

## THE WITTMANN AGENCY

### Love Letters To Bookworms | Liebesbriefe an Bücherwürmer

#### Global Online Marketing + Strategy For Modern Publishing Entrepreneurs

Reading time 3 min 03 sec

## Ahoi, my wonderful Bookworm!

Despite all the digitalization, modern marketing vibes and automation that have come to the world of global media and book publishing, the request for proposal has hung around like a bad retargeted online ad.

### Requests for proposals (RFPs)

After a couple of years into my business, I started getting quite a few *Requests for Proposals (RFPs)* from big publishing brands and well-known indie publishing companies.

I was impressed I was even getting asked at the time. I was a brand-new entrepreneur, a one-person operation in a mid-sized town in Germany.

I laboured for nearly 5 working days over my first RFP. I must have spent 20+ hours writing the document, responding to all of the required questions.

I even connected with other freelancers from my network to make sure I had enough resources to pitch the project successfully.

### Love 'em or hate 'em

Months after I had submitted my first RFP, I had yet to hear anything final.

I checked in regularly and found out that the project was first "awarded" to the existing staff and split between several colleagues and later they employed someone new to cover the workload (for more money, than they had offered to me).

I responded to three or four more RFPs before I threw in the towel.

It just wasn't worth my time or energy to respond to these inquiries when it would take months before I heard a *YES* or a *NO*.

The prospect of this year-long project lost its appeal when I could make the same amount (or more) by doing a few smaller projects for several clients in the same amount of time with the added bonus of a lot less stress.

When you deal with larger companies (or businesses with a poor organizational structure), you're dealing with a LOT more bureaucracy and often with many different people for one project.

### **The not so good, the bad and the mean RFPs**

One of my creative peers – from the German Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed ([Der Verband der Gründer und Selbstständigen Deutschland e.V. \(VGSD\)](#)) – once took part in an automotive photograph pitch and the \*winner\* was supposed to pre-finance a 350k project BEFORE they would even be awarded (and paid) the project from their prospective client (a large German automotive company).

### **There's a far better way**

If you get a larger project, you also have to factor in the amount of time you'll be dealing with the multitudes of decision-makers — the larger the budget, the more individuals are typically involved.

In the end, you have to determine if it's worth your time to tackle these types of projects.

After 20+ years in book publishing business, and 10 years as an entrepreneur I understand there are just too many variables — from budget cuts to personnel changes — that are outside of your control, no matter how good of a job you do — or how long we've been working together.

I've found over the years that I personally prefer working with solopreneurs or small companies – and I always ensure that I work directly with the decision-makers. I consciously choose every project and client I take on.

Do you respond to RFPs? Do you send out RFPs? Why or why not? What's your experience been like? Hit reply and let me know.

Much love ,  
xoxo Claudia

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