

# From Backlist to “Big Mover”: How West Margin Press Used Actionable Data To Profit From An Opportunity

## A MARKETING INSIGHTS CASE STUDY

West Margin Press' *The Last Letters of Attu* was a ten-year old title experiencing stagnant sales until the sudden rise in popularity of the WWII Battle of Attu. Marketing Insights identified increased activity across the web and surfaced new marketing opportunities and recommendations for West Margin Press to act on. By following the actions recommended by Marketing Insights, *Last Letters of Attu's* sales and discoverability increased dramatically over a 3-month span.

### OVERALL INCREASE IN SALES\*

↑ **128%**  
AMAZON

↑ **90%**  
WHOLESALE

↑ **225%**  
BARNES & NOBLE

\*Based on a 3-month span

## The Set-Up

*Last Letters from Attu*, published in 2009, was experiencing sluggish sales, coupled with poor Amazon rankings –due to low search results and online chatter. A new Atria title on the Battle of Attu, *The Storms on Our Shores*, and its associated press coverage, including a feature on the author on *60 Minutes* took flight. The release of *The Storm on Our Shores*, published in April 2019, provided *Last Letters of Attu* an opportunity to boost discoverability and sales, and that's where Marketing Insights came in.

## Marketing Insights in Action

Marketing Insights identified *Last Letters from Attu* as a “Big Mover” owing to a large jump in sales rank. As a result, a unique list of opportunities was generated for the publisher:

1. Bold the first line of the book description
2. Promote the book using relevant hashtags on social channels
3. Update the Amazon author page
4. Target Amazon ads to consumers interested in related categories and genres

**Sales Rank**

Last Letters from Attu: The True Story of Etta Jones, Alaska Pioneer and Japanese POW

EAN: 9780882408101  
 FORMAT: Paperback  
 AUTHOR: Mary Brou

Amazon Bestseller Rank: 33,821 ▲ 95%  
 Previous rank: 632,088

See Top 20 | View Insights

**Consumer Price**

Kindle \$9.99 | Hardcover \$22.86 | Paperback \$14.99

Amazon Price: \$11.99 (20% off) | Previous \$11.99

**Goodreads Activity**

Active Goodreads Members: 1,221 ▲ 4%

**Wikipedia Pageviews**

Monthly Pageviews: 17 ▲ 4%

- ✖ The book description does not begin with a bolded first line. Bold headlines capture consumer attention and are proven to improve conversion. [Learn more.](#)
- ⓘ It looks like the Amazon Author Page for the primary author could use some work. Make sure it is up-to-date with a high-quality photo, a detailed bio, and is accurately linked to all of the author's works. [Learn more.](#)
- ✔ This book is very popular within its current product categories on Amazon. Consider ads targeting consumers interested in these categories or genres to maintain and increase sales. [Learn more.](#)

# Publisher Actions Taken Based on Marketing Insights Recommendations

- Recommendations were identified by Marketing Insights and updates made by the publisher within two days.

## Before optimizations

**Last Letters from Attu: The True Story of Etta Jones, Alaska Pioneer and Japanese POW** Paperback – November 5, 2009

by Mary Brou (Author), Ray Hudson (Afterword)

★★★★☆ 70 customer reviews

Kindle \$9.99 | Hardcover \$22.86 | Paperback \$14.99

**Note:** Available at a lower price from other sellers that may not offer free Prime shipping.

Etta Jones was not a World War II soldier or a war time spy. She was an American school teacher who in 1941 who along with her husband, Foster agreed to teach the natives on the remote Aleutian island of Attu. They were both sixty-two years old when they left Alaska's mainland for Attu against the advice of friends and family. Etta, and her sister moved to the Territory of Alaska in 1922. She planned to stay only one year as a vacation, but this 40 something year old nurse from back east met Foster Jones and

## After optimizations

**Last Letters from Attu: The True Story of Etta Jones, Alaska Pioneer and Japanese POW** Paperback – November 5, 2009

by Mary Brou (Author), Ray Hudson (Afterword)

★★★★☆ 70 customer reviews

Kindle \$9.99 | Hardcover \$22.86 | Paperback \$14.99

**Kindle option**

Kindle | Earn a \$7.49 credit  
 Buy the Kindle edition of this book, and earn a \$7.49 credit to spend on any Great on Kindle book.

**Author bio**

Etta Jones was not a World War II soldier or a war time spy. She was a school teacher whose life changed forever on that Sunday morning in June 1942 when the Japanese military invaded Attu Island and Etta became a prisoner of war.

