

Welcome to the Write Publish Market podcast. If you're an entrepreneur considering writing a book to serve your business, you're in the right place. Or maybe you've already decided — that's even better. I'm your host, Jodi Brandon, book publishing partner for entrepreneurs and 20-year veteran of the book publishing industry. On the Write Publish Market podcast, in addition to learning from me, you'll meet entrepreneurs just like you and hear about their experiences as we explore all facets of writing, publishing, and marketing a book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even have dreamed up yet.

Jodi: Tracy, welcome. I'm so happy to have you on the podcast today.

Tracy: I already feel like I know you from our little pre-chat. So thank you for having me.

Jodi: I feel like we're fast friends already. So this will be a fun conversation. Let's start at the beginning: your book origin story. How did you decide that a book made sense for your business?

Tracy: Well, part of why a book makes sense for my business, I have another friend, she has a book and her book is like her "If you want to do this yourself, read my book. If you want to go a little bit faster, then join this part of the program. And if you want to go really fast then join this," and so that was really the thought process that this book is meant to be the DIY, because really gives you all the tools you need. But if you want to go faster then let's chat.

Jodi: Like the top of a funnel.

Tracy: Sure, yes. People into the funnel. Yes.

Jodi: I love it. And so that's how you're using it in your business? Are you doing anything like taking it to events, speaking opportunities, anything like that? Or is that on your horizon?

Tracy: That is on the horizon. I had made a declaration that I wasn't going to speak. I just can't do the zoom thing. And I'm a connector. So being in front of an audience just feels so much different. And I am chomping at the bit ready to do that. As soon as people are ready to go to those.

Jodi: It's coming back. You're right: The energy at a live event is — there's just something special about it. I would love for you to share the story that you shared with me in our pre chat before we hit record. We were talking, for those who weren't privy to that conversation, about how we tend to not talk about our own things enough, whether that's our books, our services, or whatever. But you told a fantastic story that I would love for you to share.

Tracy: Well, this is something I shared on social media. So technically, my book launched at the end of September. And for a little while there was like, yeah, lots of hubbub, and lots of pictures and all that stuff. And then you know, the sales stop. And so I posted on Facebook, I said, Hey, my book sales have slumped. Do you know why? Because I stopped talking about it. And, and I went on to share a little bit more about just, we think we talk about whatever we're doing all the time. And but our audiences, whoever they are, there's a lot of things fighting for attention. And so sometimes my book isn't going to make the list well, and even though to us, it feels like oh my gosh, I can't talk about this book one more time this week. No, we really probably haven't talked about it that much this week. It just feels like it's us because we know the book so much better. And you know, we think we're talking about it all the time. Well, and I'm just trying to come up with creative, creative ways to still talk about the book without it being like buy the book. So whether that's talking about book reviews or talking about, you know, like I just

surpassed however many sales — just anything I can do to avoid saying buy the book, which really creates curiosity. What you're hinting at though is you're basically telling stories about you and the book process to sort of, you know, increase that interest level and curiosity.

Jodi: I love that you call it curiosity. I've never heard that in that reference before. But that's exactly what we're trying to do is get people interested. And if we're willing to share — pull back the curtain on some of those other things, whether it's the social proof, the reviews, or you know, any of that kind of stuff, versus just, hey, I wrote this book, please buy it. I mean, that's a lot more appealing to your people, your audience. But it also, you know, it lets them in a little bit more, which is exactly what they want. And especially when you're, you've written a book to serve your business. This isn't, you know, just a novel that you're trying to sell. This is something that's part of your day to day business ecosystem. That's what we should be doing.

Tracy: Oh, my gosh, and praise to anyone who can do character development. The thought of writing a fiction book? No, thanks.

Jodi: Yeah, no. Not for me.

Tracy: I love reading them. But yeah, well, and the whole curiosity piece is one of those, like, get people to lean in, get people to ask, who told me more in, you know, I talked about curiosity all the time. And it's one of those things that is sadly lacking, because we look at, like, look at TV commercials, right? That's marketing to the lowest common denominator. It's effective, but it's the lowest common denominator. And my guess is that most of your listeners are not lowest common denominator people, right?

Jodi: You've hit the nail on the head. And I keep hearing you in my mind go back to what you said before, is so simple, that the reason the book sales slowed, because you stopped talking about it. That's just so simple. But how many of us don't have that awareness?

