Cause-Based Selling in the Literary Industry: Planning for Success

Austin Halbert | Business Honors Program Thesis Summary

Driven by a $24,000 grant from the Leon Levine Foundation, this thesis will make the business case for The American Workday, an upcoming book to be published in 2015. The book will feature photographs and interviews from 50-75 diverse Americans working within a variety of job positions, aiming to foster empathy among readers by providing a more vivid understanding of occupational variances. Revenues from the book will fund a workforce development program for unemployed citizens through Charlotte Works. Ultimately, publishing The American Workday is a test drive in exploring how to sell an adequate amount of books in the United States market to support a cause.

The thesis will serve as the business plan for The American Workday. This plan will be comprised of several components: Vision statement, description of product, market analysis, business structure, market strategy, analysis of strengths and weaknesses, financial analysis, revenue projects, and summary. This format is attributable to 10 Essential Business Plan Components according to Forbes. The plan will be created through analysis of proven best practices from recent successful publications, as well as aided by strategies from Author, Publisher, Entrepreneur by Guy Kawasaki.

The book’s content development is approximately halfway completed. Interviews have been conducted with a variety of employees from numerous sectors. Content is on track to be complete by Spring 2015, when implementation of the business plan will begin. Creating and implementing the plan will demonstrate the processes required to manage a cause-based book sales strategy. It is projected that a well-founded business plan will significantly boost the dissemination of The American Workday.