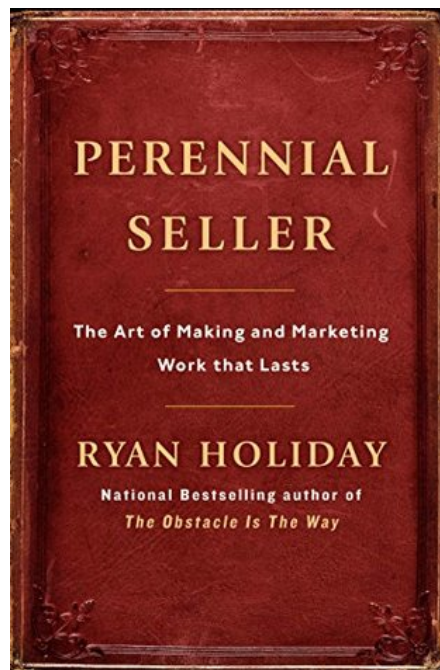




Perennial Seller: The Art of Making and Marketing Work that Lasts

Ryan Holiday

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Bestselling author and marketing strategist Ryan Holiday reveals to creatives of all stripes--authors, entrepreneurs, musicians, filmmakers, fine artists--how a classic work is made and marketed.

In Hollywood, a movie is given a single weekend to succeed before being written off. In Silicon Valley, a startup is a failure if it doesn't go viral or rake in venture capital from the start. In publishing, a book that took years to write is given less than three months to sink or swim. These brutally shortsighted attitudes have choked the world with instructions for engineering a flash-in-the-pan and littered the media landscape with fads and flops.

Meanwhile, the greats, the stalwarts, the household names, are those who focus on a singularly different, possibly heretical, idea: that their work can and should last. For instance, Zildjian has been one of the premier makers of cymbals since its founding in 1623--and shows no signs of quitting. Iron Maiden has filled stadiums for forty years, moving some 85 million albums without the help of radio or television. Robert Greene's first book, *The 48 Laws of Power*, didn't hit the bestseller lists until over a decade after it was first released, and since then has sold more than 1 million copies worldwide.

These works Ryan Holiday calls Perennial Sellers. They exist in every creative industry--timeless, dependable resources and unsung moneymakers, paying like blue chip annuities. Like gold or land, they increase in value over time, outlasting and outreaching any competition. And they're not flukes or lucky breaks--they were built to last from the outset.

Holiday shows readers how to make and market their own classic work. Featuring interviews with some of the world's greatest creatives, and grounded in a deep study of the classics in every genre, this exciting new book empowers readers with a foundational set of innovative principles. Whether you have a book or a business, a song or the next great screenplay, this book reveals the recipe for perennial success.

Perennial Seller: The Art of Making and Marketing Work that Lasts Details

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Ryan Holiday

From Reader Review Perennial Seller: The Art of Making and Marketing Work that Lasts for online ebook

J.R. says

Just because you've created something doesn't mean someone will want it.

Whether it's a book, art, music or some other product of your imagination, your job is to make others want it. Some will be satisfied with a quick payoff and move on to another project.

In this book, Ryan Holiday offers strategies for making your creation a lasting--a perennial--seller, a project with an unlimited lifetime of reward. His blueprint is practical and filled with examples of artists in many fields who have achieved this kind of success.

He emphasizes from the start, it isn't easy. It takes work, lots of hard work, and dedication to the process.

Many self-help books raise false expectations. Holiday is frank in saying you can do everything right and still fail. There's that little thing called luck that's a factor in every enterprise. Still, do everything right and it's more likely luck will follow. You can't succeed without trying.

Holiday divides his blueprint into four parts--the creative process, positioning, marketing and platform. All are essential if you want to achieve the goal of creating a perennial seller. Follow the process and you'll have a product people will care about and want.

Reading this book will inspire you. It's a worthy addition to any creative person's book shelves.

Jonatan Billiau says

I believe, quite strongly, that Perennial Seller will not be, in fact, a Perennial Seller.

