

IngramSpark®

# Book Marketing for the Self-Published Author



You’ve finished your book and published it. It’s quite an accomplishment, but now you’re probably wondering how to get it into people’s hands. You need to market your book, and we have the one-stop resource for all your needs.



At first, it may sound easy or more accessible to market your book online rather than using the marketing tactics of the past. However, there is so much information and mountains of data available that finding what you’re looking for can turn into a scavenger hunt. The last thing you want is for your current and potential readers to struggle to find your book.

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# Book Metadata Best Practices

Metadata is crucial to connecting readers with your book, and it's the first thing you should work on when marketing your book.

## What is Metadata and what does it have to do with marketing your book?

[Metadata](#) is an informative and descriptive collection of data about another set of data. Just as grocery stores use aisle description signs to connect customers to products, you can use metadata to help readers find your book.

There are generally three types of metadata:

- **Structural metadata** includes information such as page numbers, chapters, indexes, and tables of contents. This also includes the size of your book and file size.
- **Administrative metadata** includes file type, usage rights, and intellectual property.
- **Descriptive metadata** includes information that can be used for identification and discovery. This is where you have the most control and choices.



### Download Our Metadata Checklist

Download the Metadata Checklist for tips to enhance your book's metadata—plus a worksheet to brainstorm keywords specific to your book!

[Get Started](#)

## Keywords

Keywords are one of the most critical parts of your metadata. You should aim for a well-ranking website to draw people in and familiarize them with your work and who you are as an author. In order to rank well, you should be decisive and accurate in choosing your keywords. Updating your website will also help your ranking.

When choosing your keywords:

1. Look for keywords on your website
2. Google what you think people are searching for when looking for a book like yours
3. Then, type those keywords or phrases into Google and Amazon and see what search results appear

## Correct and Controlled

You'll want to create a master copy of your metadata, with all information in one document that you can use for reference. This will help you ensure that your metadata is consistent no matter where it's located online, while also making it easy to record and keep up with any updates.

## The Importance of BISAC Codes

When choosing your metadata, make sure to include [BISAC codes](#). These are essential for librarians, booksellers, and other publishing professionals to place your book in the correct category. Be sure to cover all your bases, but don't be misleading. If your nonfiction book is a memoir about overcoming addiction, you can categorize it as both memoir and self-help, not just one or the other.

## Reinforce Your Metadata with Website & Social Media Accounts

Maintaining consistent descriptions and author information on your website and social media accounts is important. However, another tactic you can take advantage of will keep you popping up in search results: tie into news and current events as much as possible.

For example, let's say you've written a historical novel set during World War II, focusing on specific battle sites. You hear on the news that a new war memorial will be constructed on a battle site featured in your work. You could incorporate this event into your online presence to connect more potential readers to your book in one of the following ways:

- Write about the event in a blog post on your website, in a tweet, or as a comment on your social media
- Update your metadata to include keywords such as "novels about \_\_\_\_" or "novels set in \_\_\_\_", listing the battle site

Keep readers coming back to your work by making it easy to find.

After making sure your book metadata is consistent and effective, you need to continue to lay the groundwork for more conventional marketing methods. You'll need to prepare a book excerpt, get a Foreword, and write a description.

## How to Choose the Perfect Book Excerpt

One of the most challenging tasks for authors is having to choose a passage from their book that best represents and encapsulates its essence. Here's what you need to know about the art and science of excerpt selection.

### Not All Book Excerpts are Created Equal

Each book excerpt serves a purpose, and you must carefully consider what you want a particular excerpt to achieve when making your selection. A simple rule of thumb is that longer excerpts (200+ words) should pass the "stand-alone" test—your selection should have the potential to spark debate, ignite a thoughtful discussion, or reveal something about the book that sets it apart. Brief excerpts, made up of a few sentences, should reflect a key message or theme from the book and/or a takeaway for the reader. You want to keep your book on the radar of potential readers.

### Tell a Story

Another litmus test for the ideal excerpt is that it has its own narrative arc and tells a story that begs to be continued. Even one sentence can accomplish this if it's the right sentence.

- The bully never remembers, the outcast never forgets.



- Bullying isn't just the mean things you do, it's all the nice things you never do.

Each of these sentences offers a fresh take on a basic concept and is immediately relatable to the target audience—and easy to remember. Whatever the length of your excerpt, it should resonate.

## How to Use Excerpts in Book Marketing

Here are some ways to use excerpts as a [book marketing](#) tool:

- [Blog](#) Posts
- [Social Media](#) Pages
- [Press Kits](#) (have a Selected Excerpts one-sheet in every press kit that features provocative pull-quotes from the book to entice media interest)
- Your Author Website
- [Email](#) Blasts
- Digital Newsletters

A word to the wise—be prudent. A few excerpts, strategically placed across multiple platforms, can generate demand. Too many, too often could deter readers from purchasing your book if they think they already know enough about it from reading the excerpts.

## Picking the Right Excerpt for Author Events

The criteria for this one is straightforward. For [speaking engagements](#), choose something that moves you. When you read it aloud, it should touch the same part of you that you want to reach in your audience. Whether your book is personal or professional, whatever you plan on reading must be authentic and it must speak to *you* first.

Keep in mind that the audience has come to hear you speak, not just read. Allot no more than 10% of your speaking time to a book excerpt. You can begin or conclude with the excerpt or insert it during your talk. Whatever feels most natural will work best because the more comfortable you are, the stronger your connection with the audience.

Now, let's look at how to get a Foreword for your book.

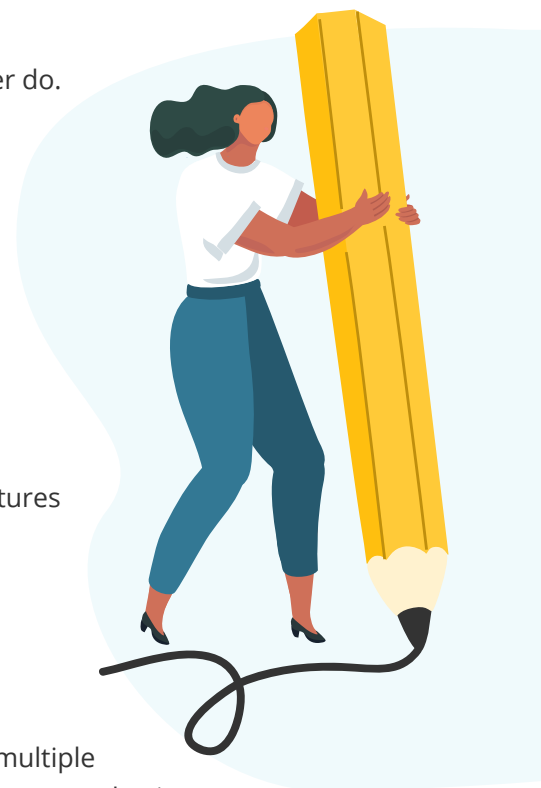
# How to Get a Foreword for Your Book

A foreword for your book isn't essential. However, authors often want to know how to get that magic piece of writing at the beginning of the book.

The more relatable and better-known the foreword author is, the more comfortable your reader will be with your book. The foreword is an important part of the introductory material, as it sets the expectation of what is to come and why your book is valuable.

## Can I Write My Own Foreword?

In a word, no. That would be considered an introduction or a preface. The foreword is written by someone else, introducing your concept and supporting the importance of your material. It's a third-party [endorsement](#).



## Who Should I Ask to Write My Foreword?

Unless the reader is also in your field of expertise, they will likely look at the person's title rather than their name. So, it works best if the person writing the foreword is a big name or a leader in the field you're writing about.

Think about who might fit this role for your book. It could be a mentor you've learned from or a leader in your field. In some circumstances, it could even be someone who's already benefited from your teachings and can clearly communicate that to readers.

## How Do I Ask Someone to Write My Book's Foreword?

When you approach the person you want to write your foreword, let them know:

- Why you chose them to write a foreword.
  - Has their work made an impact on you?
  - What about them inspires you?
- Why you feel they are the right person for your book.
  - What is it about their work that connects them specifically to your book?
- You appreciate that they are busy.
  - Reassure them that the foreword could be as brief as 500 words.
- Offering a verbal foreword is possible.
  - Offer a 15-minute call to ask them some questions. Then you could draft their words into a foreword that they could then tweak and sign off on.
- If they're really stuck for time, you could offer to draft something and have them tweak it.

## Express Your Thanks

Be sure to show your gratitude, and build on that rapport with any combination of the following:

- Thank them in a personal note, card, or send flowers, if appropriate.
- Add a link to their business page in one of your social media promotions about the book. This is an effective book marketing tool and a way to share the love.
- Invite them to your launch party—show them off and thank them for their support.
- Send them a signed and [personalized copy](#) once you have a copy of the book in your hands.

The next step is to create a good book description to reel in the readers.



# How to Write an Effective Book Description



No matter who you are or what genre your book falls into—nothing beats getting readers engrossed in a book description that leaves them wanting more. Here are a few things to keep in mind before you start writing.

## Book Metadata & Discoverability

To help your book achieve its greatest potential, keep in mind its discoverability. Readers, librarians, and retailers can't purchase a book they can't find, and your [book metadata](#) is responsible for whether or not your book pops up when they type in search terms relevant to your book. There are two metadata fields for your book description: the long book description and the short book description. Although both play a role in driving traffic to your book, they have distinct differences.

Both need to be full of what readers want: intrigue. It's up to you to get readers interested in what you have to say, and your space and reader attention span is limited. When creating book metadata, be sure you have the right information in place to help buyers understand what they're about to purchase and whether they want to.

Writing a good book description isn't just about telling readers what your book's about once they find it; it's about telling search engines what search queries your book could answer so they can find it.

## The Purpose of a Good Book Description

The better your book description, the better your chances of gaining visibility and remaining visible.

When you [own the ISBN](#) associated with your book, you can enter your description when you set up your metadata. A good book description is your pitch, your chance to get readers interested. It helps potential buyers find and understand your book, and it's also your chance to get search engines interested.

