



# A-List Media Group

A Division of The Reference Works, Inc.

347 West 36<sup>th</sup> Street / Suite 605 / New York, NY 10018

Tel (212) 502-0040 / Fax: (212) 502-0041 / Cell: (212) 363-0807

[www.thereferenceworks.com](http://www.thereferenceworks.com) and [www.a-listmediagroup.com](http://www.a-listmediagroup.com)

E-mail: [HIR555@gmail.com](mailto:HIR555@gmail.com) or [HaroldR@thereferenceworks.com](mailto:HaroldR@thereferenceworks.com)

August 26, 2007

Dear Friends,

This note is to let you know that we have moved our offices to a new address: we are now located at 347 West 36<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 605, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues in Manhattan; our phone, fax and e-mail information remain the same. In addition to being a physical relocation, this moves marks a change—a “midcourse correction,” if you will—in our focus and in our approach. We have embarked on this course as a response to how we see the publishing industry evolving. We believe the new environment offers great opportunities, even as it poses formidable challenges. Through it all (and those who know us and our work will not be the least surprised by this), we will continue to pursue the highest standards of publishing and to promote book publishing and reading...but with a difference.

In the past—in the “pre-Internet” age—the publishing of a book marked the culmination of an intellectual journey and served as the primary method of presenting an idea and conveying the complex arguments and supporting evidence for a thesis. An author could count on the publisher to promote the book and on those readers in society interested in the book’s theme and subject to find it. But today, while books remain vital in our culture, there are many other communication media that compete for our attention and which we have to learn to use to convey and obtain information. Chief among these is the Internet, but that is by no means the entire story. In addition to “Google-ing” the information, we receive an enormous number of television stations and have access to word, image, audio and video on iPods, PDAs, and mobile phones.

Some respond to this new reality by walking off and grumbling about how the world is going to Hell in a handbasket. We believe, however, that we must adapt to this new reality by embracing its potential, utilizing its advantages and addressing its challenges with new thinking and innovative approaches. We have long crossed the electronic Rubicon and the only sensible approach is to acclimate to the new terrain and to adapt to its features, opportunities, and power. I’ve out these ideas into a blog that is up and running, and I invite you to look at it. It will tell you about us and about our ideas regarding the state and evolution of publishing. I invite you to visit it at: <http://booktemplars.wordpress.com/> and feel free to comment and contact me.

The approach and program we have developed is a multi-faceted plan that uses many elements of the new communication technology to go beyond simply communicating with a reader through the printed word. What we will provide to our authors and client institutions, and make available to the publishers in support of the books and publications we provide, is an ongoing program that uses the new media to establish personal relationships with the audience, allowing them to become part of their lives—not just intellectually, but also emotionally and spiritually.



Here in broad strokes are the essential elements of this program; in the course of the coming weeks, we will amplify these points and fill in the total picture:

- **Crystallizing the Message.** We believe the first order of business is to articulate clearly the point the author wants to get across. Most people have difficulty making any point; how much more difficult is it to convey and encapsulate the essence of an individual's entire career or approach in a sentence or two. We want to work with our authors to help crystallize that message—to understand and express in powerful and engaging terms what they want people who read, hear, and communicate with them to come away with.
- **Making the Argument in a Book.** It is essential to support that message with a sustained argument and a narrative presentation of that argument—and that is best accomplished in the form of a book. We don't believe this book needs to be a hefty tome—some of the most important works of human history have been brief and to the point; but sometimes a longer presentation is necessary. Designing the book—meaning, creating the confluence of aesthetic and editorial values that create an effective package of word and design, content and form—is what we have been dedicated to for more than 25 years. Anyone who has a point worth making must be ready to do so in the form of a book—must, in fact, be prepared to do so again and again, presenting ideas and arguments in different ways and with different tones and with new insights they inevitably gain.
- **Establishing a Web Presence.** Our authors must establish an Internet presence as an essential and critical element of their work—it must become, in their minds as it is in ours, an intrinsic part of what it means to be an author and to “publish”...anything! This web-presence can take many forms—a full-fledged website (of varying designs); a blog; a lens; pod-casts—and the Internet is still devising new and interesting ways in which a presence can be established. But such an activity requires constant “hands-on” management and oversight if it is to be effective.
- **Establishing a Brand.** A critical element of the program is the clear design of a “Brand”—the image and idea that an author's message and presence evokes in readers of a book and visitors to a website. We constantly evaluate the brand and determine if that message is being conveyed in a manner that is engaging, enlightening and entertaining. In this stage, we are concentrating on establishing a persona—a character to which readers and browsers can relate and whom they will regard as the personification of a value or message they support or that they have an interest in.
- **Reaching Out.** Genuine communication is a two-way process—it's interactive—and involves a give-and-take in which an author's argument and position is received and evaluated—criticized and assessed—by a reader or a student. In our world, students and readers play a huge role in validating both the teacher and the message. If no one registers for the course, it doesn't get taught; if no one buys the book, it's taken off the shelf—to ignore this reality is simply naïve. Teaching (in whatever setting) offers an opportunity to hone the message and is viewed as a generous act of sharing and service, out of which a grateful student becomes a loyal constituent. We believe that an important part of our function is to help authors (even those who have university teaching positions) to find ways of teaching and interacting with the public.



- **Networking.** By “networking,” we mean all the various ways in which other media conduits and outlets can be used to reach a constituency. One method (albeit an older, more traditional one) may be through the syndication of a column or making regular contributions to a publication. But equally important are the networking opportunities that are provided by establishing reciprocal links to other websites, and in this arena, blogs are significant. We believe this avenue must be developed to the fullest and managed with care.
- **Creating a Public Platform.** Teaching may be accomplished in any of several ways that do not require direct contact with the public. But ultimately, it is vital that the author meets his or her public and engage that public directly. The venue can take many forms—appearances at conferences, bookstores, at contests, at ceremonies, and at special events that are geared to promoting the message that is identified with the author, that is, with his or her brand. In the current environment, these opportunities cannot be dismissed and must be cultivated.
- **Achieving a Media Presence.** An avowed goal of the program is to achieve media exposure, which can take many forms and admits of many gradations. Authors may look upon an appearance on “Oprah” as the pinnacle of media exposure, but there are many other venues that make for an effective media presence, much of which can be mounted within the framework of the Internet. It is a truism, moreover, that the “stars” of the blogosphere hold an enormous attraction to both electronic and print media—one universe feeds into and interacts with the other.

We call this program the “**A-List Media Group**” because we look upon it as a means for bringing authors—individuals and institutions with something to say, knowledge to share; or a cause or interest to promote—from the periphery into prominence and to the forefront—the “A-List”— of public attention. A colleague has looked at our program and has characterized it as “an A-List incubator,” and we think that is an apt description of what we do. In the coming weeks and months, you may expect to receive an invitation to receive our e-newsletter, which will keep you abreast of what we are up to and how this program is progressing.

It’s been an eventful summer, and, after moving all the books and the rest, we echo the sentiments of the fellow in the joke who just flew in from Cleveland: are our arms tired! Ilana and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a healthy, happy and fulfilling year ahead. To you all go our heartfelt blessings for a year of peace and our fondest and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

*Harold*

Harold Rabinowitz