



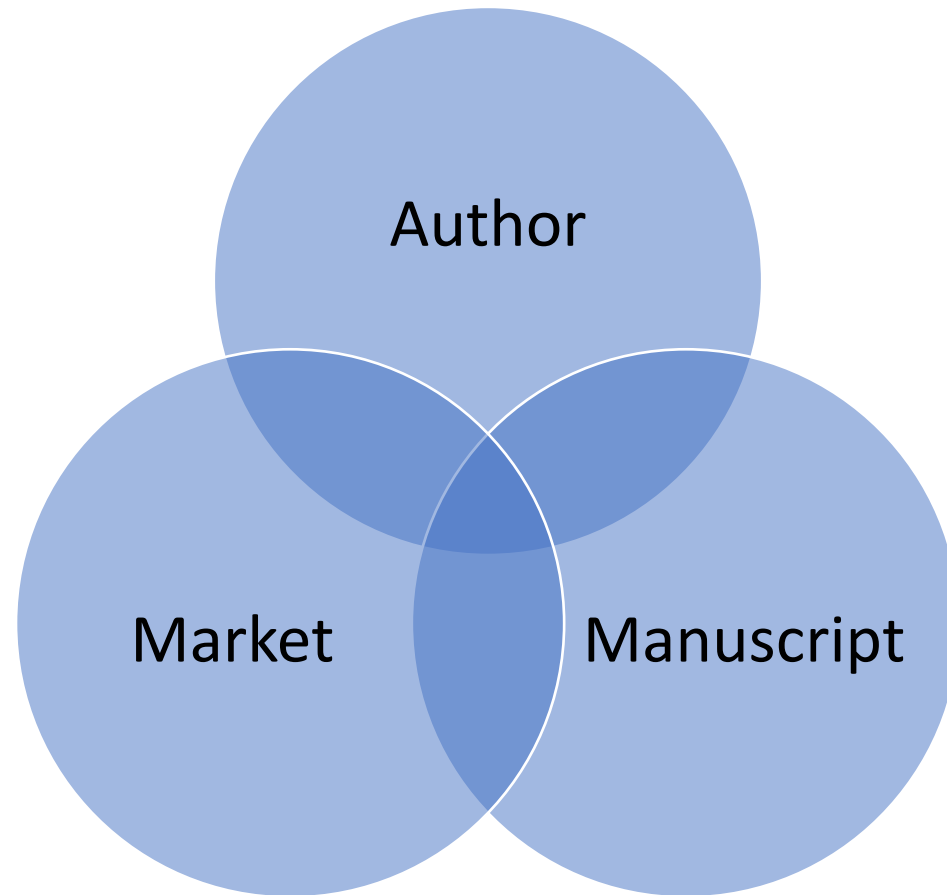
How one publisher evaluates book submissions

Ron Sauder

Bay to Ocean Writers Conference

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Looking for the sweet spot



Author – standard questions

- **What is your definition of success?**
 - i.e., can Secant Publishing meet your expectations?
- **Where have you published before?**
 - How well did you sell?
 - Any other kinds of “social proof”?
- **What are your credentials to write this particular book?**
 - Academic or professional
 - Life experiences (earned or learned)
 - Great talent or a unique voice
- **How big is your platform (sphere of influence)?**
 - Social media presence
 - Memberships or leadership roles
 - Well-known “brand” for whatever reason

Market – standard questions

- **Who would buy this book?**
 - Who would even *care* that it is being published?
- **How could we identify those people?**
 - Mailing lists/ memberships/ distinctive profiles?
 - Delmarva-based?
 - National?
- **Nonfiction vs fiction**
 - Nonfiction books “answer a question or solve a problem” – easier to market
 - Fiction books ultimately depend on rave reviews – again, “social proof”
- **Ease of access?**
 - Cost?

Manuscript – standard questions

- **Is it good?**
 - Well-written
 - Well-edited
 - Well-organized
- **What process has it gone through?**
 - Beta reading?
 - Professional editor?
 - Revision and improvement?
- **Is it distinctive?**
 - In its genre?
 - In the Secant list?

Bottom Line

- **Three critical questions:**
 - Is the author a winner?
 - Is the manuscript a winner?
 - Is there a strong Eastern Shore/ Delmarva connection?
- **Any 2 yes answers tilt positive; 3 are a virtual no-brainer**

“X” Factors

- **Seismic forces – irresistible to individuals**
 - Economy
 - Pandemic
 - Book industry changes
- **Personal**
 - What’s already in my pipeline
 - Limited through-put (think *mini-indie*) ...

Parting thoughts

“Books don’t sell books. Authors do.”

“ ... the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong ...
but time and chance happeneth to them all.”

- *Ecclesiastes*

Contact and Submissions

Query First – Always

Include author credentials and synopsis or first chapter of manuscript

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