## Tips on How to Write a Good Book Description

- Describe your book in simple, straightforward, and consumer-friendly terms.
- Your description should be at least 150-200 words long.
- Give readers enough information to understand what your book is about, and to determine if they'll like it.
- Consider a prospective online customer who may not know anything about your book yet. How would they look for something like it? What words would they type into a search engine?
- Short paragraphs and bulleted lists are better than a single block of text.
- Use paragraph breaks, bold and italic fonts, and other structural elements such as ordered lists (bullet points) to emphasize and highlight your book's key aspects.
- HTML markup, the tags used to tell web pages how to display your text, should be limited to: `<p>`, `<br />`, `<ul>`, `<ol>`, `<li>`, `<em>` or `<i>`, `<strong>` or `<b>`, and corresponding end tags. Ensure that any code is clean and valid.
- Do not include active hyperlinks in your description.
- Avoid time-sensitive language such as "latest," "soon," "forthcoming," or "most recent," and do not refer

to “last year” or an author’s “next book.” You don’t want your description to become outdated.

- For inspiration, read the top consumer reviews for comparative titles. Great reader reviews are often very effective at explaining books in an enticing and engaging way.



## Download Our Book Description Worksheet

Writing a book description is one of the most important aspects of marketing your book. Download the worksheet below to get started!

Get Started

## The Structure of a Good Long Book Description

Your long book description is a synopsis. When writing this description, think like a buyer and not like the author. You must become a master at both show and tell. Any specific highlights should immediately jump off the page.

If you had to write your author bio in 200 to 300 words, you’d most likely reveal the best or most interesting aspects about yourself. You wouldn’t share every minute detail; you’d tell them enough to let them know whether they wanted to get to know you better. Your book description should do the same.

### Headline

Start with a clear and punchy headline that highlights the things that matter about your book from a reader’s perspective (genre, key topics, themes, major brands, awards). Entice them to want to find out more or simply purchase based on what they’ve already read.

- It should be a maximum of 200 characters (roughly 25-30 words). Make sure it can stand alone and is attention-grabbing. The headline should sell your book in a few words.
- Make it bold and follow it with a paragraph break.
- It should have a strong selling focus. Think of this as the “[elevator pitch](#)”—less about the plot and specific details and more about why a busy reader should want this book.

### Detailed Exposition

The headline should be followed by a detailed exposition—this is the meat of your description. If a consumer clicks to “read more,” give them a taste of what they can expect from you while revealing what your book is about.

- It should be 100+ words detailing the notable topics, themes, plot elements, and features of your book.
- This is where you can “set the mood” and give readers an idea of the style and tone of your book.
- For fiction titles, describe the plot, settings, and key characters.



- For non-fiction, detail the subjects covered along with the important people, places, and things.
- Use paragraph breaks and bulleted lists where appropriate to add structure and break up large blocks of text.

## Strong Close

Finally, the copy should end with a strong close, emphasizing the value someone stands to gain from buying your book. If someone has read this far, they're interested. Now make the sale with a memorable final pitch.

- It should be at least 25-50 words.
- Identify who the book is for: "Fans of ...", "Great gift for..."
- Consider including awards and nominations or a strong [review quote](#).

## What Makes a Good Short Description?

The short description is exactly that—short and sweet. Consider it a blurb, elevator pitch, or [hook](#). Share just enough about your book to keep readers interested and leave them wanting to know more.

Publishers use this short book description to showcase and sell. It appears in catalogs, trade show copy, websites, marketing materials, press releases, and more. It's your book's calling card and should be informative, engaging, and thought-provoking.

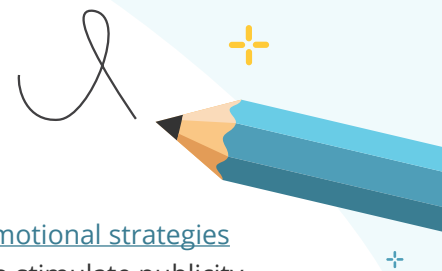
Although the long and short book descriptions stand alone, they play off of each other to provide rich content for potential buyers. Before writing either of these pieces, do your research.

- Make sure to write your book descriptions using words your ideal consumer would be searching for.
- Look at other long and short descriptions to determine whether or not you find them engaging and get tips from the ones you do.
- Remember to stay age-appropriate, be relatable, and highlight any awards you may have won to enhance your selling points. Everything else will fall into place.

Strong book metadata is necessary for your book's success. Writing a good book description is just one piece.



# How to Write a Press Release



Book publicity is one of the least expensive and perhaps most productive of the promotional strategies used to generate exposure for books, and a press release is a commonly used tool to stimulate publicity. However, retail book buyers (such as bookstores and libraries) and non-retail buyers alike are bombarded with daily correspondence. They won't take notice of something they think holds no relevance to their brand, their problem, or their customers, employees, or members. So, your first objective is to get their attention with a provocative headline that quickly points out why your content can solve their problems.

## Writing a Headline for a Press Release

- Two general categories of press release headlines build anticipation for your body text.
- A **direct** headline uses one or more of the primary sales features of your book as the attention-getter (*10 New Ways to Motivate Employees*)
- An **indirect** headline attempts to stop the readers and convince them to read more (*What are Your Members Saying About Your Association?*)

Below, you'll find information about several types of direct and indirect headlines. Practice writing headlines using all these or combinations of them in order to draw readers into your press release.

### ✔ Be Newsworthy

The most common method of direct selling, news headlines feature your content in the same manner as if it were a noteworthy item of timely interest. Simply select the outstanding feature of your book and present it clearly and quickly. You can use a number of words to trigger this impression, such as *Introducing, Just Published, Presenting the Latest, At Last, New, and Now*. Combining these formulas can positively impact the reader: *Just Published. A New Book About How to Increase Employee Productivity*.

Don't use this technique unless you actually have a news story. Once their interest is piqued, readers will want to know more. If you disappoint them, they might not trust your future press releases. Note: Do not use exclamation points for added emphasis. Let your statement stand alone on its news value.

### ✔ Communicate the Primary Benefit

This is a simple statement of the most important benefit of your content. A straightforward statement can be a powerful attraction. Make your message clear and compelling by beginning your headline with the words *How to...* (*How to End*

*Revenue Worries*), *Why* (*Why Your Employees Call in Sick*) or *Which* (*Which of These Five Sales Troubles Would You Like to End?*). These types of headlines are interesting and address the reader's major concern: "Will this be of interest to my customers, members, or employees?"

A technique that has been proven effective is to offer advice or tips. This suggests that readers will discover useful information if they read the copy, knowledge they can then pass on to their audiences.

### ✔ Tap into Emotion

A common approach is to capitalize upon your readers' emotions. Typically, these headlines have no direct-selling value but simply make an emotional appeal to involve the reader. This approach can be used well with testimonials, which can add credibility to your message.

An effective emotional headline tells the reader that you understand their audience (*For the Teacher Who is 35 and Dissatisfied*). Keep in mind, however, that certain books lend themselves to emotional approaches while others do not.

### ✔ Use a Gimmick

There are times when a light or humorous opening is appropriate. However, a gimmicky headline is most effective when your title has few important competitive advantages for a direct benefit headline and lacks the sales appeal of an emotional one. For instance, a gimmick headline addressed to librarians might declare: *This Book is Two Years Overdue*.

### ✔ Trigger Curiosity

This technique arouses curiosity about your book by, in most cases, asking a question: *What Ever Happened to Sex Education?*

You could try this technique if you sell content that fails to offer attention-getting appeals. However, it's generally better to use a logical, believable approach to the reader's interest through a straightforward presentation.

### ✔ Give a Directive

This type of headline is most useful when you wish to get immediate action from the reader. Directive headlines begin with words such as *Go Now or Call Today* and, therefore, are better used when addressing your ultimate customers. On the other hand, these tend to work well with sales managers who are looking for quick sales.

### ✔ Blow the Horn

When you can be specific, do so. If your title has outstanding selling points, take advantage of them in your headlines. But if you can find no such appeals in your book, you may find it advisable to lure the reader with a headline that speaks in general terms about the merits of it. These are called "horn-blowing" headlines: *The World's Most Definitive Book on...*

This approach is useful in other circumstances, such as when your title compares favorably with competitive books but still lacks a unique point of difference.

Headlines stop the readers and entice them to read more. Once you get the reader's attention, you then have to deliver on your promise, which is done through compelling body copy.

## How to Write Body Copy for a Press Release

Once you hook readers with your headline, you must deliver on their expectations, or they'll stop reading immediately. Use the body of your press release to continue the momentum started with the headline and get the readers to take the action you recommend.

Body copy falls into a few well-defined categories, each used in accordance with the general format and theme of your headline. The style of copy you use in the body of your release must follow the pattern and pace established by your attention-getter. If you use a direct, factual headline, your body text will usually be most effective if it, too, is factual. Likewise, if you employ a gimmick headline, your body copy should explain the connection to your book.

- **Straight Line Copy**—The most frequently used type of body copy, it directly follows the headline and proceeds in an orderly manner from beginning to end. It doesn't waste words but starts to sell the benefits of your book immediately.
- **Narrative Copy**—This type of copy follows the headline with a story that logically leads into a discussion of your content. This can be a challenging style to use because you must keep the readers involved long enough to make your point.
- **Institutional Copy**—Selling an idea, organization, or service, this type of copy is narrative in style,

because you aren't trying to sell the value of a specific book. The challenge is to ensure that your copy doesn't become boastful.

- **Dialogue and Monologue Copy**—With this type of copy, the person giving the endorsement in your headline does the selling in his or her own words. The trick is to retain the attention-getting power of the testimonial while sounding natural and convincing.
- **Gimmick Copy**—Depending upon humor, exaggeration, and similar devices to create selling power, this type of copy is not often used in business communication because, in most cases, you are writing a press release to tell a straight, informative story.

Use these techniques as guidelines, not as rules. Write for the audience of the recipient (customers, students, members, employees), not about your book. Practice writing headlines in several different styles and then write supportive body copy for each.

If you are the copywriter, become the copyreader. Read what you write with a red pencil in your hand. Be brutal. Cut out meaningless words and useless phrases. Combine some sentences and eliminate others. Give your readers sentences that flow, combine several thoughts, and present important facts. Mix and match your text with different headlines until you spark an idea that is truly creative, powerful, and designed to accomplish the objective of your press release.

You can generate more book publicity, sell more books, and become more profitable if you follow these simple techniques for writing press releases sent to media and non-retail buyers.

The next step is creating your author website.

## Creating an Author Website

Authors and small publishers must have their own mobile-friendly, professional-looking website—it's a critical element of a book marketing strategy. Following, you'll find everything you need to know to create your author website—from domain names and costs, all the way down to specific content categories.

