

THE STING BOOK

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steven Frazier has been in law enforcement for over seventeen years and holds a graduate degree in Public Administration. Currently a Sergeant, he has served in nearly every position and job description possible within a municipal police department including investigative and undercover assignments.

The author is widely known for the development of successful sting programs that have recovered millions of dollars in stolen property and sent many criminal suspects to prison. He has designed and developed several stings from the concept stage, without funding and resources, to the level of being successful large-scale programs with strong funding, widespread support and stunning results.

The author's stings have received national and regional coverage in the news media and have been excerpted and featured on several popular television news programs.

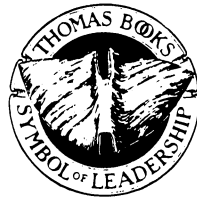
In addition, the author has taught sting technology to other police departments in state-funded training programs. He has traveled to various police departments throughout California to provide comprehensive training seminars. He has acted as an advisor to many other stings and has received requests for assistance from as far away as Australia.

THE STING BOOK

A Guide to Setting Up and Running a
Clandestine Storefront Sting Operation

By

SGT. STEVEN K. FRAZIER



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For Rhae, Julia, Christine and Danielle

PREFACE

I don't remember where the desire to do a sting originated from. Maybe it was something that I read or saw on television. At any rate, I was intrigued with designing and running a program that would pull the wool over the eyes of scores of crooks and catch them on videotape doing their crimes. Imagine, I thought, how ironclad those cases would be. It would strip away all the defenses that could be perpetrated with lies and schemes. There would be no more court battles over the integrity of the officers. For a change, the crook would be put on trial, not the officers. They would hang themselves and nobody would be able to save them. They would get what they deserved.

I remember the uncertainty thereafter. How do I get one going? How much will it cost? How do I get my agency interested in it so that they will cut loose some personnel? How do I get a storefront? How do I set one up? A million such questions flooded my mind and I spent considerable time steeped in thought agonizing over such issues. I didn't know which way to turn. I was like a blind man dropped off in the middle of skid row in the dead of night. Dangers lurked everywhere and I didn't know which way to proceed.

Slowly, over time, I made progress. I learned a little here and a little there. I learned to go out and get what I needed even if it meant going outside my agency. I began to develop skills that I never had before and learning angles that streamlined my efforts. Pretty soon I began to gain some confidence. It began to snowball. One success lead to another. Soon there was a string of successes and I was on my way.

This entire book, *all of it*, is based on personal experience. I have suffered a lot of hard knocks and acquired many gray hairs to get it to you in print. Not that writing a book is so trying. Not at all. On the other hand, riding out a large-scale sting program, without the benefit of a book such as this, is a difficult experience you don't soon forget. As one of my colleagues in the sting business once told me, "We have slipped on a lot of banana peels to get here," and so have I.

This book is designed to give you the absolute inside track on setting up and running a sting program. It does not contain a lot of theory. It is written for practitioners, not academicians. It is for the working man on

the streets, in the foxhole, fighting the battles and for the administrators who supervise them.

It assumes that you have no money, no personnel, no resources and, most importantly, no backing from your administration. Why? Because that is how most of these things start. You have only a dream—you want to do a sting.

In this book I will show you how to get all you need and more. I know how to do it because I have done it, more than once. In fact, in the stings I ran, I and my sting partners had better undercover cars and better equipment than anyone back at our respective agencies and it was state of the art. We had all the money we could use. We had mobile phones, apartments, storefronts, the latest surveillance equipment, a comfortable and functional office and storefront, brand new office furniture, great hours, a spirited team, an exciting job, the wind and sun at our backs and the crooks going to jail in droves while we had fun. In short, police work the way it was meant to be.

This book takes a realistic approach from the point of view of someone without experience in sting programs trying to set one up for the first time. As such, it is written primarily to the project manager. This is the person designated, perhaps by default, to be the one who has to gather the resources, put it all together and then run it. More often than not, this is also the person who came up with the idea for the sting in the first place. Consequently, I have included extensive material on how to maneuver around all the administrative and environmental potholes.

There is great value, however, in having all of those in the chain of command involved with the sting to read this material. I have included many anecdotes and pointers on how management can ensure a sting program's success. Upper management in a police organization typically has one or more misconceptions about how a sting program operates. Without this information you may find that they will unwittingly create roadblocks to the efficient operation of your sting. You can avoid a lot of headaches if you can form a basis for mutual cooperation and support with your administration. The material in this book will provide the hard facts both you and they need so that you can find each other working on the same team without butting heads.

Not everyone reading this book and looking for answers to their sting questions will need to start at ground zero and I realize this. I have to teach and write, though, to mixed audiences. I have found that an overwhelming majority of my students have a majority of the problems that I write about in this book. These are problems that I, and other sting managers, have encountered or that consistently come up as questions in my classes.

