

# Marketing Tips for Authors

Welcome to ***Marketing Tips for Authors***, featuring popular marketing tips from The Savvy Book Marketer blog and newsletter.

For more book marketing advice, I invite you to:

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- Subscribe to my newsletter at [www.BookMarketingNewsletter.com](http://www.BookMarketingNewsletter.com)
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I wish you much success with your books!

*Dana Lynn Smith*

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This is an informational guide and is not intended as a substitute for legal or other professional services. Readers are urged to consult a variety of sources and educate themselves about the business of publishing and marketing. While every effort has been made to make this guide accurate, it may contain typographical and content errors.

The information expressed herein is the opinion of the author, and is not intended to reflect upon any particular person or company. The author and publisher shall have no responsibility or liability with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to be caused, by the information or application of the information contained in this guide.

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# Book Marketing Strategy

## Five Keys to Successful Book Marketing

Recently, someone asked me the secret to successful book marketing. My immediate response was "lots of hard work." While that's true, a better answer to this question is "good planning and lots of hard work." In addition to making your marketing more effective, good planning will save you time and make the task more enjoyable.

Here are five keys to planning for successful book marketing:

### 1. Educate yourself about book marketing.

It's important to understand the principles of book marketing. We are fortunate in the publishing business to have many experts who share their wealth of knowledge and ideas through books, teleseminars, conferences, networks, articles, forums, blogs, ezines, and other venues.

Take advantage of these resources to shorten your learning curve and get great ideas for book promotion. Many of these resources are free, but I recommend budgeting some money to purchase books and courses that will help you in planning and executing your marketing.

### 2. Understand your market.

To successfully sell any product, you need to understand your market. Who is your ideal customer? What are your secondary markets? What are their characteristics, interests, fears, and motivations? Who else reaches these same audiences? How is your book different from those of your competitors? Ideally, these questions are answered before the book is written.

### 3. Have a written marketing and promotion plan.

Some people tend to jump from one promotional activity to another, without any clear strategy. A written book marketing and promotion plan will give you a blueprint for promoting your book and keep you focused on what's important. It will also guide you in how best to spend your marketing budget.

Creating a book marketing plan involves big picture planning, like defining target

audiences, understanding reader benefits, studying the competition, determining what channels you will sell through (online stores, retail bookstores, distributors, corporate customers, libraries, specialty retailers, foreign markets), and setting the price and wholesale discount.

A promotional plan includes strategies and tactics for reaching your target audiences. Popular book promotion activities include article writing, social marketing, email promotions, media releases, speaking, joint ventures, ezines, virtual book tours, videos, blogging, teleseminars, affiliate programs, Amazon.com promotions, advertising, radio and television interviews, book fairs, and more.

#### **4. Get organized.**

You'll save time and be more effective if you have a convenient way to keep track of everything you need to execute your marketing plan and track results.

Devote a day to organizing all of your data and files so you can find things quickly. Set up logical folders to store your computer files and emails. Organize your paper files with folders and three-ring binders. Set up automatic backups for your computer. Make a list of all of your websites, user names, and passwords.

Create a database of all your contacts. Set up an electronic or paper system for keeping track of your marketing and article ideas. Create a system to track your monthly progress for metrics such as book sales, number of website visitors, number of articles submitted, number of Facebook friends, etc.

Also, look into time-saving software and services. Spreadsheet programs like Microsoft Excel are ideal for creating lists, budgets, schedules, and databases. If you aren't familiar with spreadsheets, learn the basics (how to add and delete rows and columns, how to sort data, and basic math formulas) by reading a "Dummies" book or using the help menu.

#### **5. Budget your time and money wisely.**

With so many book promotion options available, and a limited number of hours in the day, it's important to prioritize your promotional ideas and focus your time and money on those tasks that are most likely to produce results. Budget funds for book marketing, even if it's only a modest amount, and block out time on your calendar each day or week to devote to marketing.

Consider hiring a virtual assistant if your budget permits. There are a number of

author assistants who specialize in working with authors and publishers, but many of them require a minimum monthly fee.

Don't be overwhelmed by the myriad of options for marketing your book. Devote some time to learning, develop a plan, get organized, prioritize your promotional ideas, and then implement one thing at a time. You can do it!

