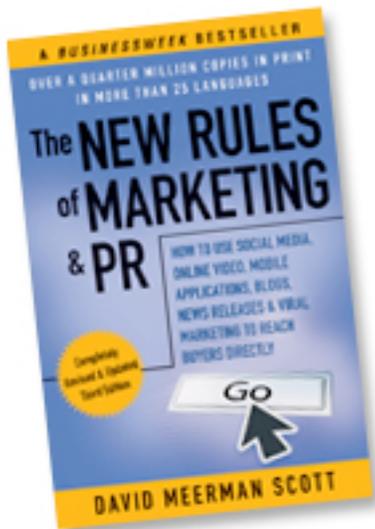


BETA AUTHOR BOOST



Interview with best-selling author David Meerman Scott

Debbie: Welcome, David Meerman Scott.

<http://www.davidmeermanscott.com> This is Debbie Weil, and this is *Beta Author Boost*. David is the best selling author of eight books, including three international best sellers. He's a professional speaker. He speaks all over the world. David, I follow you on Facebook, and you're always in Latvia or someplace like that.

David: The last place was Morocco.

Debbie: That's even better. He speaks on topics including marketing, leadership, and social media. You're a marketing strategist. You also advise companies. You're also a friend and a colleague, and I feel like we've known each other for years.

David: 10 years at least, I think.

Debbie: Thank you so much for agreeing to do this.

David: It is my pleasure. Happy to be here.

Debbie: I thought it would be fun for those listening if you could start and briefly tell us how a PDF manifesto launched your first book, and to date your biggest bestseller, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*.

David: I started blogging in 2004. I was reasonably early with blogging. Then in late 2005, I got enamored with this idea that the nature of what a press release is has changed. I wrote a PDF eBook called *The New Rules of PR*. I did a couple of things that a lot of people don't do with that.

Number one, I had it professionally edited, so I hired an outside editor to help me to go through it. Number two, I hired a designer to do a good job at doing the



layout and doing the graphics and whatnot. I made it landscape orientation so it fits nicely onto a computer screen.

Those things were pretty rare at the time. This was late 2005. At the time, most people were doing traditional White Paper style, not very well designed, text-heavy documents. I put it out on my blog very early in 2006. My blog wasn't that popular. I had a few followers, but it was nothing exciting. A few things happened quickly.

The first thing that happened was the same day I put it out, **Seth Godin** <http://sethgodin.typepad.com> blogged about it. He had at the time, and I think may still have, the most popular marketing blog in the world. That day, 8,000 people downloaded the eBook. The next day, a guy called **Steve Rubel** <http://www.steverubel.me> blogged about it. He, at the time, was the most popular PR blogger in the world. He hated the ideas, and Seth Godin loved the ideas.

Now you've got the most popular marketing blogger in the world loving it, the most popular PR blogger in the world hating it, and me thinking this is the best thing in the world that could possibly happen, because they're arguing about my eBook, which drove tons of downloads. I had 50,000 downloads the first month.

I made it totally free with no registration, and that's critical to the strategy. Nobody had to jump through any hoops to get it. They didn't have to give me an email address. They didn't have to do anything. But now that it had 50,000 downloads in just a single month, I had ammunition to go to publishers.

I emailed a literary agent. His name was given to me as a recommendation. He got back to me in less than half an hour with a contract. All I did was say, "I just wrote an eBook. Here's a link to the eBook. It's had 50,000 downloads. Here's what Seth Godin said. Here's what Steve Rubel said. Here's what some other bloggers said."

That's what it took for them to decide to sign me. He then sold the book to Wiley in a very short period of time, which became what's now *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*. I wrote it throughout 2006. It came out in mid 2007.



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Debbie: I remember when it came out.

David: Your corporate blogging book came out a couple months before.

Debbie: *The Corporate Blogging Book* came out in August of 2006. I also had a manifesto. It wasn't as successful in terms of number of downloads, but it was indeed the basis of my book – or at least what got my publisher, Penguin Portfolio's, attention.