Tracy: Well, you know, the book *The Slight Edge*, right? If it's easy to do, it's easy not to do. And I think that's the same thing when it comes to me talking about my book.

Jodi: But if you talk about it in the ways, like you're saying, you know, talk about the reviews, and that sort of thing, and you know, the way the problem that your book solves for people, it makes us, as the person selling the book, it makes it feel less icky, for sure. Which is also something that a lot of us struggle with. Okay, so let's talk about the book. The book is out there. Now, let's like, rewind a little bit. Let's talk about the pieces that you liked and didn't like, and this can be kind of any phase of the process: the writing process, the publishing process, the marketing piece.

Tracy: You know, the, one of the pieces that I like, well, I, I really do enjoy the writing piece. And sometimes I will read what I wrote and think dang, that's really good. I just have some little personal pet peeves, I, this is just for me, not other people. But I'm a word nerd. And I don't like to use the same word. And I don't like to use the same word in a Facebook post more than once. And so I really enjoy getting creative with my language. Okay, I also really enjoyed the editing process. So my degrees in journalism, I think I was a copy editor on the high school newspaper. I really enjoyed the editing. The hardest part for me was the finishing. Because there were some things I wanted to make sure that I got in the book that it's not just about. It's not just about what the book is about, but that when you do these things, it can actually help you make more money. And I didn't want to just say be generic, I didn't want to just fill it with word salad and go yes, make more money, make more money, because that's a message that everyone hears. And it's not necessarily true. So I think that everything else was fairly easy. Once I got started, I

think that was the key that I was never going to get started. Just being at my office, I needed to create space to allow the process to happen. And for for a long time, I was just way over booking my calendar and then I'm like, wait, I haven't had any time to write this week. Oh, because I didn't make any time.

Jodi: I love that. I would love to dig into that a little bit. A little bit if we could. So you found that not being in your regular space was going to be the best way for you to write the book?

Tracy: Well, actually, I started getting the book together. I took the weekend away. I have a friend who has a lake front cabin. And so I got there to get organized. And for me, what worked was I put everything I've ever written or said about my topic into one big huge Word file. Then I figured out what my framework was going to be. So then I took out a big, huge document and broke it into five pieces. And I thought, for sure, like, oh, yes, index cards. Let's do index cards. And index cards just wasn't going to work for me. No, I actually did write the book at the co-working space I work at, but what I had to do was actually block out time on my calendar to make sure it happens instead of trying to fit it in. I was never gonna fit in.

Jodi: Yeah, I'm a big believer in that you're not going to find the time to make the time. And that's hard as a business owner, especially because you, as a business owner, you're not sitting around thinking, What could I find to do to fill a couple of hours every day? Do you happen to remember — now I'm getting kind of granular here, and this probably is not interesting to everyone — but do you remember how big that document was? Once you've dumped everything into it?

Tracy: I think it was about 18,000 words. And what was really helpful about that, that process was, when I separated it all out, it made it so much easier to go, oh, okay, this fits here. This fits here. Oh, and this doesn't fit at all?

Jodi: Yes!

Tracy: And, you know, so this thing that doesn't fit at all, maybe that's a YouTube video that I do sometime down the line. Maybe it's a blog post that I write, but it doesn't fit in the book.

Jodi: What you're saying doesn't mean it's not usable text, though. That is a lightbulb moment for so many people. And it's such a good one.

Tracy: And one of the other things that I use, because sometimes I would be reading what was in this document, I go, Gosh, I feel like I said that before or something just like that. And so using the Find feature in Microsoft Word was my saving grace, because then I could actually look and go oh, yeah, I said exactly this or who I liked the way I said it here better. So let me cut this one and move this one.

Jodi: This is a great example of a working living document. Which is “Oh, it is in order for the process to move forward.” It has to be because if you're stuck on “No, this is the way I want it to be. This is the way it's going to be.” That's where people get stuck.

Tracy: Well, I think sometimes people get stuck way before that they get like, no, no, I need to know exactly what the book is called before I can start writing or I need to know exactly XYZ. It's that you get stuck in perfection. Yes. And, and stuck imperfection means you're not taking any action.

