

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

## Social Networking for Writers: Build Your Brand & Enhance Client Relationships

BY DAVE EPSTEIN

**D**o you connect with clients on LinkedIn? “Friend” folks on Facebook? Peruse repeated invites from Plaxo? “Tweet” your talents on twitter? (Yes, twitter really is lower-cased. Your Careful Writer checked.)

That paragraph has 137 characters, counting spaces, so it just makes it as a tweet (maximum 140 characters).

If (like me) that’s about all you know about using social networking strategies to help your writing business, then you belong to a decidedly non-exclusive club of business card swappers, resume tweakers, and portfolio mailers. And you really need to hear what our September speaker, IWOCer Barbara Rozgonyi, has to tell us.

Navigating the world of social networking can be confusing. Yet, for writers who want to build their brand and strengthen client relationships, Rozgonyi says being social-media savvy is a critical skill worth cultivating. “The way you interact and react online via social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and twitter defines your reputation and your success. Knowing how

the tools work is important, but being able to communicate effectively and leverage the power of community conversation is essential.”

In this presentation you’ll learn how major social

writers—local Chicago talent—have already scored their first book contract (for “a decent five-figure sum”) using twitter. Along the way, they have invented a brand-new literary genre known as “twitterature,” as recognized by The Guardian (formerly of Manchester), a source well respected by literati and political cognoscenti. Another impeccably British web source, The Bookseller.com, reported:

Penguin will be turning classic titles from Beowulf to the Brontës into tweets in its new

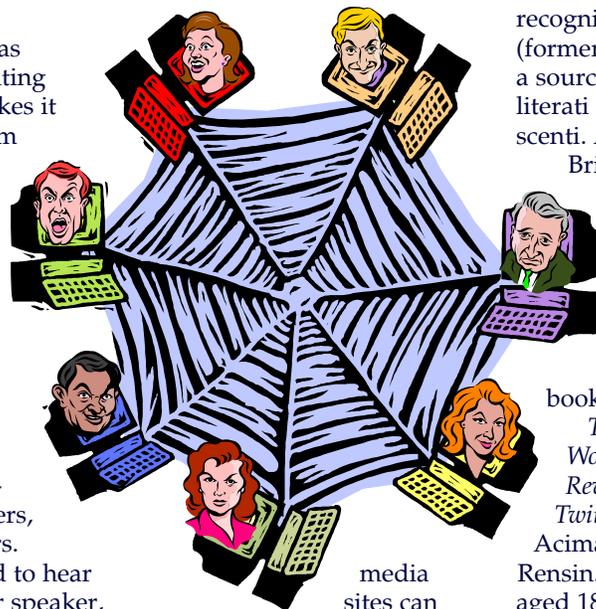
book, *Twitterature...*

*Twitterature: The World’s Greatest Books Revised and Updated for Twitter* is by Alexander Aciman and Emmett

Rensin. The authors are aged 18 and 19 respectively and are in their first year at the **University of Chicago** [author’s emphasis].

The title looks at 75 of the greatest works of literature and condenses them into 20 or fewer 140-character tweets. It aims to make classics funny, simple, and accessible for the twitter generation. It also includes a full glossary of acronyms and “tweet-speak.”

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media sites can advance your career, build your writing practice, and enrich your life. You’ll discover strategic levers that save time, conserve funds, amplify messages, position you as an authority, and get you closer to where you want to be: right next to your very best clients.

Here’s one clue to the literary value of social networking (or at least its commercial value) to writers. At least two young

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*Stet* is published 11 times per year by the **Independent Writers of Chicago**, PMB 119, 1800 Nations Drive, Suite 117, Gurnee, IL 60031, 847/855-6670. Internet address: [www.iwoc.org](http://www.iwoc.org). Copy submissions and advertising materials are due by the 15th of the month preceding publication. All submissions and ideas will be considered. The subscription rate of \$1 per year is included in the annual membership dues. Copyright ©2009 by Independent Writers of Chicago.

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN/ROGER RUEFF

*Our esteemed president is in Madrid. Yes, that's Madrid, Spain, where Roger's play Hospitality Suite, the forerunner to the movie The Big Kahuna, is being presented to what we're sure are packed houses every night. In his absence, your Stet editor will attempt to fill this space with something readable.*



# My Favorite Clients...Or Maybe Not

BY JOEN KINNAN

I must be suicidal to beef about potential clients who get my undies in a bunch, but my cat just threw up on my left foot, and I'm in a mean mood. So here are some client types you'll recognize instantly.

For example, doesn't it just frosts you when a prospective client — say from the Dibbleburp Company — gives your employee newsletter for the Zonker Group a cursory once-over, and then says, "Well, this is very nice, but it isn't exactly what I want in our newsletter." (Of course it isn't *exactly* what you'll get, you idiot, unless you want Zonker to hit you with a plagiarism suit.)

Couldn't the prospect spare just a teeny, tiny moment to reflect on the quality of the writing and — dare I say it? — *extrapolate*?

Or how about the agency person who says, "We're in a fearsome hurry to get started, so could you send your samples ASAP?" You cancel your lunch date with a friend who's just in from Alaska for the day — it isn't Sarah Palin, which is lucky, since she might shoot you — and cast about wildly for just the right stuff. It turns out the right stuff is all hard copy, so you rev up the old scanner and make copies. Most of the pages diabolically shift position under cover of the lid, so the copies turn out crooked. You copy them

again, fire off the email with samples, and then ... wait ... and wait. About the time you realize advancing arthritis will prevent you from doing the work if you don't get it pretty soon, you call. "Uh, oh, *that*," the heartless fiend says shamelessly. "Well, ya see, we didn't really have the client lined up, and the deal fell through." Would it be too much to ask that the word *tentative* be added to the job description in these cases? And how about a call?