<http://changethis.com/manifesto/show/25.07.BusinessBlogging>



Quick question: You're still doing this via manifestos. You mentioned no registration and email. A lot of the wisdom now is at least require an email so you can build your list. I take it you're not worried about that because you have so many blog beaters, it doesn't matter.

David: No, that's not the way my mind thinks. I think it's better to have my ideas spread than it is to get an email address. I've tested this, and I've had a number of other people who have tested this. In my experience, when you require an email address, you're throttling the number of downloads by a factor between 1:20 and 1:50.

I got 50,000 downloads of my eBook with no registration whatsoever. Had I put an email requirement on, I would have gotten somewhere between 2,500 and 1,000 downloads, between a factor of 50 and a factor of 20 fewer downloads. I've gotten that from testing and having other people send me their data from testing. People simply don't like to register for things, but they'll happily download something.

I've tested this too. The other thing that happens is people are very reluctant to blog about or write about on Facebook or tweet about something that has a download requirement. They're very unwilling. You're doing two things that are



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negatives. Number 1, you're actively putting up a barrier to people reading your ideas. Number 2, you're actively putting up a barrier from people spreading your ideas. To me, those far outweigh collecting a few email addresses.

Debbie: That's very interesting. This is your absolute best seller. I wanted to ask you the Elizabeth Gilbert *Eat, Love, Pray* question. This must have taken you by surprise. It's huge.

David: 300,000 copies in English, and it's in 26 other languages.

Debbie: You've since written four books? I can't remember.

David: I've got 8 all together. *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* was my third. I've done five since then.

Debbie: We've been spending a lot of time figuring out what the book idea is for the authors who are doing the program. This is key. Your title, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, it's in the title. It sets up the promise that you're going to give us the new rules of marketing and PR. The book is very all-encompassing, so one of the questions I have for you is how did you come up with your ideas for subsequent books, which, in a sense, are subsets of your first book? Was it hard? How did that work?

David: They're not really. I wrote *Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead*, which is completely different.

Debbie: I forgot that one.

David: *News Jacking* is different. The first thing is that you have an interesting observation. Because I'm best known for a book called *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, I've got to market my business the same way that I suggest other people market their business, which is a personal reason why I don't use email addresses.

Getting back to the question you asked, I have only written nonfiction since my first book. My first book was a thriller novel called *Eyeball Wars*. Everything since then has been nonfiction. When I write a nonfiction book, I am constantly



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thinking about patterns that I see. When I start to see a pattern, I'll blog about it. If it's a big pattern, I'll blog about it again in another way and again in another way. I'm not necessarily consciously thinking of it yet.

But then, if I see that the pattern has coalesced, where I'm blogging around the same topic quite a bit, I realize that's a book. With *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, what I started to write about was the idea that marketing and public relations on the web aren't in any way like marketing and public relations offline. Essentially, what marketing and PR on the web are is you have to create content that people want to consume and that they're eager to share.

That was the pattern I saw. The pattern I saw was that marketing is about publishing content on the web. That's 450 pages boiled down to a sentence. With my book called *Real-Time Marketing and PR*, what I realized is that all of business, but in particular marketing, is now a real-time endeavor, but every marketing department is set up around campaigns, around long-term planning. I realized that it's more like a trading floor and less like a traditional advertising agency to be successful with what's going on today in terms of marketing on the web.

These are the kind of big-picture patterns that my mind sees. I know that if I've got a big-picture pattern, then I've got something that's worthy of a book. I'm not the kind of writer that jumps onto a bandwagon or who says I need to make a how-to-become-successful book. I don't think that way. I write for myself in a way. I think there's something cool going on out there, and I have to put it down because I feel like I'm the first person to identify this trend.

Debbie: You used the word "cool" a lot. The way you write sounds exactly like you.

David: The way that I write is the way I talk. For me, there's no such thing as writer's block, which is why I've been able to do 8 books in 10 years. I can crank them out.

Debbie: That's what I was going to ask you about, your writing process. Recently, Seth Godin said, "There's no such thing as talker's block." That is a very interesting observation. For many of us, we shift into this different mode where it has to sound different. The sentences have to come out differently.



Tell us about your writing process. Are you saying you never suffer from writer's block? Don't procrastinate? No challenges? Tell the truth.

