

EXAMPLE 2

██████████ "Hidden" by Liza Marklund, Swedish books

I. My product and firm

A. My Product/Service

Product name: "Hidden", by author Liza Marklund

This is a true story about a battered women and her family on the run. It is written as an exiting thriller, taken directly out of the Swedish reality. It's written together with the real Maria Eriksson and is scarcely realistic. Were released February 25th 2000.

Released in/Copies sold:

Sweden: 500 000 copies
Norway: 300 000 copies
Denmark: 300 000 copies
Finland: 200 000 copies
Germany: 100 000 copies
Netherlands: 100 000 copies
Total: 1.5 million copies

Profit example on 100 000 sold books:

Cost for printing: \$290 000
Cost distribution: \$150 000
Cost marketing/PR: \$ 100 000
Proceeds: \$700 000
Profit: \$160 000

About the author:

- Liza Marklund is a 40-year-old fulltime writer and journalist.
- Has written 5 thrillers, all on the bestseller list in all of Scandinavia.
- Writes columns for a number of papers, both in Sweden and abroad. Every second Friday she has a new column in Aftonbladet, Sweden's largest daily paper.
- Been awarded 5 times for her novels, for example Author of the year 1999.

B. My Company

Company name: Swedish Book's

- Founded in 1995, published our first books in 1996.
- Owned by two of Sweden's biggest authors and one known publisher.
- Publishes fiction for adults.
- Currently publishing 15 fiction authors, primary from Sweden, but also from the rest of Scandinavia.
- Limited resources for new writers.
- The publishing firm's business idea is to give the writers bigger influence and better economical conditions.
- Don't use royalty systems, use half and half instead (profit in equal share to the company and the write).
- Goal is to be one of Sweden's largest fiction publishers with good yield over time.
- Want to provide good reading experiences to a broad audience.
- Located in the capital of Sweden, Stockholm.

My role in the company:

- Publisher/Editor
- Have been in the company since 1998.
- Work mainly with publishing questions
- Responsible for the North American market.

Other books published in the U.S. by Liza Marklund:

"The Bomber", 2000, Pocket Books 450 000 copies

"Studio Sex", 2001, Pocket Books 300 000 copies

II. My Buyer

A. The Buying firm

Company name: American Books

- Founded in 1975, published our first books in 1977.
- Owned by two brothers who been in the publishing business 10 years before opening their own firm.
- Specialized in paperback books.
- Mostly publishing thrillers and novels, by proved authors.
- Currently publishing 23 fiction authors, primary from the U.S., but also Canada and Great Britain.
- Don't publish many for new writers and don't like taking big risks.
- Located in Duluth, Minnesota.

The buyer:

- Publisher
- Have been in the company since 1982.
- Work mainly with publishing decisions and have the authority to sign a contract.
- Reads manuscripts, and decides which one to keep.

B.1. Buyer's needs

- Don't really have a book that covers the target group females 20-30 years old, and this is a highly profitable group for this kind of market.
- Don't like to take risks and need proof that the book will be successful. Need to know what the author has been doing before, and that the book really will sell.

B.2. Buyer's customer's needs

Reseller's needs:

- Needs something that stands out, because there are hard competition on the market for paperback books, and because customers don't take that long time to by this kind of book.
- Needs a book with high selling volume since margins on paperback books are low.

Customer's needs:

- Somewhat easy to comprehend, since this often is the kind of book you read when you got a minute to spare. For example, on trips, on the beach, or on lunch break.
- Have to give the reader a good reading experience, should arise some feelings and give the reader a way to identify with the book.

C. So far I have...

...talked to one of the employees in their marketing department, and found out about their looking for an writer to cover females in the age group 20-30 year.

...talked to the buyer Chris Harrison's secretary, who informed me that Mr. Harrison travels a lot in Europe, mostly England and Italy, never been to Sweden. She also told me that he is a very busy man and that I should be early and don't use more time than given.

...talked to Mr. Harrison once on the phone because he likes to make his own appointments "that way he knows what is going on". He promised me ten minutes of his time.

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III. The buyer’s options

A. “Hidden” by Liza Marklund, Swedish books (not a set price, no lower than \$100 000)

Strengths:

Have been tested on the European market, and been successful.

The writer are published in the U.S. before and done well.

Weaknesses:

Not a famous writer in the U.S.

The story is set in Sweden, a country on the other side of the Atlantic Sea.