I am a big fan of Ryan Holiday's work, and enjoyed all his other books, most notably his work on Stoicism; Ego is the Enemy and The Obstacle is the Way. This book felt a whole different level of quality. In sheer defiance of his own advice in this very book, the writing felt rushed and without substance. Creation for the sake of creation.

The entire time while reading this I imagined a Holiday pushed by publicists, trying to reach the prior agreed number of pages. Gone are the insightful stories and quotes. Instead it comes across preachy and pedantic.

I hope this book was only what I believe it was; a forced attempt at another marketing book he had to squeeze out for publicity reasons. I hope that he goes back to focusing more on writing stories he truly cares about.

E.M. Epps says

This is one of those books that's a brilliant condensation of wisdom pertaining to X thing (in this case, see the subtitle for the value of X). The use you get out of it will be proportional to how *few* books you've read on surrounding topics. I've probably got it covered 7/10, so my reactions were mostly along the lines of "oh, that's a good reminder." However, if you are a creative person who wants to get a good, bullshit-free understanding the commercial/marketing aspects of art, you should get this book at once. It may be the only one you'll need.

Neistat was expressing a truth every creator learns, one that is all the more essential in an online world where things can be shared with the click of a button: *Ideas are cheap*. Anyone can have one. There are millions of notebooks and Evernote folders packed with ideas, floating out there in the digital ether or languishing on dusty bookshelves. The difference between a great work and an *idea* for a great work is all the sweat, time, effort, and agony that go into engaging that idea and turning it into something real. That difference is not trivial. If great work were easy to produce, a lot more people would do it.

Niklas Laninge says

Didn't find anything that stuck and resonated with me. Sure, the tips are great, the examples well known but this could really have been reduced to a listicle than some +200 pages. Also, if you've read zero to one, heard some pod episodes of Tim ferriss and ever visited a growth hacking forum this book won't bring you anything new. Just a lot of goes with nothing that ties them together.

Tamara says

Super interesting and highly readable.

(Note to self: Had to return to library; stopped reading at p147)

David Wogahn says

Loved this book. This review is from my blog, which has better formatting and links (davidwogahn.com)

I like the idea of publishing a book that becomes a classic. A book that once bought, is not resold. A book recommended by experts—the people who could have written a book just like it, but haven't. It sells, year after year. There is no real competition because it's considered one-of-a-kind.

Trouble is, how do you create such a book? Or any classic for that matter?

Ryan Holiday has taken a shot at breaking down the process in his latest book, *The Perennial Seller*. He illustrates his points using examples from music (Iron Maiden and Lady Gaga) and restaurants (The Original Pantry and Clifton's), but mostly it's about books. Like the indie-published *Worms Eat My Garbage* by Mary Appelhof, a book that's sold 165,000 copies since it was first published more than 35 years ago.

Here's a breakdown of the four parts he says are necessary to achieving perennial seller status.

Part 1: The Creative process

From the Mindset to the Making to the Magic

“Literature is a wonderful profession because haste is no part of it. Whether a really good book is finished a

year earlier or a year later makes no difference.” —Stefan Zweig

Holiday talks in *The Creative Process* about not waiting until the book is finished to figure out who your reader is. He calls it pre-work—the conceptualization, your motivations, the product’s fit with the market. That these “intangible factors matter a great deal. They cannot be skipped. They can’t be bolted on later.”

Holiday suggests 6 good reasons why we may feel the urge to create in the first place:

Because there is a truth that has gone unsaid for too long.

Because you’ve burned the bridges behind you.

Because your family depends on it.

Because it’s a once-in-a-lifetime moment.

Because it will help a lot of people.

Because the excitement you feel cannot be contained.

(It’s interesting to note that perennial sellers are not written for “fun”, “me”, profit, or to “brand me as a thought leader.”)

Part 2: Positioning

From Polishing to Perfecting to Packaging

I was seated next to a retired librarian at a recent party, and she asked what I did. When I told her I help authors self-publish, beginning after it has been edited, she exclaimed, “Oh, I didn’t know self-publishers used editors.” Ouch.