David:

No, it's not that. I do procrastinate. I do have days where I don't want to write anything. Absolutely. I use my blog as an important aspect of my longer form projects, the books. That's where I test ideas. That's where I look for feedback. That's where I go to see that I've got these patterns forming in my mind where, over the course of two months, I wrote the same kind of thing five different ways.

Sometimes, I don't even realize until I go back and reread old posts. The blog is important. I might write on the blog for nine months, and I'm thinking in the back of my mind that it's time to think about a new book, what should I do? I'll go back and look. It will help me to have an idea that will coalesce.

If I'm in book mode, I've done all of my books with Wiley since *The New Rules*, so if I have a book idea, I just tell them. They always say yes. I've gotten to the point where I'm under contract for a book, and now I need to go from half a dozen blog posts to 75,000 words. My process there is that I grab those blog posts, copy and paste them, and use them as a starting point for writing chunks.

I don't make an outline. I don't make a table of contents. I just start writing chunks, almost like a chess board, figuring out where they go as I'm writing. I personally write in the morning. I don't like to write in the afternoon. In the afternoon, I do things like email and this call, for example. These are the sorts of things I like to do in the afternoon and use a different part of my brain.

As I'm writing chunks, I have an editor that I've worked with for a while who I pay. They're not with my publisher. That editor will look at the chunks and provide feedback. I'll see a structure start to form, and then I'll see a table of contents start to form. That's always a work in progress as I'm writing. It comes together, and it's done when it's done.

As you know, it's never done, so you have to put a period at the end at some point and say it is done. Then Wiley's editors take over, and we do another



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round with Wiley's editors, but I'm a big believer in having someone who works for me do the first round of edits.

Debbie: When your own editor is working with you, by the time you send that person something in your Word document, I'm going to take it that it's fairly coherent. Your blog already is coherent.

David: It is coherent, but it's just a chunk. It's 1,000 words. It's 800 words. It's 2,500 words. It might be a complete chapter. I've done that before. Or it might just be two stories that are strung together somehow. They're chunks, and that's what that editor typically looks at. He doesn't look at the entire book in one go. Sometimes, but rarely, does he look at a chapter in one go.

Debbie: What kind of feedback does he give you? What kind of feedback are you looking for?

David: I'm looking for, is the section working as a standalone? He does a light line edit. I don't obsess over every little period, but he'll tell me things that are wrong from the grammatical point of view. He'll say things like, "This is unclear." He'll draw a connection to something else he's read of mine. "Three weeks ago, you sent me this, and it looked similar." That might help me to realize that this thing and the thing I sent three weeks ago might fit together somehow.

Debbie: It's a very organic process. I have two questions that are related. Is your audience, your reader, very clear in your mind when you're writing the book? You also just said you write for yourself. What about that question?

David: That's interesting. Let's just take *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* for a second. I'm currently as we speak, and was doing before I jumped on this call, working on the fourth edition of that book, believe it or not. It's currently in its third edition. I'm working on the fourth edition. When I first wrote the book in '06, I thought that my reader was a marketing person in a company. In fact, quite a number of marketing people in companies read my book.

But as the book came out, and as I started to get feedback, and as I started to read Amazon reviews, and as people started to email me, and as I started to meet people at conferences and whatnot who had read the book, I realized that



the bigger audience for this book is actually business owners and entrepreneurs and executives of large companies.

Less so the people who work in marketing and public relations departments. Although they are a market, it turns out they weren't as big a market as I thought. Now, as I'm writing the fourth edition of this book, I am definitely thinking of the entrepreneur. I wrote a section this afternoon after Adagio Teas. It's an entrepreneurial company. It's run by a family. They've got about 20 employees. It's doing really well. They do great online marketing.

As I'm writing this little chunk, I'm thinking to myself that the audience that I'm writing to is another entrepreneurial business owner who is perhaps struggling with the idea of how they can reach people online. I am keeping that person in my mind, but interestingly, as I wrote the first edition of my book, I had the wrong person in mind.

Debbie: What does that say to you? That's very interesting. What does that say to you that it is the entrepreneur or the business owner or the executive who wants to read this? Doesn't that say something about marketing and PR?

