FOREWORD: $97 for an e-book?

When you click on any old e-mail link that comes along, you end up on a lot of lists.

Every week, a dozen newsletters, 7 inspiring quotes, 7 diet tips, 7 prayers for any occasion, 7 writing prompts, 7 PR News Alerts and a few dozen brazen sales appeals drop into my e-mail box. I've learned which ones to read, which ones to trust.

Which ones to trash.

One newsletter costs me $5 a year and is easily worth 100 times that amount. Fran Silverman's e-zine features marketing tips and advice from other authors who are out in the real world, and I've used many of them. Jeffrey Gitomer's Sales Caffeine comes to me free and is so well written I enjoy reading it – unlike another "free-zine" I dropped because the author never stopped recommending "get rich quick" Internet schemes.

(Be sure to check out the recommended Web sites at the back of

this book – for those late nights when you can't stand hearing Ron Popeil say, "Set it aaaand forget it!" one more time.)

One recent offer hooked me, but good: An as-yet-unidentified discount on a marketing e-book written by a seasoned newspaper editor.

Like me.

I nodded with understanding as I made my way through the book description and chapter titles. Then at the end of a long sales letter came The Pitch, which read something like this:

"You can easily see with all of these invaluable reference guides, our unique book delivers the equivalent of at least $10,000 worth of top-notch consulting services. To this value-packed offer, we've added a dozen bonuses targeted specifically to writers like yourself – bonuses you can download within seconds of completing your order. And because we want to make sure you can take this important step toward financial freedom, we're making a special offer, discounting our $350 e-book to just $99."

Almost $100. For an e-book.

AN E-BOOK.

Now, before every e-book writer in the world takes offense, I'm not saying this advice isn't worth $350 or even $99. I'm sure it is.

Trouble is, I can't afford to spend that kind of money, no matter how good the advice.

If you've downloaded THIS e-book, chances are, neither can you.

The cost of living a dream goes steep these days, and if you're like me, you've started your business on a shoestring, borrowing off credit cards and savings, squeezing every penny of value from every aspect of your life and work. Perhaps you've kept a "day job", or you're raising children. You may have cut living expenses in order to invest more dollars in your business.

A hundred dollars…that's two months of electricity, a month's phone bill. For my family, it's a week's worth of groceries.

That's why I'm here.

Like the author of that $99 e-book, I'm a newspaper editor with almost 20 years of experience. I know what gets attention and what doesn't. I can tell you what drives newspaper editors nuts, and how best to create the kind of first impression that gets you noticed. (P.S. It won't cost you a dime.)

I've watched business owners succeed and fail, I've seen brilliant promotions and "media events" that didn't attract any media at all.

Heck, I've RUN some of those media events.

Why listen to me? Because what I'm about to share with you will make perfect sense. I won't ask you to spend dollars you don't have. I'll give you templates and scripts and forms you can print out and fill in or customize to fit your particular needs.

Mostly, I'm going to tell you what you already know:

You are your own best cheerleader.

You have to get comfortable promoting your business with such passion and persistence, no one will be able to turn you down.

Where will you find the time to do that?

30 minutes a day. 30 focused, determined, no-excuses minutes.

Have you got a half-hour to save yourself hundreds of dollars? Of course you do.

So let's get started.