Editing is not the only focus of *The Perennial Seller* section on Positioning, but if a book is intended to stand the test of time, it’s a critical step in the process. And it isn’t just about ensuring the rules of English are followed, it’s about making sure the book’s content is positioned to serve its intended audience.

Holiday reminds us that readers “...need to be able to put things into categories so we know where they fit.” I call it writing-to-mission, not to be confused with writing-to-market.

He includes a useful exercise to help in this regard. Fill in the blanks of these two sentences:

This is a [insert] that does [insert].

This helps people [insert].

Do that in a sentence, paragraph, and a full page. (This is the same exercise our AuthorImprints clients go through when we gather information for distribution. It’s also not uncommon for this to be a first-time exercise.)

Part 3: Marketing

From Courting to Coverage, Pushing to Promotion

A perennial product requires perennial marketing.

At the end of the marketing chapter Holiday reminds us to define our product launch and start strong, but not at the expense of giving up or running out of money and energy for the continued push a perennial seller requires. Stay lean, and “keep going” as Brian Clark says.

He touches on the importance of humility, and a few pages later challenges us to use it to counteract a tendency to feel entitlement when marketing our book.

The trap that many of us fall into is believing that people are eagerly waiting for what we’ve created. The

truth is that nobody cares. Holiday points out: “How could they? The don’t know what it is.” This is the job of marketing.

So how do you do that?

Many immediately think of advertising. But Holiday reminds us that “advertising can add fuel to the fire, but rarely is it sufficient to start one.”

Contacting influencers is also a common tactic. The key there is knowing who in your niche is approachable, which often means starting with the B-list. Chances are, if you make progress here, the A-list will find out.

What Holiday has found most successful is getting products into the hands of the right people—for free or nearly free. I was especially taken by the marketing tactic Steven Pressfield used to promote his self-published *The Warrior Ethos*. He paid to print 18,000 copies labeled as a special “Military Edition”, and gave them away to his contacts in the armed services. It was a massive success.

I’ll close with two sentences that sum up what I see as our struggle to promote our own books.

“You don’t get coverage for what you feel or what you believe. Only what you do with those beliefs or feelings.”

Part 4: Platform

From Fans to Friends and a Full-Fledged Career

If you are familiar with Holiday’s other books you know he is a fan of stoicism, which dates to 300BC. Early in part 4 he quotes Marcus Aurelius as challenging himself to be a “boxer, not a fencer.”

“A fencer, he said, has to bend down to pick up his weapon. A boxer’s weapon is a part of him—‘all he has to do is clench his fist.’”

The translation for us as self-publishers is that “fencers” must rely on advertising and paid promotion while a “boxer” owns their own platform. They never stop building it, and it’s always there when they needed it.

There’s a great story about how after a string of failures, the actor Kevin Hart built his following. I call this one’s addressable audience and it consists of email addresses, Twitter followers, Facebook friends—anyone you can reach on your own, without going through an intermediary.

When Sony Pictures got hacked in 2014 a string of emails was released showing how Hart was using his platform to negotiate a better deal with the studios. If they expected him to promote their movie, they needed to pay a marketing fee.

So if an addressable audience is the key, how do you go about building it? First, he shares wisdom from Tim Ferriss about attitude and approach:

Never dismiss anyone. “Treat everyone like they could put you on the front page of the New York Times.” Play the long game. Aim for establishing long-term relationships, not just when you need someone’s help. Focus on the “pre-VIPs.” This is the B-list I referred to earlier.

In terms of strategies, Holiday shares 7 that he uses:

Give something away for free as a bonus.

Create a gate. An example is giving away some content for free, but to get the rest you need to fork over an email.

Use pop-ups. This could be on your website, but also a message at the end of your book that encourages the reader to leave a review.

Do things by hand. Use a clip board to get emails when you speak. Ask people to email you if they want to join your list, then add them by hand. (As much as I hate doing this, I have to admit it works.)

Run a contest. Give something away in a drawing.

Do a swap. Email your list and ask people to join someone else's. And vice versa.

Promise a service. If you are building a mailing list, what does being on your list do for people? Make it worth their while.

The last thing I'll close with is some advice from well-known book publicist Barbara Hendricks. It's advice she gives her A-list clients regarding platform building.