David: To be honest with you, I think I was lucky that I wrote my book at the right time. I was at the right time and the right place. If I hadn't written that book, someone else would have written that book. The entrepreneurs were dying to understand how to reach people on the web. They all knew that there's something going on. Granted, this was almost seven years ago.

As I was writing, those entrepreneurs were thinking, "There's something going on on the web." This was before Twitter. This was before Facebook. It was fairly early, but they were saying, "People are blogging." You remember that. It was right around the time that the corporate blogging book came out. People were blogging. People are reaching customers through search engines. Email newsletters are important.

These things are important, and yet no one had truly cracked the code and figured it out. Those entrepreneurs are the ones who are on the hook to produce business, and the marketers still are set in their ways, and it's hard to get a



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marketer to move. They're happily doing their TV commercials or whatever they're doing. I'm being a little bit cynical.

But it's the entrepreneurs that have their livelihood on the line, their life savings on the line in some cases, who are the ones who were eager to figure that out. In a way, I was lucky that they were looking at that time, because they found my book, and then that started the whole thing. I almost call it a franchise now, because I'm on the fourth edition of it.

Debbie: I love that. I want to ask you about your blog in a second, but first, talk a little about all the speaking you do that is based on your books. Do you think about the presentation you're going to give? Are you baking those into the book while you're doing the writing, or do you figure that out later? That is also your livelihood, as I understand it.

David: Yeah, I generate most of my revenue from the speaking engagements. I have three main sources of revenue. The speaking engagements and the books. By the way, when you sell several hundred thousand copies of a book, you do make money on a book. Everyone says you don't make money on books, and that's generally true, but if you start to sell multiple numbers, then there is a pretty decent revenue stream.

Most of my revenue comes from speaking business. The third form of revenue is that I'm an adviser to a number of companies. I don't take cash. I take all stock. One of the companies that I'm an adviser of, they went public this year and just got acquired by Oracle, so that will be a nice payday. The lottery ticket idea of taking stock rather than cash has paid off in this case.

All the nonfiction books I've written have been story-dominated. I tell stories of success. I don't preach and say, "Here's how you do this." I say, "Look at this awesome example of how somebody achieved success. Here's why they were successful." In a typical book, I might have 30 or 40 or 50 small examples of success.

I interview the people and find out directly from them how they were able to achieve that success. Then when I'm crafting a speech, I go back and look at those examples that I put into the books. Those serve as the basis for the



presentations. The presentations are the same thing. My presentations are story-driven. They're me telling stories about people's success with social media, with real-time marketing, with *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, and how they have been able to reach their buyers by implementing some aspect.

They started a blog, or they're active on Twitter, whatever it might be. I use the example of telling the story of how they became successful. In the speeches and in the book, people react to stories. They love stories. It was the first form of communication. We told stories. It's still a form of communication that people love. If you go to a bar and say, "I want to tell you a story," people listen. If you go to a bar and say, "Let me tell you about your product," they don't.

Debbie: How do you get all these examples? Obviously, your blog is key. Do you also put out requests for people to come?

David: No, very, very rarely do I put out a request. I actually put out one a couple days ago, where I asked if anybody has a success with Pinterest that they can share, but that's extremely rare. I don't think I've done that in the last two years. They mostly come my way somehow. I'll find something in my tRubels. This Adagio Teas example I told you about that I was writing about today, my daughter told me about.

She's 19. She's a college student. She loves this kind of tea, and she was telling me all about how they do their marketing and whatnot, just because she loved it, not because she was expecting me to write about it. I thought, "This is a perfect example of something that can go into my blog and then into a book."

The short answer is that I open my mind to serendipity. I open my mind to an example that's surprising. As soon as other people are talking about it, I'm not interested. Except once when I bashed them, I don't write about Zappos. Everybody writes about Zappos. I could care less about Zappos. I want to find the Adagio Teas of the world that nobody's written about before.

Debbie: You must get emails. Now people know you put stories in your book.

