

PR LEADS AUDIO CLUB
20 LOW-COST WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR BOOKS ON THE INTERNET
Dan Janal Interviews Shel Horowitz

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Dan – Welcome to the PR Leads seminar on 20 Low-Cost Ways to Promote Your Books. This is Dan Janal, the President and Founder of PR Leads; we help experts get publicity. To see how we do that, just go to our website, which is www.PRLeads.com. You can also become a member of the PR Leads Audio Club for just \$20 a month and then have access to all of our transcripts and all of our recordings from all of our sessions in the future and in the past. With that done, let's get down to business. I'd like to welcome our guest today, Shel Horowitz. Shel has written numerous books about publicity and integrity in marketing. He's my go-to guy when it comes to people who say, "Who can I trust in PR? Who would you recommend?" I always send work to Shel and Shel always does a great job. I trust him with all of my clients or my prospects so I welcome you, Shel. How are you doing today?

Shel – Thanks, Dan, very well, thank you.

Dan – Great. Let's dig right into it because we promised people 20 Low-Cost Ways to Market Their Books on the Internet and we only 60 minutes, which works out to about three minutes...

Shel – Actually, in my mailing, I said 20 Ways, Part One, because I figured there's a good chance we won't get to all 20.

Dan – Let's go to some new avant-garde stuff. Let's talk about the Internet. What are some of the cool ways to get publicity for your books and your businesses by using the Internet?

Shel – I'm going to use my own book, *Principled Profit: Marketing That Puts People First*, as a case study because I used the Internet very effectively with this book. First, I talked it up in all the discussion lists that I'm part of and, in fact, earlier than that, I used some of those discussion lists to get some of the 55 endorsements that appear in the book.

Dan – Let's go through those steps. You went on a discussion board. Did you come right out and say, "I'm looking for endorsements for my book?"

Shel – On one board I did, a rather unusual discussion group, and I said "Wanted: People to endorse a new book on ethical marketing," or something like that, and quite a number of people asked for a PDF of the manuscript and a very high percentage of those then returned a very good quote and got in the book.

Dan – One follow-up question then we'll go to the next tactic. Did you send them the entire book or just an outline or a sample chapter?

Shel – I sent them the whole rough, unedited manuscript. In fact, one person said, “My quote is contingent on your getting the final edit,” and I said of course.

Dan – This book is great but Shel can’t spell. That’s a great testimonial, we all fight for those, don’t we?. What else did you do in chat groups and news groups to promote your book?

Shel – Of course I put it in my signature, and I put the book’s website in my signature.

Dan – You had a separate website for your book, so those of you who are counting here, every time you get a new idea, that’s another tip. Those are two ideas—it’s in your signature file and you have a website. Is the website just for your book? Is that its own domain name or does it hang off of your Shel Horowitz site or some other site?

Shel – No, it has its own domain, PrincipledProfits.com. Most of the content up on that site is designed to generate interest in the book or in the general area of ethics. When you get to the site, there are, of course, preview pages for the book with all the endorsements and all the reviews and an excerpt. There’s about a 30-page PDF download that they can take that has the first chunk of the book, which has some of the very, very interesting ideas of what [UNCLEAR], which the rest of the book kind of expands. It also has a section of just articles about business ethics to become kind of a resource and a portal in that area. It of course has the ability to sign up for the newsletter because I am very much of the opinion that even with the best of intentions, it’s going to be pretty rare for people to return to your site. I’ve got ‘em once, and if they don’t sign up for my newsletter, I probably don’t ever have them again. Because I know I bookmark a lot of sites, and then if I get back to them, it’s a year or two later, but most of the time, I never do, and the ones that I go back to again and again are things like the weather page for my city.

By allowing them to sign up for the newsletter, I then have their permission to be back in front of them every single month until they either buy or drop dead; it’s their choice. I have had some people reading some of my newsletters for literally nine years now. I’ve also, I used on the website, you will see right fairly prominently on the top right of the website, you’ll see some stuff about the Business Ethics Pledge campaign. This was something that I started about a year ago, when the book was one-year old, partly as a way of generating interest in the book, but also partly because the book was written to try to change the world, and this is moving in that direction as well. I’m trying to find 25,000 business leaders who will sign onto an ethics pledge, each of them telling at least another 100 people, and hoping that that critical mass of 25,000 people will be actually enough to change the way people think about business and the way business thinks about itself and to make future Enrons impossible because nobody will be willing to carry them out.

Dan – I can think of some Internet marketers that I wish would take that pledge as well. Let’s recap here, and I’m not going to do this all the time because I know that there are a couple of people out there, I won’t mention Steve [Koss] by name, but I know that you’re marking it down, one-two-three-four. Shel mentioned a couple of other interesting ideas here. One, he became the portal for ethical marketing. Two, he added articles about the topic, so it wasn’t just about me, me, me, me; it was about the topic. And then he used the site to encourage newsletter sign-ups, and I guess that could also be blog sign-ups as well.

Shel – I do have a blog for the book also, although it seems to be veering off in other directions...

Dan – I also like the idea that you have the big idea. When you have a big idea, like 25,000 people take this pledge, whatever, who knows how many people took that pledge, and I won't even put you on the spot unless it's a really good number and you want to brag, but I'll give you that option.