In the best of all possible worlds, you'd get a call whether or not you got the job, tentative or otherwise. Recently, a woman did call me to say she'd given the job to someone else. I was so overwhelmed by this little courtesy, I fairly gushed. "You *called* me. I didn't get the job and you *called* me anyway! Thank you, thank you, thank you." (Followed by foot-kissing sounds.)

Another sure-fire goat-getter: the prospect who has already decided to give the job to his great-aunt Gretchen, but he'd still like to pick your brain anyway, and besides he wants to know how much money he'll save by getting old Gret to work for what would be considered insulting wages in Namibia. These types usually send you home from an interview with the better part of the company's library as research material, thereby

ensuring that you'll be deluded into thinking the job is yours. (I virtually wore a path to one company's door before it dawned on me that this ritual was apparently a rather unusual method of closet cleaning.)

Then there's the breathless voice on the phone: "I've got a fantastic idea for a book! It's sure to make millions, but I'm not a writer, and I need help. You're just the person to do it. We'll both get rich." Against all reason, you have a momentary vision of the new granite countertops you've been lusting after. Not to mention an immense upgrade on the family vehicle. But you proceed cautiously: "What is the book to be about?" The responses range from "my childhood in Latvia" to exposes of persons in high places (invariably the caller has been fired by one of these and wants to get even).

What about resources for writing the book? The childhood-in-Latvia guy has exactly one page of precious childhood memories. The expose woman has more: enough to put you in Leavenworth on a libel charge for a couple of decades, but that's okay. Since you'll be penniless after the lawsuit, you'll need a roof over your head.

And always, always, your

Continued on page 4.

IWOCFEST RECAP

# A Fabulous Evening: Pictures from IWOCFest



## Renewal Reminder



A friend once told me the best advice he ever got was “You’re going to do it sometime, so why not now?” Sage advice indeed, especially for procrastinators. I am, of course, referring to your IWOC renewal. Remember: the early-bird price goes up in a puff of smoke on September 30, but we’d love it if *everyone* renewed before that date. IWOC is both a major business tool and one of your best sources of social networking. (We all know how important social networking is today.) Not to mention the friendships you make with people you can actually see in the flesh. And IWOC membership is the cheapest possible advertising one could get. For the price of dues, a whole year of exposure on a site that’s constantly visited by potential employers, that gives you an opportunity to post samples, and that links directly to your personal website. In addition, there’s this lovely newsletter; monthly meetings, many of which feature potential hirers; the rate survey; Writers’ Line; and more. Click [HERE](#) to rejoin now. 🐦

*President’s Column. Continued from page 2.*

vast largesse is to come from the huge royalties this dog is sure to bring in. Money to pay you *now* for writing the book? The caller hasn’t any.

Well, enough grousing. In the event that any of my actual clients casts an eye upon this column, let me assure you that, *naturally*, these remarks have *absolutely nothing* to do with you. Or with the heads of other departments in your outfit, or with any persons to whom you might have been thinking of referring me, or with your own dear great-aunt Gretchen, bless her sainted soul. 🐦

*September Meeting. Continued from page 1.*

Examples of classical tweets include “I’m havin’ a midlife crisis. Lost in the woods. Shoulda brought my iPhone,” from Dante’s *Inferno* and “WTF is Polonius doing behind the curtain?” from *Hamlet*.

Rozgonyi heads up CoryWest Media, LLC, a virtual public relations and marketing strategy practice that gets new media to work for you. As publisher of [www.wiredPRworks.com](http://www.wiredPRworks.com), she reports on ways to use marketing, social media, and public relations to advance consultancies, build brands, and connect with communities.

The September meeting will also feature IWOC’s yearly business meeting and the election of officers and the board of directors. It’s a meeting you won’t want to miss. The meeting will be held in Room 5008 at National-Louis University, 122 S. Michigan Avenue (across from the Art Institute) in Chicago. Networking with snacks and beverages begins at 5 p.m., followed by the business meeting and the program at 6 p.m. The meeting is free for all IWOC members. Nonmembers pay \$15. Plan to stay for a buy-your-own dinner at a nearby restaurant afterwards.

Bring your laptops, so we can continue our social networking over dinner—face(book)-to-face(book). 🐦

## Calendar

### September 8

**IWOC Monthly Meeting.** Speaker Barbara Rozgonyi will give us a primer on how to use social media to our business advantage. The meeting will be held at National-Louis University, Room 5008, 122 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago. Program 6 p.m. Networking 5 p.m. Nonmembers, \$15; IWOC members free. Buy-your-own dinner follows. Nonmembers welcome. For more information, call 847/855-6670 or visit [www.iwoc.org](http://www.iwoc.org).

*The monthly food and networking get-togethers listed below meet at the same time and place each month unless otherwise noted, but call ahead in case of cancellation. The groups welcome nonmembers. If there’s no group in your area, why not start one? Contact [webmaster@iwoc.org](mailto:webmaster@iwoc.org).*

### September 24 (4th Thursday)

**IWOOP Monthly Lunch.** Join near-west suburbanites for a noon lunch at Poor Phil’s, 139 S. Marion St., Oak Park. For more info, call Barb Dillard at 312/642-3065. Check before you come. This lunch is monthly only if there are enough people who can attend.

### October 1 (1st Thursday)

**IWORP Monthly Breakfast.** Join the Rogers Park IWOC contingent for breakfast at 9 AM at the A&T Grill, 7036 N. Clark St., Chicago. For more info, call Esther Manewith at 773/274-6215.

## It’s Happening on the Web!

[Check Out Writers’ Line](#)

[Browse Resources](#)

[See What’s Doing in IWOC Events](#)

## IWOC Welcomes New Members

**Larry Todd Johnson**

**Carolyn Walkup**