David: I get a lot of emails. I get a lot of tweets. Most of them are not appropriate. A lot of them are PR people who don't understand what I'm looking for. It's just not



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appropriate. But I do have people who will sometimes tell me about something and it's ideal or fantastic. I'll get a lot people who have read the books. They'll read one of the books and say, "David, I just ran across this. It sounds just like the sort of thing you'd be interested in." They'll send me a video or something on YouTube, and I write about it.

Debbie: I think this is important for the up and coming authors listening. Your blog is absolutely key. Here is an obvious question. If an expert wants to write a short book, but they don't have a blog, are they doomed? Do you absolutely have to have a blog?

David: I don't think that you absolutely have to have anything, but I think that having a blog, at least for me, has been the most important thing that I did by far. I don't think there's any way that I could be doing what I'm doing now if I didn't have it. For me, it's critical. There's always examples of people who have become a success without a blog.

But I think that you're putting yourself at a disadvantage if you're not actively putting your ideas out there in a way that people can find them on search engines who have never heard of you, in a way that people can share through social networks like Facebook and Twitter. You're putting yourself at a disadvantage if you're not putting yourself out there in a way that people can find out what you're up to and get a taste of your thought process before they actually reach into their pockets and pay \$10 or \$15 for a book.

Debbie: I would tend to agree with you, but then there's the matter of practicality. As I understand it, Guy Kawasaki has stopped blogging regularly, but he's adopted Google+ as his new blog of choice, and he's on there all the time.

David: That's blogging. It's semantics. It's still blogging. He's still writing something that people can access.

Debbie: Your latest series, you've been writing a preface to a series of books on different aspects of marketing for Wiley. Is this to give you a break?

David: No, not at all. It's supplemental. When *The New Rules* came out, a lot of people would reach out to me and go, "Can you write a whole book on social media



metrics? Can you write a whole book on search engine optimization? Can you write a whole book on video?" I couldn't. I don't have time, and I wasn't the expert.

The idea is that I find an expert for different topics, and Wiley also helps to find those people. We sign them to the series if they're appropriate and the right kind of author. I coach them through the writing process, and then I do the forward to the book, and then I help them with their marketing and promotion. There are six books in the series right now. It's worked out really well, but it's in no way a substitute to my own work. It's supplemental to my own work.

Debbie: How do you coach them through the writing process?

David: I have a couple of conference calls here and there. It's not a whole lot, but as much as they need, I will try to help. It's calls like we're having right now. It's pointing them to some of the blog posts I've written and that others have written. Things like that.

Debbie: You're acting like a consulting editor.

David: Yeah, I think that's probably the best way to look at it. I don't get into heavily editing their work. I'll read it, and I'll provide a bit of advice, and I'll read it so that I can write an intelligent forward, but I'm not in there manipulating paragraphs with them.

Debbie: What are your thoughts on self-publishing? I think 2013 is the year of self-publishing totally legitimized as an option for lesser known or first-time authors. Obviously, you have tremendous leverage with Wiley, but most unknown or lesser known authors don't, and they're not going to get a contract. What are your thoughts on that whole new movement?

David: It's not a new movement. My first book, which came out in 2001, was self-published. It's a novel called *Eyeball Wars*.

Debbie: I was going to mention that. I've read that book. I loved it.



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David: Thank you. It's a thriller. Self-publishing was really freaking hard back then, much harder than it is right now. It was critically important for me. I got my first book out. My second book was with a small publisher. I got a tiny advance, and that was also great. My third book was with Wiley, a major publisher, and all the bells and whistles.

Yeah, self-publishing is fantastic. I would certainly do it again with the right book. If you count the free eBooks that I did, I've self-published I don't know how many there are now, probably half a dozen books. They're short, 5,000-10,000 words, but I've done a bunch of books myself, although not with ISBN numbers and all that. I only did that with one book, *Eyeball Wars*.

There's no question that that is definitely a route to go. There's the self-publish route, there's the small publisher route, and there's the big publisher. I don't think any one is better than any other. I think they're different options to get your work out there.

Debbie: What's next? Are you working on another book? If it's on your site, I might have missed it.

David: As I said earlier, I'm working on the fourth edition of *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, and I'm also working on another book, which will come out in January of 2014. This is interesting to me. When I was writing *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* and some of the books that came just after that, I blogged about it as I was writing. I kept my readers informed of my project. I talked about the new book as I was writing it.