For me, my years in the sting business stand out as the pinnacle of all my

experiences in law enforcement. It is like a block of time taken away from all the rest for which I have a million good memories. There were problems, yes, but many more times when things worked unbelievably well. I look at those times with a great deal of satisfaction.

My expectation is that your experiences with your sting program will be as exciting and memorable as mine were.

S.K.F.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book was over two years in the making. It wouldn't have been possible without the support and help of my wife, Rhae. During my involvement in the stings she endured the odd hours, telephone calls in the middle of the night and my feeble attempts to make a fashion statement on the criminal scene. The latter probably didn't earn us any points with our neighbors and friends. She also helped in proof reading the material.

A special thanks goes to Tom Caracash for his technical assistance in developing the line drawings and for proof reading some of the material. Likewise I want to thank Denise Sanders and Mary Schiavi for their help in proof reading portions in their spare time.

Finally, I want to thank Mike Mullen for providing his photographic expertise in documenting the stings and providing some of the photographs for this book.

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	vii
Chapter 1: ARE YOU UP TO THE TASK?	3
Reinventing the Wheel	4
Can You Get Out of Your Rut?	5
Are You Flexible?	6
Can You Get What You Need?	7
Can You Stay With It?	8
Chapter 2: WHY DO A STING?	9
The California Stings	9
Arrests	9
Crimes Prevented	10
Conviction Rates	11
Intelligence Information	12
Recovered Property	13
Press Coverage	16
Training	16
Joint Operations	17
Chapter 3: SELLING THE PROGRAM TO YOUR AGENCY	18
Ideas From Above	18
Ideas From Below	18
Momentum	19
Conceptualizing the Program	19
Available Resource Assessment	19
Feasibility Study	20
Need Assessment	21
Exaggerated Goals and Promises	23
Scouting for Resources	23
Building Momentum	24
Chapter 4: AVOIDING FAILURE	27

Stings That Have Failed	27
Administrative Support	28
Obtaining a Sponsor	30
Chain of Command	33
The Buying-in Process	33
Diversion of the Project Manager	34
The Sting is an Undercover Operation	34
The Sting is a Full-Time Job	35
Draining the Project	35
High-Quality Equipment	36
Loaning Equipment Out	36
Breaching Security	37
Bad Apples	37
Chapter 5: COMPONENTS AND STRUCTURE	39
The Storefront	39
Props	39
Paying Attention to Detail	41
Business Hours	41
The Residential Storefront	42
Telephone Games	43
Covering Absences	43
Live-in Officers	44
Setting Up the Fixed Site	44
The Control Room	44
Alternatives to the Control Room	47
Telephones	47
Enhancements	48
A Garage	48
Back Doors	49
Alleys	50
Location	50
Business Fronts	51
Mobile Stings	51
How a Mobile Sting Works	52
The Surveillance Van	53
Targeting Receivers	54

Reverse Stings	56
Storage	56
Warning!	59
Keeping Track of the Property	59
Storage of Vehicles	60
The Safe House	61
A Residential Safe House	62
The Commercial Safe House	62
Outfitting the Safe House	63
The Safe	64
Chapter 6: CHOOSING THE RIGHT PERSONNEL	67
The Positions	67
Scouts	68
Storefront Officers	69
Investigative Assistant	70
Tracing of Property	70
Loose Ends	71
A Filing System	72
What to Look For	72
The Project Manager	73
The Big Picture	73
Goals	74
Officer Safety	75
Audit Control	75
An Adherence to Department Policy	76
Choosing Personnel	76
Volunteers	77
Exit Contracts	78
Post an Announcement	80
Application and Resume	80
The Interview	82
Personal Characteristics	83
No Rotating Out	85
Written Expectations	86
Personnel Problems	88
Burnout	88

Substance Abuse	89
Romantic Relationships	90
Fear and Anxiety	90
Chapter 7: EQUIPMENT AND TECHNICAL MATTERS	92
K.I.S.S.	92
Multiple Camera Systems	94
Earphones	94
Video Technician	96
Video Cameras	97
What to Look For	97
Different Kinds of Cameras	98
Lighting	99
Tinted Windows	101
Placement of Cameras	101
Switches	105
Lenses	106
Microphones	110
Shielded Cable	111
Sound Problems	111
Placement and Concealment	113
Soundproofing	114
Audio Mixers	114
Video Recorders	115
Date-Time Generators	116
Body Wires	116
Night Vision Scopes	118
Mobile Phones and Pagers	119
Video Printer	119
Chapter 8: RESOURCE ACQUISITION	120
Do You Really Need Cash?	120
Reimbursements	121
Contact Techniques	123
What You Need	125
Where to Get It	127
Private Industry	127
Community Service Clubs	128