Shel – I've given myself ten years to make this campaign work. Hopefully by the tenth year, I'll be able to brag a very big number.

Dan – Okay, great. You set yourself a realistic timeframe. That's good when you're setting goals. The idea here, I believe, is that not only does this fulfill your mission, but it really, it lets people know that you're really congruent with your message and it just might lead to some publicity later on because it is a big idea, like the Million Man March idea was a big idea and got publicity.

Shel – It also does relate exactly to book sales. I find that, fairly consistently, 20-25% of the people who sign the pledge buy the book, and I do offer them a discount for buying the book.

Dan – Hmmm, that's pretty clever. What other ideas do you have?

Shel – Let's follow up with the pledge a little bit more. It's not enough just to say this pledge exists. The first thing I did with the pledge was, I went out to over 60 ezine publishers whose ezines I subscribe to and I put in the subject line, "Subscriber Item - Business Ethics Pledge," I believe you got one of these, and I gave like two paragraphs about what I was doing and, "Would you please run this in your newsletter?" Thanks to that campaign, I had, within six months, I had signatures in six of the seven regions of the world, and I just found over the weekend somebody who might be able to get me a signature in Antarctica, and then of course, I'll do a big press release about how the business ethics pledge campaign has reached all seven regions of the world. That was one piece of this, is that I went out to those people and then I continued to go out to other websites and other newsletter publishers, even if I didn't happen to be a subscriber, but just people I knew and heard of saying, "This is something you're going to want to get behind. This is something that's going to help your readers become better citizens." In fact, there has been quite a bit of interest. This campaign is growing slowly but it is growing. This then gives me entrée into many, many other areas that things are opening up for me that I would have never have guessed. A lot of people are trying to network me with people they think I should know, and sometimes they are very, very right. I'm rapidly expanding my sphere of influence as a result of this campaign. Another thing I did with this book—I'm sure that all of your listeners by now are familiar with the Amazon gambit of getting people to buy on a certain day.

Dan – For those of you who aren't, this is a massive campaign where you send messages out to all your friends and encourage them to buy your book on a certain day. In exchange, if they send you the invoice by email, you'll send them five zillion dollars worth of free articles and PDFs and ebooks from all of your closest Internet marketing friends.

Shel – I decided to do this thing a little bit differently from the way that most people have done it. Number one, I set myself a goal that was somewhat more manageable. I didn't say I want to be number one in Amazon. I said I'd like to be in the top 100. The book started the day at over a million and a half, so that was quite a bit of ways to go. Also, I did not offer a million bonuses. In fact, I offered exactly one bonus and that bonus was an electronic PDF copy of the exact same book, Principled Profit, that they were going to get a few days later as a paperback, but that the electronic edition, first of all, that it would get it to them faster because it would be delivered immediately. Second, all the hotlinks in the book, and there are 92 of them, are clickable in the ebook, and third, you can search it by using the find command in Adobe Acrobat Reader; you can search for any text strings; it's maybe faster than hunting through the index if what you're searching for is not exactly the way it's indexed. So that was the only thing. Basically, all I was doing was seeing if the book could sell on its own merits. I wanted to be able to say I made the Amazon bestseller list not by bribing people, but because people were seriously interested in the message of this book, and that, in fact, happened. I got all the way to number 83 having started the day, again, at 1.5 something million and became number 12 in business books for that day. And then I did not rest on my laurels; I sent out a press release about what I called "The Amazon Virtual Book Signing." You can see that press release in the Press Room of the Principled Profits website.

Dan – Shel, why don't you spell Principled Profits because I'm sure people are going to their high school principal now and they're not finding the right spelling.

Shel – PrincipledProfits.com

Dan – As people are writing this down, I want to add another aside. Sometime you may find that your book's domain name has been taken by some other company that just happened to get there first. When I wrote my book, Risky Business, about Internet security fraud (this goes back about to like 1998), some other company had already taken RiskyBusiness.com, and if you go to that website, it's like a board game that's actually printed in Spanish, so I got the .org site. That was smart...

Shel – What I would have done in that case was gone for Risky-Business.com.

Dan – I think that the movie industry has a parallel that's even better. They would say RiskyBusinessMovie.com, so you might want to have RiskyBusinessBook.com in case your domain is taken.

Shel – It's still relatively easy to get good domain names, amazingly enough. I have done it for many of my clients. This is kind of me being stupid, I actually own the name PrincipledProfit.com, but I set it up with Ken Evoy's Site Build It and I made a typo when I was registering the domain and I got PrincipledProfits.com, and the way their site was set up, it was easier to just develop that and then go ahead and buy PrincipledProfit.com separately and have it alias to the same place. If you type in PrincipledProfit.com, you'll go to PrincipledProfits.com. But if you try to email me at PrincipledProfit.com, it won't work.

Dan – Just to set the record straight and make this easy for everyone, because I'm sure there are some non-techies out there whose heads are spinning, you could have any domain name forward to any other domain name. If you register the typo domain or the domain with dashes in the middle of the name, they can all forward through to the correct site.

Shel – Yes, it's one of the tricks of affiliate marketing programs, actually. You can click on one of those weird URL's and you get going to the main homepage wherever you're going.

