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Become a PROFESSIONAL AUTHOR COURSE

PART TWO:

SELL STORIES EFFECTIVELY

Marketing Lesson One:
What Makes Marketing Work

Grant P. Hudson

**BECOME A
PROFESSIONAL
AUTHOR
COURSE
PART TWO:
SELL STORIES EFFECTIVELY**

Introduction and
Marketing Lesson One:
What Makes Marketing Work

Grant P Hudson

CLARENDON HOUSE
PUBLICATIONS

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How This Course Works and What to Expect by the End:

The Become a Professional Author Course is made up of three basic parts:

1. Write Stories That Work

In eight Lesson Modules, you will learn the basic structures of all successful fiction and be encouraged through practical exercises to produce stories of your own which grab, glue, guide and control readers' attention.

2. Sell Stories Effectively

In four Lesson Modules, you will discover how marketing really works and work through several practical exercises so that you will have customers who like, buy and recommend your work to others.

2. How Clarendon House Can Help You

In two Lesson Modules, you will be shown how Clarendon House lays out routes of opportunity for you to get published and acquire a readership of your own.

IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO ALL THE EXERCISES TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY TO ACHIEVE THE MAXIMUM BENEFITS FROM THE COURSE.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN PART TWO...

Part Two takes the principles outlined in Part One and applies them to marketing and selling your fiction.

There's quite a bit of repetition, because there is a tremendous amount of overlap: **the things which work when writing a piece of fiction also work when marketing it.**

Similarly, there are three important things to make clear before you read any further...

1. Marketing isn't what you think.

Many, many writers have been completely 'brainwashed' into accepting certain marketing practices as standard, even though they demonstrably fail to get book sales and are normally immensely wasteful in terms of time and money.

Course Marketing Exercise # 1:

Join your Course Log, jot down some of your most deeply held ideas about how marketing should be done.

Take your time; explore your own beliefs about marketing.



This book gives you sequences and approaches to marketing and selling based on extensive study of what makes all them work. You may struggle to accept them, however, because they might seem counterintuitive based on what is standardly taught in the wider world. Be aware that these things have been tested and found to not only work, but to save time and money, and, in many cases, to be fun.

The marketing principles contained herein underlie the success of every major marketing campaign in history.

Human Attention

Think of it as a kind of 'plasma' which surrounds us.

It drifts towards *departures* — things that it perceives **should** be there but aren't, or are there when they **shouldn't** be.



Course Marketing Exercise # 2:

List some of the things that are trying to grab your attention in a 'marketing' sense right now, through ads, newsfeeds, etc.

How many of them do you actually need? How successful are the ads?





2. Prepare to change the way you view marketing and selling completely.

If you feel you want to continue to be a 'consumer' and remain innocent as to the devices used to make marketing and selling work on you as someone who buys, don't read on.

3. 'Prospects' are not all the same.

One of the biggest myths in the world of marketing and selling marketing is that you need to hunt down 'prospects' by chasing huge numbers.

Individuals have an almost infinite variety of tastes and desires. If you want **your** fiction to be read, one of the primary things you will have to decide or discover is who **your** prospects are. You are not 'hunting down prospects' as some kind of general group; you are attracting **particular customers** who will love what **you** write.

If you can grasp that, everything in this book will work for you.



ALL THE PEOPLE IN
THE WORLD



YOUR FICTION



YOUR PROSPECTS

INTRODUCTION

Now that you know how to write a story that attracts readers, Part Two teaches you how to **grab, glue, guide and control prospects' attention**. Here are some basic principles, echoing those we learned about readers:

1. The world doesn't owe you prospects. You have to work to acquire them.

People in general don't care about you as an individual or how you are doing as an author. Many people won't like your books — they are simply not what they are looking for.

But **your** prospects will pay for your books if they can get from them the feelings they need. You just have to **find those people and cultivate them**.



2. Marketing controls people emotionally.

Any successful piece of fiction has managed to affect prospects in very specific emotional ways to get them to buy it.

Successful professional authors by definition have managed to build a career by isolating particular prospects and then controlling them to the checkout.

Course Marketing Exercise # 3:

List out the ways in which you have tried to market your book to readers.

Have any of them used emotion in any way?



3. The product of marketing is sales.

Stop wasting time and energy trying to market your fiction in ways which will never attract or affect customers, and instead create marketing campaigns which work using the principles herein.

Customers will not only enjoy the resulting stories but the process of marketing and selling them will be far more enjoyable and productive for you.

Marketing and sales, like fiction writing itself, are to do with **clarifying your message**, which **clarifies your target audience**.

Marketing has used these principles ever since human beings learned how to trade. Campaigns that work attract, grip and guide prospects; campaigns that do something else are quickly forgotten along with their products.



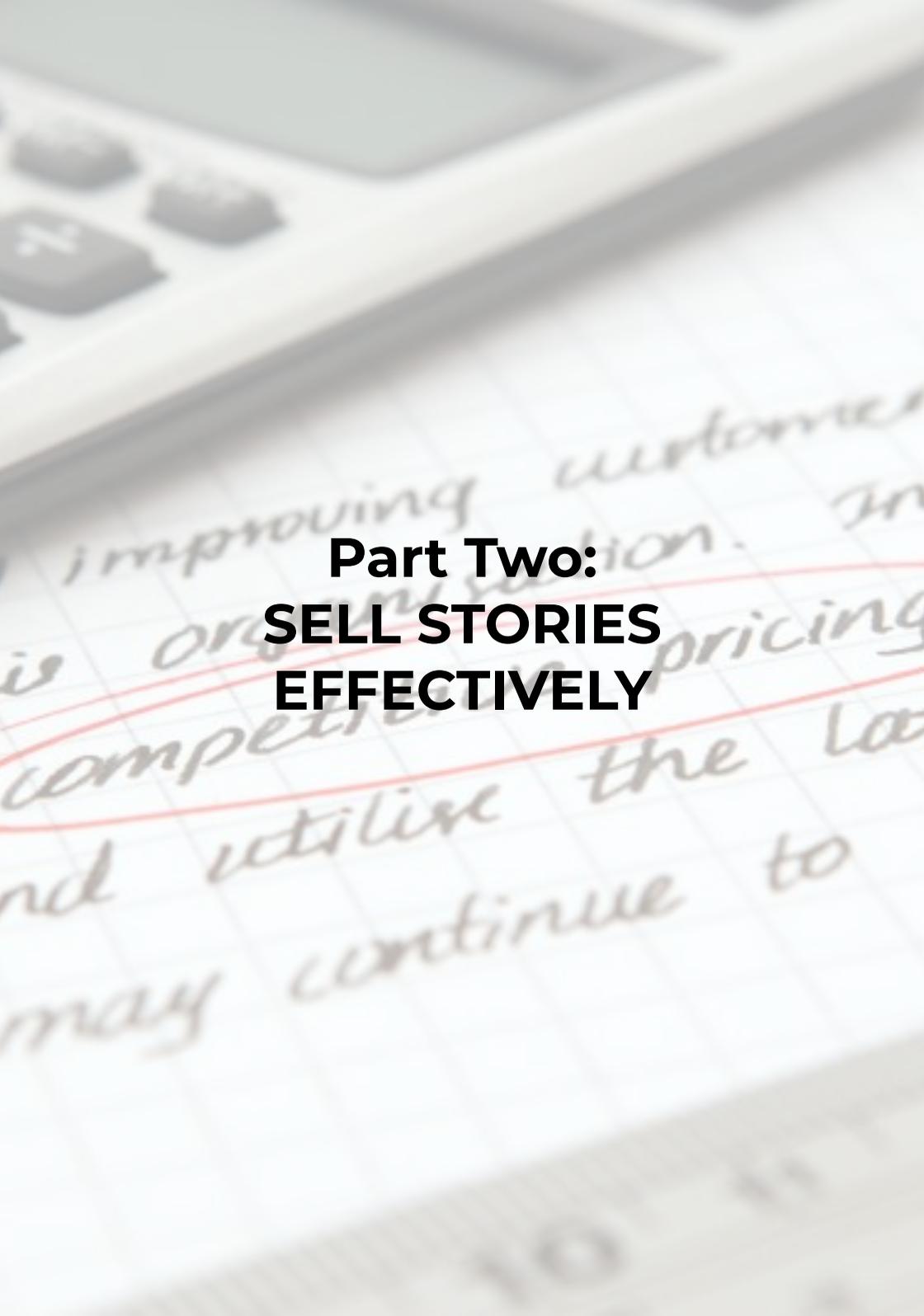
Many writers suffer from 'marketer's block', which is a condition in which someone is unable to sell books, ranging from difficulty in coming up with marketing ideas to being unable to produce a sale for years. This fades away when a marketer knows what they want to communicate and to whom.

Marketing is actually what you've been trying to do all along as a writer.

With fiction, you've been trying to draw in attention, convert it into emotion, and communicate something; with marketing, you're doing the same thing, but your communication is the hard (or electronic) copy of a book being bought.

A vintage typewriter sits on a wooden bookshelf. Below it, a book cover is visible, featuring a woman's face and the title 'Černé klamství'. The background shows more bookshelves filled with books.

