February 2003

Library Marketplace -- Orientation for New Library Sales Reps

John Riley

Eastern Book Company, jdriley@attbi.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Riley, John (2003) "Library Marketplace -- Orientation for New Library Sales Reps," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 15: Iss. 1, Article 33.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4267>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

WILEY & IEEE Computer Society Proudly Announce A Publishing Partnership

Global publisher **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**
and the **IEEE Computer Society Press**,
the world's leading organization of
computer professionals,
are proud to announce the
development and publication of
co-branded books in the field of
computer science and engineering.

**As of October 2002, John Wiley & Sons has become
the distributor of IEEE Computer Society Press Books.**
Please visit www.wiley.com/ieeecs for a complete list of titles

Contact your Vendor for Information

ATG Annual Survey Report from page 54

libraries, and six reported themselves as technical services librarians.

Aside from *Against the Grain*, our respondents read *Library Journal* (69%) and *C&RL* (57%) in large numbers. *Choice* is third (35%), followed by *Publishers Weekly* (29%) and *Information Technology in Libraries* (20%). Other popular publications include *American Libraries*, *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, *LRTS*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Computers in Libraries*, and *LCATS*.

And the Winners Are...

We got a good return on the surveys this year, coming from every corner of the US. We even got a response or two from Canada. With all the names, picking a brace of winners is a bit more random this year, and without further ado I dip my hand in my cap and pull out two names. . . **Nancy Slight-Gibney, University of Oregon**, and **Michelle Flinchbaugh, University of Maryland-Baltimore County**. Congratulations, **Nancy and Michelle**, you've won a subscription to *Against the Grain* and a paid registration to the **2003 Charleston Conference!**

Everyone else, there's always next year, and remember, you can't win if you don't send your survey in!

Library Marketplace — Orientation for New Library Sales Reps

by **John Riley** (Sales Director, Eastern Book Company)
<jdriley@attbi.com>

My wife always hates it if I say that I am a traveling salesman. Sales Director, Sales Manager, Director of Marketing are all ok. Once upon a time we were known as Book Travelers or even Book Peddlers. In this era of euphemisms, where a dishwasher is jokingly referred to as a hydro-ceramic engineer, we all seek to elevate our titles, perhaps to compensate for our lack of sports entertainer salaries.

A few rules of the road for a new salesperson.

- 1) The big building in the middle of the campus is usually the library.
- 2) If you are late for an appointment, call ahead to re-schedule, even if it is a question of 15 minutes. Usually you will just meet 15 minutes later than scheduled. Librarians have tight schedules, just like you.
- 3) When you are late, slow down. You're already late.
 - a) You only get in accidents when you are in a hurry.
 - b) If the librarian is late for your appointment, you can always read. (There are way better magazines in the library than in a dentist's office.)
 - c) If the librarian forgets your meeting and you've driven 200 miles out of the way to get there . . . remember you're in a library, ergo: no screaming allowed/aloud.
- 4) A sales call is like a blind date . . . you never know what you will get.
- 5) Never make "cold calls." The very last time I tried one I walked in on a competitor who had a pre-arranged appointment . . . exit left . . . wipe egg from face.
- 6) Don't talk about **PromptCat** around the catalogers.

continued on page 56

7) The only person actually working in the summer is the acquisitions librarian . . . either closing or opening a new fiscal year.

8) It's easier to make sales calls in the summer, because you might actually find parking.

9) Don't say anything bad about your competition. It makes it look like you don't have anything to offer other than negatives. Do point out the differences . . . this is where you can generate some business.

10) Don't say bad things about your competition . . . you may be working for them someday.

11) Don't criticize the library's current vendor . . . remember, you're talking to the librarian who selected them.

12) The quickest way to get rid of a salesman is to say "Yes" . . . "No" can come later on the phone.

13) It easily costs your company \$200.00 for one sales call . . . make it count.

14) When you take a group of librarians out to dinner let them know that it is a special event for you too. Mention business early so you can claim your IRS deduction and then get on to discussing common interests in the library world. This is a chance for you to gain valuable insights into current issues.

15) Reading a map while driving becomes a very refined skill.

16) College radio stations (always at the far left of the dial . . . any coincidence?) are the best thing on the radio.

17) No library in America has their restrooms marked so that you can find them at first glance when entering. I hate asking the reference librarian.

18) Were coffeehouses added to libraries especially for us?

19) A quick look in the mirror will save you walking into a meeting with your necktie looped over your lapel.

20) Don't take trips by state, travel by region. Part of Maryland is in West Virginia and part of West Virginia is actually in Pennsylvania. Part of Idaho is in Washington and part of Florida is in Alabama.

21) Check out the library's Website before you visit to see what is new.