There's a lot to cover when it comes to [creating your author website](#), but it's worth paying attention to—especially if you're a self-published author. Are you ready to create a professional author website and [sell more books](#)?

### What is the Purpose of Your Author Website?

First of all, you have complete control over the content of your [website](#), and you can put just about anything and everything on it. Think about the purpose of your site. Obviously, you want your [author bio](#) and book information. What else? Is your purpose to communicate with readers? If so, you should have a mailing list signup form on your site and connect it to your [social networking](#) accounts. Do you plan to blog regularly? How do you want to sell books: with links to online retailers or directly using eCommerce? Thinking about the purpose of your site will help you plan a site that serves your author goals and needs for the long term.



## Domain Names

You need to decide on your domain name before you launch your author website, and you should probably decide before you develop your website, as it could impact the design if it becomes your site's title or name.

### What Domain Name Should I Choose?

Ideally, your domain name should be yourname.com. If you have multiple books, this should be a no-brainer.

Some authors build a new site for every book or series, but this splits your book marketing efforts, money, and time. Not to mention, it increases your updating headaches exponentially.

What if you already have a website using the domain name of one of your books? Now might be the time to consolidate under one website using your name. Your name is generally more searchable, and by putting all of your books on one site, you allow readers looking for one book, in particular, to naturally [discover your other books](#).

### Domain Name Availability

What if your name is taken? You can use yournameauthor.com, yournamebooks.com, or your-name.com. Sometimes, if all your preferred options are taken, you could consider yourname.net, or even yourname.org. But think of “.com” as your preferred location.

### Buying a Domain Name

- Always buy your domain name yourself with your email address and credit card.
- Always know the username and password of your domain name account and where it's registered (GoDaddy, Network Solutions, Register.com, etc.).
- Make sure you're listed as what's referred to as the “Registrant,” meaning you own it. If someone registers it for you, make sure they follow these guidelines and that you have the username and password to the account.

If your website developer registers your domain name for you, make sure you know what happens to your domain name registration if you want to move your website hosting elsewhere. Transferring is a hassle, so this is another reason to register your domain name at an independent registrar like GoDaddy or Network Solutions, not through your web hosting company or website developer.

Domain names usually expire or come up for renewal every couple of years, so keep an eye out for emails reminding you to renew them. This is another reason why you want your domain name registered in your name and email address.

Some of the bigger domain name registrars also offer email addresses using your domain name, for example, you@yourdomainname.com. It's an additional charge, but a relatively small one. If this is something you want, check into the registrar's offerings before you use them. You can also use Gmail's G Suite to do this. The advantage of doing it with your registrar or G Suite is that it's permanent—no matter where you host your author website, now or in the future, your email, and domain name, is set where it is, and you don't have to move it.

So, give some thought to your domain name—it's part of your branding and overall book marketing.



## How Much Does an Author Website Cost?

Many authors and publishers struggle with choosing the best website option for themselves and their companies. Few people have a technical background, so setting up a DIY author website seems like a daunting task, and many authors and publishers don't feel confident talking or negotiating with a potential website developer.

The cost depends on how you build it. There's a wide range, from doing it yourself on platforms like Wix, Tertulia for Authors, or WordPress to spending thousands of dollars hiring a website designer/developer to do the entire project for you.



## DIY Website Platforms

The low-cost, do-it-yourself options are appealing if you are so inclined and willing to try. Wix is probably the most popular option, along with WordPress and Squarespace. These platforms offer a free trial, monthly costs are minimal, and you can do the updating yourself, which can be a significant cost-saver over time.

You can also hire someone to develop one of these DIY options for you, which may save you some money. There are many levels of development in this scenario — from using a basic template with no modification to using a template and customizing it extensively. Obviously, the more customization, the higher the cost. These sites can range from around \$1,000 to \$10,000, depending on the level of customization, design, and the features you want included, such as a blog, social media integration, video and audio, etc.

Another affordable option is the intuitive website builder [Tertulia for Authors](#), tailored specifically for authors to showcase their books. Templates are designed to highlight books prominently, eliminating the need for complex design tools. Upload just one of your ISBNs and instantly import all of your books and reviews. You can have your website up and running in minutes—no technical expertise necessary..

## Custom Web Design

You can hire an individual or web design firm to design and develop your particular needs from scratch. If you have the money and want that level of service, you can go that route, but it's not necessary. Prominent web design firms with professional graphic designers and programmers on staff can charge as much as \$20,000 for this service.

## Find a Developer Who Understands Book Marketing

Regardless of which path you take, be mindful that many developers don't know much about marketing in general and book marketing in particular, and that's what your author website is — a book marketing tool. Check out a developer's portfolio before you hire them. Ideally, you'll go with a developer who has experience with book and author websites. Book websites are different—they are text and content-heavy, which is very different from many other graphic-intensive websites. Note: Authors have discovered that sites such as Wix and SquareSpace aren't particularly oriented toward authors and books.

## What to Ask When You Hire a Website Developer

Many authors bemoan the fact that after their website goes live, their developer is unresponsive, takes much too long to make simple updates, and is very expensive. Below are several questions to ask yourself before choosing and committing to a developer for your site:

- When you contacted a potential developer, were they responsive?
- Did they speak in terms you could understand and not in condescending tones?
- What are their limits on how many design changes you can make?
- Is there a limit on how many pages your site can have?
- What's the cost for additional pages?
- What are the per-hour charges for changes and updates?
- Most importantly, are they available to do updates after launching your website? What's their turnaround time for updates, and how much do they charge?

## What Should You Put on Your Author Website?

You can share basic information but also include content readers can't find anywhere else. Feature your author bio, photos, audio, and video, [book information](#), excerpts, reading guides, your blog, media coverage, contact information, event schedules, and more—even your pet photos.

The key is to organize it well so that visitors to your site don't get confused or overwhelmed. A well-



organized menu helps but be sure not to have too many main menu buttons—instead, have drop-down menus, or sub-menus, with the additional information. With menus, sub-menus, or layers, visitors can drill down as deep as they want or skim the surface. You should have no more than about eight menu buttons, and then have submenus or links on the main pages to more detailed content.

Below, you'll find a concise, but by no means complete, listing of major content categories for your website.

### Author Bio

Provide both a short and a long author bio. The long one should be featured on your "About the Author" page, and this can be pretty long. The short bio can go on the home page, with a "read more" link to the full bio. Include [author photos](#) and list upcoming author events on your bio page or on a separate page. If they are frequent, make it a menu button.

### Books

Each book should have its own page on your website with a long book description. You can list all of your books on one page but link (via a "read more" link) to a dedicated page for each book. This will prevent visitors from



having to scroll down the page to find a particular book, and it's also better for search engine optimization (SEO) if you provide individual book information and utilize relevant keywords and [book metadata](#).

Each book should have the obvious information listed—the title, subtitle, publisher, book cover, and series and series number, if applicable. You should also include information such as the pub date, binding, ISBN, and page count. Add video and audio if you have it. You should offer an excerpt for viewing or download, and add [book reviews](#) as they become available.

Provide links to retailers where your books are available for sale. The key ones in the U.S. are Amazon, Barnes & Noble, IndieBound (independent bookstores), Bookshop.org, Books-A-Million, and Apple iBooks. Indigo and Kobo for Canada. For other countries, ask local authors or publishers.

### **Mailing List Sign Up**

Start collecting email addresses even if you aren't sure what you'll do with them. When you decide you want to create a newsletter, you'll be thankful you did. Use a service such as MailChimp or Constant Contact. They provide the form for you to put on your website, and the signups go directly into your email list.

### **Blog**

To blog or not to blog? Most marketers will say it can only help. Some tips:

- Write on topics related to your books or topics about which you are fairly knowledgeable
- Relate your posts to current news events and use relevant keywords to improve your organic search volume
- Announce posts on social media to drive traffic back to your website
- Blog at least once a week so you appear active and involved

### **Contact**

Encourage readers to contact you. Use a form that hides your email address, so it doesn't get "harvested" by spammers. Be sure not to ask for too much information because the more you ask for, the fewer people will contact you.

### **Media Page**

Here, include your author photos and book covers for download, along with links to your online coverage. Offer a link to your contact page as well, so the media can easily reach you if interested.

Once you have the core content, you can add and enhance. A website is always a work in progress and providing frequent updates along with new content will give your fans a reason to follow along.

## **How to Use Your Website to Market Your Book**

Your author website is your primary online presence, your brand, your "home," and your author platform. This is where people will learn more about you and your books, giving you an excellent opportunity to present yourself and your books in the best way and to brand yourself. It is the only place you have complete design and editorial control. Make the most of it.







## Using Your Author Website as a Marketing Tool

- ✓ Your Author Platform and Brand
- ✓ Mailing Lists and Newsletters
- ✓ Selling: Booksellers or Direct?
- ✓ Social Media Links
- ✓ Press/Media Page
- ✓ Book Giveaways

### Your Author Platform and Brand

When visitors arrive on your author website, can they immediately ascertain who you are and what you write about? Ask other authors or people who do not know you or your work their first impression when they arrive at your website.

Include some testimonials, which are similar to review quotes but more oriented toward you as a writer versus individual books. They can be very effective in convincing potential readers and the media of your writing skills and talent.

### Mailing Lists and Newsletters

As mentioned above, set up a mailing list at a service like MailChimp or Mailerlite as soon as possible, and begin collecting email addresses on your author website. These services make the process easy, from creating a form for your website to creating professional-looking newsletters. As soon as you're ready to begin promoting your book, you'll have a ready-and-waiting audience to announce it to. You can send an email out for feedback when you have a [designed book cover](#), when your book is available for [pre-order](#), on publication day, and more.

