

The Authority Advisor: If Your Prospects Can't Find You Online, Then You Don't Exist...

Joe Simonds

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A financial advisor finds business and personal salvation in this cleverly written parable about "authority marketing."

In the tradition of the business parable, *The Authority Advisor*, by Joe Simonds, is the fictional story of Steve Kennedy, a financial advisor whose confidence is shaken by his inability to close a significant prospect, largely because of Steve's online "invisibility." The potential client tells Steve, "we just couldn't find anything about you online...It is tough to believe that an expert doesn't have a website." Dejected and demoralized, Steve attends a conference seminar about marketing that changes his whole outlook and gives him the motivation and ideas he needs to revitalize his entire lead generation and qualification strategy.

Simonds, whose firm, Advisor Internet Marketing, helps financial advisors with online marketing, does a commendable job weaving together realistic characters, a believable plot, and sound marketing advice. While Simonds's main character is a financial advisor, the author suggests that the story is broadly applicable: "For those of you who are not financial advisors, simply substitute your profession for 'financial advisor,' and you will certainly see that we are all faced with the same changes, regardless of your business, your goals, or your clients." The changes Simonds refers to are indeed dramatic; technology, he writes, "has changed the way society consumes and digests everyday products and services in our lives."

The heart of the book is the seminar that Steve Kennedy attends, during which the speaker introduces Steve and other financial advisors to the concept of "authority marketing." Simonds cleverly uses the speaker's presentation to reveal key points about this form of marketing; in fact, the author conveys a great deal of useful information about building an effective website and using social media as the basis for sharing valuable content. One section, "The Steps to Website Mastery and Authority," is in effect a handy checklist for implementing an authority marketing strategy.

The Authority Advisor is well written, employing good plot elements that keep the story moving along, including humor, suspense, and a few twists and turns. The book is also handsomely designed, particularly the cover, which carries a color photograph that ties in nicely with the content. The author references a few other works in the text, but a bibliography of additional sources would have been helpful.

While *The Authority Advisor* is an easy and engaging read, some readers may find the fictional account of a financial advisor's marketing epiphany somewhat contrived. It may be a stretch to believe that the protagonist's business and family problems can both be solved through his learning about a new way of marketing. Still, Simonds chooses to use a literary technique that inserts his primary audience into the picture, creating an association that is likely to hold attention. As a result, the author adds a very human aspect to what would otherwise be just another book about the changing world of marketing.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (November 14, 2014)

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