



SULLIVAN SPECIAL REPORT:

TEN SECRETS FOR BUILDING A PROFITABLE SPEAKING BUSINESS



SULLIVAN
SPEAKER
SERVICES

TEN SECRETS FOR BUILDING A PROFITABLE SPEAKING BUSINESS

By Vickie K. Sullivan, President, Sullivan Speaker Services Inc.

There's a big difference between being a speaker and owning a profitable speaking business. Below is a snapshot of the hottest trends in the industry and how you can benefit:

1. THE SPEAKING BUSINESS HAS GROWN UP.

For many years, the speaking business consisted of mom-and-pop operations. The speaker would travel and give speeches and the spouse would manage the office and market the speaker. Not any more.

The speaking business has gotten enough momentum that it has caught the attention of savvy business owners who leverage their previous success into big speaking fees. These folks understand investment and are willing to throw big bucks into the marketing function. Result: it's more expensive (and risky) to get into the speaking business. You have to put more skin in the game. It's no longer a bootstrapping seat-of-your-pants business, but a "pay to play" world.

2. THERE ARE NEW PLAYERS IN THE SPEAKING BUSINESS.

Corporate America has also caught the speaking bug. Top executives are hitting the circuit to position their companies as market leaders. Speaking coaches and writers are having a field day. PR firms are making larger retainers by delivering the gigs. Organizations get more media attention for their events. Everybody is happy.

Bottom line: your new competitors have more resources, more help and more visibility. This is not necessarily bad (remember who won in the David vs. Goliath battle.) Solution: start looking at non-traditional marketing plans to combat the new Goliath.



Is this bad news? Not if your expertise is packaged to deal with these competitive forces head on.

Find out how at

<http://www.sullivanspeaker.com/yourpositionofpower.htm>

3. THE ANTI-SPEAKER MOVEMENT IS ALIVE AND WELL IN BOTH THE ASSOCIATION AND CORPORATE MARKETS.

Speakers who have "professional speaker" as their only expertise are facing empty calendars. Why? Because audiences want to hear from those who have "done it", and are not just talking about it. The "sage on a stage" phase of the speaking business is gone and isn't coming back soon.

As a result, many speakers are "reinventing" their business by positioning their expertise, rather than their speaking skills. Those who make the most profitable transition will use current market intelligence to decide how to re-package their background and topics.

4. WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY ARE OPENING (AND CLOSING) RAPIDLY.

In the good old days, hot topics were no surprise. Motivation, inspiration were the #1 requests and that lasted for years. The focus was on snappy titles and funny stories.

Between the short news cycles and changing business climate, everything has changed. Content is king and hot topics come and go in a matter of weeks, rather than a matter of months. Speakers that wait to act miss out on great opportunities, or worse, base their marketing strategy on old findings that are no longer relevant. The willingness to act on market intelligence is the difference between future market leaders and the also-rans.



Congratulations! You've taken the first step by signing up for Vickie's latest market intelligence in the speaking marketplace.

Next step: get the tools you need to execute on that market intelligence at <http://www.sullivanspeaker.com/products.htm>

5. TRADITIONAL HIGH-FEE VENUES ARE GONE. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT A SPEAKER CAN'T MAKE OVER \$10,000 PER SPEECH.

In the good old days, everyone knew where the high-fee buyers were and contacted them regularly. Now, the money has moved and traditional venues have disappeared, but the secret ones still exist.

How to find the venues and what they are looking for? Savvy speakers with ongoing market intelligence will find these secret venues -- and get there first with unique solutions. It's all about being there before your

competition ...

6. FREE SPEAKERS HAVE CHANGED BUYERS' ATTITUDES ABOUT PAYING SPEAKER FEES.

Experts who waive their fee in exchange for promoting their product/service have increased by the 1000's. And with good reason, as speaking can create much more ancillary income than the speaking fee. But the flip side of the coin is that the market now questions the need to pay speakers AT ALL.

Speakers are responding to this threat by reducing their fees and giving away more, such as their books or other products. This has backfired, which is why some \$10,000 speakers are going for as low as \$2,500. The most vulnerable speakers are those who give general content, or are speaking at \$2,500 or below. The antidote: the ability to negotiate your fees in a competitive environment.

7. SALES CONVERSATIONS HAVE CHANGED: QUALIFYING IS OUT.

Because of the plethora of information on the Internet, it's easier than ever before to find out what buyers are looking for in speakers. Industry issues, challenges, and problems (and possible solutions) can be found on association and industry media websites. Ironically enough, too few speakers check out these sites and instead, ask their prospects questions such as "What are your challenges?"

Buyers are not impressed. They see such qualifying questions as stupid and speakers who ask them are immediately disqualified. Buyers are looking for speakers who already understand their industry and challenges and bring new ideas to address the issues. Savvy speakers will do their homework and lead with intelligent questions about specific industry issues. They will transform a typical sales conversation into a "talking shop" gabfest with the buyer. And they'll get the gig.



Sales conversations are the name of the new game in speaking -- those savvy speakers who say the right things at the right time can close the deal, no matter the competition.

For more tools, check out “*Talking to Strangers*” at <http://www.sullivanspeaker.com/talkingtostrangers.htm>

8. FREE EXPERTS ARE LESS LIKELY TO GET BUSINESS FROM THEIR SPEECHES.

Two things are happening in the association marketplace that is making free speaking less and less profitable. First, audiences in the association conferences are changing -- decision makers are less likely to attend and associations are having a hard time attracting these time-starved executives. Therefore, experts are reaching fewer decision makers and selling high-end services (such as consulting) is becoming more difficult.