### Selling: Booksellers or Direct?

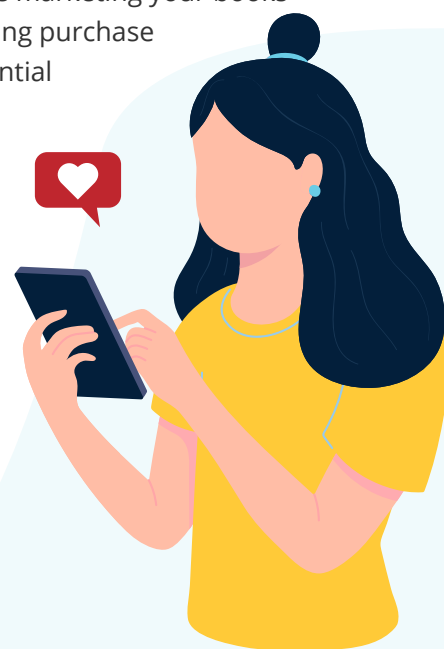
Obviously, [selling books](#) is the ultimate goal of your book marketing efforts. Selling directly often seems appealing. You get to keep a larger percentage of the sale price, but do you want to be taking orders, packing, and shipping books? This could take up a lot of the time you could be marketing your books or writing your next one. Consider selling through online retailers and providing purchase links to their websites where your books are available. It's a much larger potential audience, and people feel more comfortable buying from them.

### Social Media Links

Add "Follow Me" buttons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram—any social media pages you have. You can also display your feeds on your author website with recent posts, encouraging people to follow you. This is a great way to [use social media](#) in an interactive way—post on social media to drive traffic to your website and have social media links or feeds on your website to drive traffic there to add followers.

### Press/Media Page

The press/media page is a collection of author photos, book covers, media coverage, testimonials, review quotes, and anything else that may interest the media or [reviewers](#). Featuring everything they need on one page will make their job easier,



increasing the chances they might give you some type of coverage.

You want the media to be able to contact you easily. Have a short form, but then offer other methods of contact if you choose. If you have a separate publicist, agent, or speakers bureau, you may want to list them or link to their website as well.

### Book Giveaways

This can be a great way to generate traffic, get readers interested in your books, and get people to sign up for your mailing list. You can also use your mailing list to announce the [giveaway](#).

## Website Traffic

Now that you have a website, you need to make sure that you're getting traffic there. It's important to engage in online activities to drive traffic by engaging on social media, guest blogging on other sites, sending out newsletters, advertising, or other methods of driving people to your site.

How do you measure your website's success and marketing efforts? You can do both by tracking traffic to your website.

Getting this data is essential. You have to know if your website and promotional activities are working for



### Important Author Website Metrics to Monitor

- ✓ Number of Visits/Sessions
- ✓ Unique Visitors/Users
- ✓ Page Views
- ✓ Bounce Rate
- ✓ Average Time Spent on Your Site
- ✓ Top Content
- ✓ Social Visits
- ✓ Traffic Source Keywords
- ✓ Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

you. It's important to know what specifically is working well so you can do more of it, and what's not, so you can cut back on or improve upon it.

The easiest and most effective way to track your website's progress and discover what's resonating with your visitors is by connecting your site to Google Analytics with a bit of tracking code. It's quite easy—you can do it yourself by following the instructions from Google. Once the code is installed, you can start tracking traffic. However, the data can feel overwhelming, so here are the important data points to focus on:

#### ✓ Number of Visits/Sessions

Your number of visits is the number of times people come to your site. If the same person comes back more than once, that's tracked as two visits.

#### ✓ Unique Visitors/Users

The number of unique or distinct people coming to your site. Each unique person is counted once.

#### ✓ Page Views

Page views are the number of pages on your site that were viewed. An increase in page views indicates that more content is being viewed across your website. You can see where people are going on your site and how many pages they view per visit. It also tells you that visitors are "sticking"—they

aren't just arriving at your homepage, taking a quick look, and leaving.

### ✔ **Bounce Rate**

The bounce rate is the percentage of people who see one page and then leave the site or “bounce” off the page. Aim for a low bounce rate. This means that people find enough content they like to stay on your site, and you likely achieve reader engagement.

If you have a very high bounce rate on your website pages, you might want to reconsider the content or layout—does it immediately convey who you are and what you write? Is it compelling? If you are confident of both, then maybe the wrong type of visitor is coming to your site. If that's the case, you might want to consider where you're promoting your site and what your site is promising—is it the right audience? Is your message right for the page you're directing visitors to? Are they finding what your ad promised once they land on your site?

### ✔ **Average Time Spent on Your Site**

This indicates how long someone stays on your site, and it's a good number to track to see if it's improving or declining. In conjunction with page views, it gives you an idea of what people are doing on your site. For example, did they spend a few minutes viewing many pages or five minutes on one page, maybe reading an excerpt or blog post?

### ✔ **Top Content**

Track the content that gets the most page views and best traffic to show your high-performing pages.

This is just a basic overview of Google Analytics. Understanding what's working and where you may have room to improve should be a vital part of your book marketing strategy. The more you understand the performance of your [marketing](#) efforts, the better you'll be able to perform.

As you can see, there are many types of content you can add to your website and many ways you can

Then you know what works, and you can do more of it.

### ✔ **Social Visits**

Find out what social media sites send the most traffic to your website by going to the Traffic Sources section of Google Analytics. You'll be able to see the websites that send traffic to your site. If your Facebook posts are driving traffic and your Twitter posts aren't, you know where to focus. Whatever works, do more of it.

### ✔ **Traffic Source Keywords**

Track the keywords people use via search engines to get to your site. You might want to consider using more of them throughout your site, especially on the homepage. For example, a popular search term might be “western romance novels.” If that's your genre, make sure that the phrase is on your homepage and sprinkled throughout your site.

### ✔ **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

Keyword [search engine optimization](#) (SEO) is important, but so is sounding like a human being. People expect authentic communication, not marketing copy packed with keywords that are great for search engines but less ideal for human readers. Make sure your site isn't so optimized for SEO that it doesn't read well. Book websites are usually text-heavy with lots of keywords and phrases, so it's more a matter of fine-tuning. Consider the traffic source keywords above in crafting your SEO.



use it in your marketing efforts. While it can seem overwhelming to consider all that goes into creating an author website, if you follow the steps above, you're on your way to a site that stands out from the rest. What are you waiting for? Build an author website, connect with your readers, and start selling more books.

## Mistakes on Author Websites

If you've already had your website up and running for a while, you should look out for these common mistakes. People rarely visit the public-facing parts of their own websites, so it's easy to forget to update important info and check to ensure it's operating smoothly.

If you haven't checked your site recently, now is the time to do so. Here are six mistakes that occur far too often on author websites:

### Using Your Author Website as a Marketing Tool

#### 1 Ads on a Free Site

You may have been told that you don't need to invest in hosting or a domain or site graphics; that you can get a free website on Wordpress.com and it will be perfectly fine for your author website. You can do this, but the problem with "free" sites is that they aren't actually free—they come with advertisements.

Wordpress.com may choose to defray their hosting costs by running ads on a site. The ads will be placed in the sidebar, and they might also be put in the middle of your blog posts or even your book description.

**Solution:** If you don't mind your carefully crafted words being interrupted by ads, a free website might be what you want. Or you can avoid these ads by paying for the "personal" hosting plan.

#### 2 Broken Links

The link is the fundamental part of the web, but that site you linked to last month might be shut down tomorrow, or it could move its content around, breaking your links.

The site's owner might decide to change the company's name and its domain, or they might decide to abandon a site entirely, let the domain registration lapse, and give someone an opportunity to register the domain and point it at an inappropriate site.

And don't forget that republishing your books on Amazon.com will change their location on the site, breaking any existing links you have to your books.

**Solution:** About once a year, use a service such as BrokenLinkCheck.com to scan your site for broken links. You'll need to decide whether to remove or update a broken link, so it points to a new or different location.

#### 3 No Contact Info

Some authors' websites have no contact information on their site whatsoever—no email address, no contact form, not even links to their social media accounts. This not only prevents them from interacting with their readers, but it also makes it virtually impossible for anyone to contact them or their agent for potential interviews, media coverage, etc.



**Solution:** Give visitors to your website as many ways to contact you as you feel comfortable with.

#### 4 Not Mobile-Friendly

Though 50% or more of web traffic now comes from mobile devices, there are still many websites that don't work well on smartphone-sized screens. A surprising number of authors, including famous names, still have websites that are not mobile-friendly. Some don't realize their site looks bad on a smartphone, while others probably thought that using a particular site theme would guarantee that the site would work on a mobile device.

Test your site by visiting it on a smartphone and then visiting it on a tablet. Is the text easy to read? Do the menus and other features work? Does the site even load?

**Solution:** If your site looks bad on a smartphone or tablet, your best solution is to replace the site's theme with a more modern one. This will give your site a new look that works on all screen sizes.

#### 5 No Facebook Pixel

Many authors have boosted their sales by buying ads on Facebook. If you install a Facebook Pixel on your site, you'll be able to use the data it provides to target Facebook ads with pinpoint accuracy. You can have Facebook [concentrate your ads](#) on your site's visitors, increasing the chance that they'll decide to buy your book.

**Solution:** You can install a Facebook Pixel by following [these instructions](#). A tip: Have the instructions open in one browser tab while you follow them in a second browser tab (Facebook's ad menus are super complicated).

#### 6 No Website At All

Though it may be hard to believe, some authors avoid even having a website in the first place. They just use a Facebook page, send fans to their author page on Amazon.com, or just don't bother to keep any kind of online presence at all.

This is a mistake of the first order.

An author's website is the one place on the web where the author is truly in control. Amazon might pull your books tomorrow, Facebook might remove your account, and your favorite forum might shut down on the owner's whim, but your website is safe from anything short of legal action.

Even a simple site with a single page, a brief bio, and a few book descriptions is better than nothing.

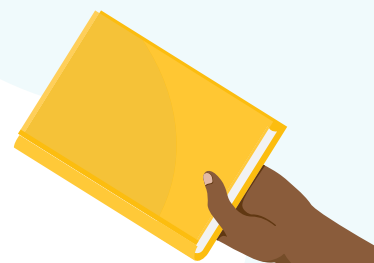
### 🌟 Bonus Tip

Before you make any major changes to your site, be sure to take the time to line up a number of friends who'll look over your site and help you spot errors such as placeholder text left on a page, missing cover images, or typos.

The next area of focus is book publicity. But first, you should do these things before beginning to publicize your book.



# 4 Steps to Take Before Publicizing Your Book



According to Bowker, the official ISBN issuing agency in the United States, self-published books were up 40% in 2018 over 2017, with an estimated 1.68 million self-published print and ebooks published. Through the boom of self-publishing, long before 2017, book promotion dramatically changed. Publicity campaigns that were once focused solely on a book greatly expanded to make room for the personality behind the content. An established author platform, in many ways, has become more of a necessity than the book itself, as it drives much of the reader, reviewer, and media engagement. Most authors know you can't just release a book into the wild to wait for something to happen, and that promotion—whether at the hand of a professional or the author—is necessary. However, there are critical steps to prepare your author platform before diving headfirst into publicizing your book. Taking these early steps, among others, will ultimately provide you with channels you'll later need to leverage your publicity results.

