

Foreword

by S. C. Gwynne

I come from the old world of publishing, a place where it is considered smart marketing to send an author on a tour to a chain bookstore in Kansas City, where he sits in a corner and signs a few books for passersby. A world where publicity consists of sending review copies of your book to newspaper editors, where they take their place along the 200 other books that hit the editor's desk that week. Maybe those editors get a follow-up call. Maybe they don't.

I lived in this world for a long time. Like so many other authors, I found myself in a sort of prison of limited access. The world was a very big place, but the opportunities to promote your book were severely limited. There was nothing you could do. Everyone complained about it.

Then I met Fauzia Burke and everything changed. At the time I was not completely naïve about things digital. I maintained a website, used the Internet in my own work, and had a

Facebook page. What I did not have was any understanding of how to promote my books online.

When I published my most recent book, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson*, I engaged her company, FSB Associates, to help me in three areas: building a website, marketing my book through social media, and doing online publicity. The first thing FSB did was to establish a close link with my publisher, Scribner. From then on they worked closely to balance Scribner's more traditional marketing with their online efforts. From my point of view, it was as though Scribner had just acquired an online arm. My publicists at Scribner saw it that way, too. They loved working with FSB.

What FSB did, very quickly and very thoroughly, was a steep dive into the digital world. As it turned out, they knew this world very well, the product of many years of working with online editors. They solicited, and, got, dozens of reviews on blogs and websites, many of them extremely prominent ones. They pitched each editor individually: no shotgun blasts. They solicited, and got, writing contracts for me, actual writing gigs at various blogs. They got me speaking engagements. They pushed very hard. One of their "target" lists alone had more than 100 websites—and they were the right ones, too. They sent me regular updates showing me what they had done. It was amazing to watch it all unfold.

So instead of sitting in that Kansas City Barnes & Noble cooling my heels, I was being reviewed in the Huffington Post, The Daily Beast, and the Washington Independent Review of Books. I was writing columns for the History News Network and The American Legion. I was suddenly living in this other

world. That world also included Facebook and Twitter, where FSB took me from a passive bystander to an active participant. All of what they did was quantified and delivered in precise metrics in regular reports. I always knew exactly what they were doing and how well it was working. Behind it all stood my glittering new website, a place to drive traffic and build audience.

Fauzia's work had a lot to do with making *Rebel Yell* a New York Times national bestseller. She opened the door to this new world for me. And, as I tell my author friends, once you have seen that world you are never going back. The book that follows is a wonderful distillation of all the knowledge she has gained while revolutionizing the field of online literary marketing. I recommend it!

S.C. Gwynne

Author of two *New York Times* bestsellers,
Empire of the Summer Moon and *Rebel Yell*