*Marketing
is actually
what you've
been trying
to do all
along as a
writer.*



**Part Two:
SELL STORIES
EFFECTIVELY**

LESSON ONE: WHAT MAKES MARKETING WORK

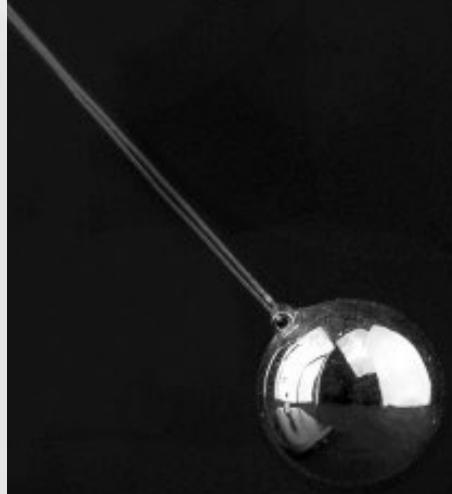
As we saw in Part One, Newton's laws of motion are three laws of classical mechanics that describe the relationship between the motion of an object and the forces acting on it.

These laws can be stated simply as follows:

Law 1. A body continues in its state of rest, or in uniform motion in a straight line, unless acted upon by a force.

Law 2. A body acted upon by a force moves in such a manner that the time rate of change of momentum equals the force.

Law 3. If two bodies exert forces on each other, these forces are equal in magnitude and opposite in direction.



You'll recognise from Part One that these laws apply to attracting readers to stories and guiding them through to conclusions.

These same laws also apply in marketing.

The 'body' in marketing is the **prospect**.

The 'force' is what we have called a **vacuum** of one kind or another.

So we could rewrite these as follows:

Marketing Law 1.

Prospects will continue to rest their attention, or direct it as they have always done, unless it is acted upon by a something you create — a vacuum which attracts attention.

Marketing Law 2. A prospect's attention can be directed proportionally, depending on how much vacuum power is applied.

Marketing Law 3. Attention can be driven away by other attention.

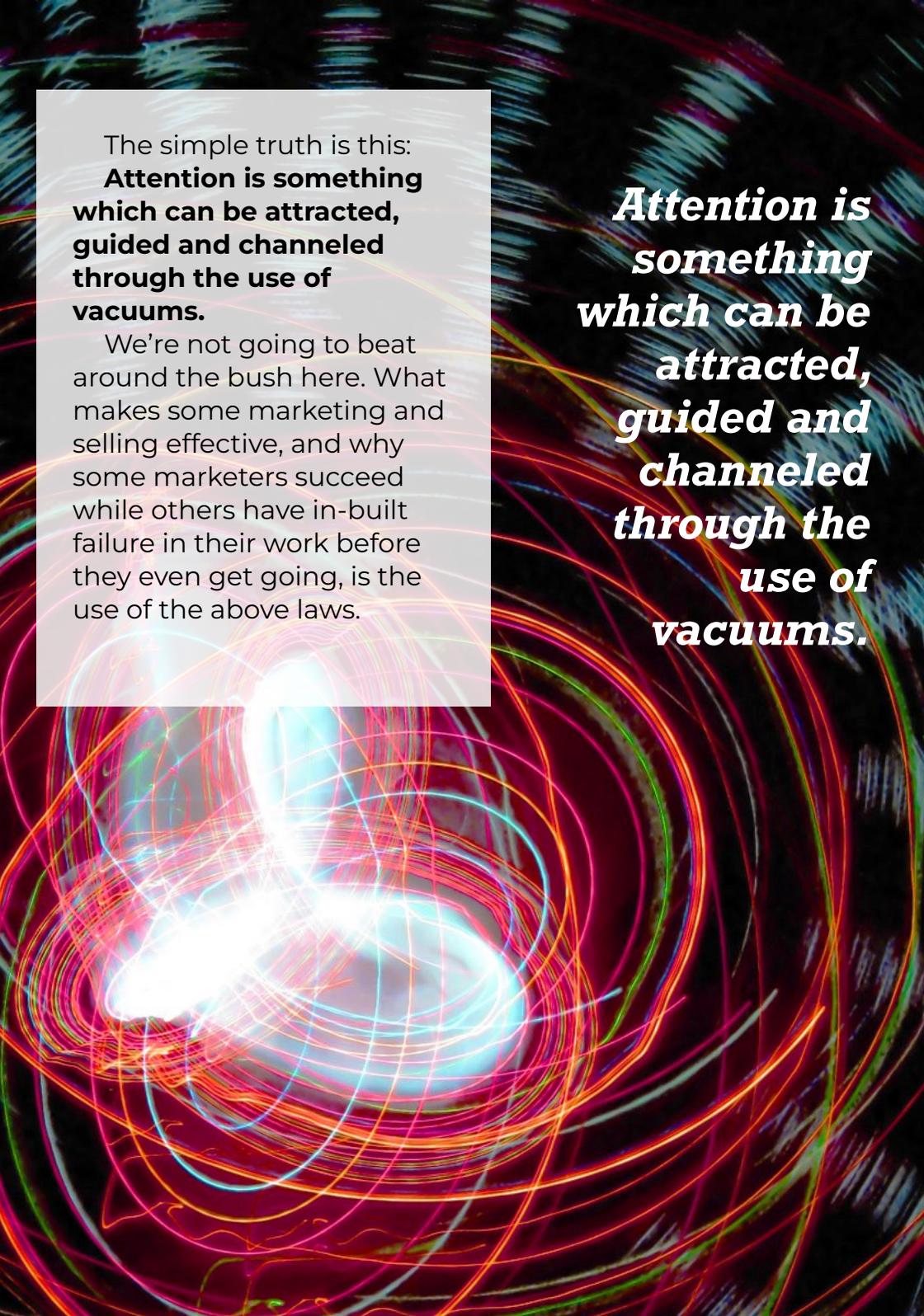
Course Marketing Exercise # 4:

Which applies
in your case, do
you think?

Based on what you
know at the
moment, is your
marketing flawed?

Note down your
thoughts in your
Course Log.





The simple truth is this:
**Attention is something
which can be attracted,
guided and channeled
through the use of
vacuums.**

We're not going to beat around the bush here. What makes some marketing and selling effective, and why some marketers succeed while others have in-built failure in their work before they even get going, is the use of the above laws.

***Attention is
something
which can be
attracted,
guided and
channeled
through the
use of
vacuums.***

What Is Marketing For?

Marketing seems to drive some writers crazy.

One reason why traditional publishers developed as they did was because they were supposed to handle the 'commercial' end of the writing business so that writers wouldn't have to engage with it. Writers like to write; they don't really like to 'sell'.

But that's a highly illogical point of view, based on some erroneous suppositions and false conclusions. The problem is that, in order to get some writers to do marketing properly, whole frameworks of thought and belief need to be blown wide apart.

In essence **marketing is simply communication.**



A young woman with long dark hair is smiling and looking at a tablet computer. She is wearing a red beaded bracelet on her left wrist. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green and blue.

What a writer is trying to do with marketing is to complete a cycle which started when the writer first had an idea for a story. That idea went from mind to page or screen, then into some sort of finished document. But the aim was to get it into the minds of readers.

The marketer's task is to ensure that the original idea actually makes it into someone else's head.

The marketer's task is to ensure that the original idea actually makes it into someone else's head.

They do this by

a) isolating what it is about that original idea which makes it appealing enough for a selected audience to want to pick it up, look at it and then go so far as to want to pay money for it so that they can make it their own (which is covered in Part One)

and

b) finding the exact people who might be interested in that original idea and controlling them to the checkout.

The act of marketing is actually an extension of the act of writing, if the intention of the writer is to get his or her books read.

Ideas flow from the imagination to the page and then across to the reader. If they don't make it across to the reader, they don't get read — simple as that.



Imagination

Writer

Pages

MARKETING

Reader

Marketing Noise

Many, if not most, authors trying to market their books waste time spamming social media and push ads out into the population hoping for some 'bites'.

The cruel fact is that all of that raw copy doesn't achieve much. Most of the vast volumes of 'marketing' out there is just **noise**.

We have previously defined 'noise' as follows:

Noise is defined as random fluctuations that obscure or do not contain meaningful data or other information.

Marketing that succeeds, on the other hand, has had most of its noise removed through studious application of the above laws.

A marketing campaign is a fictional creation resulting in real action from customers, i.e. purchases.



When you're writing a story, you're constructing something to achieve a desired effect and relay a message. What a story does, as we learned in Part One, is hook attention in and condense it into emotion. The emotion acts as a carrier wave for the author's message.

Marketing works in exactly the same way.

Marketing hooks attention in and condenses it into emotion, which then acts as a channel for action.

In other words, prospects are attracted, their emotions are engaged, and they then go ahead and buy.

What authors want from stories is an emotional channel permitting the transmission of a **message**.

What marketers want from marketing is an emotional channel permitting a **sale**.

Authors use emotion to communicate a message.

Marketers use emotion to sell things.

This is very important.

The end product of marketing is (or should be) a sale.

Course Marketing Exercise # 5:

What kind of feedback have you had from your marketing?

Note down the most positive results and the most negative.

Note if you haven't received any sales at all.