Dan – Shel, I think we have about ten tips and we've only been here ten minutes. We might be able to do 60 at this rate.

Shel – I'm sure people will want, when we open it up for questions, people will want to go back and get a little more information on some these because I'm throwing them out awfully fast.

Dan – Right, and I think...

Shel – I wanted to say one more thing about the Amazon campaign. The press release that I sent out, I did not send it out to thousands of people; I picked 12 journalists. What happened when I sent 12 press releases out—by the normal logic, that would just disappear and die in a pool of electrons somewhere and get nothing. But I happen to be a believer in seriously targeted marketing and I picked very carefully, and out of those 12 releases, seven resulted in coverage, that included articles, full-page articles, in both the PMA newsletter and the SPAN newsletter, as well as coverage in Independent Publisher Online, and I don't even remember where else. I know I didn't get Publisher's Weekly for that, but 7 out of 12 press releases is phenomenal.

Dan – You didn't send them to the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, LA Times, any of the book review editors at the major magazines. You went after places where you thought you would get good results.

Shel – Yes. I may have included the New York Times in my list—I don't remember. And I know I included Publisher's Weekly, and in fact, I was being perhaps too...one of the things I learned, I learned a few things from this campaign, one is, if you're doing this campaign, it's best if you can get people to send out the morning that your campaign starts, or at the earliest, the night before. That a number of the lists were sent to early, including my own list, and they didn't produce particularly well. One guy sent out his newsletter that morning and he sold 40 copies for me. So that's one thing I would do differently. Another thing is, I would have the press release 85% of the way completed about the results before I sent it in, so that all I would have to do is fill in what actually happened. I spent so much time dithering around about how I was going to present this and make sure that people knew that I wasn't crossing any ethical lines that I lost my opportunity for Publisher's Weekly because in the meantime, they ran a story about somebody else's more typical Amazon campaign with a lot of bonuses.

Dan – Let's go back for a second and talk about the guy who sent out the information and then got 40 sales. I want to dig deeper into that. Did you give him sample copy for him to send out or did he create his own?

Shel – He created his own. I had given him some copy he could use, but he’s a marketing guru and he wrote his own.

Dan – Was he incentivized by having an Amazon affiliate link or any other kind of incentives? Or is this just out of the goodness of his heart?

Shel – I think he did it out of the goodness of his heart. He may have had Amazon affiliate links. I certainly, again, the mailing that I sent out, I encouraged people to use their own links, but interestingly enough, very few did, and I don’t believe he was one that did. He was doing it out of the goodness of his heart and the only...I did provide an incentive that if they sold a certain number of copies for me I’d give them a free book, and then I was so pleased with the results of the campaign that I actually went sent a free book to pretty much everyone who had participated.

Dan – Is there any way to track the individual sales or do you just sort of make an offer and then just follow up and give everyone a free book and say the heck with it?

Shel – You mean who’s buying from whom?

Dan – Yes.

Shel – Who’s buying out of which list?

Dan – Yes.

Shel – Yes, because they’re sending me the receipt...

Dan – Oh, okay, so there was a way to track it.

Shel – ...in order to collect the bonus. So absolutely there’s a way to track. Then you can contact them back or have it in the original...most of them actually just quoted from his newsletter and I knew immediately. That was the advantage of him having done his own is that I knew when people replaced my text with their text, I knew exactly where it came from. But if I didn't know, I could ask. People are very willing to...in fact, I think I said, “I will send you the download instructions as soon as you tell me who referred you because they are entitled to some bonus if they reach a certain amount.” I got 100% cooperation. I don’t think there was a single order that day that I wasn’t able to trace.

Dan – What else would you do differently?

Shel – I’d plan it better. I missed out on one newsletter that probably would have sold 30-40 copies for me by just not having my deadline in alignment with that particular publisher’s schedule. I would have all the pieces in place ready to go and I would coordinate a little better on the distribution end and I’d probably warn Amazon that we were going to do this and they should have a bunch in stock. People had to wait a very long time for their books.

Dan – How long is a long time?

Shel – Three or four weeks in some cases.

Dan – Really?

Shel – Yes. Amazon was not quick on the draw. To even it, though, we sold...you would think that they would have at least ordered one case when they saw that they had more than a case's worth of orders, but they didn't. By the end of the day, people were in a backlog that lasted quite a while. The other thing I would do differently is I would have my download stuff tested much more thoroughly. I had a few technical glitches and it did require a couple hours of my time troubleshooting for people who were not able to get the download the right way. I now know better how to do that. These are all things that I've learned about how to do this kind of campaign. I still feel really good that as far as I know, mine is the only book to do a campaign like this that got into the top 100 without bribing people.

Dan – Great. What other tricks do you have or, I shouldn't say tricks, what other ideas do you have for marketing online?

Shel – Well, do you count PR Leads as marketing online? I do.

Dan – I think PR Leads is a very good way to market online. Let's talk about something else because most of the people on the call all already use PR Leads. What other tips do you have for marketing your book online?

Shel – Start a blog, and every time you update the blog, go to a site called PingOMatic.com.

Dan – One more time so we can write this down.

Shel – PingOMatic.com

Dan – I've never heard of that site. What does it do?

