

THE TRUTH ABOUT **GETTING MORE** SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

Finding Ways To Share Your Message
In A Changing World



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It's a Changing World ... Our Industry Has Changed!

The following is an interview with Karen Power, Owner of Christian Speakers Services and Empowering Christian Communicators.

Do you believe that writers should be speakers and vice versa?

There's an old adage in our industry that goes like this: "speaking and writing go together like a hand in a glove." There used to be a conference that taught this theory to thousands of want-to-be speakers and writers for many years. While I agree there is some truth in that statement, it's not entirely true ... at least not anymore.

In general, a speaker may write articles, blogs, or social media posts, but they do not have to fall into the traditional trap that they have to write a book. Conversely, writers may have to speak at some point ... doing a radio or TV interview, however, they do not have to give a 45-minute presentation on stage. There are a lot of options and avenues available.

As technology and people's lifestyles change, the model from 30 years ago that writers must be speakers and speakers must be writers — the traditional model that most of us who "grew up in the industry during the past 10-20 years" are familiar with—quite honestly, needs to change!

I've said this for the past 10 years to people pursuing speaking or writing as a profession: "If all you do is speak or write, you will probably starve to death." Standing on a stage is the smallest percentage of what a speaker does. Writing the book is the same. There is so much more as you'll see in this program that goes into having a successful speaking or writing business/ministry. That includes on-going relationship building in every form possible.

Jeff Goins said it succinctly, "Most people who are trying to become writers [applies to speakers too] usually have the process all wrong. One of the first things you need to do is to build an audience."

So, what should speakers or writers do? Is there a new model?

It's not really a new model but a broader vision or mindset and better understanding of what we actually do as speakers or writers.

I challenge people in our industry to look the bigger picture. No one is JUST a speaker or JUST a writer ... they need to expand their vision and become a Christian Communicator ... with the ability to effectively present their message regardless of the mode of delivery.

Next, consider the most basic function of what a speaker or a writer does. In a sense, we share the same basic function—we are sales people. We are selling a story, a message, a speech, or a book. If we want our audience to buy this message, we need to change the model. I worked 7 years for a top-level national training company that taught a proven sales process to our company's sales people from new hires to vice presidents. We were a Fortune 300 company, so I know it works well. As with any good sales model, there are certain steps in the process that, when taken, ensure the sale will happen.

Will you expand on what you mean?

Pick up any book or training material that covers proven sales techniques and you will find these steps.

1. Know who our customer is, or in our case as Christian Communicators, who our audience is. Are they young, old, moms, single, men, women, senior adults, etc?

2. Know what our audience's need is. Do not presume to know their need based on our reality. Talk directly with them and ask them where it hurts or where they need help. Our perception may or may not be accurate.

As Christian Communicators, we have the ultimate solution — Jesus Christ — yet we may have to first meet their physical, emotional, or financial needs before our audience can hear the message of the Gospel. For example, a missionary who sets up a local medical clinic or drills a fresh-

water well for the community first meets those needs and then they can go in and share the Gospel.

3. Know when are our audience is available to receive our message Do they have 5 minutes or 45-minutes to consume the content of our message? Are they only available late at night? Can they attend a special event or conference? Do they have time to read a book?

We need to get in sync with our audience. It's similar to the hunter who says, "I'm going out to the woods, shooting anything that moves and bringing it home for dinner." What they have in mind is shooting a deer, however, they might better prepare to bring home a rabbit, a squirrel or their hunting buddy.

4. Know how our audience wants to receive our message. What is the best method of delivery? Traditionally what we have been doing is force-feeding the solution. We give the customer, our audience, what WE think they need, not what they really need that would be a good fit and solve their problem.

Let me give an example. In the traditional model, we pick a group to be our audience. Let's say ... moms.

We create a speech and find a group of moms to deliver it to on a day or place we select. Or we write a book and somehow get them to buy a copy of our book. This is force-feeding the solution.

As we can imagine, most moms rarely have more than a few minutes during their waking hours when they can do anything alone and often that time is accompanied by little voices growing in intensity... (knock, knock) "Mom." ... (Knock, Knock) "Mom!" ... (KNOCK, KNOCK) "MOM!"