Whereas in writing a story you're trying to get an intangible idea or set of ideas from one mind to another, in marketing you're trying to get a solid (or electronic) object from one physical place to another.

This takes power, used as above.

Power, in marketing, is **vacuum power**.

Once marketers clarify that their 'message' is a sale, and that they need to

use vacuums to direct the attention of prospects, they find it much easier to put marketing campaigns together which work.

Avatars, websites, copy, posts, social media platforms and so on, everything is a kind of noisy mess unless it's built into a marketing 'engine' which accomplishes the engineering task of shifting a book from one place to another.

Without this engine, naturally enough prospects drift along in droves, per Newton's laws, unaffected; with an engine, prospects are drawn to the product, hooked by it, guided with it, and end up heading for the checkout.

What's more, if the book then does its internal work as described in Part One, they'll want more.

The book itself is an integral part of a writer's marketing campaign.

A well-structured book, which uses the elements and techniques outlined in Part One, virtually guarantees repeat customers.

Writers deal all the time in intangibles. Their task is to make the intangible **emotible** — in other words, to take something which is just words on a page and condense it using vacuums so that readers **feel** it.

A marketer's task is to make the tangible **actionable** — in other words, to take something which exists in the real world (in this case, your physical or electronic book) and condense it using vacuums into something prospects want enough to **buy** it.



Viewed as a piece of engineering, marketing starts to make more sense; all the parts of a marketing engine fall into place like the parts of a story (coming to the forefront or receding into the background as appropriate); the roles played by your posts, pages, ads, websites and so on become clearer and fit together; your sense of satisfaction with marketing increases, sometimes vastly.

Frustration arises in marketing because of the 'noise' resulting from the lack of application of the above.

Until you build a marketing engine which uses the laws of marketing to shift tangible products from one place to another, no prospect will listen to you, no matter how much time you spend on your social media or how adamant you become that the world is unfair.



After marketers construct their engine, they often double, triple, and even quadruple their sales. The apparent 'lack of time to market' melts away because with a working engine comes renewed purpose and that brings about schedule rearrangements and adjustments in priorities, just as a clarified message for fiction results in more and better fiction.



What Happens in Prospects' Brains

By now, you should be familiar with the concept of a vacuum.

A vacuum is an absence of something which it is perceived ought to be present.

This is an unknown, a mystery, a gap, a hole, a loss, a threat, an imbalance, a departure of some kind or magnitude.

As we covered in Part One, we are surrounded by vacuums of various kinds at every point in our daily lives. These absences then exert a vacuum-pull on attention: noticing something missing, the human mind wants to fill the gap, solve the mystery, restore the balance, remedy the loss, and so on.



The human mind, in other words, wants Unity and is always working towards it, consciously and subconsciously.

Any departure from Unity sucks attention.

You might almost say that a departure from Unity **creates** attention.

If all is well, and there are no unknowns, mysteries, gaps, holes, losses, threats, imbalances, or departures, there need be no attention on anything.

If there are too many unknowns, mysteries, gaps, holes, losses, threats, imbalances, or departures, there is a superfluity of attention.

Anxiety is a symptom of excessive vacuums, for example. If we had Total Unity, we would also have a total absence of vacuums. Attention would be in equilibrium, static and tranquil. There would be — could be— no anxiety.

**Anxiety is a
symptom of
excessive
vacuums**



If we entered into this placid picture just a few small gaps, a small number of hidden items, we would only slightly disturb the tranquility to a level called 'Play'. Think of children's games of Hide and Seek or any board game. Everything is under control, except for a few 'known unknowns' needed to create a game.

But as we introduce more and more vacuums

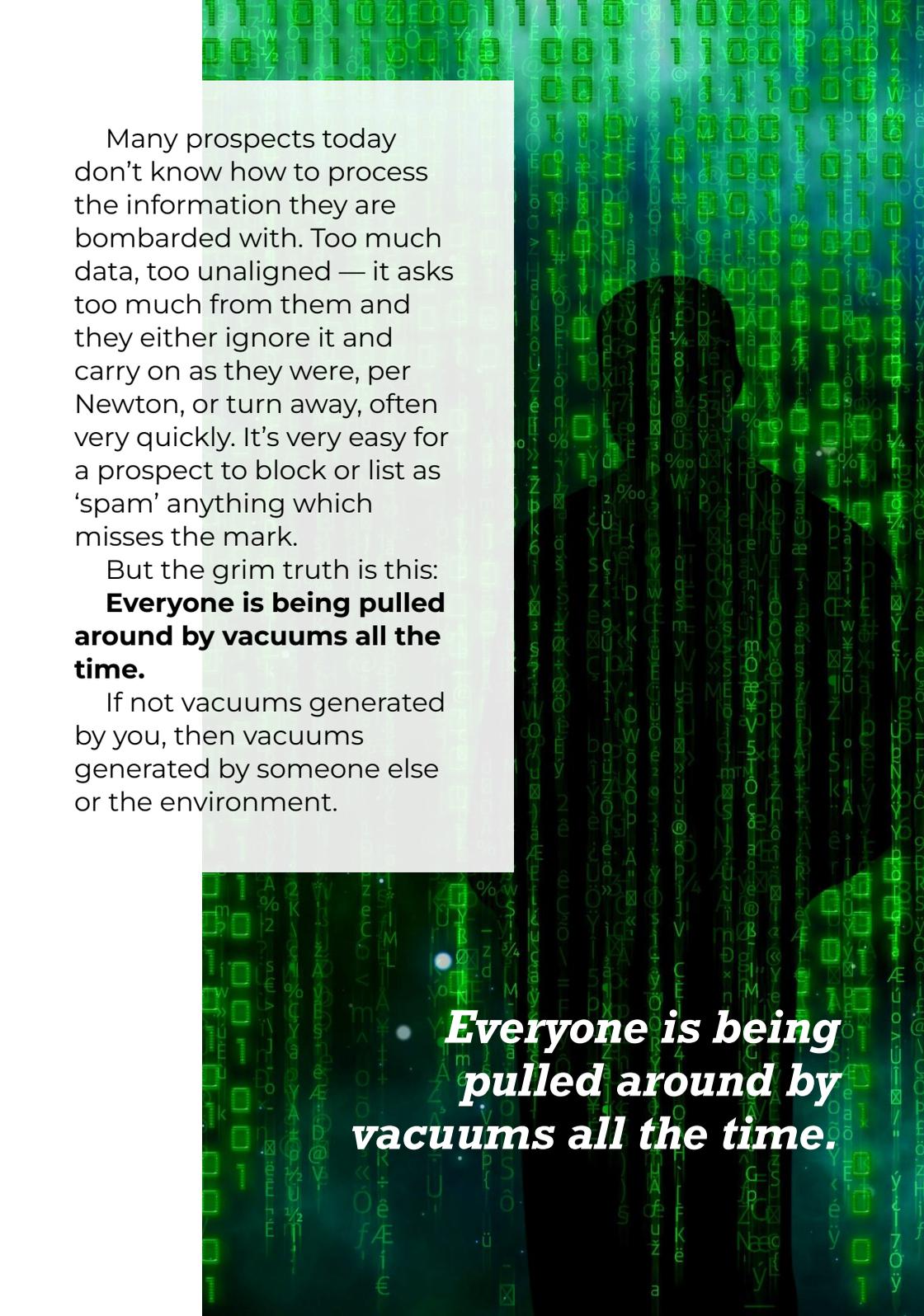
— effectively, taking more and more things away to increase unknowns, mysteries, gaps, holes, losses, threats and so on — attention begins to be sucked into a whirlpool.

These principles underlie how life works.

They underpin how fiction works.

They also underpin how marketing works.





Many prospects today don't know how to process the information they are bombarded with. Too much data, too unaligned — it asks too much from them and they either ignore it and carry on as they were, per Newton, or turn away, often very quickly. It's very easy for a prospect to block or list as 'spam' anything which misses the mark.

But the grim truth is this:

Everyone is being pulled around by vacuums all the time.

If not vacuums generated by you, then vacuums generated by someone else or the environment.

Everyone is being pulled around by vacuums all the time.

Marketing Law 1. Prospects will continue to rest their attention, or direct it as they have always done, unless it is acted upon by a something you create — a vacuum which attracts attention.

The news is full of vacuums (that's how newspapers and media corporations sell ad space, by guaranteeing a degree of attention from the public by using — and over-using— vacuums).

If a prospect (that is, someone already predisposed to liking what you offer) isn't buying your book, they may be either buying someone else's (because that person made better use of marketing vacuums) or their attention is just dispersed into all the other vacuums around them.

Every time **you've** bought something under the influence of a piece of marketing, the marketer was using vacuum power to attract, guide and channel **your** attention.





Marketing Law 2. A prospect's attention can be directed proportionally, depending on how much vacuum power is applied.

Which means that you need to use **enough** vacuum power to get a sale.

A great marketer chooses to show or tell us only things which will reinforce that vacuum power in some way.

A properly constructed marketing engine creates customers out of prospects by controlling their attention.

Human minds are constantly scanning the environment for vacuums. It's the way our minds are made. Understanding what they consider a departure from what they consider an ideal environment helps people understand everything around them. They can then prepare for anything that might pose a threat, in the case of the most serious vacuums, or make sure that they don't miss anything potentially exciting, as with the less serious vacuums.

