



**DAN KENNEDY has lifted himself to the pinnacle of not one, but four professions with Authority Marketing. With each, he applied an organized, media-based method that anyone can follow as a working model.**

**In the world of professional speaking,** Dan started speaking free to small groups to sell tickets to his own seminars. He rose to top compensation, averaging over \$25,000 per engagement throughout 30 years, often earning over \$100,000 per speech, delivering over 3,000 compensated speeches and seminars, and for nine consecutive years he was the only speaker with Zig Ziglar appearing on all 25 SUCCESS Events a year...to audiences of 15,000 to 35,000 people. SUCCESS was such a phenomenon it was covered by 60 Minutes, reported in Time, USA Today, and People magazine. Its cast of celebrity speakers included four former U.S. Presidents, including Ronald Reagan; other world leaders and political figures like Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf and Secretary Colin Powell; entertainment celebrities like Johnny Cash, Mary Tyler Moore, Larry King, and countless others; sports stars and legendary coaches; bestselling authors; and top business speakers like Brian Tracy, Jim Rohn, and Tom Hopkins. For more than a decade, Dan earned over \$1 million a year from speaking and never had bureau representation or an agent, a publicist, a staff person dedicated to booking him, or even a demo tape! Instead, he relied on his version of *Authority Marketing!*

**As an author,** Dan published 27 books with seven different U.S. publishers, including his NO B.S. book series, now in its twelfth year at Entrepreneur Media, which also publishes Entrepreneur magazine. He is also an Advantage Author. His books have earned spots on Inc. Magazine's *100 Best Business Books* list, the BusinessWeek bestseller list, Amazon's bestseller lists, and garnered favorable recognition in both Forbes and Success. He has also been featured in over 300 trade and industry journals, full-page advertisements in airline magazines, financial publications like Investors Business Daily, Entrepreneur, and dozens of others. More importantly, Dan has never been off booksellers' shelves for even one day since 1981. There are also foreign editions and foreign translations published in China, Japan, India, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the U.K., South Africa, and Mexico. His books have been a major factor in his speaking career, and in fueling a "back-end" business unmatched by any other author or speaker.

**As a publisher,** Dan built a portfolio of seven paid subscription monthly newsletters,

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including *the* largest circulation marketing newsletter, THE NO B.S. MARKETING LETTER, as well as a robust product catalog with info products ranging in price from \$10 to \$20,000. Simultaneously, he built a organization of due-paying members spanning the globe and, as satellites in orbit around it, over 200 niche-industry “gurus,” each with a business modeled after his. In total, this network directly reaches well over one million businesspeople every year, all paying for his information. This company’s annual conventions featured celebrity-entrepreneur speakers like Gene Simmons (KISS), Peter Guber (Hollywood movies and the NBA Golden State Warriors), George Foreman (George Foreman Grill), Kathy Ireland (Super Model, Fashion, and Home Products), Ivanka Trump, Barbara Corcoran (Shark Tank), and late Joan Rivers. The company was sold, now owned by private equity investors, but Dan continues his association with it. This organization was the launch pad for a number of companies serving its members, including one that has attracted over \$100 million in capital from Goldman Sachs and Bain, and is the largest and fastest growing software company in its category. All this was built from scratch, beginning with Dan’s speaking, one book, and one newsletter that debuted with four subscribers. Early on, there was also the now-famous “Cat Who Licked Stamps.”

**As a direct-response consultant and copywriter,** Dan has been at the very pinnacle of the small fraternity of seven-figure-income freelance copywriters, and one of very few who double as marketing strategy consultants for over 20 years. He routinely commands upwards from \$50,000 to \$100,000 in fees plus royalties for copywriting projects with over 85 percent of all first-time clients returning to work with him multiple times. He has delivered an average of 35 consulting days every year for the past 10 years. “Brand name” corporate clients for which major, multi-media projects spanning many months have included Weight Watchers International, Miracle-Ear, and Mass Mutual insurance. Brands he has virtually launched with his sales copy include HealthSource (over 400 franchised clinics), Scheduling Institute (the largest training company in dentistry, with two campuses, over 1200 in-office trainings a year), and ProActiv (acne remedies – now a \$500-million business). In 2011, he was named Copywriter of the Year by American Writers and Artists. Unlike other top freelancers, he has never had an agent, never had an account executive soliciting clients, and never outright advertised in industry trade journals to obtain clients. Instead, he relied on his Authority Marketing fueled system!

