

Daniel Hall Presents



Episode 126

How to Orchestrate a USA Today Bestseller Campaign

with Alinka Rutkowska

Hello! Welcome to the RealFastResults.com podcast! If you are publishing books, and you want those books to actually sell, you're going to want to stick around. Alinka Rutkowska is today's special guest. Alinka has had a lot of successes in her own publishing journey. She is, in fact, a top-100 Amazon bestselling author in the "Business & Money" category, and she has sold more than 100,000 copies of her books. Her book creation process has also been showcased in *Entrepreneur Magazine*.

Alinka is the CEO of a small press, called Leader's Press, and she has launched all of its titles to bestseller status. That's remarkable! She's also the founder of [LibraryBub](#), which connects independent authors with 10,000+ libraries, to help get their books into libraries. Alinka has also been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox News, *Writers Digest*, and a whole host of other media. Recently, she has orchestrated a project in which a number of successful authors collaborated to create the book, [Write and Grow Rich](#).

How to Get [Write and Grow Rich](#)

If you've been following the RealFastResults.com podcast, then you know that [many of the authors](#) of *Write and Grow Rich* have been interviewed. Twenty-four coauthors worked together to create the book. Each of these authors shared their knowledge in support of a basic premise, which is that if you have the ability to write, you can transform that ability into money in your bank account.

This book was Alinka's "brainchild," because she's the one that put this project together, and the goal of the entire team is to have the book make the USA Today Bestseller List. Therefore, the creators of this show would like to invite you to head over to RealFastResults.com/wagr, where you can pick up the book, *Write and Grow Rich*. By the way, if you do this around the time the book is being launched (around October 2, 2018) you should be able to purchase the book for only \$0.99.

Not only are you going to receive a great value because the book is really, really great, but if you purchase it now, you're going to receive a host of different bonuses. All in all, these bonuses carry a \$5,000 value, and this includes Daniel Hall's own *New York Times* bestselling covers. This particular portion of the bonus currently sells for \$120 by itself. You'll get access to this part of the bonus, plus a whole lot of other very valuable materials that are meant to help you successfully publish and generate revenue doing so. Now that you know who the mastermind behind this great work is, please welcome Alinka to the show...

Promise: How to Orchestrate a USA Today Bestseller

Thank you for having me! **The big promise today is that by the end of today's episode, you'll know exactly what to do in order to orchestrate a USA Today run as well.** Just to clarify and make it easier, first you have to go to Amazon and get *Write and Grow Rich*, and then you can visit RealFastResults.com/wagr to claim your \$5,000 worth of bonuses. So, that's a two-step process.

Back to our promise... If you want to hit the USA Today Bestsellers List... We don't really know if we've managed to do that, but we're very, very close. I think that we will hit it. Actually, I'm 99% sure, but whether we hit it or not, you'll have everything you need to accomplish this yourself, or at least, orchestrate that type of launch.

How Do You Know That You're Close to Hitting the Goal?

The way the USA Today Bestsellers List works is it lists, online, the top 150 bestselling books for the week, and if it's a new release, pre-orders count towards that launch week. So, it's not guaranteed, but other people's results show that with around 6,000 sales, you should hit the bottom of that list. You'll hit around 140-150. Now, this depends on the other books and how they are performing that given week. So, it's not an absolute number of sales that you hit. You have to be among the top 150 books.

I've learned that 6,000 is a safe zone. You should be able to do it if you reach that number, but out of the 6,000, you need at least 500 sales at a retailer other than Amazon. We have that. I'm confident about hitting this goal. I'm 99% certain because we are entering our launch week with almost 6,000 copies sold. So, it's looking favorable.

The Process to Becoming a USA Today Bestseller

It starts with a dream. I had been thinking about this for about a year and a half before I actually did something about it. It just felt like a lot of work, and I was silently dreaming that someone would invite me to collaborate on a project like this one, so that I could just be a participant. That didn't happen, so I thought that if I was going to make this happen, I would have to make it happen myself. So, I did.