## **Create a Book Marketing Plan**

A book marketing plan is a blueprint for selling your book. There are many different ways to promote a book, and most authors have limited time and budgets, so it's important to put together a written plan and prioritize your book promotion tasks.

Book marketing plans outline the overall book sales strategy, covering items such as these:

- Your goals for the book
- Description of your book and competing products
- How your book will be packaged, priced, and distributed
- Description of your primary and secondary target audiences
- Characteristics, needs and wants of the target audiences
- How you will reach your target audiences and promote to them

A book promotion plan is part of the marketing plan for a book, and it goes into detail about how to reach the target audiences. A comprehensive book promotion plan would include timelines and budgets.

There's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all book marketing plan. The best marketing plan for your book will depend on the type of book or information product you're selling, the audience, your budget and time constraints, and your skills and interests.

Below is a sample book marketing plan outline, to give you some ideas of what to include in the marketing plan for your book.

1. Goals – why did you write this book, what are you trying to accomplish, what are your sales goals
2. Book Description – book synopsis, format, page count, ISBN, etc.
3. Features and Benefits – what the book covers and how it benefits readers

4. Competition – direct and indirect competitors and their characteristics
5. Author Platform – qualifications, prior media experience, speaking skills, social networks, blog readership
6. Target Audiences – primary and secondary audiences; their characteristics, wants and needs; where to reach them
7. Sales Channels – distributors, wholesalers, retail bookstores, online bookstores, direct sales, bulk sales, other channels
8. Finance – pricing, re-seller discounts, payment methods, order processing
9. Additional Revenue Sources – spin-off products, affiliate products, advertising, sponsorships
10. Online book promotion
  - Author blog and website
  - Ezines and email marketing
  - Freemiums
  - Relationship marketing
  - Affiliate programs and joint ventures
  - Article marketing
  - Social networking and social media
  - Amazon promotions
  - Virtual book tours
  - Bestseller campaigns
  - Audio and video promotions
  - Contests
  - Online advertising
11. Traditional book promotion
  - Testimonials and endorsements
  - Book reviews
  - News releases
  - Radio and TV talk shows
  - Book signings
  - Award programs

- Speaking
- Advertising and direct mail
- Tradeshows, book fairs and festivals
- Book clubs

## When Should You Begin Marketing Your Book?

As a book marketing consultant, I often hear from authors who have recently published a book and are looking for marketing advice. Regardless of whether a book is traditionally or independently published, the marketing process should begin far in advance of publication.

It's best to develop at least the outline of a marketing plan early on, and refine it as you approach the publication date. It's especially important to begin building an author platform and network right away, because it takes many months to develop a reputation and a significant number of followers and opt-in subscribers.

Even if you have a publisher, you are primarily responsible for promoting your book. When you're seeking a publisher, you will need to include promotional plans in your book proposal to demonstrate to publishers that you understand how to promote the book once it's published.

Authors need to educate themselves about the business of publishing and book marketing so they can make intelligent choices about publishing methods, distribution, and book promotion. I advise new authors to begin by reading Dan Poynter's [Self-Publishing Manual](#) and John Kremer's [1001 Ways to Market Your Book](#), but there are many other helpful books, blogs, newsletters, and classes available. Of course, I also recommend my own [books](#) and [newsletter](#).

## The Best Book Marketing Strategies

Someone recently asked me what I thought were the top three book marketing strategies right now.

The short answer is: it depends. The best book marketing strategy for any particular book depends on a number of factors, including the type of book, the audience, your skills and interests, and whether you are selling through bookstores.

For example, for nonfiction authors focused on direct sales, here are my top

three book marketing strategies:

1. Develop relationships with your peers, bloggers and other influencers, and look for ways to help each other out and collaborate. Social networking is one of the best ways to develop those relationships.
2. Engage in content marketing, which includes activities like submitting articles to other blogs and article directories, posting on expert sites like Squidoo, and giving away free reports. As a nonfiction author, you already have a wealth of content, so find ways to repurpose it as part of your book marketing strategy.
3. Build a good website and/or blog that's search engine optimized, user friendly, and designed to attract opt-in subscribers and buyers. You can learn how to do this yourself or hire someone to help you.