Shel – That allows you to, with just a couple of clicks, let a lot of the blog search engines know that there's new content on your blog. There's like 12 of them and typically what happens, if you click all 12 of the ones that are...there's one that's an audio blog that I don't bother with because it's not appropriate because my blog isn't audio. You go and you just go click, click, click; tell these blogs you've got new content, and typically about eight of them will come back saying thank you and four of them will come back with some kind of technical error, but you'll get them the next time you post, so no big deal. Because why write a blog if nobody's finding it?

Dan – Do you have to do this each time you post a blog?

Shel – Yes, but it takes under 20 seconds.

Dan – I know; I'm doing it right now. I'm just curious. The time that it takes you to describe this, I've already been posted in, well; it's been received in a couple of places. Thanks. That's something I didn't know about.

Shel – I just learned about that from Chip Tarver a few weeks ago and I'm looking for more ways that my blog actually gets read. That's something, if you have an expert talking about that, how do you get your blog noticed in the world, I will be definitely signing up to listen.

Dan – We actually will be doing a seminar on that in the not too distant future. I don't have the date yet, but my blog master, Ted Demopoulos has been very good about getting my site listed everywhere, and somehow, my blog is 893 on Bloglet, which is pretty amazing because it's pretty small and it seems to be rising fast.

Shel – Maybe you should have Ted on to talk about what he's doing. I also keep a parallel copy of my blog. I use Blogger.com for the blog and that works backwards from the present. On the Principled Profits site, I've got a version of the blog with the same posts that will run forward from the past.

Dan – Let's go into that because I actually want to do this for my own site. How do you take your stuff from your blog and put it onto your website?

Shel – First of all, I use a word processor to create it because I like the idea of spell checking. I write it in Microsoft Word. I look for the red squiggly lines, I fix the typos, and then I copy it and it and I paste into Blogger, and then I copy it and paste it into an email and send it off to my assistant who pours it into our very simple page template, which anybody can do; it's not difficult; it's just like putting up any other new page.

Dan – So it's not an automatic process; it's just a manual process.

Shel – No, I guess I could figure out an automatic process for that.

Dan – And then you'd have to update...

Shel – Blogger is automatic.

Dan – Sure.

Shel – That leads all the blog software out there; it's totally automatic.

Dan – And then I guess you'd have to manually update your index page on your website to reflect a new article.

Shel – Actually, we have it indexed by Google so they take care of that, and that part is automatic.

Dan – How do you have it indexed by Google? How does that work?

Shel – You can sign up for a site-specific search engine from Google and Google will search your site as if it's searching the whole web.

Dan – You don't have to have an articles index page anymore is what you're saying?

Shel – No, you don't. We used to have to re-index every couple of weeks and we don't bother to do that anymore.

Dan – People can just go to this little toolbar on your site and type whatever terms and it comes back in your set?

Shel – Yes. I don't know if I've got one on the Principled Profit site, but if you go to like FrugalMarketing.com...

Dan – That's FrugalMarketing.com

Shel – Yes. That's another one of my sites and if you go there, down at the bottom of the home page, there's a search box and it will give you a radio button to click on my three major sites and you can search them one at a time through Google.

Dan – Interesting. How do people know what to search for if they don't know what's on your site to search for?

Shel – I don't know, but over the years, a lot of people have used my search page. I think because I have a reputation as knowing something about marketing, a lot of people will search, for example, for "press release." The one thing that I wish the Google thing did was index all my sites at once. I do have to make multiple passes. But where my old engine would search all three of the sites at the same time but it would not actually update itself automatically, we had to tell it to go re-index. And Google is so much faster also—boom, it's there.

Dan – I had no idea that they would do that. That's great. Any other tips about Internet marketing or should we take questions or you tell me where you're going with this. How much time do you think we need for Internet marketing?

Shel – (OVERLAPPING) about Internet marketing—we've covered discussion groups, we've covered the Amazon-type campaign. Well, just partnering with other people. I have been letting people have that first chunk of the book that I have as a free download when people are looking for bonuses for their Amazon campaigns or if they're looking for something to give away at a trade show or whatever.

Dan – How do you find those people and build those relationships?

Shel – They find me. I'm constantly being asked to joint venture with this person or partner with that person—some of them because when I did my campaigns I went to them, some of them because they know who I am from reading my books, but they come to me.

Dan – That’s one way, to be a magnet. If people aren't magnets, how would you suggest they joint venture and find other people to promote their books?

Shel – Chip Tarver talks a lot about this on his site, that most of the people, who are as you call, the magnets, are fairly approachable. You go to their site and do a little research and you don’t send the canned email that says I’ve been to your site will you link with me. You send something individual and personal that really talks about what they’ve done and why you like it. And you will get noticed and your email will get read.

Dan – That’s a good point because I get propositioned for joint ventures like that all the time and...

Shel – Yes, and you probably toss them...

Dan – Yes, I throw them out faster than you can imagine.

Shel – But if somebody says, “Dan, I think this is a really good match for what you are doing with Show Stoppers,” now they...they will not know about Show Stoppers from going to your PR Leads site or from...they will only know that because they’ve had some other contact with you or they stumbled on it some other way. Its going make up a little more attention, wouldn’t it.