I haven't researched this, but just anecdotally, I think people are sick of that. I think, when I did it, it was good, way back in 2006, the idea of blogging sections of a book was pretty new. The idea of keeping your readers informed as you're going through the writing process was pretty new. I think so many authors have done that right now, and I think a lot of people get to the point where they feel like they know the book so well that they don't need to buy it.

Debbie: I would agree with you.



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David: With *Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead*, which I wrote with Brian Halligan who is a CEO of Hub Spot, and Bill Walton wrote the forward to that book, we announced it the day it came out. We kept it quiet until the day it launched on Amazon. It was hard, because there was a lot of science that we were doing in this, and a few people could have spilled the beans who learned about it.

It didn't leak, and it was great, because we made a big freaking splash, and people paid attention, and they bought the book, and the media cared about it, and MSNBC interviewed us, and we were in the London Times. It was great. It was a big splash.

I did the same thing with *News Jacking*, the most recent book, which came out about a year ago. I didn't talk about it until it came out. Then it came out, and bang, it was huge. I think that's the way I'm going to continue to do it. I don't think people care enough about what I'm doing to eagerly await my missives on my latest writing project. I'd rather have them buy the book that's out than wait for the book that's not out. For that reason, yeah, I've got a book coming out January 2014, but I'm not talking about it yet.

Debbie: David, can we take a couple questions? I've unmuted everyone.

David: Yeah, sure.

Debbie: Everyone is unmuted, so jump in there if you've got a question.

Paul: Hey, this is Paul. I've got a question.

David: Hey, Paul.

Paul: Do you write with Dragon Speak talking and recording or do you write by typing?

David: I definitely type. However, as I mentioned before with my nonfiction books, I do a lot of case story telling, and I do a lot of putting into the words of the people who have been successful using the ideas I talk about. What I do is I record my interviews on the phone with my recording device, and then I send that recording out to be transcribed. I'm making sure that the quotes are accurate of



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the people that I'm interviewing, but I don't do that for my own words. I don't use any technology at all. I just type.

Debbie: Interesting. That's a nice combo.

David: Yeah, that approach works for me.

Paul: Thank you.

Debbie: Anybody else?

Paul: I've got another question. Do you tell stories of failures?

David: I do. I tell stories of failure, but they tend to be my own or big company failures that's public. I don't ever embarrass people, unless it's already a public embarrassment. What I mean by that is if a company does something silly on Twitter and they did that publically, I might use that as an example of a failure. I'll definitely talk about my own failures. That I don't have any problem with, but I won't embarrass somebody by saying, "Look at this terrible website. Let's pick it apart and why it's bad." I would never do anything like that.

Paul: I advise small business owners as my day job, and I find it's never good to offend anybody's reality, but if you can talk about somebody in the third person and make fun of somebody else, that helps somebody self-reflect and see themselves in it. Does that work in the writing stories?

David: I do that, but in a broad sense. For example, and Debbie knows this, I frequently talk about what I call gobbledygook. That's the cutting-edge, mission-critical, best-of-breed language that people use. I talk about that in a way that I'm not singling out anybody as being a poor writer, but I'm saying this is how many people speak. That's one way of failure.

Definitely, almost everyone on the planet who's ever written anything can relate to using words like "cutting edge" and "best of breed" because so many people use that crap. That's one way I can call it out so that people will recognize themselves in that behavior, but I don't do it by saying, "Look here what XYZ



company did," unless they're a really big company and therefore have a very thick skin. I certainly wouldn't do it for a mom and pop company.

Incidentally, on your question of do I use any speech recognition software, the one thing I have been doing recently is reading my own audio books. For the first few books, I didn't do that. There was a professional reader who the audio book company hired, but the last two or three books, I read myself. That's been a really interesting process. Go into to a studio, have a professional sound engineer, read the book.

It seems like every third sentence, I make a mistake, and they have to go back and redo it. We go back and have to punch in the mistakes. The whole process is probably 5 or 10 times the time it takes to actually read a book. That's how long it takes to do an audio book. I found that process to be valuable.