I'm going to cheat a bit here and add a fourth pick: speaking. Whether you speak at live events or on radio shows, online radio, podcasts or teleseminars, speaking is a terrific way to build your expert status and sell books.

For fiction authors, I think social networking and blogging can be effective book marketing strategies, especially if you can focus on a niche market or sub-genre. Book clubs and [virtual reader communities](#) such as GoodReads and Library Thing are well suited to fiction. Children's book authors can promote through library and [school visits](#).

## How to Turn Marketing Advice into Action

How many educational books and ebooks have you purchased and never finished reading, or never read at all? How times have you read a book or taken a class to learn how to market your books, and never implemented what you learned? We've all done it.

Even if a book, class, video or podcast class is free, you're investing your valuable time in it. Here are seven tips for getting the most from your investment of time and/or money:

1. **Start with a goal.** Why do you want to read this book or take this class? What are you hoping to learn and how will that help you toward your goals? If you can't answer these questions, maybe your time would be better spent elsewhere.

- 2. Consider your learning style.** Are you a visual or an auditory learner? Some educational programs include both written and audio materials, to help reinforce the message and to cater to different learning styles.
- 3. Print out ebooks.** While I appreciate saving paper and ink, I think it's difficult to really learn and absorb by reading on a screen. I have several shelves full of 3-ring binders filled with ebooks and articles and it's a great reference library. You can buy pre-punched paper for your printer, but if you do much printing it's cheaper to purchase a 3-hole punch and punch the holes yourself.
- 4. Take notes.** Whether you're reading or listening to an audio presentation, focus on how the material applies to you and make notes. I always read with a highlighter to mark important points and a pen to make notes about action items.
- 5. Review what you've learned.** If you're reading a book or transcript, go back through it a second time and review the important points that you have highlighted. By ignoring all the other stuff, you'll be able to focus on those points and how you can benefit from them.
- 6. Relate what you have learned to your marketing plan.** Write down steps you can take to move you toward your goals. If you don't have a written marketing plan for your book or business, I recommend developing one before you do anything else. See this [sample book marketing plan](http://www.CreateYourBookMarketingPlan.com) outline at [www.CreateYourBookMarketingPlan.com](http://www.CreateYourBookMarketingPlan.com) for ideas.
- 7. Take action.** Schedule a time on your calendar to implement your new ideas and knowledge.

Next time you invest in an educational resource, follow these steps to really get your time and money's worth.

## **Boost Your Profit Margin with Amazon Associates**

Every author who has a book for sale on Amazon.com should be enrolled in the Amazon Associates affiliate program (assuming that it's available in your state – Amazon has dropped the affiliate program in several states due to conflicts with sales tax laws). Even if you don't have a book on Amazon, you can still profit from this program by promoting other books or products using your affiliate link.

Just sign up for an Associates account, then create affiliate links to place on your website for your own books and any other books or products you'd like to

promote. As an Associate, you will earn a commission (called a referral fee) each time someone clicks on one of your affiliate links and purchases the product. This is extra revenue, above and beyond whatever you normally make when you sell a book on Amazon.com.

Even better, you're paid a commission on anything else the customer purchases during the same shopping session on Amazon. So if they put your book in their shopping cart, then decide to purchase a Kindle or a new vacuum cleaner, you get commissions on those items as well.

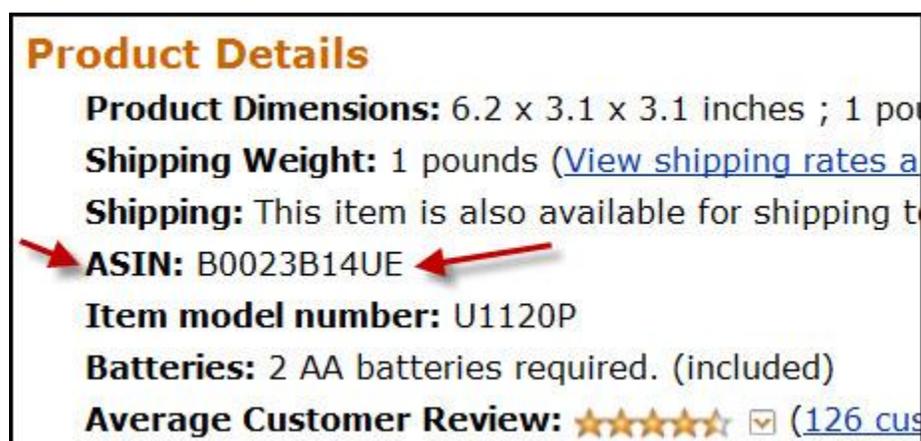
The amount of the commission depends on the type of product and your monthly sales volume, but it ranges from 4% to 10% of the total purchase made by the customer. You can read the fine print and find a commission chart [here](#). You can't use your affiliate link when you make personal purchases on Amazon.

