

Case Study

Book: *A Dedication*

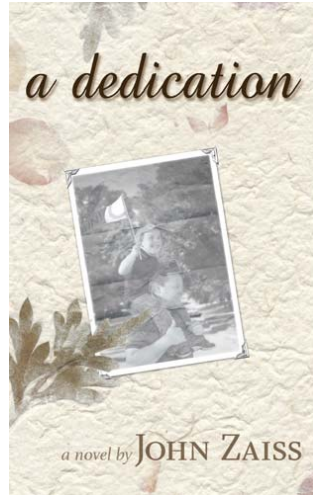
Publisher: Synergy Books

Pub Date: June 2005

Author: John Zaiss

Genre: Fiction

Campaign: 6-month Full-Service



Challenge

First-time author John Zaiss contracted BookPros to manage the publicity campaign for *A Dedication*, a semi-autobiographical novel about a young boy's rebellion and the intriguing mentor who helps him turn his life around.

Media interest in general market fiction by first-time authors is limited. The book's subject matter bore a close resemblance to many other popular fiction books such as *Tuesdays with Morrie*, making it tough to differentiate from others in the market.

Strategy + Implementation

We identified the semi-autobiographical story elements of cancer, loss and grief that sprang from the author's personal experience after losing his father to cancer. As Father's Day fell within the heart of the campaign timeline, we decided to focus the campaign on Zaiss' personal journey dealing with the loss of his father and how it is reflected in the book. To support the publicity campaign, the author organized a 6-city book tour during the month of June.

We also used Zaiss' personal credentials as an entrepreneur with a dual career in finance and writing to address the topic of "the business versus the craft of writing" with business audiences.

To reach the target audiences of teens, women, parents, teachers, tour cities and residents in the author's home states of Nevada and Montana, we identified the following media angles:

- Coping with Father's Day without a father
- Positive ways to celebrate a loved one who has died
- What to do/say when a family member is diagnosed with cancer
- The business versus the craft of writing

Reach

Using the personal, emotional story of the author's own life and motivation for writing, *A Dedication* had a deep resonance with the media and the public during the Father's Day timeframe. Personal appearances and book signings arranged by the author gave the opportunity for in-person interaction with the media in select cities, which greatly contributed to the success of the campaign. In total, we secured more than 60 media opportunities for the author.

At the heart of the campaign was an opinion piece, written by the author and edited by BookPros, about surviving Father's Day after a father's death. The moving piece earned a placement for Zaiss in Montana's largest circulation daily, *The Billings Gazette*, and prompted many readers to personally write to Zaiss, thanking him for sharing his thoughtful advice on dealing with loss and grief. The topic was also popular with talk radio and we secured nearly twenty interviews for the author in a diverse range of top radio markets across the country.

Other highlights include full-page feature stories in the author's hometown media: *View Newspapers of Las Vegas* and *The Las Vegas Business Press*. As Zaiss resides part-time in Montana and hosted book signings across the state, we were able to leverage the events for featured coverage in *The Whitefish Pilot*, *Daily Interlake* and *Coeur d'Alene Press*.

In-studio television interviews with affiliates in Texas, Nevada and Montana were secured to support the author's book tour. This included two interviews in Dallas-Ft. Worth, a top ten media market, and interviews with KTMF-TV's "Wake Up Montana" and KECI-TV's "Today in Montana," which are seen statewide. Finally, *A Dedication* received a number of comprehensive reviews in newspapers and respected online review sites. Rebecca's Reads E-zine's named *A Dedication* the Best Men's Fiction of 2005.