According to people who like audio books and listen to my books and the type of books that I write, it's good to have the author do that. Anyone who's in that category of having a book that comes out and thinking about the audio book, if you can all read it yourself, it's something to consider.

Debbie: That's a neat idea. What do you learn about your books by doing the reading?

David: I find mistakes and things that I wish I had written in a different way, which is interesting. It's a nice technique to go in and read your manuscript to yourself. Here's another little tip. During the editing process, when you're getting near the final edit, print out your entire manuscript in a completely different font. If you're doing Times New Roman, print it out in Arial Narrow or something.

You read your book in a different font, and it is a different book. You see things in it that you never would have seen if it's the same old font you've seen for the last year or two in writing. The same thing's true of reading the book out loud to yourself. You can learn a lot by reading the entire manuscript aloud in terms of places you stumble that you might need to rework.

Debbie: David, thank you for saying that. I mentioned those two very techniques earlier talking about self-editing. I suppose they're obvious in a way, but in a way, they're not.



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David: No, they're not. I don't remember who told me those ideas. I didn't think of them myself, but they absolutely work.

Debbie: I know who told you. Mark Levy.

David: Could very well have been.

Debbie: Accidental genius, maybe. One more question?

Jeff: It's Jeff. I have a question.

David: Hey, Jeff.

Jeff: Hey. I'm interested in the speaking circuits. How do you get your gigs? What kind of audience are you looking for?

David: I speak all over the world. I've spoken in 33 different countries to date. My next gig in two weeks is in Cairo. That will be my 34th country. The majority, probably 75% of my engagements, come direct. Potential clients will email me and say, "I've got this particular conference. Can you come and speak?"

The rest of the 25% or 30% comes through speakers bureaus. I have maybe 20 bureaus who represent me. Each one, on average, might book me once every other year or so. They don't have a huge number of bookings through the speakers bureaus.

The more books you have and the better the books sell, the more in demand you are as a speaker. The better speaker you become, the more people who are in the audience will want to hire you to speak at their events. I've been very focused on my own speaking development and have worked very hard over 25 years to hone my speaking style.

I've been working with a speaker coach. When I first started speaking, I did Toast Masters for about 6 years. It's a great program to learn how to speak. For the last approximately 5 or 6 years, I've been using a speaker coach. One of the last



gigs I did was 2,500 people. I almost always keynote when I speak. I've spoken in front of a lot of pretty important and pretty big groups.

I charge between \$20,000 and \$35,000 for a speech, so I'm fairly high-end when it comes to speakers, but I still use a coach because I think everybody, no matter who they are, can still improve. I always find it interesting that professional athletes all have coaches, even though they're the best athletes in the world. That's why I continue to use a speaker coach.

I think that best-selling books, having a blog that a lot of people read, doing a good job when you're on the speaking circuit, all of these things lead to people who want to book you. The other thing is that it's critical to have a great speaker video. I just updated my speaker video, and I'm really happy with it. I released it about 2 weeks ago. I think it's the fourth or fifth one that I've had, and this one is by far the best.

If you go to my website, <http://www.davidmeermanscott.com> it will be on a link that's on the front page. It's 8 minutes long. It's got highlights from some of the speeches that I've delivered with some commentary that I do. That's important for having a potential engagement, because the people who hire you want to see you in action, and the only way to see you is through a video.

Debbie: I can say from firsthand experience that I think you're a phenomenal speaker. I've heard you speak a number of times.

David: Thank you, Debbie.

Debbie: It's another medium from the writing in your book, but I've tremendously enjoyed it.

David: I love it. I'm so happy to have been able to find a career that I absolutely love to do what I do. It's amazing. There's nothing better than having something that you can earn a good living with, but that you also love.

Debbie: I think that's the goal. I think you've nailed it. David, thank you so very much. That was fantastic.



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David: My pleasure. I hope it's helpful to you and your team.

Debbie: Definitely. We all join to say thank you very much. Let's stay in touch.

David: Thanks, Debbie. Take care.

Debbie: Take care. Bye-bye.

David: Bye.

This interview was recorded live on Dec. 27, 2012