22) Always check out the recent additions shelf to see what the library is buying.

23) **Gertrude Stein** said "Nothing should take over an hour" . . . make it true of your sales call.

24) Knowing where to eat is one of the great talents you will develop on the road: Don't miss **Zingerman's Deli** in Ann Arbor, **Dreamland BBQ** in Tuscaloosa, **Kayser's Health Bar** in Santa Barbara, **The Clam Shack** in Ipswich, **Durgin Park** in Boston, **Joe's Stone Crab** in Miami, **Acme Oyster Bar** in New Orleans. (Please send me more!)

25) No B&B's thank you. I just want to crash with the controller in my hand and not have to chat.

26) Always visit a new museum or historic spot on your trip . . . it keeps things fresh.

27) If it's a special occasion (a retirement, promotion, etc.), bring a gift.

28) Don't try to be all things to all people. Librarians appreciate your honesty when you point out your limitations, (i.e., No you can't supply out of print South American videos).

29) Stay friendly with competitors. Psychologists say that having enemies leads to early death (not necessarily by strangulation, but by stress). Remember what **Don Corleone** said about friends and enemies: "I keep my friends close and my enemies even closer."

30) When a customer is really negative . . . just wait . . . they'll probably be gone within six months. They've got other problems than you.

31) You may think that setting up a new account is a priority; the librarian may not. It's your job to help them remember.

a) You never know who controls the vendor selection . . . it could be the library director or it could be a library clerk. Usually it's the acquisitions or technical services librarian, but don't bet the farm. If it's the business office get ready for a bid.

b) Some decisions are made in "geologic time" involving presentations, teams, meetings, etc.

32) Telemarketing is a "pain in the ear."

33) Everyone tells me I should listen to audio books while traveling, but I find them too slow and droning . . . they're ok for poetry, but not for fiction or history.

34) Nothing ever gets sold at a convention. It's just an opportunity to reconnect.

35) Definition of marketing: Find out what the customer wants and give it to them.

36) If you want to keep your job . . . always bring home gifts for the kids.

An Interview at Schoenhof's Foreign Books

ATG Interviews Judy Townley, Dan Cianfarini, David Leyenson, and Staff

by **Bob Nardini** (Senior Vice President & Head Bibliographer, YBP Library Services, 999 Maple Street, Contoocook, NH 03229; Phone: 800-258-3774 x. 3251; Fax: 603-746-5628) <nardini@ybp.com> and **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*, MSC 98 The Citadel, Charleston, SC 29409; Phone & Fax: 843-723-3536) <strauchk@earthlink.net> www.against-the-grain.com

Every week scholars, students, tourists, and wanderers visit Harvard Square by the thousands. Most reach **Cambridge** on the **MBTA** subway system and emerge from what all of Boston calls the T to walk in **Harvard Yard**, shop at the **Harvard Coop**, see a museum, hear a show at **Club Passim** or the **House of Blues**, or just immerse themselves in the street life bred by America's most celebrated university.

For a few pilgrims, the very first aim is just around the corner from the T station, a modest store at 76A Mount Auburn Street, where two small window displays recently held selections of Chinese poetry and children's books in Spanish. Inside, in addition to shelves of books in these two languages, are language-learning materials in some 700 other languages and dialects, as well as fiction and academic non-fiction from 50 countries. **Schoenhof's Foreign Books**, with

a clientele equal to the worldly nature of its stock, is a destination within a destination.

Many librarians have visited the store, and many more have sent orders to **Schoenhof's** on behalf of their libraries. What they and other customers seldom know is that the store on Mount Auburn isn't the only **Schoenhof's** location. In a quieter, residential precinct of **Cambridge**, about a ten-minute walk from the Square, is a nondescript brick building on Green Street housing the **Schoenhof's** warehouse and offices. It's from here that the business founded in downtown Boston in 1856 by **Carl Schoenhof**, who sold books to the city's German immigrant community in their native language, is run today.

Schoenhof's was a mom-and-pop operation until the French academic and literary publisher **Editions Gallimard** acquired the business in

1981. By then the store had long since shifted focus away from Boston's immigrants and toward the city's academic community. That change had begun late in the prior century, when **Schoenhof's** made French a specialty, stocking the works of **Zola**, **Flaubert**, **Rimbaud**, and other giants of the era, on the way to becoming a pan-lingual **Harvard Square** institution after moving to **Cambridge** in the early 1940s. French literature, however, after a hundred years plus, remains the store's backbone. **Schoenhof's** stock holds more volumes in French literature than in the entire language-learning inventory of dictionaries, phrasebooks, textbooks, and other course materials from every corner of the world.

Carl Schoenhof's present successor, **Judy Townley**, is a diminutive, soft-spoken woman

continued on page 57