

The
**ULTIMATE BOOK
MARKETING
CHECKLIST**

Imagine this Scenario...

You've spent hours crafting the perfect book. You've poured your heart and soul into material that you are confident readers will love. Yet weeks and months pass...**and only two sales.**

No matter how good your book is or how much effort you put into it, people can't read it if they don't know about it.

As a beginning or self-published author, marketing is essential, but it doesn't have to be complicated. By following a checklist, you'll make sure you stay organized and do your best to get your book in front of more readers.

This checklist is divided into marketing your book before and after your launch.

Although you want to be marketing the entire time, there are different strategies you will follow depending on what stage your book is at.

BEFORE YOU LAUNCH

☐ Figure Out Your Brand

As an author, you need to have a brand so that you can best identify your target audience. And once you've identified this audience, you need to be able to foster and maintain relationships with them.

Ask yourself questions such as:

- What genre do I write?
- What do I read?
- What is my background?
- Who do I write for? Age group? Demographics?

For example, if you are an avid science fiction reader and this is the genre you write in, then you're looking at these readers as your target audience. If you have written a business book, you are looking for a similar reader.

You could then take a look at what age group you write for and determine their demographics through statistics and analytics. The more you know about your target audience, the better you'll be able to find them and market your book to them. This is essential work to do before you launch your book.

☐ Make Sure Your Title and Cover Are Relevant

The design of your cover and the wording of your title are both important because they're the first impression that readers get of your book. Most important, they are your most basic marketing elements.

If you have a boring title, then new readers aren't likely to pick up your book when they're looking for something to read.

You also want to design an eye-catching cover that's relevant to your book's content, genre, and your personal brand as an author. You can also include a blurb on your cover where other writers give authentic praise for your book.

PRO TIP: Cover and Title Reveal

*Instagram is a great place to do a cover and title reveal for your new book.
Months before the book comes out, do a big reveal to help build anticipation.*

Have a Professional Website

You may not have your own Wikipedia page yet, but your readers still need to be able to find you.

Your website helps readers get to know more about you. They'll also go to your website if they enjoyed your book and want to see what else you've written.

Remember to keep the design of your website clear, professional, and easy to navigate. Include essential information such as links to buy your books, an "about me" page with a photo, links to your social media accounts, and excerpts from your books.

Endorsements

Procure endorsements for your book. Reach out to influencers you know and ask if they would be willing to endorse your book. Give them a due date. Add their endorsement to the inside of your book, on the back cover, and onto your Amazon sales page.

PRO TIP: Stick the Book Landing (Page)

*Make sure you have a web page that is dedicated to your book. This can be the homepage of your website, or it can be a separate singular page on your site. Instead of directing people to your website, hoping they'll find your new book, take the guesswork out of it and send them to the landing page for your book. And just like at Costco, don't forget the samples!
Make sure it's easy to download a free chapter.*

Be a Great Tribe Member

If you make deposits in your community – support other writers, offer free advice, etc. – you cultivate lasting relationships that help support your book launch. The time to

become a member of that community is NOW. Be a great tribe member now so you'll earn the opportunity to ask for support when your book releases.



Offer Pre-Order Incentives

Pre-orders are a great way to get your audience excited about your upcoming book. By incentivizing readers to order early, you can help drive reader sales and support the book before it releases. When it comes to pre-orders, the best offers are the ones that have value. Maybe it's a sneak peek at the first two chapters or maybe it's a section that didn't make the final cut of the book. Audio is another great idea. Offer a behind-the-scenes Q&A or do an interview with another author. An easy rule of thumb is: if it doesn't get you, the author, excited about your book, it probably won't move the needle with your readers.



Book Launch Team

Mobilize a launch team to help spread the word. Think of your launch team like a group of super fans that will help you spread the word about your book when it launches. The team doesn't have to be huge, but no matter what size your team is, give them clear objectives to accomplish. Perhaps they write a review on GoodReads or Amazon or they share about your book on social media. Word of mouth marketing goes a long way!