I started by reaching out to my closest collaborators who were sharing this dream. I got very positive feedback, so one of my girlfriends thought it was an awesome project, and she wanted in, 100%. So, it started like that. As I started getting more people, most of which are well known in the space... **When I had 10, I could start reaching out to others who were not in my direct circle, but whom I've known.**

Some people were completely new, and it was a great opportunity to connect with them. I would say, you know, "I already have 10 people, and these are well-known names. We are doing this together. Would you like to be part of it?" **You leverage that first group to reach out to the second group.** At the same time, with the very first people that decided to do this, we did a coaching session with a *USA Today* bestselling author. He guided us through several key planning stages.

Basically, what we learned was that you really need to use the full pre-order period. So, it's three months on Amazon. We started even before that, on Apple, on iBooks, and on Barnes & Noble. We did that, and he also recommended that we get people's commitment to mail and deliver the chapters when they were ready, as well as to get people to commit to the ad spend and send over the funds for the ads.

I think a lot of it was organizational, to get people to commit and say, "Yes, I will mail it out during those dates." One of the authors is a whiz when it comes to the Amazon algorithm, so he did the promotional plan, which has been working very well. So, we've really leveraged everybody's talents, and I can talk about that too.

Steps for any Book

Well, some of them are steps that you would follow for any book, so I guess I take them for granted.

1. It has to be a book that fits into a genre that's already popular, but also stands out, so that it pops and people want it.
2. It needs to have a title that a lot of people resonate with,
3. It needs to have a compelling cover and description.

I can name drop a little bit here. I know that Bryan Cohen is the description guy, so he did the description. Derek Murphy is the cover guy, so he did the cover. [Adam Houge](#) is the algorithm guy, so he did the promotional plan.

I guess I'm leaving a whole bunch of people out right now, but those are, sort of, the foundational elements, you know? The cover, the title, and the description. One thing that I forgot to mention is that everybody contributed a bonus. We are incentivizing the purchases. The book is priced at \$0.99 cents, and this will be during the rest of the pre-order period and throughout the launch, and then you get \$5,000 worth of bonuses. I didn't expect people to be so generous and give away so much stuff.

I've had people say, "I actually paid a couple of hundred dollars for this and a couple of hundred for that, and now you're giving it away for free?" I'm like, "Well, you see, at least this is legit, you know? Think how many thousands you're saving by getting this deal." [Laughs.] So, people were really collaborative and wonderful. I think we are a really great team. I mean, 24 people all standing together, strong. A lot of it is picking the right people, but I think that people, sort of, screen themselves. So, there's this self-screening thing, you know?

If someone's not committed, they won't join, and I think it's better not to have them join than to have a lukewarm person on the team. So, it's better to have a smaller group, but a little more committed, or even a bigger group that's really, really committed [laughs]. **There are a lot of pieces, but I guess, outside of the foundational elements for any book, it's all organizational and getting everybody together.**

Should I Do an Anthology if I Want to Get on a Bestseller List?

I think it helps a lot. On the one hand, you get everybody's help, but on the other hand, it was the first time I had ever done this. **So, after one success, I could pull off a lot of different things.** But, it's the first one, and anyone can say, "What's your track record?" [Laughs.] I have a track record, just not in terms of launching a *USA Today* bestseller because this is my first launch to make a *USA Today* bestseller.

The thing is, here, I've sold more than 100,000 books, but to sell 6,000 in a week, it's really concentrated and very focused, and it has to be all different buyers. You can't have a bulk sale, like to a cruise ship, if you have experience with that, where in one sale they buy thousands of copies, right? You can't hit the *USA Today* list by making one sale to the cruise ship industry. It's not going to count.

So, you know, these things are logistically a little more complicated. Another opportunity that everyone knows has happened is that people buy their spots on a bestseller list. There are these companies, and some people talk about it openly that they use them. Basically, what they do for you is they get different stores, or different people, to order singular copies, or small batches of

copies, around the US, so that you actually buy 6,000 copies of your own book. It's going to be \$100,000 or \$200,000. That would be 6,000 copies of your own book.

When we started chatting about this, there was a person who mentioned this tactic. I didn't like it. I mean, even if you have \$100,000 just lying around... To me, that's not really the way I want to be perceived as... I don't want to criticize anyone that did that may be proud of it because they did get on the list that way, and then they did do something that got them that money in the first place, and that's how they used it. But, I didn't see myself, as the leader... I didn't want to lead by example this way. I don't think that I would inspire my audience by doing that.

