors care about the reader; publishers care about the buyer. “

*From Kate Siegel Bandos, KSB Promotions*

- ✧ “Make sure all the materials you develop are available to send electronically or for the media to download from your website.”
- ✧ “Be accessible. You never know when someone you have contacted will want to contact you for a story or interviews. If you are hard to reach by phone or e-mail, they will likely move on to another contact on their list.”

And then there were the lessons I learned:

**Lesson #1: Amazon Is Not The Devil. Who Knew?** As a first time author and indie-publisher, I’ve done my fair share of complaining about Amazon and what I perceived as their “unfair percentages”. Thanks to Publishing U (and Jon Fine of Amazon.com) I began to see ways I could partner with Amazon on book sales, distribution and promotion. Jon repeatedly reminded us to “Keep your book in stock”. “We can’t sell what we don’t have.” He explained that having

“Search Inside the Book” on your Amazon page would increase your sales ([www.amazon.com/sitb](http://www.amazon.com/sitb)) as would creating an Author’s Page ([www.amazon.com/authors](http://www.amazon.com/authors)). Thanks to Jon Fine and his staff, I’ve not only called a truce on Amazon, I’m looking forward to partnering with them.

**Lesson #2: I Need An E-Book. Yesterday.** Ok, I already knew this but I was reminded of this constantly. The statistics overwhelming show the consistent and steady growth of e-book sales. During the ‘E-Magination” roundtable it was also pointed out that 50% of e-readers are women age 45 – which – considering that the majority of Alzheimer’s caregivers are women age 55 - is pretty darn close to my target market. Yes, I need an e-book. And thanks to [www.smashwords.com](http://www.smashwords.com), [www.amazon.com/kindle](http://www.amazon.com/kindle), and several others (including my printer, [www.ThomsonShore.com](http://www.ThomsonShore.com)), it looks like I’m going to finally have one.

**Lesson #3: The Value of Asking For – and Getting – Help.** Perhaps one of the most valuable aspects of Publishing University for me was the “Ask The Experts” sessions. I met with a number of experts who allowed me to hone in on specific questions I had regarding my book and marketing. My session with Mary Agnes Antonopoulos ([www.RockawayWriter.com](http://www.RockawayWriter.com)) was particularly invaluable. She provided me with a notepad of ideas and guidance that day – and I am continuing to work with her on social media and my presence in that arena.

**Lesson #4: Magic Happens When You Least Expect It – and When You Trust Your Instincts.** As I waited for my ride to pick me up at The Javits Center, a young man sat down next to me and began sketching. I glanced briefly at what he was doing then returned to the book I was reading. But something told me (*my instincts?*) that I should introduce myself. When I did, he smiled and said, “It’s you! I’ve been looking for you so I could introduce myself.” We struck up a conversation and found out we had a common interest in educating others about Alzheimer’s. By the time my ride arrived, we’d decided to begin discussions about collaborating on a book.

As my ride pulled up to the Javits, my heart skipped a beat. After two weeks of planes, trains, automobiles and hotel rooms, I was going home. That night, I would see my family and sleep in my own bed. I was returning to what was familiar and known.

But I was going home a changed person, author and publisher thanks to the IBPA, the Mid-Atlantic Publishers Association, and Publishing University. I not only got answers to my questions, I now had a vision of where I was heading on this journey. And I had an abundance of wise friends and mentors willing to help and guide me along the way.

*Patti Kerr*

*“I Love You, Who Are You? – Loving & Caring For a Parent with Alzheimer’s”*

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