

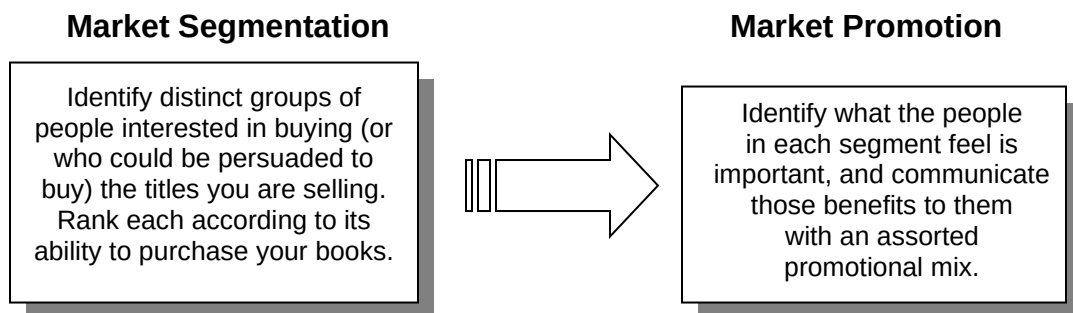
# Mid-Brain Marketing

By Brian Jud

Have you ever written a creative press release, or crunched numbers to calculate a budget? If so, you have used right-brained or left-brained thinking. These two separate modes of thinking can be applied to book marketing, too. Right-brained marketing is embodied in the “aha” factor, the source of a creative press release or an idea for new books. Left-brained marketing can be exemplified by the more analytical tasks of segmentation, forecasting and database management.

Historically, these have been considered as distinct functions. But the separation between the two is becoming muddled as creative marketing techniques are subjected to critical analysis in the quest to make marketing more accountable to budgetary constraints. Subsequently, a third, *Mid-Brain Marketing* strategy has evolved, requiring a combination of creative and analytical thinking. It is the application of strategic creativity, innovative analysis or imagineering.

A publishing-industry example of *Mid-Brain Marketing* can help you pinpoint your prospective buyers and communicate with them more economically, and it involves two steps. The first step is *market segmentation*, or dividing the total populace into smaller groups of people potentially interested in purchasing the content of your book. The second step in this example is *market promotion*. This involves creating and communicating a unique message to each segment. Innovative and analytical thinking are required in both steps.



The title *How To Make Real Money Selling Books* (by Brian Jud) serves as an example of *Mid-Brain Marketing*. This book describes how publishers can increase their sales and profits by selling books to non-bookstore markets. As you suspect, bookstores are not likely to carry this book, so it must be sold in other market segments.

## Step One: Market Segmentation

Segmentation is the process of finding groups of people with similar needs for the information in your books. This process begins with a left-brained analysis of the obvious targets, and then evolves into a creative brainstorming session to stimulate new ideas.

**Analysis.** Begin the process of segmentation by asking yourself two questions. The first is, “Who could directly benefit from using the information in this book?” This will force you to describe what your content does for people, and then think about groups of people who could benefit by it. In the case of *How To Make Real Money Selling Books*, two significant groups are authors and publishers. They can use the information in *How To Make Real Money Selling Books*, to help them sell more books directly to niche markets.

Next, calculate the number of people in each segment. How much are they willing to spend to acquire the content you offer? Are there geographic concentrations of these potential buyers? Do they purchase seasonally? What are competitive prices for similar products in each sector?

**Creativity.** Once you have exhausted your list of primary prospects, ask yourself another question: “Who *else* could benefit from the content of this book?” Still using the example of *How To Make Real Money Selling Books*, the answer to the second question specifies a group of firms such as book designers, publishing consultants, book publicists, book printers, and distributors and wholesalers. These people could sell more of their services if their clients sold more books.

**Mid-Brain Marketing:** Not all market segments are equally accessible, nor is the opportunity for sales the same among them. So, use *Mid-Brain Marketing* to rank all the possible target segments according to their likelihood of buying your books.

Prioritize the niches according to their potential for sales or profits, and place them in an A, B or C category. Those in group A might represent the largest, or perhaps most immediate sales. Those in the category B could symbolize a smaller; or longer-term source of revenue; and those in the C category may not be prospective customers at this point.

Set up a checklist to rank your niches both subjectively and objectively, according to the ability of each to meet your objectives. Give each an A, B or C rating based upon its:

- ☐ Likelihood of purchasing in large quantities.
- ☐ Knowledge of you. If you have a platform already established, you may have a ready-made base of prospective buyers.
- ☐ Accessibility. It could be difficult and expensive to promote your title to a target audience defined as “people who like children’s stories.” The more precisely you can define the target segments, the easier it is to approach and rank them. For example, you can find the names of buyers at daycare centers, home-schooling groups or grade-school teachers and prioritize them using the criteria you have established.

In the case of *How To Make Real Money Selling Books*, The A prospects could be comprised of groups of publishers. These represent the opportunity to reach many prospects at one time. B prospects might be distributors or printers who could purchase *How To Make Real Money Selling Books* to use as a premium for those who utilize their services. The group of C prospects could be individual publishers who would purchase one book at a time.

## **Step Two: Market Promotion.**

People buy products for their reasons, not for yours. Therefore, you are more likely to convince them to buy your books if you can persuade them to do so by solving problems that are important to them.

**Analysis.** Most publishers do not have unlimited budgets with which to communicate to every target audience. So, begin your promotional planning by forecasting your sales. Next, calculate a cash flow statement that shows the amount and timing of your revenue and expenses, using your forecast to compute your revenue.

**Creativity.** If analysis makes promotion more efficient, innovation makes it more effective. If you can come up with a creative way to demonstrate the value you bring to each audience, you can convert more people from prospects to customers. And it is important to note that the communication to a particular niche may be totally different from that directed to another, since their reason for buying may be dissimilar.

### **Mid-Brain Marketing**

You can apply imagineering in the promotional phase, too. For example, if you are reaching your segments with sufficient frequency, but they are not buying in the quantities you have forecast, how can

you change your strategy to improve your effectiveness? How might you change your message to better influence people? Do buyers get a clear sense of your title's true personality and its true value?

There are many other applications of *Mid-Brain Marketing* to help you market your books more profitably. You can combine your analytical pricing formulas with subjective consideration of the *value* your content provides. Use traditional bookstore-distribution channels but devise alternate routes to special markets. Think not only in terms of books but consider other formats in which you could communicate the same content. Use and combine all your analytical and creative skills to differentiate your products and the solutions they bring to your individual market segments, and you can increase your sales, your profits and your enjoyment of the journey.

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