Put as much time and effort into promoting your book as you did in writing it. And Participate. Participate. Participate.

W. Whalin says

Get These Insights about How to Make a Book Which is Different

Every day thousands of new books enter the market. Which books become continual sellers? Bestselling author Ryan Holiday has studied these details with his own books and with other books. PERENNIAL SELLER is loaded with the details for every author or would-be author to read. Ryan has a keen sense of what it takes to create an excellent book and each of his sections includes gems of information for the writer.

While many writers believe their key failure is in the marketing areas, Ryan writes in the opening pages, "Promotion is not how things are made great—only how they are heard about. Which is why this book will not start with marketing, but with the mindset and effort that must go into the creative process—the most important part of creating a perennial seller." (Page 19)

Also for those writers who believe they can quickly crank out such a book, Ryan cautions, "Creating something that lives—that can change the world and continue doing so for decades—requires not just a reverence for the craft and a respect for the medium, but real patience for the process itself. (Page 29-30)

No matter who you are working with to get the book out there, Ryan is realistic in PERENNIAL SELLER encouraging the writer to take their own responsibility rather than feel like they can delegate it to someone else. In the section on positioning, he writes a section called "You're the CEO" saying, "If the first step in the process is coming to terms with the fact that no one is coming to save you—there's no one to take this thing off your hands and champion it the rest of the way home—then the second is realizing that the person who is going to need to step up is you." (Page 67)

Whether you are brand new to publishing or a seasoned writer with multiple bestsellers, you will gain insights reading PERENNIAL SELLER. I found the book engaging and valuable—in fact, maybe a book that I will read multiple times (unusual for me). I highly recommend this title.

Max Nova says

In my 2013 personal annual review, I wrote that I wanted to build something that would last 100 years. I have made no progress over the last four years. It is such a large and intimidating goal that it seems

impossible to begin. Where to start? What are the steps along the path? Ryan Holiday's "Perennial Seller" promises to help us "make something that can stand the test of time," and he delivers.

The book surprised me with its focus on the marketing side of things. A quarter of the book is about actually creating a masterpiece. The remainder of the book deals with the positioning, marketing, and platform strategy needed to make a work grow and endure. This part of the process had always been a mystery to me. I was one of those naive people who thought writers just handed off their works to their publishing companies ("kissing it up to God") and then their work was done.

Holiday insists that great creators see "every part of the process as their responsibility" and he relentlessly pushes us build a platform to connect with our fans. I had never thought about having a pre-built platform/network of people to help jumpstart the spread of my work. It's such an obvious idea that I can't believe I hadn't been doing it before. And to give us a clear and achievable target, Holiday quotes Kevin Kelly who says:

Anyone producing works of art — needs to acquire only 1,000 True Fans to make a living

Beyond the importance of a platform strategy, I found Holiday's thoughts on the advertising interesting. While the initial launch is an important opportunity, he discounts the long-term importance of advertising:

If a product is going to sell forever, it must have strong word of mouth. It must drive its own adoption. Over the long haul, this is the only thing that lasts

But how to rate this book? It's certainly not great literature itself. Most of Holiday's recent work (including his "Obstacle is the Way" is written according to the same formula. Find a bunch of great quotes and then include a very thin veneer of analysis and add some link to modern situations.

Having followed Holiday for years, I feel like he recycles the same guys (Churchill, Epictetus, Lincoln, Robert Greene, Aurelius) over and over again. He seems brilliant and widely read when you first encounter him, but repeated exposure threatens to expose the shallowness beneath the surface. I'm particularly concerned by his increasing promotion of James Altucher (one of his clients at Brass Check) who follows a similar but less well-executed formula for writing his own mediocre books. See my 2-star review of Altucher's "The Choose Yourself Guide to Wealth" for why I think this is a bad direction for Holiday.

Yet this book accomplishes what few other books have - it made me change my behavior. Taking Holiday's advice that, "the best time to have built your network was yesterday. The second best time is right now," I have started to set up my own "platform" for connecting with people who enjoy my book reviews. One day, when I write my great American novel, I'll be well-prepared to begin the next step of the journey: turning it into a perennial seller.