## Prepare Your Author Platform for Publicizing Your Book

### Create Your Reader Avatar

1

It seems so simple, yet writers can find themselves at the tail end of their manuscript without a firm idea of exactly who they wrote their book for. Take time to step back from your manuscript, close your eyes, and envision *your target reader*.

Now take it a step further and create your reader avatar—the description of the consumer who will love your book. Which social media platform do they utilize? Which outlets do they turn to for news consumption? What other books are they reading? The more you “know” your reader, the better you can steer your marketing initiatives to reach them.

### Make a List of Competing Authors You Admire and Follow Them

2

You can and should find certain aspects of your book in others that have already been written. This lets you know there is a market for your book, and it also gives you case studies for successful marketing tactics in your genre.

Before you kick off your publicity campaign, make a list of [comp titles](#) including A-list authors and self-published authors who've broken out in your genre. Follow them on social media. Engage in their posts. Identify the groups they're associated with and join them. Learn how they interact with their readers. Take notes on which social media tactics they implore that create the highest engagement with their followers.



## Establish Your Digital Footprint

**3** You don't need to be active on all social media platforms. You don't need to have a blog. You don't have to start an author newsletter. But you do have to create a digital "home base" that will ultimately become the place to direct readers, media, and reviewers for more information about you, your book, and your brand.

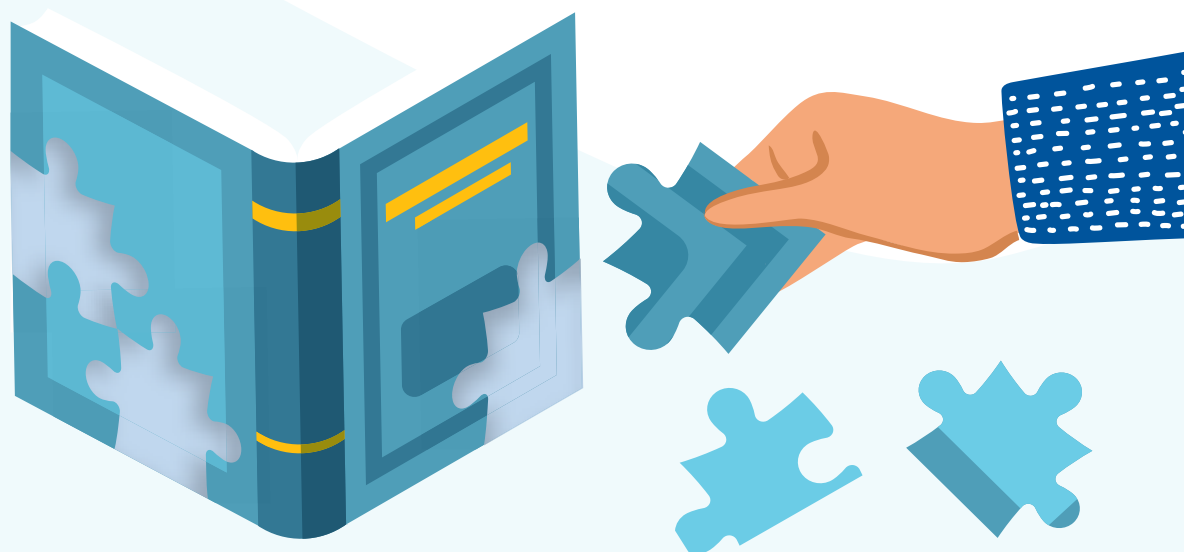
Draw on the [insights](#) from your reader avatar and establish a platform within the space where your future book buyer "lives." Whether it's a website, an author Facebook page, an Instagram account dedicated to your author brand, a blog, or any other channel that suits both you and your audience, choose a platform to grow and start early; if possible, six months to a year before your publication date, although it's never too late. The earlier you start, the more time you have to organically grow your audience and enhance your author voice.

## Create an Editorial Calendar

**4** Identifying critical tie-ins for your book and message is important before actively promoting your new work. There are awareness months, weeks, and days for most social, lifestyle, and health causes, and if you identify these crucial dates up front, you'll be positioned to leverage them at critical points throughout your publicity timeline.

Once you've established these awareness dates and holidays, mark off the time on your editorial calendar in which you'll pitch long-lead (4 to 6 months), medium-lead (2 to 3 months), and short-lead (1 month) media opportunities to effectively leverage what will undoubtedly be covered in the news.

By focusing on identifying your reader, checking out your competition, creating your digital home base, and putting together an editorial calendar before it's time to publicize your book, you will be taking smart steps to set yourself up for maximum success.





# Digital Book Marketing vs. Book Publicity

As you evaluate your book's marketing and publicity needs, it's important to take a minute and evaluate your timeline, purposes, and intended audience. Evaluating these things will help you decide what is best for you and can help you decide what kind of resources you need to get going.

Digital marketing and publicity are often mentioned in the same breath. Both help promote your book and get it in front of readers. However, there are several key differences that you should keep in mind as you decide how to promote your book.

## 📌 Digital Book Marketing Is Advertising, While Book Publicity Is Not

Digital marketing, in its simplest definition, is advertising, whether paid or organic. Your digital marketing may include blogging, email communications, social media outreach, and traditional advertising. This is very different from [publicity](#), which relies on reporters, bloggers, and tastemakers to choose your book and feature it at no charge to the author. The advertisements you plan are guaranteed to run, while publicity is beholden to the whims of the media cycle and individual writers.

## 📌 Digital Book Marketing Is About Conversions and Sales, While Publicity Is About Exposure and Credibility

The function of digital marketing is very different from the function of publicity, and both are very important to a book's exposure. Publicity is especially helpful around a book launch as it establishes an [author's brand](#) and gives him or her clout in the publishing world. If an important blogger or reporter writes about a book, readers will appreciate it as a title curated by a media outlet they trust, which helps increase the perceived value of your book. Digital marketing, however, is about getting people to click on an ad and buy your book. This is great for sales but does a lot less for your author branding and is often best incorporated after the initial book launch so that people will see your book both in advertising and in trusted media publications and blogs.

## 📌 You Control the Audience for Digital Book Marketing, While Media Outlets Develop and Curate Their Own Audiences

Both options are double-edged swords. If you have a good handle on your own [audience](#), digital marketing

may be an easy move; however, if you don't know the ins and outs of your audience, it's easy to spend a lot of money sharing your book with the wrong people. This is much less likely with publicity, since writers and reporters select your book based on the idea that their readers will be interested. Once you figure out what kinds of readers are interested in a publicity campaign, it can be a lot easier to develop a digital marketing campaign that effectively targets your readers.

## 📌 Book Publicity Campaigns Typically Take Longer Than Advertising Campaigns

Since publicity campaigns depend on media outlets and bloggers deciding to read and write about your book or conduct an interview, this process takes much longer than setting up digital ads. Because of this, you must plan more lead time for your publicity campaign before launch than you do for a digital advertising campaign, although it's incredibly important to plan your book promotion ahead of time for both.

## 📌 Digital Book Marketing Has More Potential for Long-Term Use, While Book Publicity is Very Time Sensitive

Digital marketing campaigns can begin at almost any point in your book's lifetime. Publicity, however, cannot. Publicity is very focused on the idea of newsworthiness, and a book that came out a year ago or even a month ago has already lost its excitement for a lot of traditional media. Though some publicity can be done after a launch, it is typically very limited. This means that publicity campaigns and digital marketing campaigns work well in conjunction with each other, where the publicity campaign focuses on launch, and the digital marketing campaign focuses on post-launch book sales.



# 15 Tips for Getting Book Publicity

Book publicity uses the media as a conduit to spread the word of an author and book to general and/or target audiences. In its simplest form, it really is a “you scratch their back, they scratch yours” scenario.

While there is no single, proven approach, book publicity is indeed a craft—with tactics, strategies, and professional standards. Here are 15 important tips to consider when you’re trying to get media attention and coverage to promote your book:

## 1. It’s Not Always About Your Book

For both fiction and nonfiction, book promotion is often more about the author than the book. Keep in mind that much of the time, you’re marketing yourself as an expert/author to the media. This step is so important; IngramSpark offers a [free course](#) to learn how to build your author platform.

## 2. Understand What a Media Pitch Actually Is

A [media pitch](#) is a brief note (typically an email or letter) that explains why you would be a great guest on a specific show, a subject for a feature story or article in a magazine or [newspaper](#), a source for expert commentary, etc. A good pitch is succinct and direct. It’s all about persuasion.

## 3. Remember, the Media Needs You

Editors and producers really do need and want you. Without [book publicists](#) and self-promoting (or self-published) authors, their jobs would be much harder. Keep this in mind when promoting your book. If you don’t get a response to your initial inquiry, don’t let that discourage you. Instead of promoting yourself, you’re *selling yourself*, and you’ll decide who to engage.

## 4. Know Your Audience

You’re using the media to reach people who should be interested in your book, so you need to approach the right media—the outlets that cater to your end-user. No book is right for everyone—clearly [define your audience](#) to ensure you’re approaching the right media that caters to that audience.

## 5. Offer Guidance

For interviews on radio, television, and podcasts—offer book giveaways. Giveaways prompt call-ins to shows, spark listener questions, and they’re a great way to generate interest in your book.

## 6. Craft a Quality Press Release

Press releases are the foundation of your promotional platform. Media contacts expect a professional presentation and quality information. Don’t assume you know how to write a press release simply because you’re a good writer. Press releases follow industry-accepted formats and styles. Learn how the pros do it and follow that style.

## 7. Personalize

When reaching out to journalists you believe should be interested in your book, take a few minutes to [research](#) them and read what they’ve recently written about. Mentioning something they’ve covered recently dramatically increases your chances of getting a response.

## 8. Be Creative in Your Media Outreach

The competition for media attention is fierce. Virtually every book has an angle that should resonate with some media. Make your book stand out from the crowd by accentuating what makes it unique, different, and newsworthy.

## 9. Put Yourself in the Position of a Producer or Editor

Media contacts will respond to your outreach if you make their job easier. Think about the kind of pitches, guests, and story ideas they’re looking for.