Dan – Someone sent me an email the other day that said, “I have the very first copy of the Online Marketing Handbook that you wrote back in 1997 and it’s influenced my life and changed my family.” He got my attention.

Shel – I’ll bet he did.

Dan – That’s so much better than if you link to my site, I’ll link to your site and, by the way, we sell mortgages.

Shel – Personal relationships are really key. At this point, I have a template letter that goes out to people who request a link and are clueless. I have another template letter to people who submit articles who are clueless. That’s the other piece of online marketing that we haven’t talked about—submitting articles.

Dan – Let’s talk about that.

Shel – This is a good thing. I have my articles all over the web and I have articles by a lot of other people on my websites. I have something like 1,200 articles on my various websites of which I’ve probably written about a third myself. That leaves 800 that came to me from other sources; have not paid a dime for content.

Dan – Let’s talk about how you get your articles on other people’s websites.

Shel – There are dozens of Yahoo Groups and websites. I'm in the process of compiling some kind of list of article sites. Just look for free article sites on Google. You'll probably find dozens. There are just a million places you can submit your content. The trick is that it should be well written, focused, include a blurb that gives people a reason to visit your site—that, I think, is one of the things that is most often left out—and it should not be generic. When I get these ridiculous blurbs that say, “Such-and-such is a good place to go for articles about parachuting,” well, you know, you need to do better than that, and it's so lame. There's somebody out there selling canned templates for articles and they're all horrible.

Dan – What call to action do you think would get people to come to your site? Obviously a newsletter won't work. What other things would work?

Shel – I find freebies work well. For example, when I used to promote my book on Frugal Fun on the radio, I would say things like, “And the section of the Penny Pinching Hedonist about how to have a \$300 wedding is actually posted at FrugalFun.com,” and I've done that with my business books as well.

Dan – Why would you want to post other people's articles to your website?

Shel – Last year I got \$3,300 in passive income from Google Ad Words. That is one very, very good reason.

Dan – You had Google Ad Words on all the pages for all of the articles that you received.

Shel – Yes, so every time anybody clicks on an article and they see the Google Ads and then they click on one of the ads I get a few cents.

Dan – Do you have any special tips on how to use Google Ad Sense?

Shel – No. We're actually in the middle of...my assistant is supposed to be taking that on as a research project and I gave her some very good terms as, that will be in her financial interest to improve the system, but so far we're much too early in the game for to report anything.

Dan – I'm going to have a special seminar on how to maximize your Google Ad Sense dollars in a couple of weeks. Again, I don't have a date set, but I do have an expert who has written an ebook on this and he's made lots of money, and I'm starting to follow his advice now. I'll give you a full report later when I get some good results.

Shel – That might be the ebook that I bought and gave to my assistant to say, “Do this and I'll pay you a commission on what you earn.”

Dan – Fantastic. Let's get to your last few tips about Internet marketing and then we'll take a couple of questions.

Shel – One would be affiliate programs, of course. Now, this works two ways. One, you can make money not only selling your own books, but selling other people's stuff. And two, you can pay other people to sell your stuff based on their results.

Dan – What kind of dollars or percentages are you talking about?

Shel – In my case, if somebody sells an ebook for me, I give them 50% of the price. If somebody sells one copy of a print book, I give them 25%. (OVERLAPPING)...

Dan – Okay, 50% for an ebook, 25% for a print book.

Shel – Yes, because I have no cost to fulfill an ebook order and do have a cost to fulfill hard goods.

Dan – You're the publisher, of course, for your book.

Shel – For some of my books I'm the publisher. The first, third and fifth were traditionally published, and the second, fourth and fifth were self-published. It just worked out that way.

Dan – Let's talk about, do you offer a commission for the books that were published by the other publishing companies?

Shel – Yes. At this point, I only have one of them that's current, and that's Grassroots Marketing. That's another reason why I pay a 25% commission rather than a higher commission, because I'm having to buy these books at a percentage off the price and I have to make some money in the deal also.

Dan – Again, I didn't quite catch that. What is the percentage you're offering for books that were published by a traditional publisher?

Shel – 25%

Dan – 25% for them as well.

Shel – If it's a paperback. If it's the ebook version, then I pay 50%.

Dan – Whether you publish it or the publisher publishes it, you're both offering the same percentage?

Shel – Yes.

Dan – One last tip, then we'll open it up for some questions.

Shel – I had one I wanted to share and...

Dan – Let’s talk about affiliate marketing from the flip side. What affiliate marketing programs should you sign up for and promote?

Shel – The ones that are complimentary to the message of your books. For example, I talk about frugal marketing and I am an affiliate for Ken Evoy’s Site Build It Program, which allows you to put up a very search-engine-friendly keyword-rich, content driven, high performance website and it includes a whole bunch of stuff like hosting and this and that. It’s a good fit for what I do because for a few hundred dollars year, somebody can have, very easily, a very effective Internet presence. Therefore, I certainly sell a few books on areas of marketing that are related to but not the same as what I talk about, would be good fits for me. I have not ever done hugely in the affiliate area. It’s not something I’ve concentrated in, but I certainly keep my finger in it.