Full review and highlights at <http://books.max-nova.com/perennial-seller/>

Ties says

It's fine. I enjoy Ryan's storytelling / style and like his approach in general. I feel that's where it remains though, being very general even though the book is filled with examples and stories.

I'm missing something, and as holiday quotes Neil gaiman, your reader is most often right if he feels a work lacks something. I wouldn't really recommend this book to be honest even though it's all right. I wouldn't know what to recommend it for.

MGMaudlin says

I have been working in publishing for over three decades and have become a little jaded when someone wants to explain the book business, especially when giving advice on how to be successful at it. And so I was surprised when I found myself nodding vigorously with everything Ryan Holiday says in PERENNIAL SELLER, from how to conceive of the project to the role of the editor to how to think about and do marketing for the project. I won't summarize his main points since there are so many, but I will say this: I will recommend this book to everyone (especially my authors)! I suspect it will indeed become a perennial seller, as it should.

Lone Wong says

"They are the kind of art or products that we return to more than once, that we recommend to others, even if they're no longer trendy or brand-new. In this way, they are timeless, dependable resources and unsung moneymakers, paying like annuities to their owners. Like gold or land, they increase in value over time because they are always of value to someone, somewhere."

This is not a typical marketing tactic book that you're looking for. If you're looking for a marketing book or any tactic to sell your mediocre ideas or products to your customer, I advise you skip this book as there's no any deductive or easy formula guideline to help you promote your mediocre ideas.

This is a book to cultivate our mindset, discipline, and creativity to become a perennial seller. I remember I read a book, by *Nassim Taleb* in **Antifragile** he describes "If a book has been in print for forty years, I can expect it to be in print for another fifty years." They are the examples of a phenomenon known in economics as the **Lindy Effect**.

During this digital era and exponential growth of social media and the numerous contents buzz on the internet. The lifespan of the product consuming is getting shorter than ever. People's attention is getting constraint. And this makes me wonder how do we create something that can be able to last longer than those viral content on the internet or the product offering by those new ventures on the market.

The title of "Perennial Seller" attracted my attention and interest and it turns out I quite enjoy reading it. The book distinguishes into four parts, Part I *Creative Process*, Part II *Positioning*, Part III *Marketing*, at last Part IV *Platform*. (I personally think Part I is not even satisfied my curiosity and thirst to know more about thinking creatively, in my opinion, I rather prefer **Todd Henry's Accidental Creative**) But no doubt, this is a book that not only meant for business but anyone who is the creator. In the purest form, every entrepreneur, designer, journalist, producer, filmmaker, comedian, blogger, actor, investor-anyone doing any kind of creative work. Ryan advocates people to think like an artist, challenge ourselves and our work, to thrive further and to create successful masterpieces to the world, make an impact on the society, put a mark into the world. To become a perennial seller.

Blahoot says

In one part of Perennial Seller, Ryan Holiday shares advice he got from an unnamed successful author who said that the key to success in non-fiction is to be “very entertaining” or “extremely practical.” Holiday definitely chose plan B.

Perennial Seller is full of practical, timeless advice. It's well written, flows smoothly, and is easy to digest. While there are no groundbreaking new strategies here, what's new (to me at least) is its argument to shift to a longer term focus. Perennial Seller reinforced in me the importance of planning for the long haul instead of shooting for short term rewards. I found this to be compelling and much-needed advice, and is why I wholeheartedly recommend it to any creator.

The problem is the idea of being a “perennial seller” isn't sexy, and the book doesn't do it many favors. (The cover is sexy though!) Changing people's horizons from short to long term to want to create a perennial seller instead of a viral hit is hard. As the Heath brothers outline in their book Switch, to make such a change you need to “direct the rider” (appeal to the rational brain) and “motivate the elephant” (inspire the heart). Perennial Seller does a great job of the former, but not the latter. It didn't make me jump out of my seat to sit back down and create my own perennial seller.

Again, I found the book to be highly practical and well worth the read. And hopefully it embeds the term “perennial seller” within the popular vernacular to join (or replace) terms like “smash hit” and “viral sensation”. I doubt it will though, until it gets sexier.