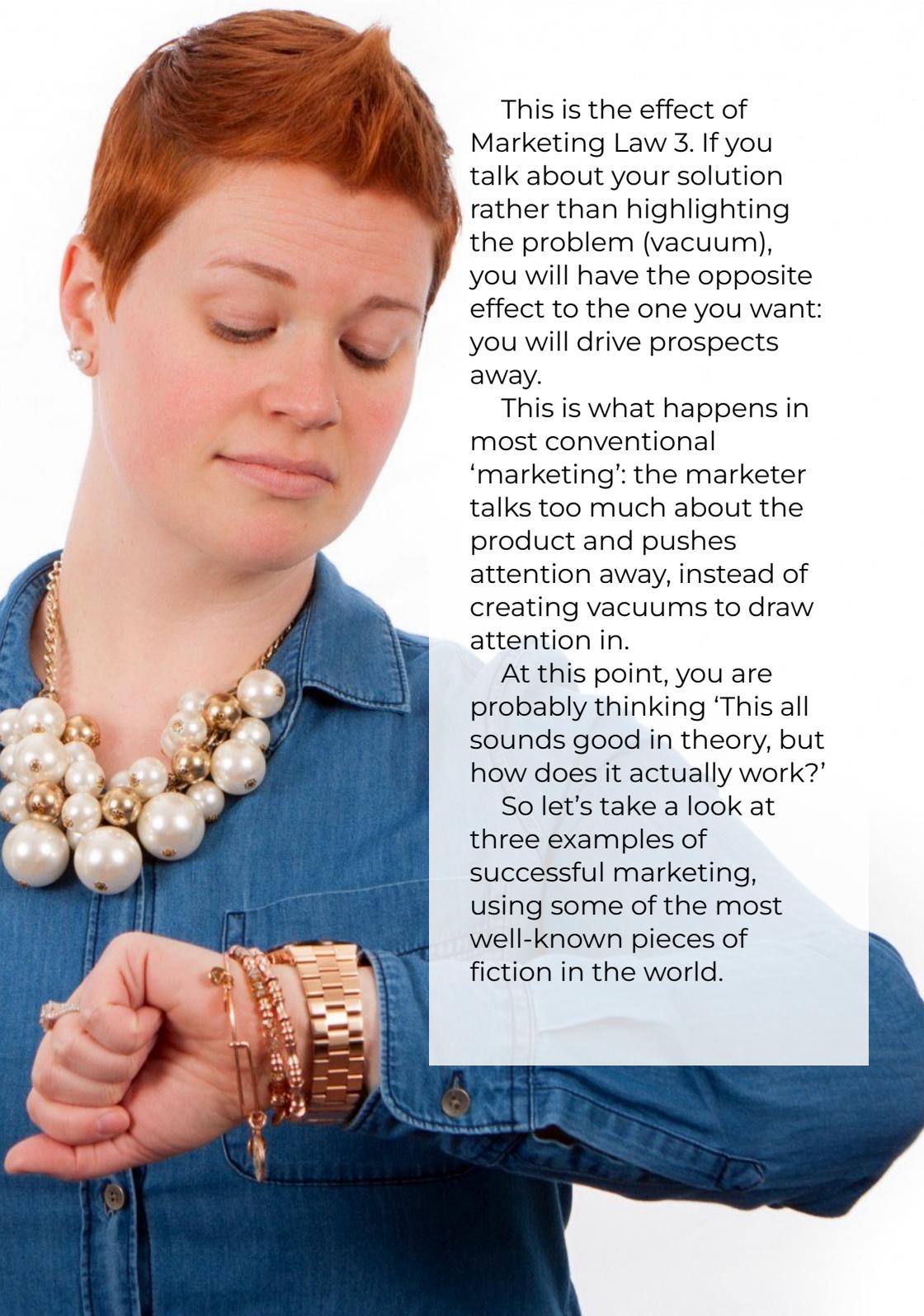
Once a vacuum is spotted, people automatically look for the path which will guide them through to a resolution and to restoration of Unity.

Marketing Law 3.
Attention can be driven away by other attention.

In other words, if a marketer rambles on and on about benefits, or positives, or anything which doesn't contain a vacuum — unrelated material in copy, images which don't resonate with the rest of the campaign, attributes, features — prospects start not only not to care, they actively start walking away or marking your posts as spam or blocking you.

Have you ever walked away from a 'salesy' salesman, or labelled something as spam because it kept deluging your inbox, or blocked someone because they kept trying to sell something to you?





This is the effect of Marketing Law 3. If you talk about your solution rather than highlighting the problem (vacuum), you will have the opposite effect to the one you want: you will drive prospects away.

This is what happens in most conventional 'marketing': the marketer talks too much about the product and pushes attention away, instead of creating vacuums to draw attention in.

At this point, you are probably thinking 'This all sounds good in theory, but how does it actually work?'

So let's take a look at three examples of successful marketing, using some of the most well-known pieces of fiction in the world.

Example 1: Harry Potter

One of the best examples of marketing success in the fiction world is the **Harry Potter** brand. Here are five good reasons why **Harry Potter** became a marketing triumph from which new authors can learn.

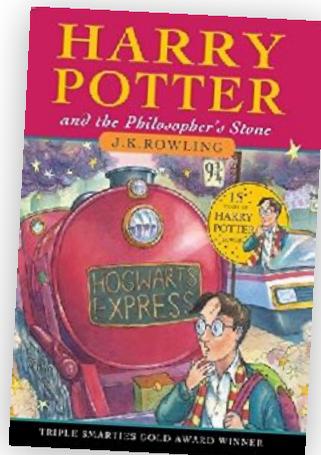
1. The story itself was built on vacuums.

As you will know from Part One, the big secret about **Harry Potter** as a work of fiction is that it is built on vacuums: character vacuums, linear vacuums, mystery vacuums, the whole lot.

Actually, it's mainly mystery vacuums that do the work in Potter. Readers keep turning the pages mainly because they want answers to the question 'What's really going on?' Throw in a few tricky moral choices and cliffhangers, and you can

get away with the fact that, at its core, the Harry Potter books don't have a highly original core vacuum. Arguably, Voldemort is a two-dimensional villain and the whole 'Good versus Evil' conflict is largely based on tropes. But the series was successful anyway, because of these other reasons.

Remember, the book itself is part of the marketing machine. **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone** was constructed in such a way that it set up readers to want more of the same.



2. It condensed its audience's attention into emotion and then action.

With Harry Potter (as with all works of fiction) specific audience is key.

I was an English teacher during the late 1990s when the Harry Potter books started coming out. I saw first hand what happened 'on

the ground', as it were. At first, only the more literate and bookwormy students picked it up. But such was the mystery vacuum engagement of these few that discussions would break out spontaneously about the book, with individual readers offering their own theories as to 'What was really going on' in the plots.



HOGWARTS



RAILWAYS

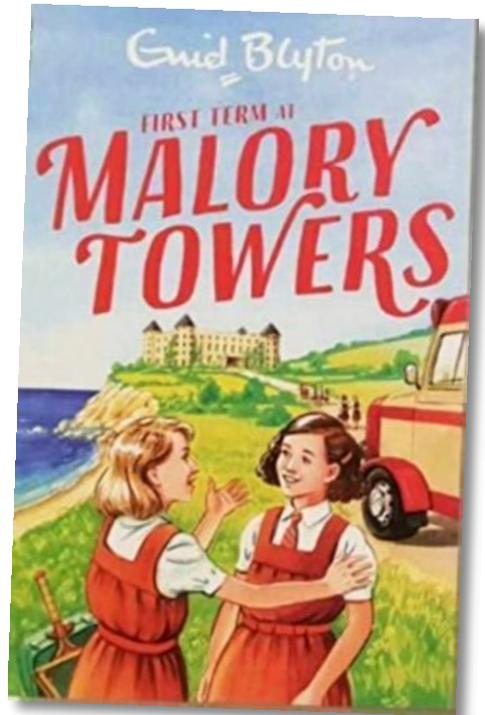
Then something special happened: because the Potter series has a generally low vocabulary, those readers who might not have normally read books at all found that they could read Potter without too much trouble. So the next level of reader — the ones who were more or less indifferent to reading any kind of book — started to pick the Potter books up and get through them. More playtime discussions

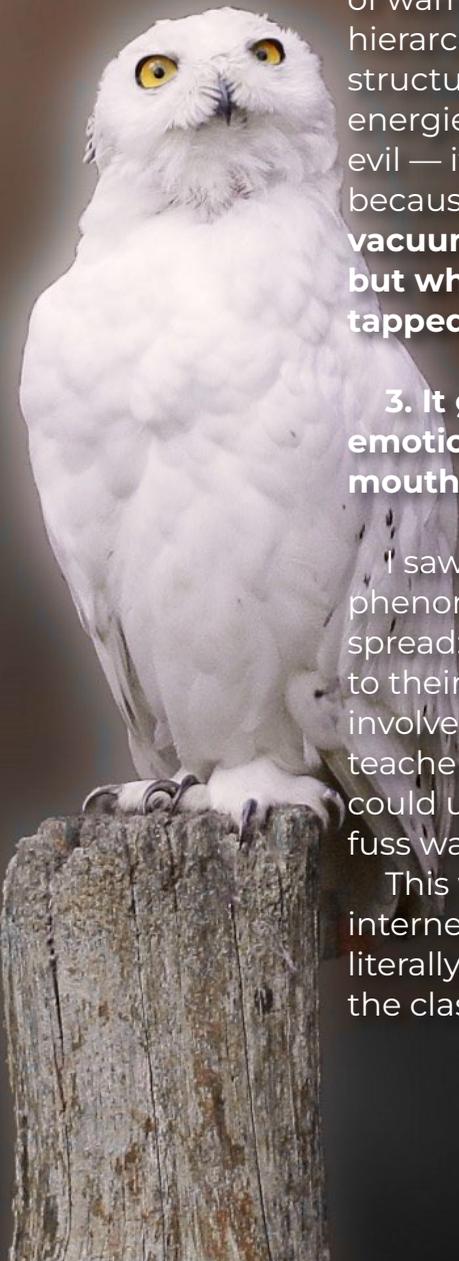
about the mysteries in the plot, more arguments, more excitement.

