



BE THE MEDIA: How to Create and Accelerate Your Message... Your Way
Compiled by David Mathison

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Reviewed by Elizabeth H. Cottrell  
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We've been hearing for the last two or three years that the social media revolution was upon us and that Web 2.0 was creating a paradigm shift in the way we can do business. I knew intellectually this was true, but until I read this book, I didn't understand the enormity and power of this shift or exactly HOW it was happening. This book describes a true revolution—one in which the former small fry of various industries are shown how they can wrest control of their preferred media platform. No longer do authors have to wait until they are accepted by a publisher. Musicians no longer have to depend on a record label or prominent radio station disc jockeys to be heard. Filmmakers can produce their own work. Nonprofits can reduce their TV and newspaper advertising budgets, because there are other ways to spread the word about their mission. There are nuggets of gold here for journalists, publishers, activists, broadcasters, marketers, publicists, licensors, and anyone who has something to promote, whether it's a product, a service, or a message. The information in this book empowers you and me to take control and get a wider audience than was ever possible even as little as five years ago. In fact David Mathison, the compiler of these articles written by a wide range of experts, chose self-publishing himself for this book instead of sharing the profit with a publisher. Instead, he is sharing the profits with anyone who wants to become an affiliate and help him sell the book.

I first learned about *Be The Media* from listening to a free teleseminar in which David Mathison partnered with an Internet marketing guru named Joan Stewart (a.k.a. The Publicity Hound <http://www.publicityhound.com>). I was on Joan's free ezine list, and because it's always so chock full of valuable information, when she offered a free teleseminar, I knew it would be good, even though I'd never heard of David Mathison (not to be confused with Dave Mathews, the musician). Do you see what's going on here? These folks are grasping the NEW WORLD OF BEING THEIR OWN MEDIA and teaming up to build their own platform by creating solid reputations through genuine relationships with other professionals, with their customers, and potential customers.

This book can be dipped into as a resource book by looking at the table of contents or index and finding what seems to be the most applicable to your situation, but I STRONGLY urge you to at least skim all of it. I found, for instance, that even though I am not a musician, the sections that were primarily targeted for helping musicians learn how to promote their work still had ideas that could be used or adapted for authors, speakers, or someone selling an infoproduct. The other

reason for reading it all is that you're bound to have friends who can use some of the information in those other chapters, and you'll get points for telling them about it. There is a rich tapestry of relevant and valuable information here, and you don't want to miss any of it.

Part One: "The Personal Media Renaissance" is a nuts-and-bolts "how-to" on a wide range of topics about reaching your fans without the traditional print publishers, movie studios, music companies, or other corporate giants. The titles will give you a sense of how powerful this is:

- Blogs: How to Create and Promote Your Blog
- Books: How to Self-Publish Your Book (and Promote the Hell out of It)
- Making Music: How to Make Music With Just Three Chords and the Truth
- The Music Business: The New Way to Promote and Sell Your Music
- Podcasting: How to Create and Promote Your Podcast
- Radio: How to Create and Self-Syndicate Your Radio Show
- Video: The Video Revolution
- Film: How to Produce and Distribute Your Ultra-Low Budget Digital Film
- Internet: How to Optimize Your Internet Presence for E-Commerce
- Syndication: All About Syndication
- Licensing: How to License Your Ideas without Selling Your Soul
- Zines: Be a zinester: How and Why to Publish Your Own Periodical

I was especially interested to see some good information about retaining your rights and how to partner with others to leverage your exposure. The advice is liberally laced with suggestions on how to balance practicality and ethics.

Part Two: "The Community Media Renaissance" is a broad and wide-ranging discussion about how communities all over the world are "taking back their airwaves and information rights-of-way." These chapters are written by the people who are at the forefront of these movements to make the media more participatory and to allow more public access. This section includes a chapter on Social Networks and how to use them to stay in touch with your fans. There are dialogues about intellectual property rights and how illusive that really is. Other topics include community radio, public access, DIY Wireless, and open publishing.

The contributors to *Be The Media* represent a fascinating collection of experts, educators and advocates in media-related fields. Reading their biographical sketches was most impressive, and their own expertise was supported by generous details, resources and suggestions.

One of the most fascinating take-aways from this book was the concept of "1,000 True Fans" presented by *Wired* Editor-at-Large Kevin Kelly in the Foreword. He defines a True Fan as someone who will purchase anything and everything you produce. "They will drive two hundred miles to see you sing. They will buy the super-deluxe reissued hi-res box set of your stuff even though they have the low-res versions. They have a Google Alert set for your name. They bookmark the eBay page where your out-of-print editions show up. They come to your opening. They have you sign their copies. They buy the T-shirt, the mug, and the hat. They can't wait till you issue your next work." And he suggests that whatever your industry, to make a living, you only need to acquire 1,000 True Fans. Now that is not a small number, but it IS an attainable number, and I found that exciting.

You'll find this book exciting too, because it will give you ideas as well as instructions, and that is a great combination.

TO ORDER THIS BOOK NOW, click here: naturalEcreative.com or paste <http://www.1shoppingcart.com/app/?af=994219> into your browser window.

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Elizabeth H. Cottrell is a writer and owner of [Riverwood Technologies](http://www.riverwoodtechnologies.com) (<http://www.riverwoodtechnologies.com>), a home-based desktop publishing company in Maurertown, Virginia. She is a staff writer and editor for the International Association of Home Business Entrepreneurs (IAHBE), for which she has written extensively on issues facing home-based and small business owners. Other areas of expertise include personal note writing and letter writing for difficult or challenging situations, personal or business. As a community activist and philanthropist as well as a business woman and civic leader, Elizabeth believes in—and teaches—the power of authentic connection with others in all aspects of life.

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