

# As Sales Cycles Lengthen, Networking Mastery Becomes a Competitive Advantage for Business Leaders

*New Book Formalizes a Proven Framework for Transforming Professional Networks into Strategic, Revenue-Generating Assets*

DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, February 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Across the United States, professionals are confronting a clear shift in the business landscape: paid advertising is more expensive, cold outreach yields diminishing returns, and trust has become harder to earn. Customer acquisition costs have increased approximately 222% over the past eight years, making traditional lead generation significantly more expensive and less predictable (according to Salesloft).

In response, many professionals in finance, real estate, insurance, mortgage lending, and entrepreneurial sectors are shifting toward a more reliable growth channel: structured referral networks.

Business strategist and keynote speaker [Sarah Hubbard](#) has built a \$2M+ company powered almost entirely by referral partnerships—without cold calling or paid advertising. Her newly released book, [The Intentional Networker: How to Strategically Build Your Sphere of Influence and Transform Connections into High-Value Opportunities](#), outlines the disciplined framework behind that model.

“When acquisition costs rise, professionals need growth strategies they can control,” Hubbard says. “Relationships, when built intentionally and managed systematically, become the most predictable source of revenue.”

Rather than promoting high-volume networking, Hubbard teaches professionals how to identify the right rooms, clarify their positioning, cultivate aligned referral partners, and implement

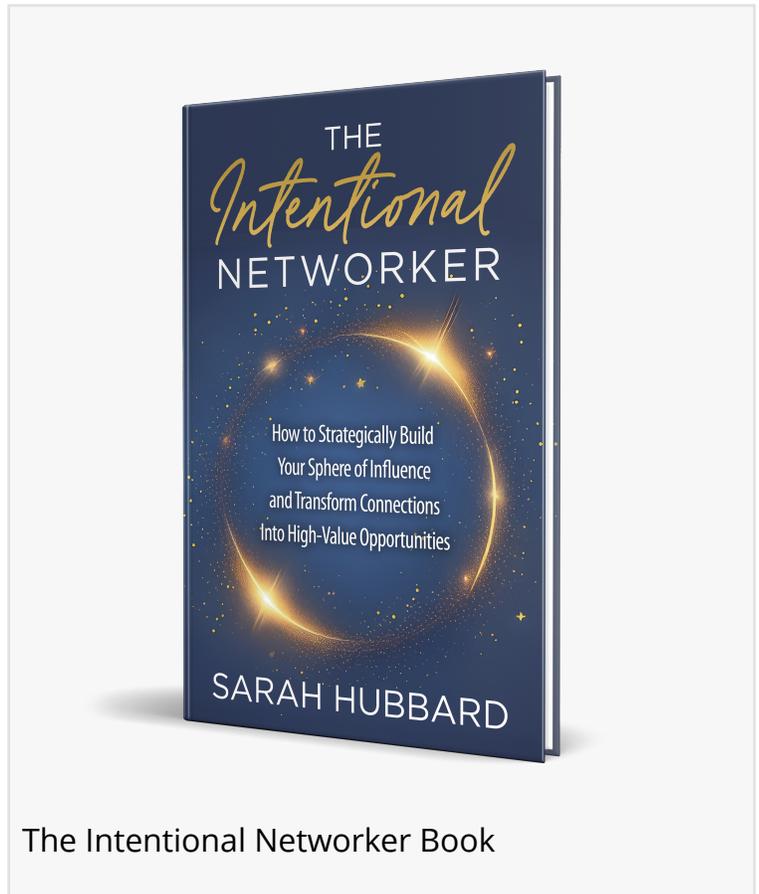


Sarah Hubbard launches new book *The Intentional Networker*

consistent follow-up systems. In post-event surveys, 73% of professionals who apply her framework report new business opportunities within 30 days, with an average 42% increase in qualified referrals.

The book also addresses a timely development: the responsible integration of AI into relationship management. Hubbard provides guidance on using AI to research contacts, refine messaging, and maintain thoughtful follow-up, particularly important in regulated industries such as finance, insurance, real estate, and mortgage lending.

As economic pressure forces businesses to reevaluate how they generate revenue, the shift toward relationship-based growth is accelerating. Professionals who treat their network as a structured asset—not a casual activity—are positioning themselves for greater resilience and long-term advantage.



#### About Sarah Hubbard



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*Sarah Hubbard*

Sarah Hubbard is a keynote speaker, strategist, and [founder of The Intentional Network](#). She helps entrepreneurs, executives, and service professionals transform their networks into structured ecosystems that drive measurable business results. Sarah built a \$2M+ referral-based business and is known for delivering practical, systemized strategies that increase qualified referrals and create long-term growth without reliance on cold outreach or paid advertising. She lives in Colorado with her husband and their son, Riggs.

#### Book Information

Title: The Intentional Networker: How to Strategically Build Your Sphere of Influence and Transform Connections into High-Value Opportunities

Author: Sarah Hubbard

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Amazon link: <https://a.co/d/0e1hvery>

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