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## Adam Witty interviews Dan Kennedy about Authority Marketing

**ADAM:** I have some key questions for you, Dan, related to Authority Marketing. Some have been provided to me by our clients. Some I ask as their surrogate, based on my long relationship with you, and application of your methods in our business. I'll dive right in.....you're fond of John Lennon's quote: "I can sit down and write us a swimming pool." Why?

**DAN:** Lennon described what I call the "Income At Will" position. I like being in that position. I'm nearing the point of exiting it in retirement, not without a bit of anxiety, because I have held this position for such a long time, and used it often. One of the profitable uses of authority is this position. Established authority, and an audience or constituency or market that recognizes it, puts you in this position.

**ADAM:** When you talk about converting established authority to "income at will," can you cite examples?

**DAN:** The mid-year, specialty subject seminars I've been holding in recent years are good examples of the *equity* you can establish through Authority Marketing. This year's was sold only by lead generation; inviting people to request information through mentions in the newsletters, weekly fax memos, and other internal, owned media. One brochure, prepared, incidentally, via barter for exhibit space. No mass marketing of any kind. Nothing up at the websites. No online registration. No inbound calls for registration. Everybody faxing in a form. There were 165 attendees, it grossed over \$400,000 in registration revenue, and as a tail, filled a one-time, small group mastermind meeting on a specific subject, with the allowed max of 15 people at \$8,700 each. This all worked because of my established authority with this organized group of people, who read my books and newsletters. And that's not really a huge number either; it's in the thousands, not hundreds of thousands. A "locked in" audience of the size that has supported me for years and made me wealthy is very achievable, within one to, at most, five years for anybody adept at Authority Marketing.

Seminar marketing, per se, has become more and more and more difficult, but filling this kind of seminar with established authority, with a well-organized audience in an on-going relationship is actually, still relatively easy. By the way, this one was all me for

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three days, with only one guest speaker: Nido Qubein, from High Point University. The prior year it was Mark Victor Hansen, co-creator of Chicken Soup for the Soul.

The income at will aspect is that I'm able to do this every year, could do it at any time I felt like it, and can turn the same faucet on differently as well. For example, at GKIC, we do a lot of online info-product launch campaigns, many culminating in three-to-four-hour live webcasts hosted by Dave Dee, with me. Some are big, involving a lot of affiliates. Some are small, for existent members and the GKIC email list only. Just about any time we want to, we can get 1,500 to 2,500 people to register for one of these, and have half that number show up, and generate over \$100,000.

This is what you can create, put in place and own by Authority Marketing. **It's basically like having an ATM in your house you can go withdraw money from anytime you like – but there's never a deduction or debit from your account.**

ADAM: Why do you think hardly anybody ever puts in place what you've put in place?

**DAN:** I get asked that a lot, including by peers, by names you and most of your folks would know. I'm mystified that they're mystified! But, I think a huge mistake people make is **running around chasing fame, chasing prominence, creating authority as random and disparate and erratic acts, without an organizing theory of a business for it to feed and support and integrate into.** Getting a book published, for example, is a very questionable thing to do, without an ecosystem it leads its readers into, that you own and operate, with multiple streams of income, and means of retaining and monetizing the people with whom you've sparked interest. Poorly managed and poorly monetized authority is just a hobby, an exercise in ego, and, look, as long as that's your intent, fine, have fun. But if you want it to really mean something, it has to be a means of organizing at least a cult following. With some staying power. I have a lot of readers, subscribers, fans, clients going into their third decade with me. At my most recent event, there were people there who date to being at events of mine in 1986, 1990, 1995. One entered the fold by buying a book in 1981. Still here. Still handing in money. He has also been co-opted into and made a part of my on-going Authority Marketing. Overall, at least 60 percent of all money flowing to me, to GKIC, and to my book publishers through my books this year comes from people who were handing over money 10 years ago. There's *equity* in this.

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At Disney, right after the 9-11 attacks, when the travel industry plummeted, the CEO reassured Disney employees, saying: “We can trust *our* customers.” Who can *you* trust to support you? It’s a profound question.

Also, I think people think creating authority should be enough, in and of itself, sort of like the fellow with his Ph.D. feels entitled to a certain status and income. He is horrified to discover it’s *not* the guarantee he thought it would be, and doubly horrified by guys like me getting the main stage while he’s lecturing in a breakout room at the end of the hall; guys like me making a seven-figure income while he makes an ordinary wage. But **there’s a huge difference between having authority and doing Authority Marketing.** And bluntly, entitlement thinking at any level, tends to produce relative poverty.