A quick tip if you’re seeking TV interviews: Watch one of the national morning news shows and listen for the segues before commercials. Example: “Coming up after the break, five surprising things your handshake says about you.” These segues are pitches.

## 10. Use Google Alerts Related to Your Book Topic and Your Expertise

Identify keywords and phrases to ensure you are alerted when a topic related to your book is in the news. News begets news; if a topic has been covered, chances are other outlets will cover it, and many editors, reporters, and producers like to do follow-up stories and interviews.

## 11. Stay on Top of Current Events and Trending Stories

The media loves to hear from authors whose expertise can be used in stories or interviews regarding breaking news, trends, or fads.

## 12. Be Patient and Persistent

Book publicity is more of a marathon than a sprint. Media coverage is not a one-and-done proposition—it must be sustained to spark book sales and generate other opportunities. You will inevitably hear “no” more than “yes” when trying to secure media coverage—it’s the nature of book publicity.

## 13. Go Old School

The average editor or producer gets hundreds of emails a day from book publicists and self-published

authors. But what if you actually mailed a letter and hand-addressed it? A hand-addressed envelope is very likely to be opened, and your pitch may actually be read.

Another insider tip: instead of [mailing a copy of your book to the media](#), send it via FedEx or UPS—almost everyone opens these.

## 14. Set Realistic Expectations

Every author wants to sell tens of thousands or millions of books. The reality is that very few do. But this doesn’t mean you can’t achieve good book sales over time with a sustained and strategic media outreach and book marketing plan. Set reasonable expectations and goals, and you’ll set yourself up for success.

## 15. Enjoy the Ride

You may never pass this way again, so enjoy the ride. Book publicity and media coverage can be a lot of fun. Enjoy the journey. Relish it. It’s business, but it really can be a blast.



# Marketing Your Book by Genre

There are a few more things that are important to know for a complete book marketing plan. The way you market your book can vary based on its genre. Find your book's genre below and discover marketing ideas particular to your book.



## Children's Books

The majority of book marketing strategies online focus almost entirely on the adult market. There are [three things](#) that make marketing children's books so different from other genres.



## Cookbook

In the digital age, the opportunities to market a cookbook can seem endless. Follow [these steps](#) to help build a following, plan a successful book launch, and add different ideas to your marketing plan.



## Fantasy

Fantasy books have always been one of the more popular genres and tend to be one of the hardest to [market](#). You must be creative to grab the right audience's attention. Use the right platforms and tactics to generate your ideal reader and create a following with your that person in mind.



## Historical Fiction

Selling your historical fiction book requires strategic planning and execution to get your book in front of the right audience. Your target audience is not just people who will purchase your book but who appreciate the [research](#) and hard work that went into writing it.



## Horror

Get creative when marketing your horror book to ensure it reaches the right audience. Marketing to horror audiences requires you to set the mood and [tell short stories](#) that invoke fear and intrigue enough to get them to purchase your book.



## Mystery

Marketing your mystery novel can be even more challenging than [writing the story](#) itself. Successful marketing involves careful presentation and sharing just enough information to keep potential readers on the edge of their seats, wanting to purchase your book as soon as possible.



## Nonfiction

Finally seeing the nonfiction manuscript you spent months, or years, writing turn into a published book can feel like crossing the finish line of a long and exhausting marathon. But now you've got to [let the world know](#) that your book actually exists.



## Poetry

Poetry is now one of the bestselling categories for IngramSpark, and many of the genre's negative connotations are being flipped upside down: what was once seen as outdated, unrelatable, and highbrow is now current, relatable, and approachable. Poets don't need to sell the entire genre to readers anymore, but they must [sell themselves](#) against their large (and growing!) competition.



## Religious/Spiritual

As a self-published author, marketing your spiritual or religious book requires an intelligent marketing strategy. In selling your book in the faith-based or spiritual community, you need to be authentic and genuine in your beliefs. Highlight not only what makes your book great, but also what's needed to align with the values of the communities of your target audience.



## Romance

As a romance author, you're given a wonderful opportunity to speak to readers on an intimate level. Every time they purchase one of your titles, they invite you into their lives and admit their (sometimes very secret) fantasies and desires! Use these [five essential strategies](#) for selling romance novels and building a return fan base.



## Self-Help

The right marketing for self-help authors can mean the difference between a successful, impactful book publicity campaign and one that produces marginal results. If you're a self-promoting author, you can implement all of [these tips](#) without professional help.



## Sci-Fi

Promoting a self-published sci-fi novel requires creativity and engagement with the community of readers who are fiercely protective of this fun and exciting genre. Marketing your sci-fi novel can be challenging.



## Young Adult

The YA genre continues to evolve along with its readers and their tastes and now includes more realism, romance, diversity, and inclusivity than ever before. As a result, the number of YA books published and sold each year has exploded. So, what can YA authors do to set their books apart? Discover the four key [book promotion strategies](#) to keep in mind.



# Book Marketing on Social Media

You have to be on social media to market your book well, and it's one of the best ways to connect with readers.

## Branding First

Now's the time to create consistent branding across all your social media properties (even those you don't use). You need an author bio, a photo, and a header image for each site. Canva is a free service that provides templates for each of the social media and email headers you need. Try to adhere to a set of colors, fonts, and graphic elements that you use everywhere, so your followers will know it's you right away when they see your brand.

While you might be overwhelmed by all the various social media platforms, we recommend registering for all of them, if only to create bios that point to your website.

## LinkedIn for Authors

If you're a nonfiction author who writes on topics such as business, finance, politics, technology, or medicine, LinkedIn is an important place to connect with the professionals and the public who are looking for the information in your book.

Since LinkedIn provides a virtual resume to connect with other professionals in the industry, your profile must be polished and well-written. You can also join LinkedIn interest groups to post advice, ask and answer questions, and connect with other authors and professionals.

## Following the Social Media Rule of Thirds

People seeking to connect with you will be quick to find your social media profiles and eagerly expect new content. Here's what you need to know about what to post and the social media rule of thirds.



### Make 1/3 of Your Posts About Your Book or Brand

Your social media followers want to know when your book is coming out, what the cover looks like, if you've won a book award, or if they can read a portion of your next book in progress. Sharing these details helps them connect with your book and your brand.



### Make 1/3 of Your Posts Curation (Recommendations)

Being a curator of interesting books, events, movies, activities, recipes, solutions, facts, quotes, or anything that catches your eye, is another great way to build community. Making your social media platform a trusted resource builds word-of-mouth traffic.



### Make 1/3 of Your Posts Personal

Write about your personal life. This doesn't necessarily have to include your "private" life. Do you do yoga or like to garden, or is World of Warcraft your guilty pleasure? Posting stories and pictures from your life draws readers in and helps them to feel a sense of connection with you.



## Free Online Social Media Course for Authors

Learn how to market your book on social media,  
what social platforms work best for authors, and more!

Enroll Today

### Tools to Help You Manage

There are a few different tools to make posting easier. For example, Bitly provides an extension that lets you share any web page with fans on Twitter and Facebook with just one click of a button at the top of your browser. Twitter can be used to post news and updates to a community or a list of your followers, and a Pinterest button on your browser allows you to share images from any web page to your personal boards.

Social media is a great way to communicate with friends and fans and have a true conversation, whether about books and movies or about business and writing. Instead of stressing about the best way to use social media, use the social media rule of thirds to provide a scaffold for your content.

### How to Promote a Book on Social Media

Use these tips below in your social media marketing strategy to start finding readers for your book. These are quick goals that require a daily time investment of no more than 20 minutes.

#### ✓ Ask Yourself: Who Are You Writing For?

Where do you find your [target audience](#)?

Start by following people you actually want to follow. Show interest in what they're saying by responding to their tweets and engaging in conversations. Never forget social media marketing is a two-way street. Your social media presence will start to grow organically when you understand who you're writing for.

There are several free and paid tools to help you. The most obvious places to start are social networks—namely Facebook and Twitter.

#### ✓ Find a Consistent Voice

Your writing voice should carry over to social media as well.

Knowing who your audience is and what they're saying about you helps you find the right message to communicate. When you know who your audience is, you can begin crafting a message that's directed to them and that they actually respond to. Always be yourself, but in a way your readers can connect to.

#### ✓ Create a Social Calendar

Your social media shouldn't be random—it should be strategic. At the very least, you should schedule one social media post per day on Twitter and two posts per week on Instagram and Facebook.

When you're creating a schedule, it helps to be thematic. Mondays are for tweeting quotes, Tuesdays are for posting reviews, etc. Knowing the type of post you'll publish on any given day will help you avoid having social media writer's block.

### ✔ **Be Topical**

Scheduling your posts will help you manage your social media, but at least once a week, prove you're human by posting something topical. It could be as simple as a photo on Instagram of something you're doing or a question to spark conversation.

### ✔ **Make Recommendations**

Your readers should start seeing you as an authority figure in your genre, and you should also start seeing yourself as one. Once a week, start recommending things that your readers would enjoy. Think outside the box and recommend movies, websites, conferences—anything your audience would enjoy.

### ✔ **Create Sharable Content**

One of the ways more people will discover you is by having others share your content. At least once a week, you should have a post, photo, or tweet that is unique and shareable.

### ✔ **Be Social**

It's easy to forget the most important word in social media: social. Talk to people; be personal and genuine. Every day you should spend at least 5 to 10 minutes reading and commenting on social media.

### ✔ **Share Others' Content**

You don't need to be 100% original in your daily social media goals. Spend a few minutes each day retweeting or sharing things you find interesting and think your readers would enjoy. For example, if you write mysteries, then maybe it's a funny quote from a mystery author or a fascinating article about an unsolved mystery.

### ✔ **Who's Talking About You?**

When it comes to social media marketing, you never want to miss a moment of people talking about you—but you also don't want to hover around your computer all day long just waiting for someone to say your name. Mention is a paid tool (with a free trial) that alerts you when you have mentions and tracks the overall sentiment.

### ✔ **Post Different Content on Different Platforms**

Don't be lazy with your social media marketing. Posting the same content on Twitter and Facebook is not effective. Your message on each network should change—people who regularly use Twitter are a different audience from those who use Facebook.

Make sure you understand the social media channel before posting. Talk about what you're writing or getting ready for, allowing your fans tend to see you much more personally.