Secondly, the attendees are screaming about sales pitches, so buyers are having tough conversations about what constitutes a sales pitch. New definitions include such items as not even MENTIONING the fact that they have clients. Result: these experts are now wanting to get paid ... and don't know the differences in market expectations.

9. SOME BIG CONTRACTS FROM CORPORATE AMERICA ARE GONE FOREVER -- BUT NEW ONES ARE CREATED IN THEIR PLACE.

Many speakers were really “motivational trainers” with big six-figure contracts from Fortune 500 companies. When the economy tanked, these contracts were cancelled in a heartbeat and these speakers were forced to do something that they hadn't done in years

-- sell themselves to folks who don't know how great they are.

One reason why many speakers will find this difficult: they may not even know the value of their expertise in the open market, because they have operated in the vacuum for so long. These folks will go hungry until they get market intelligence to help position their expertise in a way the market will respond to immediately.

10. THE NEW WAY TO SELL PRODUCTS.

Many speakers develop educational products, such as CD's and videos to sell in the back of the room. These sales have often exceeded the speaker's fee, and are a popular way to increase revenue for every speech.

However, association conferences have changed their policies concerning these sales, no longer allowing many speakers to set up sales stations after the speech. Exhibitors have complained about the outside sales and attendees want one place to shop. Associations have answered these concerns by bringing in book stores such as Barnes and Noble to set up tables for all book sales. Savvy speakers are looking for creative ways to get bulk sales before the speech, such as finding a sponsor to buy the product for each attendee.



There are many changes in the marketplace -- can you find those “side doors” that create more invitations and opportunities to sell products and services?

Vickie's SpringBoard Marketing system will help you leverage every opportunity. This system is available at <http://www.sullivanspeaker.com/springboardmarketing.htm>

ABOUT VICKIE SULLIVAN

President Sullivan Speaker Services Inc.



Vickie Sullivan is known worldwide as being the foremost expert on generating revenue for high-end experts. Since 1987 she has worked with thousands of experts in a wide variety of industries to launch their big-fee speaking, professional service and book/ product empires in highly lucrative markets. How does she do it? Through customized solutions created with market analysis and research. Vickie's clients report that her market assessments and intelligence gives them a two-year heads-up on the marketplace.

She has been quoted in national publications such as The New York Times, Investor's Business Daily, and Fortune.com....Her articles have been published in Professional Speaker Magazine, Lawyers Weekly, Presentations Magazine and others.

Vickie helps experts find outlets where their messages will sell for the highest fees and get speaking engagements, book deals and professional services assignments that extend their brand and increase revenue and market share in a wide variety of markets and industries.

Vickie speaks internationally on marketing trends and strategies and is the author of *Springboard Marketing™*, *Talking to Strangers™*, *Speak to Sell™*, *Speaking in the Strike Zone™*, and *Your Position of Power™*. Her bi-weekly market intelligence updates *Tips, Trends & Tirades®* are considered a top resource for experts and are distributed throughout the U.S. and in 17 countries.

Vickie graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a BA in Journalism/PR and a minor in Marketing. She and husband Larry Miller reside in Tempe, Arizona, along with their four-legged "child" (the kind that meows) Tigger.

OTHER RESOURCES

VICKIE SULLIVANS SPEAKER SUCCESS KIT: AN EXCLUSIVE THREE CD SET

Your ultimate, need-to-know source to start playing the speaker's game. In these three CDs – jam-packed with winning content and offered together for the first time – you'll get the pre-eminent scoop from Vickie on the common mistakes and pricey pitfalls you can avoid in starting your speaking career. The CDs include Get Those Bookings: Marketing Strategies for Professional Speakers, Speaking in the Strike Zone: How to Get in Front of a Buying Audience, and Speak to Sell: Using Public Speaking as a Marketing Tool.

YOUR POSITION OF POWER: PACKAGING YOUR EXPERTISE FOR HIGH-FEE MARKETS

Ready to make yourself P.O.P. in the marketplace? You can with Vickie's four CD set that shows you how to flex your own unique Position of Power. Here, she provides a strategic, step-by-step approach to positioning – and communicating – your expertise in ways that will make you a must-have speaker...and draw in your most profitable customers.

TALKING TO STRANGERS: EFFECTIVE SALES CONVERSATIONS FOR EXPERTS WHO SPEAK

In this amazingly comprehensive 7-CD set Vickie down-loads the info to make every conversation count so you can turbo-charge your success...right now. She breaks down – CD by CD – how to make every phone call more effective, how to communicate how valuable you are, how to respond to budget-blues excuses, and how to implement top-tier closing strategies. Vickie's masterful approach will have you summoning your innate courage to speak to strangers...and

command the highest fees possible.

SPRINGBOARD MARKETING

Looking to create currency with a business that prominently plays up your intellectual capital? In this CD set, Vickie enthusiastically unspools a winning consultant program previously revealed only in pricey one-on-one sessions. It plots out the plan to build an infrastructure – driven by speaking – that sets your expertise apart, fine-tunes message development and turns a single speech into a powerful, revenue-generating machine.

GET THOSE BOOKINGS: MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS

In this CD, you'll find out what to know before you market yourself, how associations and corporations select speakers they pay for, and how you can influence the committees that decide which speakers get hired.

SPEAKING IN THE STRIKE ZONE: HOW TO GET IN FRONT OF A BUYING AUDIENCE

This fast-paced CD features Vickie giving the very latest on market expectations and how you can tailor your format for the highest return.

SPEAK TO SELL: USING PUBLIC SPEAKING AS A MARKETING TOOL

Specifically targeted to those who want to give presentations to sell products, procure clients or promote their ideas, this CD offers a tested, systematic approach to create captivating topics that sell.

All of these products are available for purchase through the Sullivan Speaker Services online store. Visit <http://www.sullivanspeaker.com/products.htm> today!