ADAM: So, let’s get into some detail. What does Authority Marketing mean to you? How do you do it?

DAN: You can’t play blind archery. You need clarity about what you are trying to create and develop. My objectives have evolved a little, but at the core, they’ve been relatively constant for 30 or so years. There are four. **First, become known, recognized and respected as a true authority on a few high value kinds of expertise to a selected constituency with reason, willingness, and ability to pay well for that expertise.** There are two parts of that equation. So, personally, I’ve never sought or even worried about being *broadly* famous. I call myself a famous person nobody’s heard of. So, I’d rather get 15,000 books sold to the *right* people than 150,000 books sold to anybody and everybody, and it’s a lot easier to do. I’d rather be featured in the newsletters put out by GreatLegalMarketing.com to lawyers or Craig Proctor to real estate agents than in The New York Times. I’d rather be in SUCCESS magazine than in People magazine or on The Today Show. I *know* there are book buyers, customers, and a whale or two reading SUCCESS – and incidentally, the last article by and about me that appeared in Success has directly brought me over \$150,000 in business. I’d consider The Today Show a crap shoot. Now, if I was a diet guru, I’d be more interested in The Today Show, but I still might be even more interested in being written up, in say, one of the private jet travelers’ magazines, reaching only rich and mega-rich people. One of my clients, Ron Wolforth, who runs the pre-eminent baseball pitching academy in the country, for high school and collegiate players, and for pros having difficulty, was recently featured favorably in a big article in Sports Illustrated, and that’s going to be

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very useful to him in many ways, yet it probably won't bring a lot of direct customer flow. Being referenced and talked about as an authority by as many high school, college, and pro coaches as possible can be a lot more profitable for Ron, so an article about him in an obscure trade journal read only by those coaches, with a circulation 1/100th the size of Sports Illustrated is the real prize to pursue. And being in that private jet magazine wouldn't hurt either – it reaches rich, guilty parents. Bingo. Everybody has to decide on this for themselves, but I'd urge giving as much thought to the second part of the equation I've stated here as to the first.

**Second, to be the “go-to guy” for something of very high value – the go-to guy everybody prefers if they can afford him.** I am talked about *that* way and it's by design. My experience, with entrepreneurs, with smart corporate leaders, and with affluent individuals is that they aren't easy to get to and persuade about getting a thing done. They're not product oriented. They go looking for The Guy or Gal, to solve their problem or fulfill their desire. They are “who” oriented, not “what” oriented. That's why superior products or information or capability proves so disappointing. Few people really understand why money moves from place to place and person to person. I've made myself an authority on that, by the way.

**Third, to be The Guy *others of influence want to stand next to.*** This is important. For me, it's been the gold key of all gold keys, in getting speaking engagements, in being incessantly promoted free of cost, in being talked about as an authority, and in a lot of direct compensation. This is the way you get to put others' planets in orbit around you and have each paying tribute and treasure. In olden times, a king sat in his castle, and his tax collectors each went to one of the little communities circling the royal land, and collected taxes from all the farmers and shopkeepers. The king sat high on a mountain in the center of a circle, money flowing upstream from each point around the circle where there was a community. This is the system I put together for myself. It's good to be king. As said and sung in *The Lion King*.

**Fourth, to leverage authority for autonomy.** I prize autonomy above everything else, so everything I've done and do has that as its governing principle. A lot of people who think they have authority are doing a whole lot of things they'd rather not do or even detest doing in order to get their incomes. I do very little I don't like doing to get mine, because I really do have established authority and leverage it. And I think that's how you assess whether or not you really are accepted and respected as an authority:

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how much autonomy you have and exert.

**ADAM:** I have been at different meetings and at high-level mastermind groups, and, at some point, someone will reference you, then it seems like almost everyone is referencing you. Quoting you. Talking about “What Would Dan Kennedy Say? Do?” It happens with enough regularity that people notice it and comment on it.