I do remember the other thing that I was going to talk about now in terms of Internet marketing, is make sure your site is search-engine-friendly. If you’ve got frames on your site, get rid of them. If you’ve got “robots, ignore the page” tags on your key content pages, take them off. If your site is hard to navigate, clean it up. You want to have a site that is approachable both for the robots that are spidering it, and also for the human beings that are visiting, and you want to move both of them toward different kinds of actions. For the robots, you want them to keep clicking and going a layer deeper, a layer deeper, until they’ve gone through your whole site. For the human beings, you want them to read and learn and buy.

Dan – Shel, this might be a good time also for you to tell people where they can get in touch with you and let them know what kind of services you offer and what’s in it for them.

Shel – What’s in it for them is that they get to have their story told in a way that people notice; whether it’s press releases that the media will actually read and pay attention to and follow up with and get you into press, or whether it’s website copy that creates interest and then moves people through the funnel until the point of purchase, or whether it’s simply an overall marketing consult that looks at the direction of your business and how best to harness it, or creating a marketing plan that’s specific to your book—these are all among the many things that I can do for you. I do offer a particularly good deal. If you go to my site, you’ll see the Frugal and Ethical Marketing Jumpstart Kit, which includes a half hour of phone time and my two most recent marketing books, and depending on which package, assorted special reports, and in one case, an audio. These are an extremely good value. One of them is, I believe, \$99.95, and the other is \$124.95, and their list price is quite a bit more than that. This is a way of marketing, by the way, that I’m going to tell you exactly what I’m doing here and why I’m doing it. It is because, number one, I believe very strongly in ways of trying before you buy. Number two, I know that a very, very large percentage of the people who do this are going to come back to me as clients. And number three, essentially, I get paid to do my own marketing.

Dan – Great. I want to endorse Shel wholeheartedly. I have sent many clients to Shel and they’ve all been very, very happy. Shel, cover your ears. I don’t want you to hear this. Shel doesn’t charge enough money for his hourly time based on industry standards. Okay, Shel, welcome back.

Shel – Fortunately I'm in a soundproof booth and didn't hear that. Actually, I know what other people charge in my industry. I know that you can pay \$1,200 for a press release from some people, and you pay typically between \$150 and \$300 to get it from me, but that's because I practice what I preach about frugality. I don't have a goal of being super, super wealthy; I have a goal of helping people and making a decent living. I'm fully aware that my competitors think I undercharge.

Dan – There you have it; you don't get any more ethical than that. I've opened up the phone lines. Who has the first question for Shel?

Roz – My question is about the Google Ad Words. How do you use them and make sure that your competitors aren't advertising on your website?

Dan – You can tell Google not to include ads from any site. You just type www.YourCompetitor'sAddress.com and they're out of there. It's really, really simply. It's a great question. Thank you much.

Shel – I have a very different answer.

Dan – What's your answer?

Shel – In my book, *Principled Profit*, I actually discuss the idea that competitors can be your strongest ally. If my competitor shows up on a page of mine with a Google ad, fine and dandy. I actually list, in the book, I list 20 other copywriters with their contact information and their specialties, because the universe of copywriting clients is far bigger than I can handle. I come from an abundance mentality where there's enough for me, there's enough for you.

Roz – But what happens if you have a specialty like I do, which is greeting cards? I'm not trying to advertise, but if I have other people, my biggest competitors are the free sites.

Dan – Right. Exactly. Let's leave it at that. I think we gave you two solutions that would help you. I agree with you Roz, there are times when I agree with Shel, but if I'm doing my Great Teleseminar site, I don't want someone clicking on an ad for another conference call center and finding out they have different rates, so there are times when have to pull the plug.

Shel – Well, particularly for book authors, though, generally, people don't only buy one book in a subject. Who's got the next question?

Participant (Female) – I do. My question is, I have a book and it is a book on diversity. It's a workbook. It's about 125 pages. There's part of me that thinks well, it's just a workbook, so why would I do such a big marketing campaign, but I still want to sell it. Do you have anything you can say to me about...would this work for my book, too?

Shel – Absolutely it would work for your book. But also, when you have a workbook, that means you have a number of other products that you can spin off. You could have a teacher guide, you can have a book that is, uses the same information, not as a workbook; you can have an

interactive website. Each of these has a marketing component and they all work together to build your brand.

Participant (Female) – Thank you. I'll call you.

Shel – Great.

Dan – Who's next?

Participant (Male #1) – I have a question, Shel, about your ezine sign up, or newsletter sign up. You have a separate ezine for your books, than your main website or business?

Shel – I have, actually, three ezines that I send out each month, where each one more or less promotes a different book. Two of them are hosted with Topica in their free version, and one of them is hosted as part of my Site Build It site. I don't actually have a site just for the ezine. You can, from pretty much any page of any site, you can sign up for it.

Dan – We are getting some feedback. Please be so kind as to press *6 if you haven't already; that will mute out all the noise.

Participant (Male #1) – Shel, how often do you post to your blog for the book?

Shel – I try to post at least once a week. I don't always make it, but I come pretty close, and some weeks I post two or three times.

Participant (Male #1) – Do you allow people to comment on your posts?

Shel – I do. I think I've gotten a total of one comment so far.