What fuelled this was an as-yet-unseen vacuum — and I say this with some certainty because I was there.

The unseen vacuum in Potter's case was the yearning need for a book about school-related things: teachers, routines, conspiracies and relationships amongst classmates and friends in a school environment.

For an earlier generation, Enid Blyton had achieved massive popularity with her **Malory Towers** series, a school-based set of stories featured in six books in the late 1940s, which arrived at a time when children needed to read about stability and routine and predictability and order, just after the Second World War. Now, in the Potter series here was another set of stories about who likes who and which teachers are bad and what lessons are fun and so forth, but with the added exciting dimension of magic and escapism and real battles against evil. Potter also arrived at a time when over-prescription from government had dulled schools into fairly boring or frustrating places for the average child.



A white snowy owl is perched on a weathered wooden post. The owl has bright yellow eyes and is looking slightly to the left. The background is a dark, solid color.

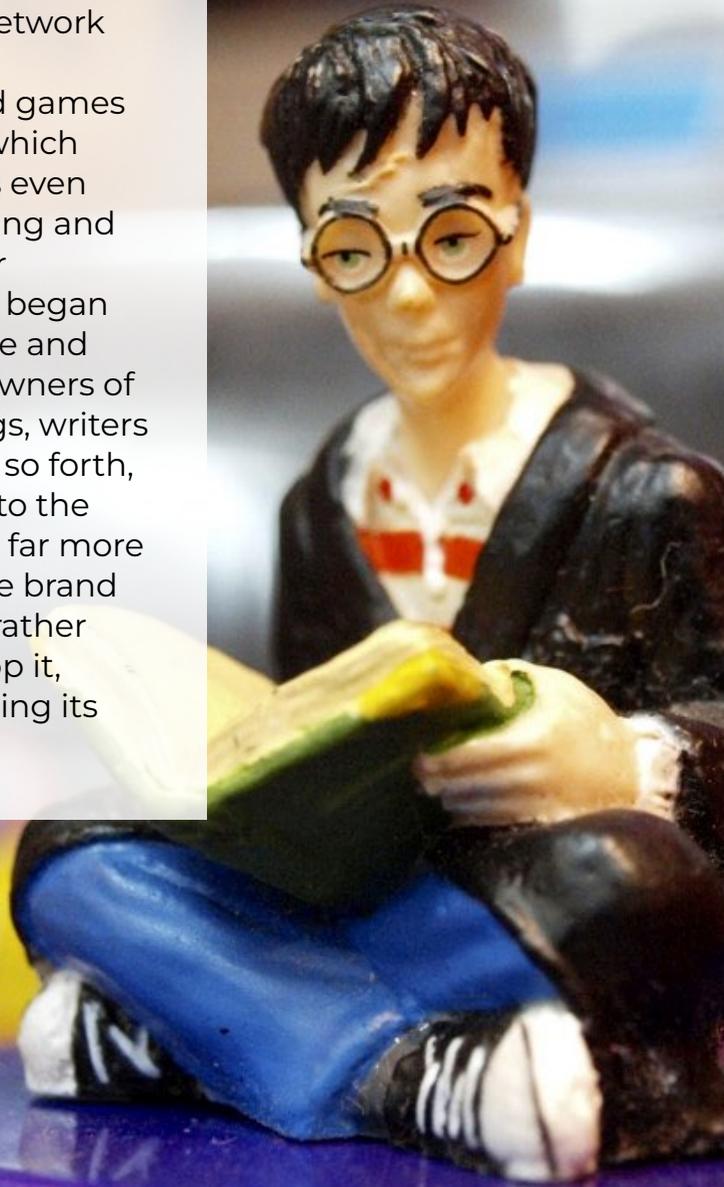
The sense of stability created by a school-like environment, the endless possibilities of adventures involving school-based characters, and the feeling of warm security generated by a hierarchical school-orientated structure, coupled with the wild energies of magic and rampant evil — it all made for a winner, because it was all **filling a vacuum that was already there but which no one had seen or tapped into.**

3. It generated sufficient emotion to create a word-of-mouth effect.

I saw first-hand the phenomenon of how Harry Potter spread: the first readers spread it to their friends, then family got involved just to keep up, then teachers got involved so that they could understand what all the fuss was about.

This was all largely before the internet became a thing. It was literally 'word of mouth', around the classroom and then beyond.

Once the internet came along, the Harry Potter community found that it could socialise, network and even find merchandise and games and so on, all of which spread the books even further. J.K. Rowling and her U.S. publisher Scholastic at first began sending out cease and desist letters to owners of fan sites and blogs, writers of fan fiction and so forth, but slowly came to the conclusion it was far more effective to let the brand grow as a brand rather than trying to stop it, while still protecting its core (see below).



4. It used vacuum-powered marketing

By leaking bits and pieces of information about characters and forthcoming books, holding promotional events and contests and creating veils of secrecy around future events in the storyline, marketers managed to boost sales to extraordinarily high levels.

This is using linear vacuums — ‘What’s going to happen next?’ — to condense emotion into action. Queues lined up around the block whenever a new Harry Potter book was due to be released.



5. It developed its brand over time.

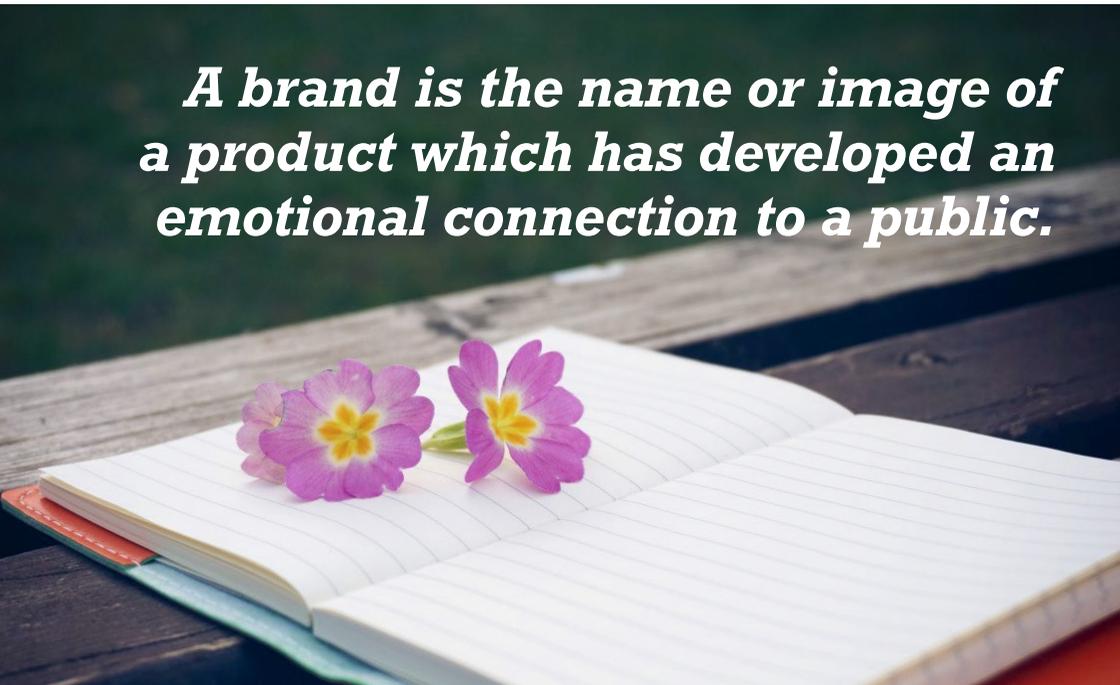
All of this generated an enormous amount of emotion, which condensed into an enormous amount of action, i.e. sales.

A brand is defined usually as a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that distinguishes one seller's good or service from those of other sellers. We can define it slightly more accurately:

A brand is the name or image of a product which has developed an emotional connection to a public.

Readers developed a loyalty to Potter as a brand, a strong emotional connection to it. J.K. Rowling worked to protect the brand she loved, saying no to merchandising offers, refusing to allow Harry Potter to appear on a McDonald's Happy Meal (for example) and attacking where legal rights were infringed.