Ariel Curry says

This book is absolutely essential for writers, editors, marketers and publishers, seeking to think outside the box and make work that lasts.

Daniel Rodic says

Ryan Holiday's latest book - Perennial Seller — walks readers through Ryan's views on what it takes to build a creative work that lasts. It's one part product, and one part marketing.

Here's my key takeaways from the book:

> Most perennial sellers weren't hits out of the gate when they launched. While nailing a good launch is important, when you have a long-term view of how you market and grow your product, the initial reaction by the market doesn't always determine it's long term success.

Take for example Avatar, which is the most commercially successful box office movie ever — that no one ever quotes or remembers scenes from. It definitely achieved success, but not the long-lasting impact (and revenues) that Star Wars created. Unlike Avatar, Star Wars wasn't even #1 at the box office when it debuted in theatres.

> Most “business experts” try to market their hacks and shortcuts to optimize for quick and obvious success. They track their success in “microseconds” versus “years”. Even though people want to do things that matter, this short term thinking leads to them focusing on things that don't.

> Perennial sellers are products we recommend even if they are no longer trendy or brand-new. One example is Zildjian Cymbals. If you look at any famous drummer, you'll see him using those cymbals on their drum

kit. The company has been around since 1623 making the same product.

> Perennial sellers don't just refuse to die, they actually grow stronger with each passing day. For example, Ryan Holiday's own book, *The Obstacle is the Way*, has grown in popularity since its initial launch many years ago, especially once it got into the hands of head coaches in the NFL, which led, two years later, to a huge feature in *Sports Illustrated*.

> Another example is Ted Turner buying MGM's film library, which includes films like *Gone with the Wind*, and smaller films like *The Postman*. The library generates \$100MM+ in revenues per year.

> Another example is Michael Jackson, who bought the rights to all of The Beatles music. He arguably makes more money from The Beatles library than from his own music.

> Another example are the works of Shakespeare, despite being available for free online, it still sells hundreds of thousands of copies per year

> The first step in building a perennial seller is actually focusing on building a quality product or work of art. The better your product, the better your marketing will be. Crappy products don't survive. Microsoft is a great example of how it's perennial seller, Microsoft Office, continues to generate cash flows to this day while they've wasted billions on building and marketing products like Bing or the Zune

> To produce meaningful work, you have to want to do so. Unfortunately, many people want the benefits of great work without enduring any of the difficulty involved.

> Similarly, outsourcing or having someone else work on your idea is never a path to building something that lasts. "There's no firm that can produce a timeless work of art on your behalf for a flat fee."

> A willingness to trade of something — time, comfort, easy, money, recognition — lies at the heart of every great work. If it didn't everyone would do it.

> "Art is the kind of marathon where you cross the finish line, and instead of getting a medal placed around your neck, the volunteers roughly grab you by the shoulders and walk you over to the starting line of another marathon." What this really means is, when creating meaningful work, the job doesn't just stop at creating it, but it also extends into marketing and promoting the work to ensure it's reached by and impacts as many people as possible.

> You must be patient not only in creating you work, but also viewing the success of the work with a very long term view. If it means spending an extra 10 days now to perfect the product, it won't mean much 10 years later.

> You should strive to create things that will be around at least for the next 10 years. There's something called the Lindy effect that if something's been around for a long-time, the chances that it lasts for a longer time increases exponentially with age. Because email has been around for 50 years, there's a high likelihood that it will continue to be here for another 50 years.

> It's sometimes better to draw inspiration from things that have lasted in other industries than focusing on what is popular in your own industry when thinking about building for the long-term

> Creative ideas must be given space to develop. But it also be developed incrementally, bit by bit. There is benefit to sitting and thinking, but at some point you need to put things into market to see how people react to small pieces of it. Continue to create and launch incrementally until your work begins to form itself

- > “Mediocre ideas that contain buried with them the seed of much better ideas.”
- > “A book should be an article before it’s a book, and a dinner conversation before it’s an article. See how things go before going all in.”