When the mom does get little Johnny or Susie into bed at night and finally asleep, they spend their precious time finishing up household chores, spending time with their spouse, and finally falling into bed ... then start it all over again tomorrow.

To expect a mom who really needs the help our message will bring them to read a book or attend a weekend conference is probably not going to happen.

I've heard a statistic that seems to be accurate of many moms and even the general population: "MOST Americans do not finish reading one book in a year."

Here are some statistics found at statisicbrain.com:

- Total percent of young people who claim they read more than 10 books a year - 56%
- Total percentage of college students who will never read another book after they graduate - 42%
- Total percentage of U.S. families who did not buy a book this year - 80%
- Total percentage of adults who have not been in a book store in the past 5 years - 70%
- Total percentage of books started that aren't read to completion - 57%

This doesn't even begin to cover the stats for people who do or do not attend conferences, retreats, women's or men's events where there are guest speakers.

For us to so firmly hold on to the traditional model and the narrow viewpoint that we have to speak from a podium behind a lectern or write a book to get our message out to our chosen audience ... we are missing the boat ... and missing the sell!

This is partly why I believe so many speakers and writers are struggling financially. They have one product with one method of delivery and they expect the world to come rushing to their door or website for it. The world

doesn't have time to do this or isn't going to engage in that delivery method. We need to change the model.

How do you propose that we change our model and reach our intended audience?

First and foremost we need to begin by talking with our audience. We need to get out from behind our computers and actually have a conversation. Or, at the very least, ask them via an online poll. We need to find out who they are, where they are, how much time they have, if they need what we are selling and in what format do they want to receive our message.

Among the answers we will receive will be that we should be delivering our message through multiple streams — speeches, books, videos, websites, social media posts, blog posts, webinars, etc.

With all of this content from these various delivery methods, let me ask one question: “What’s in your hand?” Many people have a smartphone in their hand or quickly nearby. What if our content was pushed out to these devices 24/7? Would it increase our opportunities for reaching our audience where they are and whenever they are available? Certainly it would.

There are some speakers and authors who are ahead of the curve and have developed their own apps. I would encourage others to do so as well.

Just one quick note though ... back to knowing our audience. Smartphones may not be the answer if your audience doesn't like to use technology, has certain disabilities, or financially can't afford a smartphone, so you're going to have to find other ways to reach them. Again, ask them. Do some research.

Let's go back a minute to “do speakers need to write and do writers need to speak?” Both should be effective communicators regardless of the delivery method. They will be speaking and writing ... not always in the traditional manner. Whatever it takes to get our message into the hands, the ears, the hearts of those who need it. When we think of our message as a product,

we can then create various forms of that product to fit how our consumer wants it.

A great example is the Internet. Its basic function is to give access to information anywhere in the world. As technology has progressed, we are no longer forced to sit at a desktop computer to access this information. Today, we embrace using smartphones, notebooks, tablets, laptops, and Google glasses.

Speakers and writers have to do the same!

As Christian Communicators with a message that the world needs to hear, we should use every creative skill that God has given us and any delivery method available to get that message out to our audience.

Let's go back to our example about moms.

A preschool mom may need messages pushed out to her smartphone to watch a 5 minute video, listen to a short audio, or read something quickly while waiting in line at the grocery store or in the pickup lane at daycare. Mothers of older children might want to read or watch something longer while waiting as their child is practicing soccer or some other sport. Moms of teens might actually have time to read a blog, watch a full length video, or read a book. Any of these mothers might be able to swing an evening or Saturday morning on occasion to attend a women's event at their church.

If our audience is moms, we need to have ALL of these delivery methods available for them, not from our personal perspective, but so that they can access our message when they are able. This is true for any audience type.

This makes sense and is certainly different from what we traditionally hear at some speaker and writer conferences. If someone wants to learn more, develop these ideas specific to their audience and ministry, or change their mindset from being just a speaker or writer to becoming a Christian Communicator, can you help them?