PRO TIP: Love Your Fans

When it comes to your launch team, give them early access to your book. Whether that's a printed copy or a PDF, they'll enjoy getting it before everyone else. Plus, it'll help them spread the word at launch. And again, you want them to post reviews, which provide social proof for your book. It will be difficult for them to post reviews right at launch if they haven't already read the book.



Post on Social Media

Social media marketing is one of the best ways to reach new audiences. When someone likes or shares one of your posts, all their followers can see it.

This is why you need to create a social media marketing plan.

For example, you could post excerpts of your book, do giveaways, or generate excitement by counting down the days to your book launch.

Also, consider signing up to various social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Different demographics tend to use different social media websites, so you have a higher chance of reaching more people this way.



Cultivate an Email Subscriber List

No matter what type of business you have, an email list is essential for building connections with your audience and keeping them up to date. People don't always check social media, and email is a good way to have regular contact with your audience.

To get more people on your email list, consider offering a freebie or "lead magnet" on your website in exchange for their email. This could be a short e-book on how to write your own book, or it could be a list of your favorite books.

You can use your email list to count down to your book launch. You can also include some fun facts or giveaways to make it more interesting.

PRO TIP: Share Excerpts

Share, share, share. But especially share excerpts from your book with your email list. These are people who've invited you into their inbox.



Make a Book Trailer

With the rise of YouTube and other video platforms, it's now easier than ever to make and share a book trailer.

A book trailer is a short video that's meant to promote your book. Since it's based on the concept of a movie trailer, you want your book trailer to be interesting, professional, and accurately represent your book and its theme.

Book trailers are particularly popular in genres with younger readers, such as YA, as they incorporate a visual element (and sometimes an interactive one).

Once you've made your book trailer, you can share it on your social media platforms. You can also include a link to your trailer for the people on your email list.

PRO TIP: Nothing Fancy

Your book trailer doesn't need to be a huge production, and it shouldn't be long. In 60-seconds or less, focus on why your book is going to make a difference in your reader's life. Having a felt-need driven book trailer is the secret sauce to having an effective book trailer. Focus on the value you are bringing!

Send Copies to Advance Readers

Advance readers are a great way to generate excitement about the launch of your book.

To get advance readers, you can do giveaways on your social media accounts. This is a way to get early reviews, which can persuade more readers to take a look at your book when it comes out.

Take a look at blogs that review books in your genre and reach out to these bloggers. Ask them if they'd like an advance copy of your book in exchange for an honest review. This way, you'll get your book in front of a new audience.

Tell Them Who You Are

Don't skip over your bio. It's easy to do but would be a huge miss. Create a bio that does two things - lends authority to your book's subject and shows your personality. Don't leave out where you live, either. The reason why authors include that is because it could lead to opportunities in your area. Post your bio on your website. It can also be used for securing speaking engagements and even posted in the back of your book or on the inside flap.

Trade Publication Reviews

Don't dismiss traditional reviews in print and online trade publications. They still provide value. This is one of those key things that working with a publicist can really help with.

And those reviews make a difference for retail buyers. Make sure you or your publicist are pitching to the trade publications for reviews.



Make An Amazon Author Page

We've heard publishers say that over 80% of their sales come from Amazon. Ignore this giant at your own peril because your presence there matters - and it's required. Create a robust Amazon Author Page so that when people find your product, they can learn more about you and all your other books.



Social Media Branding

Use consistent images across social media platforms. That means you should use the same author photo for your profile picture along with an image of yours for any banners or additional profile images. Remember, customers might not remember your name, but they will remember your book cover. Having consistent images for your brand will help eliminate any confusion with brand recognition.

AFTER YOU LAUNCH

☐ Celebrate

Don't forget to celebrate your book launch! You've worked hard to get to this day. Congratulations! A great way to do this is throw a launch party. This is an awesome way to celebrate with fans and family and thank them for all of their support. If booking a venue feels like too much, take the party online so the world can tune in.

☐ Get Book Reviews

Even if you already have some early reviews from the people you sent out advance copies to, including your launch team, you still need to focus on getting as many reviews as possible.

Make sure your book is listed on websites such as Goodreads, Amazon, Google Books, and other sites where there are book reviews.