- > Define what you’re doing and not doing on a project. Many creators want to be for everyone and as a result end up being for no one. Sometimes it helps to pick out one person you know and create the product for that specific real individual.

- > Often “creating something for yourself” is an excuse, ego in disguise, for not thinking about your audience instead

- > Non-fiction work should be “very entertaining” or “extremely practical”

- > Questions to answer before every project:
 - >> What does this teach?
 - >> What does this solve?
 - >> How am I entertaining?
 - >> What am I giving?
 - >> What are we offering?
 - >> What are we sharing?

- > Summarize what you’re working on in:
 - >> One sentence
 - >> One Paragraph
 - >> One Page

If you can’t do this clearly, you’ll need to refine the idea further

- > The Grateful Dead (a band) weren’t trying to be the best at anything; they were trying to be the only ones doing what they were doing.

- > Positioning is really important as we have to take this thing that means so much to us personal and prime it to mean something to other people too.

- > If you’re not amazing every facet, you’re replaceable.

- > Feedback is important — but you must understand if you’re not taking it because it’s wrong, or because you are afraid to do more work.

- > One interesting test of ideas is the LA Car Test where songwriter Max Martin (writer for Adele, Bon Jovi... etc.) plays an unreleased track while he drives up and down the LA Strip, envisioning whether or not this song fits within the environment he hopes it will thrive in

- > Are early users you’ve given prototypes to already addicted to their early versions of the product?

- > Picking a “genre” for what you do is really important as it helps people pick and discover you from a world of options

- > There is sometimes value in just restating other people’s ideas in a better way. For example, Malcolm Gladwell has made a career of popularizing other peoples academic works. He creates value by just articulating their findings than the original researchers could.

- > It's often easier to reach a smaller well defined group first, WOW them, then expand from there, so long as you don't alienate others
- > You must avoid the trap of making this about you because you won't be the one buying it.
- > Being better isn't enough always as your customer may not even understand why it's important that you're better. Often the best way is to give them or show them your product for free.
- > A good product is your best sales and marketing tool.
- > "If you can't be first in a category, setup a new category you can be first in."
- > Knowing your PURPOSE of WHY you're doing something is important as you need to know if you achieved it, if you're making decisions that jeopardize that mission, and to ensure you turn down exciting distractions that might take you away from it.
- > Steve Jobs was successful because he didn't think about what other people would do, or what he should do, he did what he felt was right for the company long term. This is very similar to how my favourite coach, Bill Belichick, approached his work.
- > "No one cares about what you've made. How can they care much about something they haven't even experienced the benefits of yet? People are busy, they have no idea why they should care about this thing. No one is eagerly awaiting it."
- > A future perennial seller is a creator who doesn't believe he is god's gift to the world, but instead thinks he has created something of value.
- > "Anything that requires advertising to survive will on a long enough timeline cease to be economically feasible"
- > Look up Cass Sunstein's study on why Star Wars was so successful
- > Sometimes it's better to wait before launching until you're equipped to fight the battle. A general would never go into a battle without knowing what he had at his disposal and, if he knew he was under matched, would not even think about pulling the trigger.
- > Even giving away free trials "Cost" the end user their time and mental energy. If you're new to the game, giving things away for free may even be hard.
- > The right price for something is to be as cheap as possible without damaging the perception of your product
- > Classics are classics because (1) it's a good product and (2) it's been consumed by a lot of people — the best way to do #2 is to make it as cheap as possible
- > Think about how to make your audience look good instead of yourself
- > Marc Ecko built his brand by sending influencers free stuff that he thought they would appreciate without asking for anything in return
- > "I wasn't asking for anything. I was making offers" — Ryan Holiday on how he got to know reporters and celebrities at American Apparel

