

THE WITTMANN AGENCY

Love Letters To Bookworms | Liebesbriefe an Bücherwürmer

Global Marketing + Strategy + Foreign Rights Licensing For Publishing Brands

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Reading time 4 min 47 sec

Grüezi*, my lovely Bookworm!

In my last week's [LOVE LETTER TO BOOKWORMS](#), I mentioned my updated workbook

[5 online Mistakes Even Smart Book Publishing Pros Make](#) – how to spot, fix and avoid these most common mistakes that 2/3 of creative and book publishing businesses make.

Have you taken a peek?

If not, it's probably because your entire workday feels swamped in marketing activity, right?

Crafting endless papers, excel sheets, releases, catalogues, texts etc. sending it off to colleagues, partners or maybe your boss – getting radio silence, wondering whether to follow up, thinking of outsourcing tasks, then realising how expensive experts are and feeling utterly deflated.

Instead, you could be leapfrogging over all the other entrepreneurs on the same depressing hamster wheel...

How? You've already got the steps in your hands. Or actually in your inbox:

[5 online Mistakes Even Smart Book Publishing Pros Make](#)

Print it out and stick it on the wall by your desk. By putting the process up there, you're already saying to yourself, this is what I want for my business: get found and more customers!

If you have checked it out, how are you finding it? Hit reply and let me know. I'd love to hear how it's going.

Dan, an author from the U.S. wrote to tell me,

"Hello again, Claudia. My thanks for your workbook. Most helpful."

And Ruth wrote,

*"These incredibly well-written guides** exceeded my expectations: clear, concise and easy to understand. Chapeau! Your guides have become my favourite resources, that I use in my daily business. HIGHLY (!!!) recommend it."*

Start now. And get ready for the requests to start coming in!

Why?

Over the years I heard a LOT of resistance and E-Mail unpleasanties starting with 'I hope this finds you well' to this idea like:

"What the hell she's talking about! Who she thinks she is! MY BUSINESS is completely DIFFERENT and it doesn't apply to me and my unique situation."

You know what, nearly all of these dozens of publishers, agents or creative freelancers, who told me that, because they were around for decades, have disappeared.

Starting and building a business in global & online book publishing from scratch can be like learning a foreign language.

You have to practice daily, might encounter terms and concepts that you've never heard of before – and it can get confusing!

Understanding this 'language' or getting help from someone who already 'speaks this language' is vital and will make you a more informed person – it can save you loads of money and an untold amount of heartache!

As an entrepreneur, I know about failure.

In 10+ years as an international solopreneur – with a LOT of ups and downs – I've made many mistakes, even pretty stupid ones and learned a thing or two.

Some lessons I had to learn multiple times to get it right to my heart – and my head.

Biggest takeaway: I had to learn to clearly set and over-communicate

expectations, goals, and priorities.

Here are 3 lessons I hope you can take to your heart and avoid my hurtful mistakes.

#1 Businesses who cannot get clear on what they really want or need

If a person or a business brand has no clear focus on where to go or what they want or need – you're signing up to endless back and forth E-Mails, never-ending inquiries, voicemail messages and telephone calls.

All of these are a clear sign, they aren't valuing you, your time and your expertise.

This is also one reason I rarely work for large organizations anymore. To get forward you need to have direct access to the primary decision maker – otherwise, you'll be running around in circles – and your project time (and often the money, too) will lag on and on as you wait for the approval.

Biggest takeaway: That experience got me thinking a bit more strategically about who my ideal clients should be, something I've refined over the years and put into a specific client onboarding process.

#2 Can I pick your brain

To be clear, I'm all for being generous and sharing my knowledge to help others get ahead.

Heck, I've been sharing my best advice for nearly 11 years through my [newsletters](#), [catalogues](#) and [social channels](#) for FREE.

BUT if I would drink every coffee and eat every lunch I got offered for free consultancy and unpaid working hours – I would look like a fatted goose before Christmas.

Biggest takeaway: People who don't pay for your advice or work won't value your advice and work.

#3 Doesn't show respect or don't understand boundaries

A HUGE mistake I made in the beginning, when I was transitioning from 'employee mode' to freelancer, was to tolerate too much unreasonable, unacceptable behaviour from clients and co-partners, because I was unclear about what was acceptable and what wasn't.

I ran into

- Never-Ever-Satisfied Sam
- Unpaid-Invoice Iris

- Over Demanding Dana
- Haggling Harry
- Toxic Tammy
- Ghosting Gerry

who intentionally acted in a thoughtless or abusive manner, causing problems for me and my business.

Keeping clients and co-partners happy while retaining boundaries is a full-time job on top of doing your actual daily work.

Comic artist Randy Glasbergen put it into a funny quote: "Your satisfaction is our top priority. So if you could try to act really satisfied, that would be a big help."

What are the underlying reasons for challenging behaviour:

#1 They haven't the slightest idea what kind of resources, expertise, time and money are required to start, run and complete a project or task they've asked for.

#2 They know they can't afford you.

#3 They're afraid of paying too much (or anything at all).

The best thing you can do is to try to spot them ahead of time and avoid them altogether.

Biggest takeaway: NEVER EVER tolerate yelling, name-calling, hatred E-Mails or calls, or any other form of abuse. Never. Period.

Self-employed, freelancers and other small business owners

- **aren't kids** (Treat others the way you want to be treated.)
- **aren't employees** (Not saying employees should be treated poorly. Of course not! But employees need to fit in, freelancers need to stand out.)
- **aren't order-takers** (No commands.)
- **aren't pets** (No cuddling, no whining.)

I'm pretty happy with all of my existing partnerships – if I wasn't, this would have ended the relationship anyway.

This was another real-life example, of how to mining old content (No joke, this is an old post from World Book Day 2019 I have polished for you) for new gold – repurposing heaven.

Sending you all my love 

xoxo

Claudia — your global book publishing co-pilot

***Grüezi** /'gryətsi/ = formal greeting in Swizz German that means "Gott grüess si" | "Hello" in Switzerland

** If you haven't already gotten it, grab my **Digital Office Survival Guide: 25 Digital Marketing Tools And Services Modern Publishing Entrepreneurs Can Trust** [Click here and you'll get your guide.](#)

P.S. Need more help? Hit reply and just ask. Share how you're doing on this journey. Before, may I bribe you? [I would be grateful if you would share your thoughts in 60 sec. with me.](#)

P.P.S. Would you do me another favour? Forward this E-Mail to a friend who's starting or running their own business. It could mean the difference between MASSIVE profits and growth and having to shut their doors for good. Thank you so much. You're the best!

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Well, today's the day. This year's your year.

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