### ✔ **Hashtag It!**

Hashtags are one of the easiest ways to get followers quickly if you use them correctly. A hashtag is something that starts with a # sign. When a person clicks on the word after it, they see other people talking about that topic.

Here are a few things to remember about hashtags:

1. Don't hashtag everything. Only use them when they seem relevant.
2. Don't be generic; posting a tweet about how happy you are about something with #excited will not gain followers for you.
3. Use hashtags relevant to your followers—if you're at a writers' conference, for example, and there's a hashtag for that conference, use it.
4. Think of hashtags that build into your author brand—unique hashtags that only you use. You might have a hashtag for the book you are working on, and whenever a reader clicks on it, they can see all the tweets about that particular book.

### ✔ **Use Facebook Analytics to Understand Your Followers**

Any author who opens a fan page has access to detailed analytics that show them who is a fan of their page. To access it:

1. Go to your Facebook page
2. Click "Insights" on the top white bar; from here, you'll see an overview of your reach



3. On the side panel, you'll see several different options

4. Select "People"

This will give you demographic data such as where your fans live and how old they are. Among other things, these kinds of statistics can help you as you think about where you should do readings and what publications you should target for reviews.

### ✔ Use Twitter Analytics to Understand Your Followers

Twitter also has analytics you should check out. There are a number of free and paid websites that can help you see who your fans are beyond what Twitter offers. One popular tool with a free option is Tweepmap. Much like Facebook, this will show you where your followers live but not their gender or age.

If no one is buying your book—or if you just want to sell more copies—then pause for a moment and ask yourself if you really know who your audience is.

You don't grow your social network overnight; it's a long process. Work on it as you write your book, not as you prepare to release it. Be persistent, and don't give up when it's not growing as fast as you want it to.

## Social Video Marketing

Making videos on social media is a great way to get personal with your followers and make them feel more connected to you. People buy people, and as a self-published author, the goal is to get people to like you and buy into you—and eventually buy your books.

Videos make it easier to close the gap between social media followers and loyal readers.

The possibilities are endless when it comes to video creation. It doesn't take a big production with a crew and expensive equipment. With just your smartphone and your personality, you can be on your way to becoming a social media phenomenon.

### Video Equipment

Clarity, proper lighting, and good sound quality are imperative when recording your videos. These days, smartphones have pretty good image quality, so it's okay to record right from your phone.

To make things easier, you might choose to purchase a phone stand to hold your device. Many of the stands come equipped with a ring light to provide perfect lighting. Some are relatively inexpensive and can sit right on top of your table or desk.

If it's within the budget, you may want to invest in a noise-canceling mic that will block out any background noise. These, too, can sit right on top of your desk or table. But even without a mic, stand, or ring light, you can make it happen.

Be sure to record in a quiet room with no distractions and set up good lighting. Natural light can work wonders, but make sure the light is in front of you, not behind. Make sure your background is clean and free of clutter.

Download a video editing app on your smartphone, which is often free. With a free video editor app, you can cut and splice your videos together and edit with text, filters, voiceovers, and more to make your video more engaging.

### Video Content

It's important to offer value with your video posts. By offering valuable content, you're establishing





authority, building trust, encouraging engagement (likes, shares, and bookmarks), and eventually converting your followers into book buyers.

Value can come in different forms, from entertainment, education, and conversation to connection, promotion, and inspiration. Ensure your video content offers value in one or more of those categories as it relates to your target audience and brand.

Try these ideas for video content that will encourage your followers to connect with you and engage:

- Tips and tricks
- Advice
- Behind the scenes
- Live readings
- Book reviews
- Opinion pieces
- Character assessments
- A day in the life
- Current events
- Personal experiences
- Promotions and contests
- Regularly scheduled installment

### **Authenticity**

When recording and posting video content, being yourself is more important than ever. Relax and let your personality shine. Don't obsess over how you look. If you deliver valuable content, your followers won't care.

Besides, letting people see you in your natural element makes them feel more comfortable with you. You come off as authentic and confident. Trying to be something you're not is the best way to turn your viewers off.

Whatever you choose to do for your video posts on social media, you must be consistent, even when you think no one is watching. Consistency, like authenticity, builds trust, and it builds a platform.

Come up with a strategy, execute it consistently, and watch your online community grow.

### **Pitfalls to Avoid When You Advertise Books on Social Media**

There are a lot of unique pitfalls that authors need to consider when running ads for their books. Some of these are common tropes in all advertising, but when it comes to promoting your books online, you need to know a few specific things before you begin. With these in mind, you'll come out of the gate with better clickthroughs, more engagements, and, hopefully, more book sales.

#### **Text in Images**

Take a look at your book cover. Is the title written in huge, bold letters across the front? Your name is probably on there, too, right? You probably have an eye-catching image on there as well, but like most book covers, the main selling point is the title. There's only one big problem with that: advertising platforms hate text.

In fact, Facebook's ad platform will automatically detect if you have too much text in your ad image and automatically flag it. Only images that contain less than 20% text are permitted.

According to Facebook, this is because the text in an ad image results in significantly lower engagement with the ad. The most eye-catching visual is the one that elicits an immediate, visceral, reflexive response.

An effective image can make or break your ad campaign, but you should opt to use as little text as possible when creating your campaigns. Here are a couple of ways to avoid this issue.



## Separate Visual Elements from Text

The cover of Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner's *Freakonomics* is a very popular—and effective—cover. Its imagery is iconic and incredibly descriptive without saying a word—the apple masquerading as an orange is the perfect visual representation of the revelatory findings inside the book.



Unfortunately, this book cover would be immediately flagged by Facebook's ad platform for having too much text.



So, here's an easy fix: just isolate the image. Or even better yet, find a similar image that can provide some variety in your ad while still creating a strong impression in the viewer's mind of what the book cover looks like.

## Make an Image Inside an Image



If you can't isolate the imagery in your book cover, you can use a variety of tools to insert your book cover into other images, sometimes referred to as mockups. There's an incredible tool called Placelt that can help you create these mockups, or if you've got the skills, you can make your own. Here's what 5 minutes in Photoshop can do:

Of course, you'll still need to be careful not to cross the 20% text threshold, but with careful planning and some creativity, you can easily bypass this issue and likely make for a much more compelling ad in the process.

## Platform Native Ad Styles

One of the simplest mistakes you can make is to forget to tailor your creative for the platform on which it is served. And the clearest and most common place this happens is on Instagram.

One of the byproducts of the extensive filtering available on Instagram is that, for better or for worse, everything on the service looks like Instagram—the vintage filters, that slight haze of summertime, like every single photo was taken during golden hour.

When you create an ad for that platform, you should strongly consider making your creative fit that aesthetic as well. Don't just slap an image of your book up and expect it to get lots of engagement. Instead, try filtering your images on the service before you upload them to the ad network.

Before



After



## Nobody Wants to Buy Your Book...Yet

You just wrote the Great American Novel. Your book may be fantastic—but nobody knows it yet.

It's important to remember that advertising is a game of impressions. It's about putting your brand, your title, and your name in front of as many people as possible, as many times as possible.

Say you just created your first campaign. You can see that the ad is being shown, but you've only had one or two sales. Don't worry. Your campaign isn't over yet.

Instead of going for the hard sell on your first impression, why not try to lure the reader in with a little mystery? Tease them with a sample chapter. Or go one better: give them your book for free.

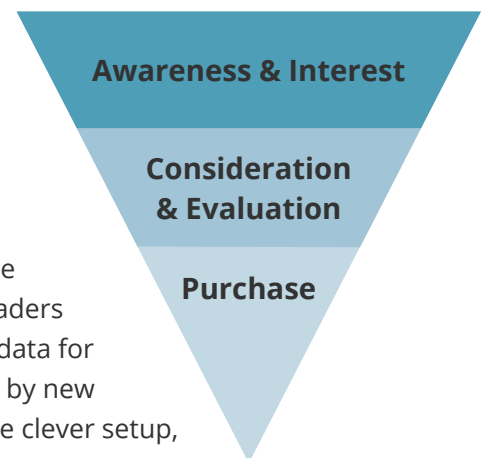
The facts are that nobody knows what your book is about. They don't know who wrote it, they don't know whether their friends liked it, and they don't have any meaningful data about whether to purchase it beyond just seeing a photo of the cover in a Facebook ad and perhaps reading a brief synopsis.

But if you give your book away for free (or at least a chapter), you gain two crucial things: first, you expose them to the actual work; second, you capture an email address you can then use to re-market to that reader.

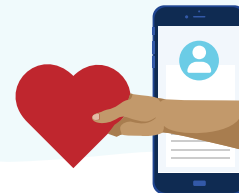
In the marketing business, this is referred to as a sales funnel. Here's a simplified version:

Advertising takes care of the very first part: In this segment, new readers hear about your book for the first time (awareness), and maybe something catches their attention enough to click through (interest). They read some more on your landing page (consideration) and decide to download the free chapter or free book (evaluation).

It's then, and only then, that you complete the sale (purchase). It's a tried-and-true method that marketers have been using long before the advent of digital ads, but the ability to reach huge numbers of new readers with advertising, coupled with the simple approach of capturing user data for re-marketing and direct sales, is a winning combination turbocharged by new technologies. It's easier than ever to reach new people, and with a little clever setup, you'll be picking up new readers in no time.



# Social Media Platforms



Promoting your book can seem daunting at first but leveraging the power of social media is an incredible way to market your book to larger audiences, at a low cost or for free. Understanding the platforms and how to use them is essential to ensure you connect with the right people and gain traction in your book sales.

## **Reddit**

Reddit is a unique and popular social platform that can help you share content to market your book, allow users to interact, and boost your post. It allows you to talk directly with your target audience and build relationships within communities.

## **TikTok**

Don't underestimate the power of TikTok to market your book. It is one of the most effective ways for you to connect with your audience of readers and promote your book to an incredibly diverse audience.

## **Facebook**

Marketing your book on [Facebook](#) is a given, but there are many moving parts to consider. Discover and learn more about:

- How to use the algorithm so your posts are seen
- Fan pages
- [Ads versus boosted posts](#)
- [How to optimize ad performance](#), and more

## **Instagram**

Instagram is more than just a tool for posting pet pictures. It's a very effective platform for communicating with your target audience. But if you want to use Instagram to connect with readers, here are [a few things to remember](#).