To get started, sign up for an Associates account at <https://affiliate-program.amazon.com/>. You will be assigned an Associates ID, usually a string of numbers or letters ending in 20. To create a link that will give you credit for sales, use this formula:

**<http://www.amazon.com/dp/ASIN/?tag=ASSOCIATESID>**

Replace "ASSOCIATESID" with your own Associates ID

Replace "ASIN" with the Amazon product ID. For books, use the ISBN-10 (10-digit ISBN). For other products, look for the ASIN. Both are located in the Product Details section of the product page.



Check your product link to make sure there are no extra spaces, and test it to make sure it works. There are also some link building tools on the Amazon

Associates page, and you can even create banner ads or a whole store full of products.

What other products could you promote? Feature complementary, non-competing books that would appeal to the people who read your books. If you're a cookbook author, you can link to your favorite cooking gadgets for sale on Amazon. If you've written a travel book or a book on photography, you could link to cameras. Think about how the product categories on Amazon.com tie to your book and use your imagination.

## **How to Increase Your Book's Visibility in Amazon's Search Results**

Amazon.com customers typically search for books by author, title, or keyword. Like search engines, Amazon uses several criteria in deciding which products to display on the search results page and in what order to display them. Popularity (the number of books already sold on Amazon) and how well the book matches the keywords are major factors in determining the results of keyword searches.

The more books you sell on Amazon, the more books you will sell in the future, because your book will appear higher in the search results. In addition, many customers assume that the best-selling book must be the best one on the topic.

One way to increase your book's "popularity," and therefore its search results placement, is to direct all of your online book orders to Amazon.com.

It's also important to make sure your book matches popular search terms entered by customers. If your book is not yet published, you can add important keywords to the book's title and subtitle. Some publishers use long subtitles in order to pack in as many keywords as possible.

To capitalize on searches for keywords not contained in your title and subtitle, enter important keywords into Amazon's Search Tag feature. Near the bottom of the Tags section (about halfway down your book page), look for "Help others find this product - tag it for Amazon search" and click on the "suggest" button.

You can't use keywords that already appear in Amazon's search function, such as the book title or author name. Word order matters, so create different search tags with variations on your most important keywords. After you enter a keyword, you must to tell Amazon why you think the book should be indexed under that particular term.

Amazon staff members approve Search Tags, so make sure your tag and your explanation are relevant and don't sound like a sales pitch. It's best to use the keyword phrase within your explanation. You can personally submit up to ten search terms for your book. If you have additional search terms to enter, ask a colleague to enter some for you.

Another way to increase your "popularity" on Amazon.com is do a virtual book tour or an "Amazon best-seller campaign," designed to push up your Amazon sales rank by generating a large number of orders on a single day.

There are a number of other ways to promote your book on Amazon.com, including getting lots of good Amazon reviews, writing reviews of other related books, participating in the Look Inside program, creating an Amazon Connect blog, enhancing your book description, participating in Amazon forums for your book's topic, and creating Listmania lists and So You'd Like To guides.

Learn more about promoting your book on Amazon in the ebook, *How to Sell More Books on Amazon* available at <http://bit.ly/AmazonEbook>

# Audio and Video Promotions

## 7 Ways to Promote Your Book with Video

Video is one of the hottest online promotional tools these days, and with good reason. People watch hundreds of millions of videos a day on YouTube, and folks who enjoy videos often forward the link to someone else, creating viral marketing opportunities.

Google includes videos in search results, and people also search Google and video sites for videos on a particular topic. So, how can authors take advantage of the power of video to promote themselves and their books? Here are some ideas:

- Add a video greeting to your website, to get up close and personal with your audience.
- Record a brief video promoting yourself as an author, expert, speaker, and/or consultant.
- Create a video book promo (similar to a movie trailer, combining graphics, words, and music).
- Offer free video tutorials.
- Make video posts to your blog (known as vlogging).
- Post video testimonials from customers on your website.
- Create a video bio for your online media room or post clips of live speaking events or television interviews.