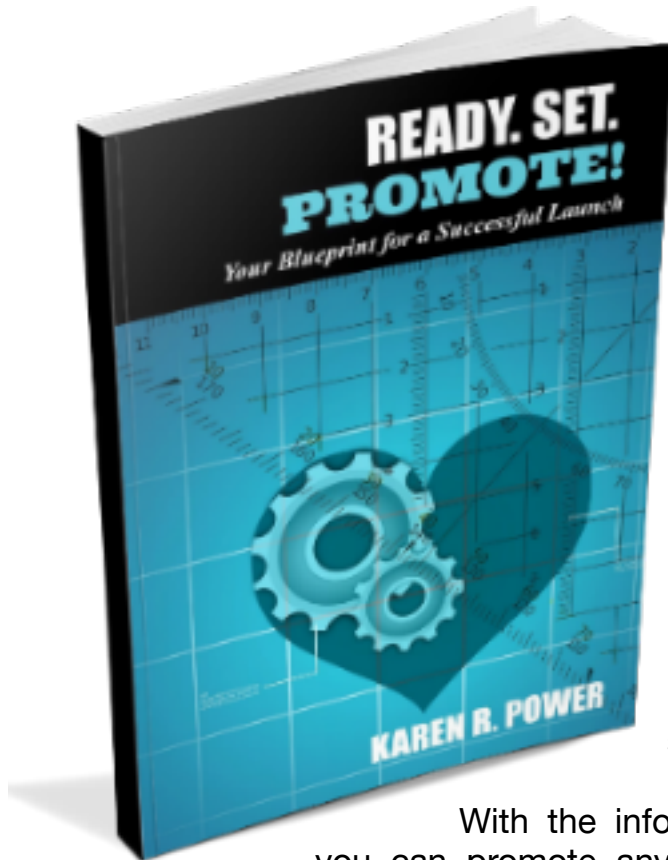
Yes! I would love to do so. I currently offer private coaching, other support services such website development, webinar production, branded infographics, and I also offer various training and professional development opportunities by me and other industry experts.

Any final thoughts?

Yes, my goal is to empower Christian Communicators to hone their message to be the best it can be, find their audience wherever they are, know what they want and need, and finally, get their message of hope and healing out to a lost and dying world.

As Christian Communicators, we are accountable to God for effectively using the gifts, skills and technology He's given us to reach as many people as we can possibly reach. If we limit our delivery method to just speaking or just writing, we will miss the greater majority of these people. By using the technology we have available today, each one of us has the potential for a ministry that reaches around the world. When we lose sight of the bigger picture and focus on our own personal preferences, we miss the scope of the commandment that Jesus gave us: "Go ye into all the world and make disciples."

What's Next?



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About the Author

“Karen Power is a gifted coach and speaker advocate. Her services have led to a significant increase in the number of speaking engagements I secure yearly. Her speaker training has covered everything from platform building to building better talks, audience engagement, and how to make meeting planners love you. I highly recommend her services to anyone serious about expanding their ministry reach.” ~ Dr. Sandra Dalton-Smith, Physician, Speaker, and Author

Speaker Business Training. Support Services. Promotional Strategist. Speaker Booking Agent.

Karen's passion and purpose are to help Christ-centered communicators and business owners share their messages and products of hope and healing to change the world by creating innovative solutions. She has helped them connect with their audience, grow their platform base, find new speaking opportunities, raise the bar, and increase their customers, paid enrollees, products and book sales by using various delivery methods and strategies.



Karen started booking speakers for Classservices, Inc., Albuquerque, NM, in November 2004. Then started her own agency, Christian Speakers Services, in January 2007.

Karen has 40+ years experience in the Christian communication industry. She started at the age of 11 as a drummer and later served as a bass guitar player for Christian music bands and church praise teams. She has been on virtually every side of events and the stage as a musician, songwriter, speaker, author, event planner, concert promoter, coach, book tour manager, speaker bureau owner, and booking agent. Her marketing, technology, and curriculum development experience has helped her develop and launch a national support group, develop and produce hundreds on live webinars, develop websites, and design promotional and other support materials for internationally-known Christian speakers, authors, and teachers.

While Karen has been focused on helping speakers and authors take their messages to the world, she has also written several stories that appear in the following books: ***Your Spiritual Personality*** by Marita Littauer, ***Making the Blue Plate Special*** by Florence Littauer, Marita Littauer, and Lauren Littauer Briggs, and ***The Authentic You*** by Anita C. Lee. She has also managed virtual book promotion tours for New York Times best-selling authors such as Francine Rivers and Cecil Murphey and for other top authors in the CBA market such as Carol Kent, Thelma Wells, Kathi Macias and more.

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