## **Pinterest**

Pinterest was once a relatively niche social media platform with only a small marketing and ad presence. That has [changed dramatically](#) over the past few years as the platform has grown exponentially and attracted more and more brands for advertising purposes. Here are a few of the most

[effective ways](#) to optimize your [Pinterest marketing practices](#) for even better results.

## **Twitter**

Hundreds of writers have used Twitter to successfully master social media marketing: Joyce Carol Oates has nearly 250K followers; Rick Riordan has over 890K; George R.R. Martin has more than 1 million; Stephen King has 7 million; and Paulo Coelho has over 15 million. These writers aren't just popular on social media because they have popular books—they're popular because they're actually saying things on Twitter that people are responding to.

Here are seven tips to help break down Twitter and make sure you are [tweeting like a bestselling author](#).

## **YouTube**

YouTube stars have been able to amass enormous followings (and similarly large incomes) by independently creating and releasing content. And the principles that have allowed them to succeed aren't exclusive to [video content](#). Countless self-published authors have built sustainable careers by following the same rules.

Here are [four things](#) that all self-publishing authors can learn from popular YouTubers.

## **Amazon**

Since Amazon holds the lion's share of the book market in the United States, not only should your book be available for sale on Amazon, but you should also be taking advantage of Amazon's book marketing tools to leverage your book sales.

[Making the Most Out of Your Amazon Author Page](#)  
[7 Tips for a Successful Book Launch on Amazon](#)

# Blog Marketing

You probably already know how important it is to blog about your book. Here's some helpful information for making the most out of your blog.

## Article Writing 101: Crafting Effective Articles to Support Book Promotion

Writing a book is hard work, but it's only half the battle. Once your book is finished, you'll need to promote it—and not just through book signings and social media. Article writing is a great way to grow your audience and build a community.

Many authors are intimidated by the idea of writing an article, but it's something beneficial that almost every author can do with the right approach. Here are some key tips for crafting an article that will effectively support book promotion.

### Find the Best Topic

For nonfiction authors, the easiest way to determine a topic is to pick a chapter in the book. Which section are you most passionate about? Which ideas can you most likely expand upon? Don't copy the chapter verbatim, but rather use it as a starting point for your article.

### Offer Specific Takeaways

Readers want specific tools and takeaways when they read an article. General, broad themes can be overdone and are not helpful. Your goal is to make readers want more content, but you can't do that if your article misses the mark.

Most editors and readers prefer lists such as "10 ways to help employees avoid burnout." This type of article promises specific tactics that can be applied in the workplace. Scrollable content is more appealing, especially when people can easily click out of a story before reaching the end. Remember to always ask yourself when writing: what is this article giving readers?

### Don't Be Too Promotional

Editors are not fans of shameless promotion, and neither are most readers. Mentioning your book too often is a turnoff for readers and media and can backfire. You want people to crave more content

without forcing your book on them. If done well, your reader's curiosity will be piqued by your content, and they'll want to learn more about you and what else you've written.

### Do Your Homework

Read content that's already been published in your desired outlet. Want to get an article published in *Forbes*? Take a look at the topics they cover and the writing style of their contributors. They already have an established readership, so figure out how to speak to them. Also, make sure to note what's already been written about recently to ensure the topic you propose is fresh and, therefore, more likely to be accepted.

### Publicize and Share

Though it's tempting to sit back and passively watch for the reaction to your piece once it's published, the best thing to do is to promote it and share it widely on your end. Share the link to your article on your own social media sites, your blog, your email list, and your newsletter – wherever possible! The more people you share the link with, the more people will ultimately end up appreciating your work.

Though writing articles may be time-consuming, it's one of the best ways to generate more followers and establish credibility.



# How to Develop a Content Strategy for Authors



We live in a world where content is king. Businesses know one of the most important pieces of information they need to have is a content strategy. Without one, how are people going to find out about your business? Successful authors are not just people who write well—they're people who think of their writing career as a business. Like any successful business, authors need a content strategy.

A content strategy will look different for every author and every genre, but these are the key things every author should be thinking about as they develop their own:

## Goal

The most important piece of your content strategy is the goal. Don't be vague here. Have a quantifiable number, such as "drive x people to my author website and convert y% of those people to buy my book." The more specific, the better. Make them realistic and give them a timeframe. Every other piece of information in your strategy will point back to this goal.

## Persona(s)

Who is the ideal person for your author website? It may not be the person who buys your book—it may be people such as librarians who will recommend your book. Knowing your audience will help you decide what content to write to drive traffic to your website. Like your goal, be specific. Write a mini biography of your ideal person, then research where they hang out online. These are the forums you need to participate in and the places you should consider marketing to.

## Competition Audit

No matter what genre you're writing in, there are people with books that are similar to yours.

Part of your strategy should be researching what their strategy is. What happened when their book came out? Did they get [reviews](#) in publications? Pitch your book to those reviewers. Did they do ads or any kind of promotion? Did they write guest posts? There's a lot in their strategy that you can implement in your own.

## Content Plan

The biggest piece of the strategy, aside from the goal, is the actual content plan. What will you write to bring traffic to your website? Everything you write should answer the why, how, and what:

- **Why:** Why are you writing what you're writing?
- **How:** How will this help your audience?
- **What:** What are you offering your customer?

Google is getting smarter. It can spot when you're just writing something to sell a book but not offering valuable content. You can and should include information that leads your user to your book, but the focus of your content needs to be something unique and engaging.

If you have presentations, guides, [podcasts](#), [videos](#), a newsletter—any kind of content—then think about how you can reuse that content in a separate blog post.

Braindumps are very helpful. Spend 10 to 20 minutes writing as many blog posts and article ideas as you can think of onto a piece of paper. Some may be bad. Write them down anyway. After a day has passed, go back and see what works and what doesn't.

## Editorial Calendar

Once you have ideas for your content, decide when you'll publish it. Your editorial calendar should include what your [day-to-day plan](#) is. How many blog posts will you post a week? How many Tweets? How many Facebook posts?

Writing a content strategy is difficult. The real challenge, however, is acting on it. Building interest in your book doesn't happen overnight. Your first post probably isn't going to get thousands of viewers. That's not the point. The point is to build your traffic and, by extension, build your audience over time.



# Places to Sell Your Book

You can sell your book to more than just your local bookstore. Here are the details on all the places you can sell your book.

## Selling a Book to Independent Booksellers

### Know Your Audience

When I ask you who your demographic is, and you reply, "My book is for everyone," you're wrong. Independent booksellers need to know if a book will meet their customers' needs. You have to be able to sell it, and that means knowing who is most likely to read it. Writers want to be embraced by the masses, but that's just not realistic. You have to start with your true audience first. You already write what you know. Now, use what you know to find your audience.

### Craft Your Pitch

No one wants to read your book—at least, they don't know they do until you tell them why they should. People are busy. Booksellers are busy. Here's what you do: the elevator pitch. Reduce your [pitch](#) to its simplest form and make sure it's:

- Clear
- Interesting
- Direct

Your pitch should introduce your story idea and define your angle. Now's the time to show why your book is timely, unique, important, and of interest to readers. Practice your pitch and be ready when the time comes to share it with a bookseller.

### Have a One Sheet

One sheets are a great way to present what's most important about your book, and you as an author to a bookseller. Have one ready to hand out with your contact information, author photo, author bio, book awards, and book information. Make it fun. You are your author brand.

Give it to the bookseller if you meet in person or email it in a follow-up to a phone conversation. You may want to make it downloadable on your website. If you call, be polite, and ask if they have time to speak right now.

### Be Available

Do you know what a bookseller wants to hear? Where your book is available. Don't mention online retailers, especially not Amazon. They want to know the wholesaler. What's the discount for bookstores? What's the cover price? Are you willing to do a book signing?

Your book can be for many more people than you could ever hope, but first, you have to focus. You have to get the ideal audience for your book to get behind it, and then word can spread to other potential markets.

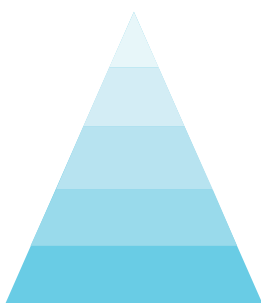
Define your audience. Refine your pitch. Communicate who will read your book and why.



## Selling Books to Corporate Companies

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory comprised of a five-level model of human needs. The theory is most often depicted as a pyramid with hierarchical levels through which people move up and down during their lifetime. The pyramid's foundational level is made up of the most basic needs, and people advance up the pyramid towards self-actualization. This concept can also be applied to book-buying.

The Value Pyramid depicts the influences on the business-to-business (B2B) buying-decision process. This information is very important, as it helps you understand the factors that go into making a book-buying decision and will help you adjust your sales presentation based upon these factors.



**Inspiration Value:** Vision and social responsibility

**Individual Value:** Career (reputational assurance) and personal (growth and development, reduced anxiety, comfort level)

**Operational Value:** Ease of doing business (simplification, integration with existing operations, risk reduction) and relationships (flexibility, responsiveness, expertise)

**Augmented Value:** Meet needs; creative solutions to problems

**Expected Value:** Acceptable price, quality, ethical standards

### Expected Value

The base of the pyramid depicts the quantifiable requirements such as price, page count, production quality, trim size, and book description. These elements are a basic, yet important part of a successful [selling strategy](#), but one must move up the pyramid further to address more qualitative factors.

### Augmented Value

The second level of the pyramid depicts the more creative elements that add value to your product. With regard to book sales, this concerns a customer's reason for buying. By determining the problems the customer wants to solve, you can better focus on addressing their needs with your product.

### Operational Value

At the third pyramid level, ease of doing business and relationships are the focus. Buyers consider subjective criteria, but they concern themselves here with the relationship between parties. Topics such as trust and dedication to meeting the customer's needs are key.

### Individual Value

The fourth level sees customers (buyers) concerned with their professional decisions and how those could affect their career and/or personal reputation. Book sellers should take this into consideration and provide comfort and reassurance to the buyer at this stage via tools such as testimonials and case histories.

### Inspirational Value

After ascending the first four levels of the pyramid, prospective buyers reach the Inspirational level. At this stage, the buyers are more likely to make repeat purchases from sellers who performed well at the upper levels of the pyramid. Sellers should engage with potential buyers rather than just selling to them. Work with them to develop focused and specialized programs or offers that are customized to their needs. This care and level of satisfaction will likely differentiate quality sellers in a positive, and successful, way.