Dan – Shel, we've already given more than 20 ideas, so I think we've done our job today. We can talk about whatever we want now.

Shel – Let's talk about some offline stuff.

Dan – Okay, great.

Shel – I think a lot of authors do not realize that personal appearances are a great way to sell books; however, bookstore signings are not the right kind of personal appearance for most of us—that you want to have some kind of event. It could be in a bookstore, but it's not enough to just sit there at a table with your magic marker and your pile of books unless your name happens to be Stephen King or J. K. Rowling. There are some people who have enough buzz around them that that works. For us ordinary mortals, if you're a travel writer, you can do a slide show of like the 10 Greatest Places to Take Your Kids or...

Dan – Shel, let’s get through this quickly. Not many of my people have time to do book signings in places and they’re pretty low-return investments anyway, so I’d really just...go through one or two ideas and then move on.

Shel – What I find much better than signings in a bookstore is speeches, where first of all, you're getting paid to go there. Second, a very high percentage of people are going to be interested in what you're doing, and a very high percentage of those will buy your book. In fact, I just did one. I was in St. Louis this past weekend and I went to a conference on media reform that I very much wanted to be at. I had had some dialogue with a group of independent publishers in St. Louis a couple of years ago...having me talk...and it hadn’t materialized, so I sent an email to the organizer of that group and I said, “Remember, we talked about this. It happens that I’m going to be in St. Louis on such-and-such a date. If you have me then, I will speak for the fee that I had discussed with you then, which I have since raised significantly, and I’ll pay my own airfare.” They were delighted. The only expense I really had was my airfare. I got a check of a few hundred dollars for speaking. I sold a few hundred dollars worth of books. I fully expect that at least a few the people will become consulting or copywriting clients, and essentially, I got paid to go to this conference I really wanted to go to.

Dan – You hit on a really rich vein of ideas here. Let’s talk about what you can do when you're speaking to promote your book.

Shel – First of all, you can talk about the general content of the book and you can say, “I do go into this fairly in depth in chapter seven...”

Dan – You’re referencing your book without giving away all the meat.

Shel – Yes.

Dan – Great. I just wanted to...

Shel – You want to make it clear that the speech is the edge of what they’re going to get, but at the same time, you want to provide real good content. You don’t want to just stand there selling for an hour and nobody’s buying...

Dan – Exactly.

Shel – ...you want them to buy your book.

Dan – Right. Agreed. What other kinds of marketing things can you do at a conference to promote your book?

Shel – I was at Book Expo America several years ago and I was wearing my t-shirt with...whenever I go to a book show, I wear a t-shirt with my newest book. At that time, it was the Penny Pinching Hedonist, so I’m wearing my Hedonist t-shirt and I come to a booth and I see a foam board poster about a book on sustainable hedonism. I went up to the publisher, pointed to the shirt, pointed to the poster, and said, “We have to talk.” By the time we were done talking,

we had initiated what became the contract for Grassroots Marketing. I actually sold a book on the floor of BEA, which I'm not aware of a lot of people who've done that. It was serendipity. A lot of it was serendipity. Because I was there seizing the opportunity, the opportunity manifested itself for me.

Dan – And of course sometimes wearing the t-shirt just sort of helps. Now, a lot of people can't get by, by wearing t-shirts, but I've seen other people wear buttons, 3x5...

Shel – All sorts of stuff.

Dan – ...hats with their books, with their patches.

Shel – At this conference in St. Louis, actually, I was wearing the t-shirt for Grassroots Marketing and somebody else was coming down an escalator as I was going up and I...he had a really interesting t-shirt, and I read it, and then he read mine and he said, "Can I talk to you?" The next thing you know, he's got a microphone and tape recorder out. He's a radio host and he did an interview of me. Again, you do things in life to make things happen and they do happen.

Dan – Sometimes you just never know what's going to happen when you put the message out there. Here are some ideas that I've heard about speakers getting additional buzz for their books when they're speaking, and feel free to add your own. I just want to prime the pump here. You can do a lot of trade-outs with these organizations. They don't want you to shill the book from the platform, but they might let you put an order form on every attendee's seat, they might let you sell from the back of the room. If there's a conference area, they might give you a free table so you can sell your book or do a book signing. They might let you rent their mailing list, or rather, give you the mailing list or give it to you at a greatly reduced rate than outsiders would get. Those are all some ways to market.

Shel – You can look beyond that to ways of partnering. Here's a great thing to do with your obsolete inventory, for example. When I did Grassroots Marketing, that meant that Marketing Without Megabucks, my old Simon and Schuster book, was no longer current. The way I got rid of a lot of leftover inventory for that is when people would talk to me about speaking, I would say, "And by the way, here's something you can do really nice for your attendees. You can buy these books from me in full cases for three dollars a book," which was still more than I paid for them, "and you can give them out to your attendees as a gift." In one situation, actually, I sold three cases of books using them as...the conference used them as an early registration bonus. They got a lot of money in hand knowing that their seminar was going to be profitable and was going...the numbers were going to work by investing in a couple of cases of books from me.

Dan – Great idea.

Shel – Everybody won. I got rid of three cases of a book that I couldn't really sell on the open market anymore. They got a very, very juicy early attendee bonus, and they got early registrations.