**DAN:** It’s no accident. It is powerful. **If enough authority figures are talking about you as THE authority, then you don’t have to talk about yourself as much or work as hard at getting business and opportunities.** I happen to be relatively anti-social, detest travel, have very high value in work at home, and drive in harness races three to five nights a week and prefer not missing race nights, so I’m a lousy networker. I don’t just get on the phone and “chat” with people. I’m not on LinkedIn or any social media, although I’m used there by GKIC. I turn down virtually all invitations to go “hang out” at this event or that, with this group or that, and other than the Titanium Mastermind Group that I run for GKIC, for info marketers, I don’t belong to any formal groups. I’m not suggesting this, but I am pointing out, you *can* stay home and let everybody seek you, if you have enough Authority Marketing happening, so there are enough other people at all those gatherings talking about you. In an odd way, there’s more power for me in my absence than there would be in my attendance. A lot of clients and others say the same thing when they finally come to me: “I heard this wizard talking about you, then this other wizard, then this other wizard, and it dawned on me – maybe I should be working with THE wizard all the other wizards reference.” This puts me in front of only people pre-determined to do business with me if they can. Not people who have to be persuaded, sold, or impressed. This can be deliberately cultivated, maintained, and stimulated.

**ADAM:** Let’s go back to speaking for a minute. You once did a lot of it. By choice, you now do less than 10 a year, outside of GKIC. But you’ve always said that you get booked to speak for a lot of reasons that have nothing to do with speaking. Explain that.

**DAN:** This links to being The Guy others want to stand next to. First of all, most people who book me to speak at a particular event are selling to their audience, clients, and prospective clients, and are eager to have me because of my established authority. Usually, I’m known to some number of the people they’re appealing to, because of my books, the GKIC business and its media platform, or others in that same niche,



including their competitors. Second, I'm a "get", a bragging right, again because of my established authority. Getting me to speak at his event elevates my client in the eyes of his constituency. This has been helped by my scaling back the number of appearances per year, adding some exclusivity to having me. It's rare, not common. Extraordinary, not ordinary. Third, I have a constituency from which they can draw attendees and customers, and being seen – online via their own marketing, in social media, etc. – standing next to me, embraced by me in my own universe is potentially very valuable to them. I also have access to a robust media platform in which I can give them other stand-next-to-Dan spotlight. At minimum, there's mention of their event and its web sites. Often, I can do a lot more – as example, having them as a guest expert on one of the monthly calls and CDs that I host for GKIC's Diamond Members, as I did for you, for the Authority Marketing Summit in 2015. Obviously, this not only promotes the specific event at which I'm speaking, but promotes you to a much bigger listening audience who won't attend the event, but might seek you out otherwise, or who are affected cumulatively so when your company exhibits at a GKIC event or you are out at some other entity's event or mastermind, it's warm, not cold. It's, "Oh, you're *that* Adam Witty? I heard you with Dan Kennedy. I read about you in Kennedy's newsletter." Instead of, "Who are you?" People who book me to speak or consult with me are often also buying influence for the future, hoping to be mentioned in my next book, featured in a newsletter. Fourth, because I am one of, if not the highest paid copywriters, with one of my specialties the marketing of seminars, they know the copy they get from me about me and my subject matter will be top notch. Fifth, I'm a much published author, so they can add a book signing, they can gift books to be autographed to their best customers, and they get to bolster an activity, like a reception, by doing so.

I'm now quite expensive, and I travel only by private jet, so I'm expensive just to bring somewhere, but I was utilizing all these values even when I wasn't so pricey a date. It just stands to reason that the more complex a value package you offer, the better differentiated you are from other speakers.

If you look at the engagements I've done this year, last year, or have booked for next year, you'll see all this in play with all of them. This year, for example, I spoke at the top technology marketing conference put on by Robin Robins' company; in September, I'm in the U.K. as a featured speaker at Chris Cardell's Sovereignty Summit, at Downton Abbey. Later this year, I'm the featured guy at Dr. Burleson's event at Disney for orthodontists. In 2014, I was a featured speaker at Titans of Direct Marketing put on by



Brian Kurz, the marketing brain behind Boardroom, publisher of BottomLine Health and BottomLine Personal. These are all \$100,000+ direct compensation engagements plus “whale hunt” exercises. None of these reflect my being hired just as a speaker, because I’m great on stage, or have great content. They occur in large part because of all the Authority Marketing that I’ve done beforehand, making me a much more valuable item who is just as good of a speaker with good content.

ADAM: Can we shift and talk about consulting?