Book reviews also help you become a better writer. Readers may point out where you did well and where some parts were superfluous or confusing, which will help you improve in the future.

☐ Guest Blog

This is a great way to tap into your relationships with fellow authors – offer to write content for their blog. They love it because it provides content for their readers and you'll love it because it's exposure to a new audience. That's a win-win.

☐ Adapt Book Excerpts for Media

Many media outlets are always looking for content. By keeping an eye on the news, you can use current events to help gain valuable coverage for your book. Take an excerpt

from your book and adapt it to speak into a current cultural topic or moment. Be media mindful!

☐ Offer to Speak

Booking speaking gigs can make a huge difference for supporting your book. Does your website have a place where people can book you to speak? Making yourself available will open opportunities and give you the chance to talk to people about your topic, and therefore, your book.

☐ Activate the Influencers

When you launch a book, that's when you need to call-in the favors. Don't be bashful. Make a list of 25-50 people in your circle of influence and then ask them to help promote your book. Target your most influential friends and contacts.

☐ Make Your E-Book Temporarily Free

Getting initial readers and fans is one of the most important parts of any new author's career.

While established authors can be sure that their fans will likely pick up their new book just because their name is on it, new authors have to build this audience in the first place.

Many programs like Amazon First Reads let members get new, featured e-books for free or at a discount. These programs may not help you make money, but they're a surefire way of getting your book in front of more people and building momentum.

You can also run a promotion on your social media or email list where you make your e-book free for the first 24 hours post-launch. And if these readers liked your book, they're more likely to tell their friends or post about it on social media.



Organize a Book Signing and Reading

Advertising a book can be expensive, so one of the most budget-friendly options to do this is to organize a book signing by reaching out to your local bookstores.

Tell them about your book and see if they'd like you to come in for a signing and reading. They could also help with the promotion of the book signing.

You could also connect with your local library or community center, although you might have to do more of the promotion for the event on your own.

You could also do a book reading on a podcast. Of course, make sure the podcaster's audience is similar to your target audience.



Book Tour

To make the most of a book tour, don't just think about book signings. Think about the media in that city, think about launch events, think about speaking. Who do you know? In what cities are you well connected? Book tours can be a ton of fun...if you do the work up front to make the most of each stop.



Enter Your Book in Competitions

One of the best ways to get discovered as an up-and-coming author is by winning prizes in book competitions. Even if you don't win first place, you can still get valuable exposure.

There are many writing contests these days, from free to paid, and some of them even have cash prizes. To see which ones you're eligible for, look at some contest lists online.



Pitch Podcasts

Podcasts have a ton of ROI. Much like speaking gigs, the biggest thing you need to do is make it known that you are available to podcasters. Ask to join for an interview. Pitch yourself as an expert in your field and offer to talk about issues of the day, not just your book.



Post on Instagram

Instagram is a great place to post about your book. Photos, short videos, and contests are great ways to promote your book. And it's completely free! Use reels, hashtags, encourage people to buy your book.



Amplify Your Efforts

Partnerships are the secret sauce to amplifying your book marketing efforts, especially with non-profits. Partner with them to get your message to a wider audience. Ask the organization to use their platforms and offer to collaborate and help them in whatever they might need.

PRO TIP: Buy One / Get One

A buy one / get one offer is a great way to spark sales and drive interest for your book. It's a great generosity move. But it also makes for great messaging when you promote it on your platforms. The key to making this work is doing it for a limited time. By limiting it, you create urgency. One of the most powerful and effective marketing tools of all-time is urgency. Use it to help your book.



Hit the Conference Circuit

Go where your audience is. Conferences, whether it's attending, speaking, or hosting a table, are a great way to get out in front of potential readers. There are conferences in almost every special interest group. Find the ones that work for your book's promise.