Jodi: You're right. Yes. Starting is a big hurdle for a lot of people too, for sure. With all my one on one clients, my book coaching clients, I encourage them just to simply use the word *working* in there, like working table of contents, working book draft working title. And it just, if you can kind of embrace that

word and that mindset, it kind of allows you to get unstuck and just keep moving forward. Okay, this isn't set in stone. We can change this if we need to, we can, you know, add this, take this out, all of those things. Yeah, no, you're right. You're so right. You're so right. I wanted to ask you specifically, Tracey: You share in your book that you changed the title partway through. That fits nicely with what we're talking about here. Your book is called Ignite Your Champions, but it was originally going to be called Nurture Your Network. Can you explain how you realized? Did you just have an aha moment? Was it something a beta reader said that made you think Nope, this is not the right title?

Tracy: Oh, a beta reader. That would have been a really good idea. Anyway. Honestly, it was a series of conversations that I had with different people and one of my friends said, knowing nothing about my book, or what I was working on, it was just independent. She said some women spend way too much time nurturing, and not enough time asking. And I was like, oh, yeah, Nurture Your Network is fine, if that's what I'm known for, but it's also a little bit vanilla, which I am not known for. So, Ignite Your Champions just has a lot more Earth to it. I did hire a messaging coach, and she helped me get to Ignite Your Champions. They were words I was always using anyway, and so just putting them together.

Jodi: I love one, that you were open to it and two, that it just kind of happened organically. It wasn't you trying to, you know, shoehorn something in where it didn't belong. But I have to say, now talking to you, you're much more of a firecracker. You know, so I think ignite suits you way better than nurture.

Tracy: Yes. Not that there's anything wrong with nurture, like, but that's So training is fine. But I do feel like nurturing gets us in a permanent state of not actually taking any action to grow our business.

Jodi: Plus, you have, you know, the fire analogy in the book. So you know, it all works. It all works.

Tracy: My other business is a co-working space, and it's called Inspark. So we've got the whole fire thing to do.

Jodi: And that's good, because the book is supposed to be a piece of your business ecosystem, and you are living and breathing that. So I love it. Tracey, what advice would you give if you were sitting down at a networking event or on a zoom call or whatever, with another business owner who said, I'm thinking about writing a book to use in my business? What would you say to them if you could give them like one or two key pieces of advice?

Tracy: I think I would say, Take everything you've ever written and said, and put it into a document or when you're having consult calls with potential clients, get out the recorder. We ooze content, but I don't think we think about that. The other thing that was a good aha for me was, there was a study recently about short books, like books that are under 100 pages, they get read, like 10 times more than long books. And so the other thing I would say is, it doesn't have to be like anyone else. It doesn't have to be a certain number of pages; it can be whatever you want. One of the comments I've gotten about my book recently was Tracey, I'm so glad you left a space to write notes. Some of this was my idea. Some of it was my publisher's idea, but I really want it to be like a workbook, something that you will go back to. So chances are, if you take what you've said, and what you've written, you're already on the path to writing a book.

Jodi: A great point that you made is that recording yourself talking to potential clients and clients. You're, like you said, oozing content all the time. But on the flip side of that, those conversations are really invaluable, because it's so important when you're teaching, which is what you're doing, essentially, when

you're writing a book, to speak the language of your audience. And those kinds of conversations are gold mines as far as showing what they're telling you their problem is and what they need from you to solve it.

Tracy: Mm hmm. In the words that they're using, or that they would be searching for on Google or on Amazon or wherever looking for a book. Right? So, uh, yes. And the other piece of that is using what you already have out there.

Jodi: I don't know about you, but when I've written my books, the thought of starting with just a blank screen of zero prevents a lot of people from starting, but like you're saying you had — what? — 18,000 words already. Now maybe all 18,000 of them didn't make it into the book, right? But starting with 18,000 versus starting with zero feels a heck of a lot better.

Tracy: I think one of the other things that people need to remember is, they might think, Oh, I've told that story before I don't I I don't need to tell it more. We'll think about somebody like Brene Brown. And if you're familiar with her work, you know, she tells the same story about the time her and her husband went swimming and they felt disconnected. But like, I know this story because she has shared it so many times. And this is part of the back to what we were talking about, about continuing to share about your book. Well, just because we've told a story one time doesn't mean anyone is going to remember it. We need to repeat the stories and repeating the stories makes us unforgettable.