B. “What belongs to me” by Anne Holt, Norska Bocker (not a set price, lowest \$60 000)

Strengths:

Have been tested on the European market, and been successful.

Have a lower starting price and the same target group.

Weaknesses:

Haven’t been tried on the American market.

The story isn’t as realistic.

C. “Tokyo Night” by Elin Lindqvist, Bonniers (not a set price, lowest \$100 000)

Strengths:

Have been tested on the European market, and done well.

Are published by Sweden’s largest and most successful publishing firm.

Weaknesses:

This is here first book and she hasn’t had the time to build up a name for herself anywhere.

Has a high price for a new author.

D. Every author with a book that is directed towards women in this target group.

Strengths:

Might have made a name for him/herself on the American market.

The story might have been written by and for Americans, easier to identify with.

Might not include cost for translation.

Weaknesses:

The book has probably not been tested on another market before.

IV. Objectives

A. Primary Goal

I want to awaken interest for the book and get him to read it.

I want him to really consider this book for publishing and be interested a deal further ahead.

B. Minimum goal

Get him to keep the book, and at least consider reading it.

C. Optimistic goal

He makes an offer on the book without even reading it.

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I. Objections

1. I don't think that American women can identify with a Swedish one.
2. The books story doesn't seem interesting to me.
3. How much will it cost to translate it into English?
4. I have never heard about this author before, so how do I know she is good enough?
5. Why should we buy a Swedish book when we have so many great American books that we don't have to translate?
6. I don't think the journalist can write good books. They can only write short stories and articles.
7. How long have you been doing this job, because you appear very young, what kind of experience do you have in this business? Have you worked with American publishers before?
8. What other writers does your company work with? Anyone I would know of? What does your selling history look like?
9. How do I know that Liza's writing style fits the American market? What makes you think that it will be successful here?
10. What's her background? What kind of other books have she written? What kind of journalism was she doing, investigating, popular, etc.?
11. I don't think this book would fit the target market we are looking for.
12. We usually work with North American writers, it have worked out well this far.
13. This is a big investment, how do I know it will pay back?
14. It's hard to make any kind of decision about this book without reading it first. Why didn't you send it to me so I had a chance to read it before our meeting?
15. We usually only work with well-established writers, why should we take the risk of publishing this book?
16. I've been talking to Bonnier about a book by a promising new writer, Elin Lindqvist. Do you know anything about her and her book? Have you read it?
17. What can Swedish books offer us that no one else can offer us, beyond this book?
18. I don't like the cover, it doesn't seem very interesting.
19. We do not want to deal with the translation of the book.
20. Your firm hasn't been in the market for very many years, are you sure you can manage to work over seas?
21. Your company is not very big; can you offer us the same support that a larger one like Bonnier can?
22. You have been working with another publishing firm over here earlier, how come they don't want to continue that relationship?
23. In which ways will the writher be willing to participate in promotion of the book, and will your company help on that point?
24. I don't think that this story is very original. It seems to me there are a large number of books like this on the market right now.
25. Do you know how many manuscripts that ends up on my desk? Why should I take time to read this one?

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II. Responses

1. There isn't that big a difference between women in America and Sweden, especially when it comes to an issue like this. I think every woman all around the world can identify with a woman that is trying to protect her family.
2. I think that if you read it you will change your mind, and if you don't, let a woman read it, and I assure you that she will find it interesting. The book treats a subject that is very real to many women and it also shows the government's lack of resources to fully protect their citizens.
3. I would not pay more than \$5000 for a professional translation from Swedish into English. If you want I can recommend a firm in here in the states that I know have translated some of our other books, and done a very good job on that.
4. Well, she had all her 5 books as number 1 on the bestseller list in all of Scandinavia. I have some reviews of this book right here. She has also been receiving 5 awards for her writing, for example Author of the year in Sweden 1999. She is one of Sweden's most known novel writers.
5. Good question! You're right about that, but sometimes something different is what is needed. As a Swedish writer Liza has a different style and way of telling a story. She is something new and her book shows that problems that exist in America exist in other places too.
6. You might be right about that, but I think that Liza's background as a journalist gives her the capability to tell it like it is. She makes this story scarcely real, sometimes her writing feels like a blow to the stomach. Her goal is not to write beautiful, it is to tell a story that is real and makes it clear how horrible a situation like this is. So in this case I think her ability to picture reality like a reporter works to her favor.
7. I've been working with publishing since 1998, when I graduated from Vaxjo University. I started as a publishing assistant and have worked my way up. Today I'm responsible for publishing our books in North America and I've been working together with several different firms over here for the last two years. So I like to think that I have some experience with this.
8. We work with several of Scandinavia's biggest writers. Jan Guillou and Unni Drugge who are two of Scandinavia's most read authors through their own Swedish books together with publisher Ann-Marie Skarp. We also publish books by some of Sweden's largest personalities. Since we started in 1995 we have had sustainable growth from 3 writers till now when we publish 15.
9. She has had two of her novels published before, "The Bomber" in 2000 have sold about 450 000 copies, and "Studio Sex" which was released in 2001 have sold