For this to be a dream come true for me, and to be a dream come true for everyone who has been contributing, as well as for our audiences, I think that we need to lead by example. We need to show how this can be legitimately done. It should be accomplished not with a budget of \$100,000, but with a much smaller budget.

What Else Have You Been Doing to Make This Work?

The recommendation that I got from the fellow author who hit the list was that we should all pay \$500 in ad spend, so that's what we did. Simply, I sent everyone a link and told them to send the money there, and I was responsible for that budget. I have a spreadsheet that I use to track how the money is being spent. Recently, I've been getting our book onto various promotional sites that mail. I have been doing this for the promotional days on our calendar, before and during the pre-order period, and now, during the launch.

Every day of the launch, we are on at least one, and on the most important days of the launch, we are being promoted by several of these sites. So, there's that, and then there are ads. There are Amazon ads and [BookBub](#) ads, and we've got people working on that. We've got Matt Stone's team working on BookBub ads, and we've got [Derek Doepker's](#) team, and also Matt Stone's team, working on Amazon ads. See, I knew I didn't mention some people's names.

So, we have these people working on stuff, but then the ad spend is actually going towards the ads. What else? Well, there are things like, you know, book conversion that outside companies do. So, we have that. I've been working with a publicist, also, for a few months to get us some exposure.

Have You Seen Any Results from Using a Publicist?

Well, there was supposed to be an article for *Entrepreneur* magazine. It was outlined and partly written, and it was waiting for approval from the editor at *Entrepreneur*, but it's still waiting for them to "green light it," so to speak. So, I'm not convinced about that.

I've been reflecting about this. I have been reflecting upon how replicable this strategy is, that we are using. I know that several people can feel, now, that we are so close, and they want to do it for their own books. I've spoken to Martin Doherty, and he said that he put his book on long pre-order as well, inspired by what we are doing here. Several people mentioned that they want to do a one-on-one *USA Today* launch. We learned a lot. This has been a big learning curve for everyone, for sure.

I've been thinking about how I can make this replicable. Again, having a large budget, how do you allocate it? What I've seen is that... **I think Pareto's principle, the 80/20 rule, is mailing for us.** It's us mailing to our lists and getting influencers on board to mail as well. Initially, when I reached out to people and asked them if they wanted to be in the book, some of them committed. They said yes, but then when the deadline came to submit their chapter, they said, "Sorry, I can't do it, but I will promote."

Obviously, I made a note of that, and then I would go back to them and say, "Hey, we are launching now." And, I was replying to the email in which they said, "I will promote." So, I replied to those emails, from like five months prior, and I let these people know that the book was out. Then, I asked them what they needed to help promote.

So, in doing that, or for example, I know that you are friends with an influencer that has a powerful audience, then I would say, "Daniel, you're friends with this person. Can you ask them to mail?" I know that you are closer to them than I am. I may be someone that they have heard of, but I don't really have a relationship with them yet. So, for us, it's really the mailing part.

To replicate this, you'd have to get together with other authors or influencers. It doesn't have to be people like us, in the publishing space. It could potentially be business people, or any type of niche, but they would have to all have large followings. That's really our main strategy.

Now, why would someone mail for you if they aren't in the book and don't share that dream of becoming a *USA Today* bestselling author? There are three reasons. One is, you set them up as an affiliate so when someone ends up buying, they get a commission. Or, you cross promote, so when they have something to promote, you mail. Or, you pay them. I can pay. We pay for the promotional sites to mail, so you can pay for another person to mail. I don't love this solution because it's very transactional, but you know, we have that option as well. That's pretty much where our spending was going.

How Important is it for an Author to Have a Responsive Email List?

If you read the book, you'll see that everybody mentions how important an email list is. And, to engage the audience because it's really two steps. One is lead generation. So, you need to get people to sign up to your list, and then it's lead conversion. You need to engage with that list. You can't just let people accumulate on your list and never write to them. You have to keep

delivering value so that when you have something to sell, which is also valued, they are responsive. You're a welcome visitor in their inbox. All of this is very important.

What Else Should I Consider?