A brand is the name or image of a product which has developed an emotional connection to a public.



The fact that the Harry Potter series came out over an extended period (**Philosopher's Stone** 1997; **Chamber of Secrets** 1998; **Prisoner of Azkaban** 1999; **Goblet of Fire** 2000; **Order of the Phoenix** 2003; **Half-Blood Prince** 2005; **Deathly Hallows** 2007) acted as a linear vacuum, growing and building momentum.

Emotional connections developed over years. And **people buy when their emotions condense into action.**

Conventional marketers, violating the Laws of Marketing so far described, try to 'push a product down a public's throat' by sheer volume of promotion. But in the end, readers experience a story, see some commonality with its characters, engage emotionally with it through the application of vacuums, become loyal to it as a brand (which just means that their emotion has turned into action), and spread the word about it.



Example 2: The Lord of the Rings

As we enter the third decade of the 21st century, it's easy to forget that 60 years ago, fantasy as a genre hardly existed.

Yes, there was science fiction, and mixed in with that were a few 'fantasy' stories of the sword and sorcery kind. And there were children's stories in which fantasy played a highly relevant part. But there literally was no such genre as the 'Fantasy' which now forms a significant proportion of any bookshop. Mainstream fiction, romances, crime, mystery, and even Westerns were much more common.

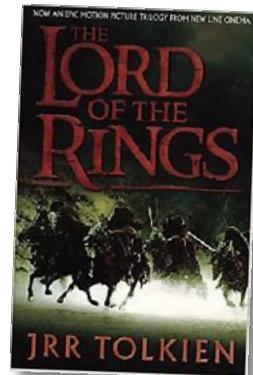
When it comes to **The Lord of the Rings**, we are talking about the creation of a new mass market fictional genre. Since Tolkien's trilogy started to take off in the 1960s,

fantasy has become a genre unto itself.

Not only that, fantasy began to bleed into mainstream entertainment in ways which it's almost impossible to conceive for those born into the Netflix Age of multi-million dollar fantasy epics — they are only seeing the end result of a ground-breaking process.

The Lord of the Rings went on to become one of the best-selling novels ever written, 600 million copies sold to date, and of course spawned multi-Oscar-winning films.

But did it follow the same five marketing principles which we have already seen?



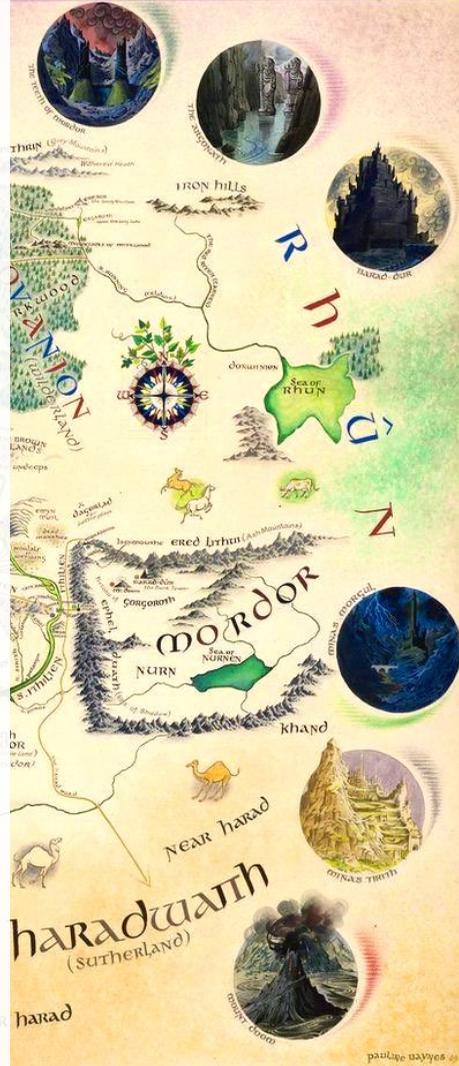
1. The story itself was built on vacuums.

We've already examined, in Part One, the way in which Tolkien structured **The Lord of the Rings** on vacuums — linear vacuums, mystery vacuums, moral vacuums, all coming together around a giant core vacuum, which effectively work in alignment as an engine to convert readers' attention into emotion.

There are the obvious vacuums, pulling readers along and engaging them, but there are a myriad of others, revealed in varying degrees of subtlety.

For example:

- The elves are portrayed as living in harmony with nature and the mortal world, but full of yearning for an environment which matches their own immortal aesthetic. This vacuum eventually pulls them West to the Blessed Lands.



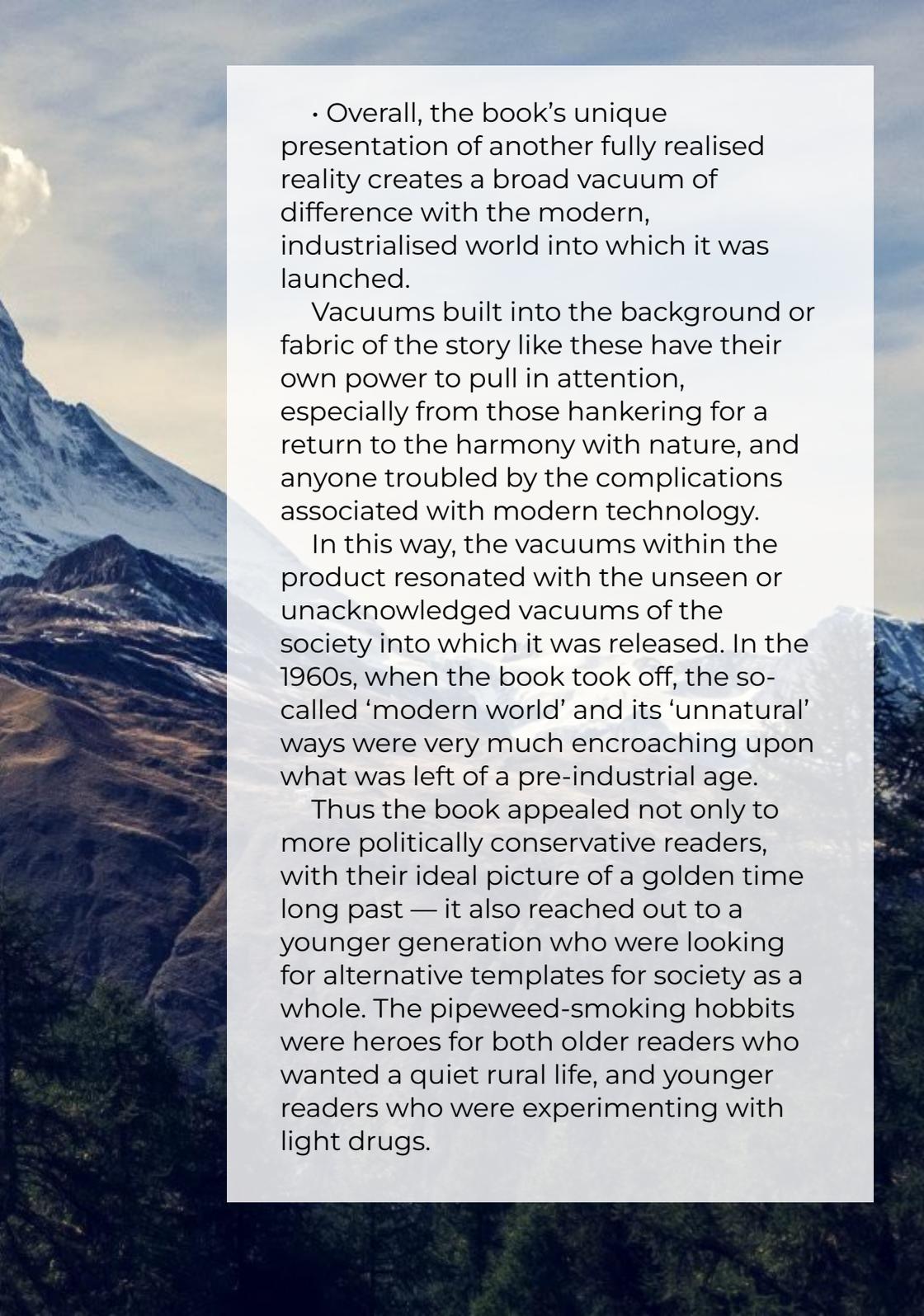
- The dwarves love their mountains and caves but are often found brutally separated from them by dark evils like dragons or Balrogs, instigating adventures.

- The pastoral paradise of The Shire is later despoiled by the corrupt, power-hungry Saruman. This story-creating vacuum leads to it being restored at the end of the story by the returning hobbits.

- The whole of Middle-earth is afflicted by a blight of thinly disguised industrialisation, seen more clearly in the slag-heaped wasteland of Mordor and less clearly but no less powerfully in what happens to The Shire and the coming Dominion of Men. Sauron's desire to destroy beauty is one of the underlying aspects of the core vacuum of the story.

- The book is infused with a Catholic sense of morality so ethical choices are portrayed as real, poignant and powerful throughout, compared with the moral greyness of modernism. On an intellectual and spiritual level, this creates a vacuum too.