Short videos get watched more often, so keep your video under three minutes. About 30 to 90 seconds is usually ideal. Be sure to include your website address and a call to action in promotional videos.

You can create brief promotional videos with a webcam, the video capture feature of your digital camera, or a digital video camera such as the Flip Video Ultra. You don't necessarily need to use editing software to enhance your video—part of the charm is having it look homemade.

For book promos, you'll probably want a more polished look. You can learn to

produce videos, or hire someone to do it for you. Prices range from \$150 to thousands of dollars, depending on the skill level of the producer and the complexity and length of the video. There's a good article about making your own videos at <http://bit.ly/73LfiY>. Book videos are usually most effective for fiction.

I recommend uploading your video to YouTube <http://www.youtube.com>, then embedding a link on your website or blog. Just copy and paste the "embed" code from the video's page on YouTube. When you upload the video to YouTube, include important keywords in the title, description, and tags.

Promote your videos in your ezine and through social media sites such as Twitter, Delicious, and StumbleUpon, link to them from your blog and website, and embed them in your profile on social networking sites like Facebook.

These are my recommended resources for learning how to produce and distribute videos:

**[The Book Trailer Manual](http://bit.ly/lrefmM)** by Darcy Pattison, available at <http://bit.ly/lrefmM> is a great guide to planning, producing and sharing book video trailers. My favorite thing about this guide is the detailed instructions for creating the storyline and incorporating audio and visual elements, but the ebook also offers advice on recording equipment, editing software, and places to upload videos online.

**[YouTube Marketing for Authors](http://bit.ly/jZBzDK)** by Shelley Hitz, available at <http://bit.ly/jZBzDK>, explains how to create effective "talking head" videos, where you record yourself speaking. This type of video helps you relate on a more personal level with your audience, and it's especially effective for nonfiction authors. The ebook also includes detailed instructions for using the YouTube video editor, creating your YouTube channel, and posting videos on YouTube for maximum marketing effectiveness.

Together, these two guides are great resources for learning how to produce and distribute book promotion videos. Don't be intimidated by the process of creating and sharing book promotion videos—it's not hard to learn and it can be a lot of fun!

## Blogs and Websites

### Websites for Authors: Contact Information is Essential

As I was doing some research for a client, I was reminded of how many blogs and websites have no contact information. I understand why owners of personal blogs don't post their contact information, but it's essential for business-oriented sites like blogs and websites for authors.

If you're promoting any type of product or service, people need to be able to reach you, at least by email. Someone may have a question about your book or want to ask you to write an article or speak at an event. Maybe they want to contribute a guest post to your blog or propose some sort of joint venture. Your readers may have helpful suggestions about your site. If no one can contact you, you're missing out on business opportunities.

Blogs and websites for authors should feature contact information prominently on the site. Just beneath your photo is a good spot. You can also include contact information on your site's About page and Media page.

It's never a good idea to put a direct hyperlink to your email address on your site, because that makes it easy for spam bots to harvest your email address and sell it to spammers. One solution is to spell your email address with spaces or alternate symbols in between.

For example: john -at- yourwebsite.com.

Or you can place your email address on your website as an image rather than text. On my websites, I use an encrypted Javascript link from [Hivelogic](#). This service is free and easy to use, but it's not completely foolproof.

### Enhance Your Blog and Ezine with Guest Posts

Although I write most of the posts on my blog, I am fortunate to have other experts share their knowledge on a range of topics. Guest posts are win-win for everyone. Readers get valuable tips and insight from a variety of experts, guest posters build their expert status and get links to their websites, and bloggers get additional content for their sites. Guest posts are often used in ezines as well.

Guest posts can take the form of how-to articles or interviews, and you can even post audio or video clips from the guest. Fiction authors can interview other authors in their genre.

Where can you find experts or authors to contribute to your blog or ezine? Seek out others in your field or genre through your social networks and your own contact list. Send guest post invitations to the owners and guest posters of the blogs, ezines and print newsletters that you enjoy reading. Use search engines to find other blogs and ezines in your field.

