

Authors – Understand How Rankings Rank

I was following some links from high ranking web sites, noting others that talk about book marketing and promotion, and found the usual attack on the credibility of various ranking lists.

Come on people.. let's not bicker..

Of course we're manipulating (using) the system. The system is the system, we can't change it.. we just work with it.

I'm a fan of Emerson. I want to believe that the world will beat a path to your door if you have a better mousetrap. It's just that the statement isn't accurate most of the time when it's quoted.

The world does want to know about your mousetrap (great book).. and there are those who will seek it out. I for one would love to find the next Emerson, an author more concerned with writing great books than whether they are ever read.

I understand Emerson. He's make a great client. He could spend years working on a manuscript, then give up the rights for next to nothing. Great writing for a song.

So what if you're not famous, never make a nickel from your writing, and die without knowing if anyone will ever remember it. There is a joy in the writing.

On the other hand, if you have a book, and want to use it to promote yourself or earn a living, you need to use the system.

Is the system rigged? Of course it is. The books on best seller lists are the ones that sell the most by every measure.. and certainly aren't the best books.

All such systems are rigged.. Think about the last presidential election. Does anyone believe we chose from the two best men for the job?

The business of selling books is marketing. There are systems that work, and you have to follow those systems. Is there a difference between "use the system" and "manipulate"? I don't know.. I do know that there is a line you can cross to "fraud" and there are rules you can break to get tossed out of the running. However, most of the complaints I hear are from people who have not figured out how to use the system. (the negative term manipulation is only used when it's the other guy)

I read a great article just now from about the best college lists and "which of those lists is best".. here's another view of the way Amazon ranks books.

More About Rankings - Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Management: "Take a look at the sales ranking data at Amazon.com. I once needed a publication, a World Bank technical paper on the regulatory environment in Bulgaria. The demand for technical working papers on Bulgaria being what it is, the publication's Amazon sales rank was extremely low (about 2.5 million down on the list). Yet after I bought it, a most amazing thing happened. My one purchase moved this working paper past almost one million other books. This happened because once buyers get out of the best sellers -where the difference in sales can be enormous - almost everything else is basically tied. The differences in rank are statistically meaningless, and small blips cause big changes."

About the Author

Warren Whitlock is the Marketing Results Coach. His mission is to help authors and businesses improve the results of their marketing programs. Warren is a #1 best selling author, publisher, and editor of dailywarren.com, an online web log (blog) focused on book marketing. Warren is an entrepreneur in the computer and imaging industries, several offline businesses and Internet properties. He started his career in broadcast advertising, developing cross promotions between two or more businesses, and has used the same strategies in direct mail and other media.
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