Etta and her sister moved to the Territory of Alaska in 1922. She planned to stay only one year as a vacation, but this 40 something year old nurse from back east met Foster Jones and fell in love. They married and for nearly twenty years they lived, worked and taught in remote Aleutian, Alutic, Yup'ik and Aleut villages where they were the only outsiders. Their last assignment was Attu.

After the invasion, Etta became a prisoner of war and spent 39 months in Japanese POW sites located in Yokonama and Totsuka. She was the first female Caucasian taken prisoner by a foreign enemy on the North American Continent since the year of 1812, and she was the first American female released by the Japanese at the end of World War II.

Using descriptive letters that she penned herself, her unpublished manuscript, historical documents and personal interviews with key people who were involved with events as they happened, her extraordinary story is told for the first time in this book.

Author bio

Optimized description

- Updated 10 year old metadata (Refreshed outdated description and improved formatting)
- Deployed keyword advertising on Amazon to drive discovery from the *The Storm on Our Shores* book (in effort to improve discovery and placement alongside the new title)
- Built an Amazon Author Central page for the author who isn't digitally savvy (Added detail and context about the author)
- Promoted the book on Facebook and Twitter

Product Page Scorecard	
Score	Description
✓	Cover image included
✓	Look Inside preview available
✓	Description is at least 175 words long
✓	Description includes paragraph breaks
✓	Description begins with a headline
✓	Description headline is bolded
✓	Description headline is fewer than 250 characters
✓	Description uses supported HTML markup

Keywords
great world war ii
world war history
post world war ii
life world war ii
world war ii japan
women world war ii
world war two history
complete world war ii
american world war
campaigns of world war ii



## What Happened?

- Organic cross-promotion on Amazon with the frontlist title, *The Storm On Our Shores*
- Sponsored ads for *Last Letters* being run and paid for by Amazon as well as Barnes & Noble
- Amazon price and availability changed to most optimal for conversion – automatically

## Results

- **Sales lift seen across channels over a 3-month span**
  - Amazon +128%, Wholesale +90%, Barnes & Noble +225%
- **Physical and digital unit sales more than doubled**
  - Initial spike in sales 4x preceding 3-month average
  - Sustained 2x sales growth for trailing 3 months
- **Amazon rank increased sustained**
  - Paperback rank peaked at ~25k
  - Baseline average rank increased from 585k in prior 3 months to 190k in trailing 3 months

Hardcover \$28.44

Paperback **\$18.99**

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**Buy New** **\$18.99**

Qty: 1

FREE Shipping on orders over \$25.

**Only 14 left in stock (more on the way).**

Ships from and sold by Amazon.com.  
Gift-wrap available.

Hardcover \$22.86 ✓prime

Paperback **\$14.98 ✓prime**

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**Buy New** **\$14.98**

Qty: 1

List Price: ~~\$18.99~~  
Save: \$4.01 (21%)

✓prime FREE One-Day

FREE Delivery **Tomorrow**  
if you order within 8 hrs 22 mins.

[Details](#)

**In Stock.**

Ships from and sold by Amazon.com.

Before

After

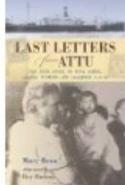
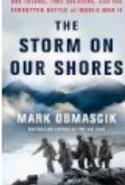
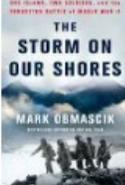
Amazon updated pricing, stock availability and single day shipping to match the consumer demand.

Google attu pow book

All Videos Images News Shopping More Settings Tools

About 54,400 results (0.69 seconds)

See attu pow book Sponsored ⓘ

 <p>Last Letters from Attu: The True</p> <p><b>\$22.86</b></p> <p>Amazon.com</p>	 <p>Last Letters from Attu: The True</p> <p><b>\$11.49</b></p> <p>Barnes &amp; Noble</p> <p>Free shipping</p>	 <p>The Storm on Our Shores: One</p> <p><b>\$18.30</b></p> <p>Amazon.com</p>	 <p>The Storm on Our Shores: One</p> <p><b>\$19.12</b></p> <p>Barnes &amp; Noble</p>	 <p>Last Letters from Attu : The True</p> <p><b>\$9.80</b></p> <p>Used</p> <p>Thriftbooks.com</p>
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Sponsored ads for *Last Letters* were being run and paid for by Amazon and B&N.

**Learn more and schedule a demo at**  
[www.ingramcontent.com/iqmarketinginsights](http://www.ingramcontent.com/iqmarketinginsights)