Well, you could potentially burn out. I mean, I'm not burning out, but there's a lot of communicating. There is swipe copy. You have to write the copy that people will be sending out. I talked about leveraging people's talents. I am actually a student of copywriting. I write the copy that is sent to everybody, but you could potentially hire a copywriter, and a lot of the budget would go to that as well because good copy is expensive.

You know, it's just the... I think, fatigue. The group fatigued because we've been hammering our audiences about it for almost three months. I mean, it's a great offer, but I think that we can get tired, and the participating authors can get tired. The organizer can get tired, the authors, and the people in the audiences can get tired, so there's that. You just have to maintain momentum for so long! I think that's a challenge, to keep morale high and everybody engaged.

There were some bumps in the road. It wasn't all smooth sailing. We had some issues, and yet, we managed to overcome them, then regroup, and keep working towards the same goal, and it looks like we are going to get there. So, a lot of it is organizational, and leadership, and team building, and teamwork.

Why Would You Provide Swipe Copy?

When you ask your team member, or especially someone outside of your circle, to mail to their list, you have to give them the text to mail. When I wrote to the collaborators in this project, asking them to invite influencers, I even provided some text to be sent to those influencers. This might be just three or four lines, but it's much easier to copy and paste those three or four lines than to have to think about writing them from scratch.

Across the board, you want to diminish the workload on other people. The more that you can do that, the higher the probability is that they will actually take the action that you want them to take. The point is that when you are asking someone to do something for you, then you should take it as far as you can. You might write a draft of the copy up and send it to someone to use. Send it to them and say, "Hey, does this square with how you feel about the book. If not, they can change it. If so, let me know." You know, just make it as easy as possible.

I did this with the endorsements, and even one of the contributing authors had a problem actually writing the chapter, so I just had her interview. We transcribed it, and it was ghost written. Whenever somebody has an issue on the way, be supportive and make the process as hassle-free as possible.

Final Thoughts

If you listened to all of this, you have, sort of, the helicopter view of how this all works. Now, when you get the book on Amazon and go to RealFastResults.com/wagr, I will be providing a detailed report on everything that we did, which will include screenshots of our sales, of our rank with Amazon, and I'll talk about the challenges we had as well as how we overcame them. So, it will be super-detailed and structured, and you'll get that as part of the \$5,000 worth of bonuses.

This is the byproduct of our effort. As previously mentioned, I'm a top bestselling author on Amazon in "Business & Money". Well, most of us are on that list, and that's a byproduct of ranking for this book. This may be something that you haven't even considered. Even before reaching the goal of being on USA Today's bestseller list, I've looked at the numbers, and we could potentially be on the Wallstreet Journal's bestseller list. The numbers needed there are lower. It's between 3,000 and 5,000 copies sold.

So, you know, with our numbers, we are probably already *Wallstreet Journal* bestselling authors. So, there are a lot of byproducts. It's like they say, "If you shoot for the moon, you might land upon the stars." (Quote by Norman Vincent Peale.) If you are doing any launch, not just a *USA Today* launch, but you are doing a big launch together, this information would be very valuable because you'll be able to meet some goals and reach some levels that you never even dreamed possible. You get them just as a byproduct of what you are doing.

How Can I Connect with Alinka?

I think the best way would be to head over to AuthorWisdom.com and get yourself a free copy of my award-winning guide, "How I Sold 80,000 Books". This way, you'll also have my email. Whenever people write me at that address, I always answer. So, you'll get the great guide, and we'll be in touch! Again, if you have not grabbed *Write and Grow Rich*, you'll need to head over right now. Hopefully, you're reading this in time to actually pick it up for \$0.99, and then you can grab the bonuses by visiting RealFastResults.com/wagr.

Resources

Write and Grow Rich - RealFastResults.com/wagr

AuthorWisdom.com

LibraryBub

Real Fast Results Community

If you are diggin' on this stuff and really love what we're doing here at Real Fast Results, would you please do me a favor? Head on over to iTunes, and make sure that you subscribe to this show, download it, and rate & review it. That would be an awesome thing.

Of course, we also want to know your results. Please share those results with us at <http://www.realfastresults.com/results>.

As always, go make results happen!