• Overall, the book's unique presentation of another fully realised reality creates a broad vacuum of difference with the modern, industrialised world into which it was launched.

Vacuums built into the background or fabric of the story like these have their own power to pull in attention, especially from those hankering for a return to the harmony with nature, and anyone troubled by the complications associated with modern technology.

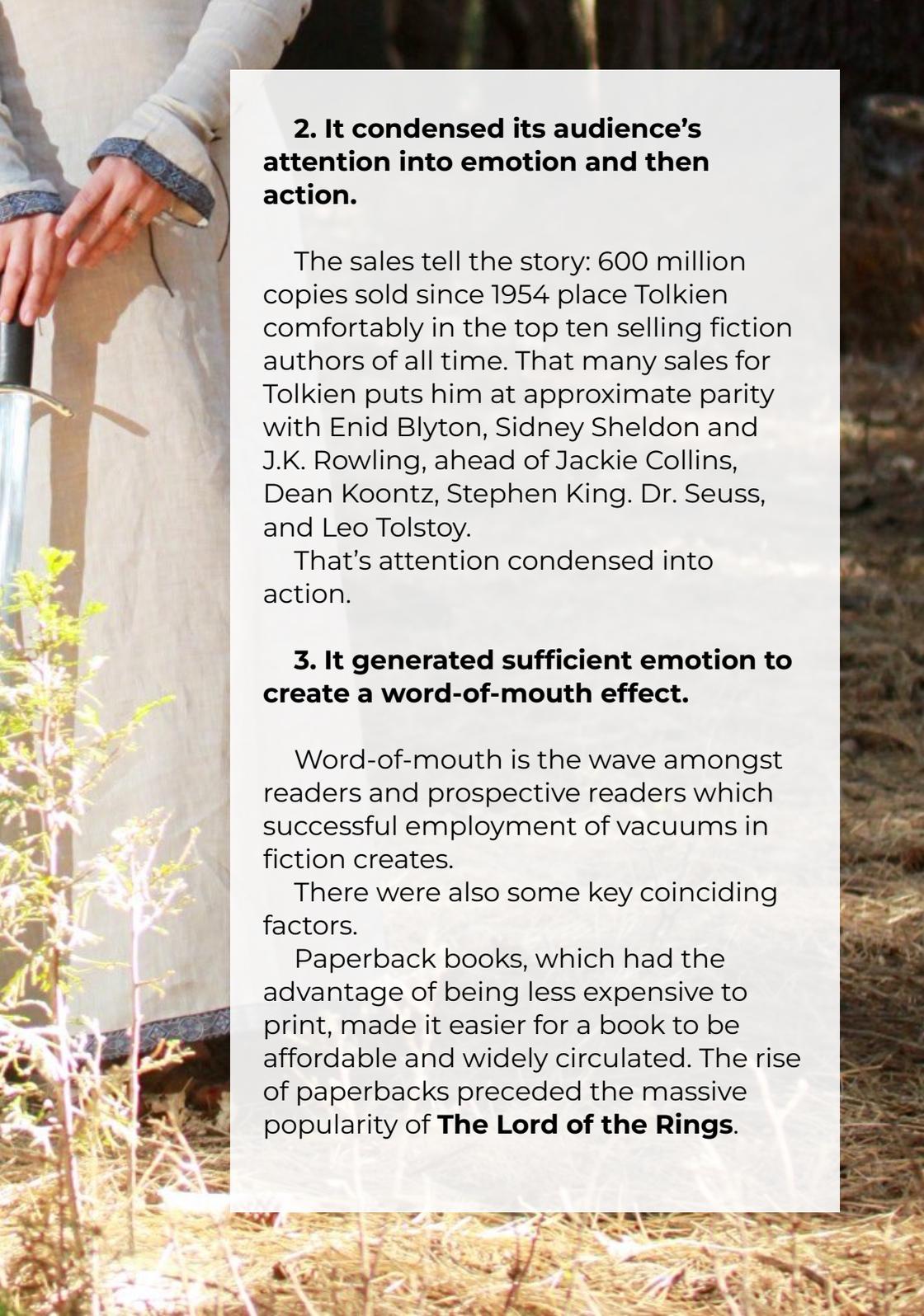
In this way, the vacuums within the product resonated with the unseen or unacknowledged vacuums of the society into which it was released. In the 1960s, when the book took off, the so-called 'modern world' and its 'unnatural' ways were very much encroaching upon what was left of a pre-industrial age.

Thus the book appealed not only to more politically conservative readers, with their ideal picture of a golden time long past — it also reached out to a younger generation who were looking for alternative templates for society as a whole. The pipeweed-smoking hobbits were heroes for both older readers who wanted a quiet rural life, and younger readers who were experimenting with light drugs.

A person wearing a long, white, flowing robe with a dark blue or grey patterned hem is standing in a forest. They are holding a sword with a silver blade and a dark hilt. The background shows a tree trunk and a forest floor covered in dry leaves and small plants.

The Lord of the Rings is also deeply anti-war, which resonated with anti-Vietnam war feeling in America for younger readers, and with those who had suffered personally from the Second World War, still very much in living memory at that time. And the true heroes of Tolkien's war were ordinary hobbits, caught up in larger affairs through the desire to do the right thing, which appealed to many young American readers facing the draft back then.

Feminism was on the rise, too: Galadriel the elven queen is one of the most powerful figures in Middle-earth, and courageous shield-maiden Éowyn tells a story of her own in which femininity is the aspect which wins the day.



2. It condensed its audience's attention into emotion and then action.

The sales tell the story: 600 million copies sold since 1954 place Tolkien comfortably in the top ten selling fiction authors of all time. That many sales for Tolkien puts him at approximate parity with Enid Blyton, Sidney Sheldon and J.K. Rowling, ahead of Jackie Collins, Dean Koontz, Stephen King, Dr. Seuss, and Leo Tolstoy.

That's attention condensed into action.

3. It generated sufficient emotion to create a word-of-mouth effect.

Word-of-mouth is the wave amongst readers and prospective readers which successful employment of vacuums in fiction creates.

There were also some key coinciding factors.

Paperback books, which had the advantage of being less expensive to print, made it easier for a book to be affordable and widely circulated. The rise of paperbacks preceded the massive popularity of **The Lord of the Rings**.

Originally published in 1954, **The Lord of the Rings** set the structure for the publication of virtually all epic/quest fantasy since, though in fact the work had been divided into three volumes to minimise any potential financial loss due to the high cost of type-setting and modest anticipated sales. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. of London published the first edition of **The Fellowship of the Ring** on 29 July of 1954 in a print run of a mere 3,000 copies. On 11 November of

1954 the second part, **The Two Towers** came out. There were 3,250 copies made of that run. The 20th of October 1955 saw 7,000 copies of **The Return of the King** come off the presses.

Houghton Mifflin of Boston and New York released an American edition of **The Fellowship of the Ring** in October 1954, 1,500 copies only. With April came **The Two Towers**, 1,000 copies, and early in 1956, 5,000 copies of **The Return of the King** were printed.





Then, trying to capitalise on what they saw as a loophole in copyright law, Ace Books in America attempted to publish a 1965 paperback edition without paying royalties to the author. This backfired spectacularly, and Ace was forced to withdraw their edition, but evidence of a market had been shown. Later that year, an authorised paperback edition was released by Ballantine Books and within a year it had reached the top of The New York Times Paperback Best Seller list. A poster based on the paperback cover of **The Fellowship of the Ring** spread into college dorm rooms.

The success of the trilogy created a new market for fantasy novels, effectively creating a new genre.

4. It used vacuum-powered marketing

Unlike the Harry Potter series, which was released one book at a time over a number of years — and consequently built up momentum among avid fans — **The Lord of the Rings** was fully available on the market before a ‘fan base’ started to grow.

But if we consider the book over the whole seven decades of its life, there has certainly been a ‘vacuum-effect’ creating momentum, contributed to by Peter Jackson’s movie trilogy in the 2000s. The final instalment of that trilogy was the second film to break the one-billion-dollar barrier —the trilogy also won a total of 11 Oscars.

Sales of the book after the film trilogy tripled from approximately 200 million copies to today’s 600 million sold.





5. It developed its brand over time.

After the publication and success of **The Lord of the Rings**, publishers searched their archives for anything they could find with swordplay or magic involved. **Conan the Barbarian**, written by Robert E. Howard, was a reprint success. A trilogy by Terry Brooks beginning with **The Sword of Shannara** was one of a host of Tolkien 'copycat' books. The fantasy genre began to grow, but the acknowledged master was Tolkien. From a small community of established fans, **The Lord of the Rings** became one of those books that everyone was reading, or at least everyone knew about. Fantasy became part of popular culture — but its touchstone was **The Lord of the Rings**.



ON STAR WARS
ARRIE FISHER

by
WILLIAMS

THE LUXE® TECHNICOLOR®

in 20th Century Records and tapes

1. The story itself was built on vacuums.

We've examined some of the internal vacuums which made the story work in Part One. Marketing-wise, though, we can still pick up plenty of pointers.

George Lucas said that the fatal mistake made by most science fiction films was spending too much time on special effects. They were 'showing off', he thought, instead of focusing on the quality of the story.