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somewhere around 300 000 copies. So her writing style has been tested on the American market, and the numbers show that she didn't do that bad for an unknown writer.

10. Her other four books are independent in a series of novels about news reporter Annika Bengtzon. They show both Annikas professional and private life and how these two intervene. She still writes columns every second week for Aftonbladet, who is Sweden's largest newspaper. Earlier in her career she has worked as an investigating reporter for television news and Expressen another of Sweden's largest newspapers.

11. I was under the impression that you were looking for a book that would cover the segment of women between 20-30 years old? (if NO) What target group are you aiming at? (if YES) That is the group that has been targeted in Europe, and according to this market research (show portfolio), this is the group that mainly has been purchasing the book in Europe.

12. I'm sure it has, but what would be the main reason for not working with a Swedish writer? This way you actually have material that shows that the book sells. In one way you can say that it's been tested on a test market, namely Europe, let me show you the results for Hidden in Europe. Liza has also been published here before and has actually sold pretty well.

13. Naturally, there is no guarantee in this business, but I don't have to tell you this. But looking at the results from Europe the risk should be small that you will lose money on this book. I have an actual profit example from when we released this book in Sweden 2 years ago. We sold 100 000 copies on the first six months so the payback time was not long in this case. And I'm sure it won't be here either.

14. I would have sent it to you but the translation weren't ready in time, and I'm not asking you to take a decision about this book right now. Of course you have to read it first, and I really think you should. Then after you read it maybe we can have another meeting and discuss the mere details of the rights for the book.

15. In Scandinavia Liza Marklund is a very well established writer and columnist, and I have no doubt that she can become one here to in the long run. And if she does you'll have the rights to her first book.

16. I'm assuming you're talking about Tokyo Night? I have not read it myself yet, but I have only heard good things about it. It is Elin Lindqvist first book and she hasn't had the time to make a name for her yet. Liza on the other hand is well known in Scandinavia and has been published in the U.S.

17. Swedish Books can offer you a more personalized deal than a larger firm, since we have a smaller organization. We can also offer you a closer relationship with the author since we work more closely with them from the start and keep them involved in the process; this is a big advantage, especially when it comes to coordinating marketing efforts and PR-events.

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18. It won't be a problem to change it to something that fits the American market better. And you know what they say, "don't judge a book by its cover".

19. That point of the deal is of course negotiable, we have dealt with translations before so it will not be hard for us to do it again; it's mainly a cost issue. That's way we only have this nonprofessional translation available right now.

20. We have worked over seas for four years and so far so good. We have connections with both other publishers, printers, marketers and distributors here in the stat. But your right about our limited experience on this market and that is way we want a local publisher to publish the book over here.

21. We might not have the resources that Bonnier has, but we can offer more personalized service and back up than bigger companies just because we are small. Our size makes us more flexible and we care more about our clients since they have a larger input on our organization.

22. I think they will be very interested in this book if I show it to them, but our writers haven't been satisfied in the way they have been marketed and other small details, and since we want to work for our writers we have to at least explore other options.

23. You will of course get all marketing research concerning this book and other promotion material follows with the rights of the book. And I do think that Liza will help with promoting the book. She has lived in the U.S. for several years so she has a lot of friends her that she visits pretty often, so she'll be in the country from time to time.

24. I assume you mean books about battered women? This book is unique in the sense that the main character is one of the writers, and Liza's writing style is one of a kind. This book is more real than most books about any subject and it is its realistic features that make it stand out.

25. How many of the manuscripts on you table have been tested on other markets before? How many of them can actually show that it can make profit? And on top of that this book is one of the best books I ever read. It's true and it touches you with its straight forward writing and it awakes emotions. All and all I think that you would miss a very good experience if you don't read it.