**DAN:** This is better for me at this stage of my life, because everybody treks to me, and I am always sleeping in my own bed. I do days at my home office, at \$19,400 for new clients or \$18,800 for repeat or on-going clients, and I have 10 to 12 in a Private Client Program that bundles a day a year, 10 private calls during the year, a flow of information only they get, at about \$30,000 a year. **I haven’t advertised or prospected for any of these clients in at least 20 years. They all come through what I call my Feeder System, and they come pre-determined, because of my Authority Marketing.** Many, not all, but many wind up also in complex, on-going relationships and/or hiring me to do project-defined work, like copywriting, ghostwriting, training their in-house marketing teams. My biggest client began with me in 1987, small, and is today a \$1-billion-a-year entity, but most clients are entrepreneur-run entities, with revenues from about \$500,000 to \$5 million and up to \$20 million. About half are info-marketers, the other half not. Every once in a blue moon this segues into my having equity in a business.

**Creating demand for yourself as a consultant is actually quite simple and formulaic.** It utilizes all four of the objectives I described earlier, plus demonstration. If you get to demonstrate, in front of the right people, your authority, high caliber of thinking, and the obvious fact that there’s a lot more to get from you, they come to you, asking how they can work with you. **If you have depth of know-how about anything of value to people with money, it’s very easy to create \$100,000, \$200,000, or \$300,000 of yearly income just from people coming to sit in your room and talk with you, one to one, or in a small group, and by phone or, if you prefer, Skype.** It’s easy, in part, because the business’ economic arrangement is small numbers of buyers times large fees. I do about \$750,000 a year just from this, and have stayed at that level for many years without any difficulty, except during the 2008-to-2009 crash, and even then I maxed my schedule, but had to

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do a little more for a little less. It's important to understand, though, that just as with speaking, there are actually quite a few reasons beyond the consulting deliverables that clients want to come and be with me. They get status and bragging rights, they take photos of themselves in my workspace and blast them on social media, they take information from me back to their customers and clients as heroic hunter – which, of course, serves as more free Authority Marketing for me.

ADAM: If people want to see some of your business media, where do they go?

**DAN:** There is a free trial membership offer from GKIC usually available at GKIC.com, and that, or at least a wandering around that site and opting in for free email, will give folks a very good idea of how GKIC leverages my authority and, to some extent, how I leverage the house I built from scratch that is now GKIC for my own authority marketing. There is also a book information site, *NoBSBooks.com*. It is not as up-to-date as it might be, and I don't manage it, but it is still instructive. This is all generic, of course. My books are all available at Amazon, many on Kindle as well as hard copy, and at Barnes & Noble stores. If your favorite store doesn't have them, demand them! There were recently two new editions of past *No B.S.* series books released, a brand new one – *No B.S. Guide to Direct-Response Social Media* with Kim Walsh-Phillips comes out shortly, and another new one, *No B.S. Guide to Maximum Retention & Referrals* with Shaun Buck that came out in March 2016. **The main book published by Advantage, *Unfinished Business: Autobiographical Essays* is relevant to Authority Marketing, in that it is engineered to establish and reinforce authority, but also to build personal affinity and relationship.** It's the book I gift to new clients. I should also mention the book that you and I co-authored, *Book The Business: How to Make Big Money With Your Book Without Even Selling a Single Copy*, as this book lays down a good foundation for Authority Marketing in and of itself. My chief platform is a portfolio of up-to-date, month-by-month newsletters. This is center of my universe.

In addition to those published by GKIC, there is *Look Over My Shoulder*, for copywriters and direct marketers, and *Marketing Your Services*, for freelance writers. If, for some reason, anybody wants to communicate with me directly, my office fax number is 602-.269.3113. Do NOT email any of the sites; I do not operate them, nor do I use email at all. You'll go into a black hole. Anyway, here's the thing: properly established and leveraged authority and well-organized Authority Marketing opens a

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lot of different doors and makes it a lot easier to achieve whatever you want to achieve. It affects fee or price elasticity, income, wealth. It affects influence, prominence, ability to get – better yet, *attract* – cooperation from others. I do believe I bring unique perspective and experience to its discussion. As somebody who has been writing book, after book, after book for more than 35 years, managed to keep most alive, but seen some loved ones die and disappear, dealt with the highs and lows of authorship, wanted to strangle publishers and publicists, done the A.M. radio interview at 4:00 A.M. with the Howard Stern wanna-be in Duluth, etc., etc., I consider authors dear kindred spirits and welcome a rare opportunity like this to talk openly and candidly with them, about what those years have taught me about what works and what doesn't.

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