Dan – Fantastic. That's a win-win for everyone.

Shel – A lot of this stuff is. That’s the interesting thing. The more I learn about marketing, the more I learn that it’s really not so much about how you grind out the best press release, but it’s about how you form partnerships and relationships that move everybody forward with the least amount of effort.

Dan – Right. Let’s look at the 80/20 rule in the limited amount of time that we have left and the limited amount of battery life that my cell phone apparently has left. What are some of the highest percentage marketing ideas that you can offer us.

Shel – Getting covered in national media is definitely a good one, although it doesn’t necessarily translate to sales, it’s an incredible credibility builder. I think selling in bulk is a very nice thing. My book, *Principled Profit*, was actually profitable the day the presses rolled because we had sold 1,000 copies to Southwest Airlines. And let me tell you, when I think about which airline to fly, and Southwest goes on a route I’m going, I am much more likely to go that way now having had that experience.

Dan – How did you sell books to Southwest Airlines?

Shel – I actually hired a consultant to go out for special sales and with a very limited effort, she identified nine companies for the original push, and one of the nine bit, and actually, I got the phone call literally one day before the books were going to go to press. I was able to call up the printer and say, “Please run an extra thousand and send them over to Dallas.” I could have easily...the odds were not good there, only one of the nine bought, and only, if one in ten had bought, and we’d gone after nine, then that would have been money thrown away, but you just don’t know.

I do think that entering and winning contests is a good thing for a book. You can leverage that a lot of ways. *Principled Profit* is an Apex Award winner and *Grassroots Marketing* is a *Forward Magazine Book of the Year* Finalist, and I’ve gotten a lot of mileage from that. It builds credibility. All these things build credibility. And you get known. It’s gone down, but at one point a couple of months ago, I searched for myself on Google and was rather astounded to see 11,300 returns. Then somehow it went down to 5,000 and it’s slowly building up. I think it’s around 7,000 now, but you get your stuff out there. You answer reporter queries, you participate in discussion groups, you put up stuff on your own website, you seed your articles out into the world, you make yourself...basically, you put yourself in a position where anybody in your target market is going to trip over you sooner or later.

Dan – What other tips do you have?

Shel – Take good notes when you go to events.

Dan – Why?

Shel – If you collect people’s business cards, write on the back of the business card why you took them and if there’s any follow up needed. Many good things can happen just by showing up

and following up. Go to local networking events. One of the other things I did to get rid of Marketing Without Megabucks was that I would go to Chamber of Commerce events and they did a raffle every time, and I would always throw a book in the raffle and they would wave it around in say, “Our member and local author, Shel Horowitz, who’s sitting over there, he wrote this wonderful book on marketing and we’re going to pick, now, a business card to see who wins it.” Then I’d watch for who won it and I would go over and sign the book for them. Needless to say, that made friends and good contacts.

Dan – Great idea. You might send that idea to other associations, too. I’ve given away a couple of free subscriptions for a month or so for PR Leads to several NSA chapters, and more often than not, people who won the bid sign up forever. The idea here is that your name is on the auction bid so everyone in that group sees your name, and as we all know from that old adage about advertising, “It takes 21 impressions to make a real impression where people actually buy something,” so this can go a long way toward that 21.

Shel – I have a riff in the book about how sometimes that isn't true. I won't go into that now. But also, when you walk into my office, which is in a farmhouse in rural Massachusetts, but I do have clients coming to the house sometimes, what do they see when they walk into my office? The first thing they see is a very spiffy poster that the Public Relations Society of America did for my book signing there last year, which shows my face, my two book covers, and a nice picture of the New York skyline and the Brooklyn bridge, and then below that, is an acetate book display rack with the books themselves. I sell a fair number to clients who are just sitting in my office having me write something for them, and that’s obviously no work at all to me.

Dan – That’s pretty clever. We have time for maybe one or two more tips. What final words do you...?

Shel – I haven't given people my phone number either, which is 800-683-9673. My email is Shel@PrincipledProfits.com, and I’m very happy to discuss your own marketing needs, those of you who are listening.

Dan – Let’s end this on a high note. What kind of words of wisdom do you have for us on how to set the high tone of getting marketing and publicity for your books and how to sell more books?

Shel – I think the more I go through this, the more I am convinced that the ethical approaches are also the effective approaches are also the affordable approaches. These things have a lot of synergy if you do them right. There is no need to hustle and shyster and cheat people. It’s much, much better to be of service to your readers, to your customers, your clients, and to let them become your unpaid sales force.

Dan – Definitely. I’m reminded of the very first line in Philip Kotler’s book on marketing—and that’s the book that’s used by more MBA programs to teach people about marketing—and the very first line about the definition of marketing is, “Marketing is the process of making selling easier.” I think if you follow through on a number of Shel’s tips and ideas, you’ll be able to accomplish that great 80/20 rule in getting more sales with less effort. Shel, I want to thank you for joining us today and offering all these great tips, especially all these great ideas for marketing

your books online. I think you gave us well more than the 20 tips that you promised us, so it just goes to show what a great giver you are, and I appreciate that.

Shel – Thank you.

Dan – Thank you again for joining our session today. This is Dan Janal, the President and Founder of PR Leads. Have a great day.