- > “Be a person. Be nice. Think relationship first and transaction second.”
- > “Media outlets have trouble getting people to pay for their own product. What makes you so sure they’re going to be able to convince their readers and viewers to buy yours?”
- > “The hard work is finding the influencers of the influencers”
- > When you “trade up the chain” and go from smaller publications to bigger publications over time, it creates momentum for your work, as opposed to a big flash of publicity and then nothing
- > “The most newsworthy thing to do is usually the one you’re most afraid of”
- > “Paying for media always seems easier than earning it.”
- > “Effectiveness was our metric, not existence”
- > “When you do something unsuspected, it almost always does better than going dollar for dollar with major advertisers.”
- > You can deploy “earned media arbitrage” by buying small media in one place, then creating a story around that media buy to get it amplified in other news outlets
- > Becoming a perennial seller requires that you build a fan base before and after a project
- > Ryan knew in 2008 that he wanted to be a big author, so nearly 10 years ago he created an email list where he sent people book recommendations, knowing one day he would use that list to eventually sell his books. He had a very long-term view of things.
- > “You can pay for influence the way you can pay for sex, but from what I understand, neither is quite the same as when you get it the old-fashioned way.”
- > On Networking; never dismiss anyone, play the long game, focus on pre-VIPs.
- > Building an email list is an incredibly valuable asset to have
- > More great work is often the best way to market yourself and your older works of art. Robert Green’s saw his sales really grow after his 3rd book.
- > Luck also plays a huge factor in your success — you should strive to be within striking distance of your goal at all times, and then hopefully luck pushes you over the finish line.

Links to check out: www.perennialseller.com/gift or email at hello@perennialseller.com

Here’s some memorable quotes from other people quoted in the book that I enjoyed:

- “Whom the gods wish to destroy, they first call promising”
- “People who are thinking about things other than making the best product never make the best product.” - Phil Libin
- “The best way to increase a startup’s growth rate is to make the product so good people recommend it to their friends” - Paul Graham
- “Lots of people want to be the noun without doing the verb” (Austin Kleon)
- “Write on subjects in which you have enough interest on your own to see through all the stops, starts,

hesitations and other impediments along the way.” - John McPhee

- “Focus on the things that don’t change.” - Jeff Bezos

- “Getting into action generates inspiration. Don’t cop out waiting for inspiration to get you back into action. It won’t” - Robert Evans

- “Only is better than best” - Srinivas Rao

- “If you are working on something original, you will have to ram the idea down their throats” (on being worried about someone stealing your idea)

- “Platform is not a stepping stone. IT’s the finish line.” - Casey Neistat

- “Be a boxer, not a fencer.” A boxers weapon is part of him (alluding to what a platform is versus paying for media)

Jason Pettus says

I have a complicated relationship with the work of former douchebag marketer turned full-time author Ryan Holiday, who to remind you first made his fame and fortune by being the driving force behind the infamous kiddie-porn ads that got American Apparel in so much trouble, as well as the entire career of professional rapist and human monster Tucker Max; and while I've ended up loving the more philosophical writing he's done since on topics like Stoicism, I've also been intensely disappointed to see him return to his douchebag roots through such recent projects as a hagiography of sociopath Peter Thiel, and in general I simply don't know how to feel about this genuinely talented writer who flip-flops with every other book between admirably earnest writing and the kind of writing that makes you want to angrily throw his book into a wood chipper.

Unlike most of his other books, 2017's *Perennial Seller* aims to be a straight-down-the-middle, dry factual guide to creating, marketing and promoting creative projects in a way that guarantees their popularity for years and decades to come, which is both the book's blessing and curse; for while all the advice given here is absolutely solid and helpful, it's also nothing more than the kind of basic advice you find in any book concerning these subjects, which is disappointing given the overhyped promises the book makes about this containing some sort of special magical lessons you won't learn elsewhere. Ultimately there's not a single difference between an author who follows all the advice in this book and has a novel that still flops after a few weeks, and an author who does the exact same steps but has a novel that continues selling for twenty years, other than pure dumb random luck; and while you will definitely increase your chances of your project being a long-term success if you follow all the advice here, it's disappointing to see Holiday not acknowledge, "Oh, and yeah, you also need a bunch of random dumb luck on your side too, or else none of this advice will matter even the tiniest bit." I will continue checking out the newest books by this engaging but often infuriating writer as he keeps releasing them; but while this particular title isn't going to do you any specific harm if you follow its advice, it's certainly not a guarantee that it's going to do you any good either.