Jodi: What do they say? We have to say something seven times before it really registers? So yeah, I mean, you're telling a story one time on Instagram Live or whatever? No, not gonna cut it.

Tracy: Well, and I think there's something that's comforting, honestly, when you are listening to a podcast, or you're reading someone's book, and you start to get familiar with them because of the stories that they tell. And I think it's just a good reminder that people will feel connected, because you're not changing your story. Right? Like, you know, those people that are out there. They're reinventing themselves every six months. And you're like, I have no idea what you're talking about. When people say to me, gosh, or when I listen to things I said, 10 years ago, I'm like, wow, my story really hasn't changed a whole lot. I mean, I've had a ton of stuff happened between 10 years ago, and now, but my philosophies are the same. My rights, core values are the same. And there's something really attractive, like magnetic attractive about that.

Jodi: Just to take that one step further and tie it back to what we started with — about the book being a funnel — that connection piece is so important. That connection piece is so important for someone reading your book, or first of all wanting to pick up your book, because you've made that connection, but then picking up and reading the book and realizing, oh, I can learn a lot more from Tracey, if I work with her one on one. Or I can get a lot more and help not only solve my problem in a DIY way, but even expand what I'm trying to do by working with her, using her knowledge to help me, and all of those things that we want as people move down our sales funnels. But yeah, you need that connection piece to even get people you know, into the funnel to begin with business owners especially, we're not trying to become you know, York Times bestsellers, we're not trying to sell a million copies. We understand the money's not in the book, directly from book royalties. We're trying to get the book to the right people to solve the problem that they're having. And that's a very specific audience that we're trying to find. So we've got to find them, and then connect with them.

Tracy: And a book is instant credibility — just instant. So this is my actually my second book. And when I wrote the first one, I used to say, this is the best promotional product I could ever have. If my books cost me \$4 to buy as an example. I don't exactly know what they cost me. But it's a really easy gift to give to

someone. If I'm meeting with a potential client, here's a copy of my book. Like it's just feels easy. And I know it's not this is a whole other thing, but you're a published author. Holy cow. That's amazing.

Jodi: You're right. The credibility that it lends right off the bat is irreplaceable. Yes. This was a good conversation. I feel like we feel like we could just keep recording for like days on end, Tracey.

Tracy: We probably could. The audience wouldn't enjoy that probably quite as much as we would.

Jodi: I also, by the way, didn't know that you had another book, so I'm gonna have to have you back on the podcast to talk about that. But for today, I don't let anyone leave the podcast without giving me a book recommendation because I don't know about you, but I have a "to be read" pile growing and growing and growing at all times.

Tracy: Oh, my gosh, so I discovered Frederick Bachman. I started with *Anxious People* and *The Man Called Ove*. And *Bear Town*, and I've listened to all of them on Audible. I usually listen to them in about two days cuz I'm just like, what's gonna happen? So this is the first year I have read more fiction than non. And I'm just finding it so much better for my brain too. Like I can't listen to business books all the time, right?

Jodi: Yeah, it's good. Good to have a little balance. Frederick Bachman — I first discovered him when my book club read *A Man Called Ove* and I was the only one in the book club that liked it. And I couldn't believe it because I thought it was so fantastic. The next day I went and bought *Anxious People*, and now I've just sort of made my way through his library.

Tracy: Yeah, his other one is *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry*. Because the main character is this tenacious, little, like, six year old, and she's just delightful. Again, character development, I just, I don't think I'd have the capacity to do that.

Jodi: I definitely don't have the capacity. But they're great to read. So that's a good recommendation. If anyone has not read any of his books, check those out. Those are great recommendations. Tracey, thank you so much for your time. You have been a fantastic guest. I loved our conversation. I will put all of your book information in the show notes so people can where they can find you and all that.

Tracy: This was great. Thank you so much. It's fun to talk about the process, and not just the book.

Jodi: Thanks for listening to this episode of the Write Publish Market podcast. I know just how busy entrepreneurs' schedules are. I'm grateful you've taken some time out of yours to journey into the world of book publishing with me today. If you enjoyed this episode, take a quick screenshot and share on social media to let others know you're listening. Use the hashtag #writepublishmarket to spread the love. Until next time, friends, happy writing.