

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Frank Peretti Social Media Campaign Grows Fan Base 300%

#### *Helps Launch Book to New York Times Bestseller List*

**[Wheaton, Ill.]**—*New York Times* bestselling author Frank Peretti recently released *Illusion*, his first novel in seven years. Within the first week of its release, *Illusion* skyrocketed to the *New York Times* bestseller list, propelled in part by engaging author fans and generating pre-sales interest online.

*Illusion* is the first book written by the author in which social media played a key role in fan engagement and sales. Publisher Howard Books tapped Wheaton-based Handlebar Publishing to lead the online marketing initiative of the book launch. Through the innovative use of social media and fan engagement, the agency grew the author's Facebook fan page by more than 300%, with more than 25% of those fans actively sharing about the page and its contents at any given time.

Breaking ground with the Facebook page, the agency used an innovative giveaway, offering one free chapter of the new book to all fans once a certain number of page "likes" had been reached – "dripping" the dynamic story content to Peretti fans prior to the book release. Operating as "Team Peretti", the agency also held Facebook "giveaway parties" with fans attempting to complete challenges within a short timeframe in order to win a free copy of *Illusion*. "Frank's Inner Circle" fans were continually engaged through newsletters, exclusive video interviews with the author, top fan offers, and more.

"We are pleased with the responsiveness of Frank Peretti's fans in the social media launch of *Illusion*," states Carla Ballerini who heads the Handlebar Nashville initiative. "Offering cutting-edge and effective marketing tools to publishers is a regular practice for our team, which has handled book launches of such well-known authors as Ted Dekker, Stephen Lawhead, Sheila Walsh, Beth Wiseman, and many more. Empowering author/fan engagement, supporting publisher marketing platforms, and promoting books through our own proprietary marketing channels and 'outside-the-box' advertising and promotions is what helps our clients break through the clutter."

In addition to the efforts in the typical social media venues of Facebook and Twitter, the Handlebar team created a strong blogger review and giveaway program of more than 200 top bloggers, a hosted a blog tour reaching more than 500,000 followers in the blogosphere, and promoted both the print and audio book debut with online advertising.

#### **About Howard Books**

Howard Books is an imprint of Simon and Schuster. Based in Nashville, the imprint is home to numerous *New York Times* bestselling books. Simon & Schuster is a part of CBS Corporation, a global leader in the field of general interest publishing, dedicated to providing the best in fiction and nonfiction for consumers of all ages, across all printed, electronic, and audio formats. Its divisions include Simon &

Schuster Adult Publishing, Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, Simon & Schuster Audio, Simon & Schuster Digital, and international companies in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. More information can be found at [www.simonandschuster.com](http://www.simonandschuster.com).

**About Handlebar**

Handlebar (Wheaton, Ill.) is the publishing division of C. Grant & Company, a leading Chicago-area marketing communications firm founded by Chris Grant, former head of marketing for Zondervan. The Handlebar offices steer the future of publishing by providing consumer research, blogger review programs and content, and information for professionals on upcoming book releases and news. More information can be found at [www.handlebarpublishing.com](http://www.handlebarpublishing.com).

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