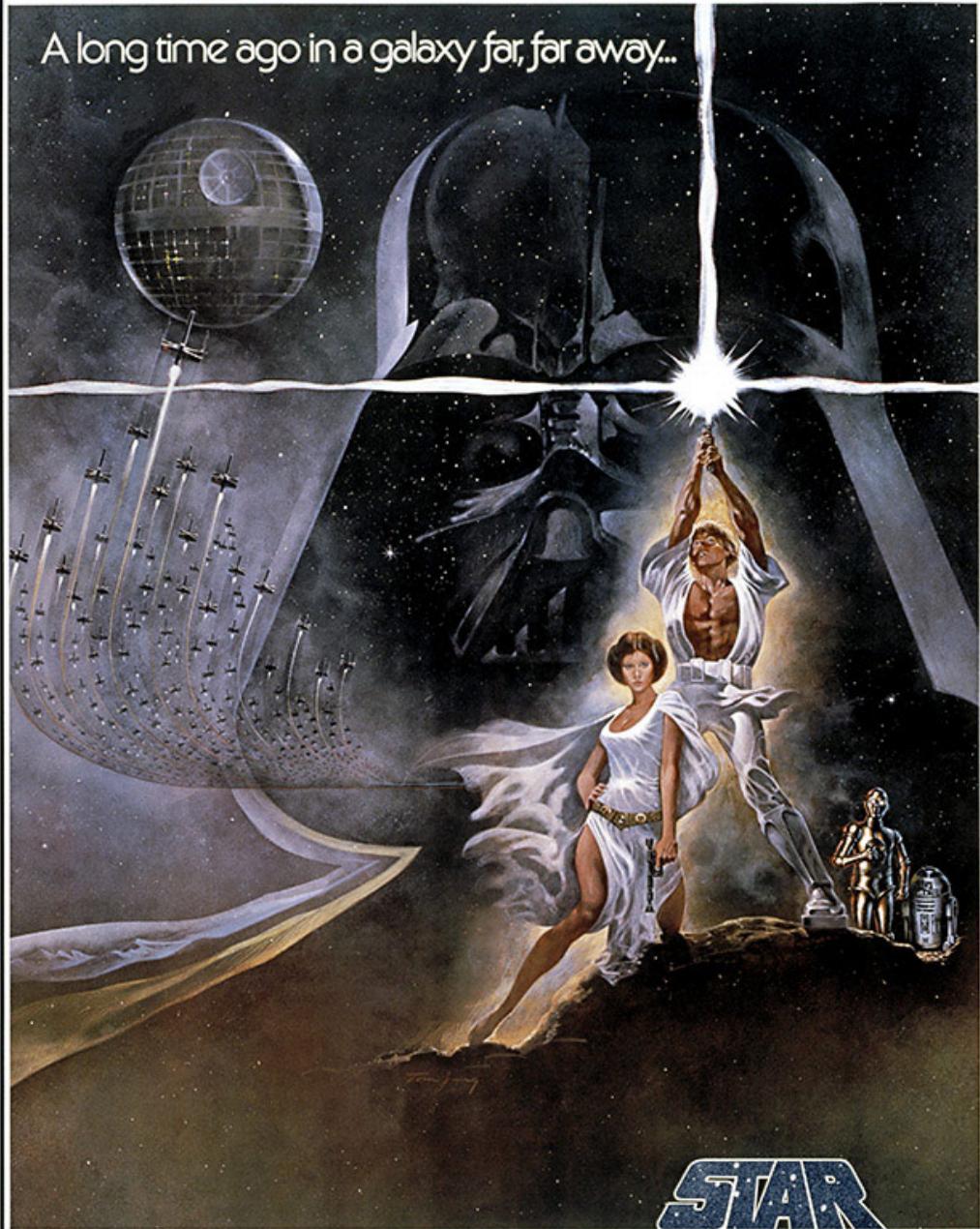
His message — that the human spirit was more powerful than the material world — was conveyed to audiences through a network of vacuums within the tale, of which some central examples are:

- Luke Skywalker returns home to find his uncle and aunt, whom he had lived with since his youth, killed by the evil Empire, pointlessly, collateral damage. Luke is established as our 'audience vehicle'.
- mentor Obi Wan Kenobi, who knew Luke's father and who introduces Luke to the Force, is suddenly killed toward the end of film, leaving Luke even more vacuum-laden.
- the imperial super-weapon, the Death Star, slowly approaches the world upon which the Rebel Alliance is hiding. The standard story element of a countdown increases the sense of threat.

These and many other scenes ramp up the vacuum power and condense more and more attention into emotion.



A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...



© 1977 Twentieth Century-Fox

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX Presents
A LUCASFILM LTD. PRODUCTION

STAR WARS

Starring MARK HAMILL HARRISON FORD CARRIE FISHER
PETER CUSHING

and
ALEC GUINNESS

Written and Directed by GEORGE LUCAS Produced by GARY KURTZ Music by JOHN WILLIAMS

PANAVISION® PRINTS BY DE LUXE® TECHNICOLOR®

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 10

Original Motion Picture Soundtrack on 20th Century Records and Tapes



Making Films Sound Better
DOLBY SYSTEM
Noise Reduction - High Fidelity



2. It condensed its audience's attention into emotion and then action.

Star Wars became an instant success upon release; within three weeks, 20th Century Fox's stock price doubled and shattered records. Before 1977, 20th Century Fox's greatest annual profits had been \$37,000,000; in 1977, the company earned \$79,000,000. Adjusted for inflation, the very first **Star Wars** movie has made over time a whopping \$1.6 billion, outranking in box office terms any other film in the franchise.

Star Wars was literally a 'block buster'

THE STAR WARS SAGA CONTINUES

3. It generated sufficient emotion to create a word-of-mouth effect.

The film rocketed to the top of the all-time highest grossing film list. **Star Wars** won 7 Oscars, which allowed George Lucas to plan a series of further films, originally nine films in all.

On May 27th 1980, the second film premiered in theatres. **The Empire Strikes Back** was entirely funded by Lucas and proved to be a major success, grossing over \$300 million worldwide. There were even reports of fans beginning all-night vigils 3 days before the premiere.



THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK STAR WARS

Starring
MARK HAMILL · HARRISON FORD · CARRIE FISHER
BILLY DEE WILLIAMS · ANTHONY DANIELS

Costarring DAVID PROWSE as Darth Vader · KENNY BAKER as C-3PO · PETER MAYHEW as Chewbacca · FRANK OZ as Yoda

Directed by IRVIN KERSHNER · Produced by GARY KURTZ

Screenplay by LEIGH BRACKETT and LAWRENCE KASDAN · Story by GEORGE LUCAS

Executive Producer GEORGE LUCAS · Music by JOHN WILLIAMS



Original Soundtrack on RSO Records



Filmed in Paramount • Color by Stone Film Laboratories • Print by DeLuxe® Inc. Lucasfilm Ltd. Production - A Twentieth-Century Fox Release



4. It used vacuum-powered marketing

By now, as with the Potter series of books, **Star Wars** had its own audience base. The third film in the series, **Return of the Jedi**, proved to be another success and is currently positioned at #4 on the all-time box office list behind **Star Wars: A New Hope**.

5. It developed its brand over time.

With the original release of each film, hundreds of film-related items of merchandise flooded into stores, from lunch boxes to video games. The popularity of this merchandise faded a little in the mid-to-late 1980s, but then a book trilogy, telling of the aftermath of the **Star Wars** trilogy rocketed to #1 on the New York Times best seller list. Posters and even action figures began to reappear.

Since then, of course, there have been the prequels and the sequels, followed by numerous TV spin-offs, all of which have enjoyed huge success commercially.

The original **Star Wars** trilogy was commercially monstrous, setting records financially — but this was because the films had stories that captivated attention.

Course Marketing Exercise # 6:

Take a look at five other successful products, writing-related or not.

How have they been marketed?

Do you see any of these principles being applied, consciously or not?



25,423 Pageviews

3.32 Pages/Visit

Traffic Sources Overview

- Direct Traffic 3,097.00 (40.0%)
- Search Engines 2,910.00 (38.0%)
- Referring Sites 1,642.00 (21.4%)

**Marketing Lesson One:
Using the Three Laws of
Marketing, you can draw in
prospect attention, direct it
proportionally, and avoid
driving it away — and thus
acquire more sales.**

Visitors Overview



Marketing Lesson One Exercise: YOUR MARKETING VACUUM

Write down the main genres of your fiction. Spend some time nailing these:

GENRE 1:

GENRE 2:

GENRE 3:

Write down the main vacuum for each genre— i.e. what are readers seeking from each one?

**For example:
science fiction readers might be seeking to fill the vacuum of what will happen to our society; romance readers might be seeking to fulfil romantic fantasies. The more you can nail this, the better your marketing will be.**

What emotional experiences are your readers seeking from each genre?



What emotional pay-offs occur in your fiction?

Research at least five social media groups which cater for readers of books like yours. Write down each of their requirements as far as promotion goes: do they allow it? Is it restricted?

**Your next
module:**

**BECOME A
PROFESSIONAL
AUTHOR
COURSE
PART TWO:
SELL STORIES EFFECTIVELY**

Marketing Lesson Two:
Your Marketing Message

Grant P Hudson