Host a Free Webinar

Webinars are great for a one-time, free event that teaches key information specific to your audience. Remember, the key here is FREE. You can host a webinar on platforms like WebinarJam, Demio, or Zoom. Pick a date and time, invite people to sign up to participate, and email them a link to participate. Teach on the topic of your book, and equip your audience. Make purchasing your book easy by adding a link to purchase your book in the chat.



eBook Discounts Work

Make your eBook cheap, like \$1.99 or some other ridiculously discounted price, for a limited time, and then spread the word on your platforms. A low-price point is a great way to cultivate new readers and create organic momentum for your book. Remember, cheap and limited time.



Don't Forget Holidays

Having a promotional calendar will allow you to be proactive about promoting your book around upcoming holidays. No, you don't have to have a Flag Day promo, but if your book is about President Woodrow Wilson, you should. Knowing what's coming allows you to plan ahead. Get in front of promotional opportunities instead of reacting and missing them!



Offer Signed Bookplates

Signed bookplates make for great incentives, especially around the holidays. Tell your audience they are available but in limited quantities, that way you create scarcity. And don't forget to post a picture on Instagram of you signing them.



Post Consumer Reviews

When someone reviews your book on Amazon, thank them on social media and share their review. It's a pro move to thank your readers. They'll love the attention! It'll also keep the book fresh in the mind of the reader who hasn't purchased or read it yet.



Host a Book Club / Offer to Visit a Book Club

Book clubs are a great place to meet your readers. By offering to host a book club, you'll invite readers to your writing. Offering to visit a book club after everyone has finished reading it, is a great move. Mentioning book clubs on your platform is a great way to plant seeds in the reader's mind for their own book clubs.

Having a book club kit is another easy way to promote book clubs.

PRO TIP: You Have Not Because You Ask Not

Much like book clubs, oftentimes authors bemoan the lack of opportunities for their book. When you find yourself going down that road, stop, ask yourself, have I made the ask? For example, mentioning book clubs on social media could lead to further opportunities. Reach out and ask if you can speak to a group about your book. Ask readers to post reviews. Make the ask.



Goodreads Is Your Friend

What if we told you they created a social media platform for books and authors? You'd want to join it, right? That's what Goodreads is! Create an author profile on Goodreads with all the relevant info about your book - and don't forget a link to your book landing page.



Pay to Play

There are lots of paid email campaigns you can do, but BookBub is by far the best. It's worth it to pay for email exposure, especially if it's in conjunction with an eBook discount sale. There's also Amazon sponsored ads. Remember, timing is everything, so make sure you are running ads when it makes sense to promote your book.

PRO TIP: Ask for Reviews

Reviews matter — Goodreads, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon Reviews. Ask readers to review your book. Offer giveaways and incentivize them to do this. Reviews offer “social proof” and a lot of reviews can be a strong persuasion for future readers to buy.



Keep in touch with your Launch Team

Don't forget to thank your launch team. You'll also want to remind them to post their reviews to Amazon. Keep the conversation going by continuing to talk about your book

on your platform. Now that the book is available, it's much easier to tell people to go buy it. Stay consistent and on message.



Cafepress Swag

Readers love swag. Whether it's a coffee mug or a t-shirt, having swag available is a great way to help further promote your book.



One Last Thing: Don't Forget the Call to Action

Tell people to buy your book. Many authors make the mistake of doing everything they need to do to lead a reader to their book and then stop short of asking for the sale. Tell them to purchase a copy today. Explain to them why they need your book, and what your book will give them (hope, information, practical steps, etc). Tell them your book is available here and share a link. Never forget to give them that call to action.

Simplify Your Marketing with a Book Marketing Checklist

Marketing your book doesn't have to be overwhelming.

By following a book marketing checklist, you can stay organized and focused during each stage of your marketing journey.

If you're ready to start marketing your book but still have questions, schedule a one-on-one coaching call with one of our author coaches at AuthorCoaching.com. We can offer you tailored marketing advice specific to your network, platform, audience, and message.

As literary agents, we've been working in publishing for 120 collective years. We've launched over 40 NYT Bestsellers, and over 50 Publisher's Weekly bestsellers.

Lastly, remember that nobody cares about your book more than you do! So be confident. And bold. You are the most qualified mouthpiece to share your message and story with the world! You've got the knowledge, the passion, and the experience! So share it!