When sending a guest post invitation, describe your blog or ezine, suggest topics of interest, note whether you accept previously published content, specify a word count range for the article and a limit on the length of the resource box, and request a photo. Here's an example:

*I enjoy reading your blog and I would love for you to do a guest post on the Savvy Book Marketer blog about how to write effective press releases. My audience is authors and others in the publishing business. About 500-600 words would be ideal, with a 30-word resource box. Previously published content is fine. Please send me a photo as well.*

Some bloggers request that all guest posts be original content (articles not already posted elsewhere). That's nice for SEO purposes, but may limit your ability to get guest posts since your experts may not have time to produce an original article for you. If you're willing to accept articles published elsewhere, you'll have access to more articles.

In many cases, you can reprint other writer's articles without asking permission. Look for a "permission to reprint" statement on blogs and ezines that you read. You can also search article directories such as [Ezine Articles](#) for articles to reprint. It can be a bit time consuming wading through article directories, because some of the articles are of low quality. Still, there are many excellent articles available.

When reprinting other people's articles, be sure to include their resource box. I let writers know I'm using their article, even if it's not required. It's courteous and helps build relationships.

## Top 15 Reasons to Do a Virtual Book Tour

As publishers' promotional budgets shrink and travel costs rise, the traditional city to city author tour is waning in popularity. But what if you could reach a much larger, highly targeted audience from the comfort of home? You can, with a virtual book tour.

On a virtual book tour, authors promote their books by making "virtual" guest appearances during a particular time frame on blogs, podcasts, radio shows, social networks, or other venues.

So why should you do your own virtual tour?

1. You will sell books during the tour and afterward as a result of the tour.
2. Virtual tours are less expensive and time consuming than travelling. Generally the only cost of a do-it-yourself tour is the cost of mailing your book to tour hosts.
3. Reach far more people and a more targeted audience with a virtual tour. In contrast, live author appearances by authors who aren't well known tend to have low attendance.
4. The virtual tour provides quality, lasting links to your website. These links have search engine optimization value and may continue to bring new visitors for months or years to come.
5. Making a commitment to a tour gives you an incentive to get out there and promote your book and get content onto other websites.
6. If any of your tour hosts do a review of your book, you'll get the benefit of additional reviews.
7. Tours build buzz for your book and get people talking and sharing with others.
8. When others host you on their blog or show, there is an implied endorsement of you which enhances your author platform.
9. You have the chance to interact with readers and potential customers.
10. Getting a lot of book sales in short period of time pushes up the Amazon rank of your book.
11. You get the chance to develop relationships with bloggers and other key influencers in your field or genre.
12. The content of a virtual book tour gives potential book buyers an opportunity to sample your work.

13. Nonfiction authors can enhance their expert status by posting content on other venues.
14. You get exposure to new audiences you might not reach any other way.
15. Additional traffic to your website during the tour gives you the opportunity to build your mailing list and blog subscribers.

*To learn how to organize your own successful virtual book tour, check out my [Virtual Book Tour Magic](http://www.VirtualBookTourMagic.com) guidebook for authors at [www.VirtualBookTourMagic.com](http://www.VirtualBookTourMagic.com).*

## **Attract Readers to Your Author Blog with Lists**

Looking for ideas for your author blog posts? Bulleted and numbered lists are always popular with readers. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- 7 Ways to . . .
- Do You Make These 3 Mistakes in . . .
- Top 10 Reasons to . . .
- 9 Secrets to . . .
- 12 Tips for Effective . . .
- 5 Steps to . . .

At the end of your list article, invite readers to share their own ideas by commenting. Once you've created your list article, you can write a series of blog posts expanding on each of the items in your list.

# Selling to Libraries

## Should Your Book Be In Libraries?

Some authors and publishers worry that having their books offered for free check out in libraries will hurt consumer sales. This is probably more of an issue with fiction than with nonfiction. But many people who check out fiction in libraries are voracious readers who get most of their reading material from libraries and don't purchase many books.

Library usage can actually boost sales of nonfiction books. Library patrons often purchase a nonfiction book they have checked out from the library, because they want their own copy for future reference or to make notes in.

Having your book in libraries is also good publicity. Anyone who sees or reads your book can potentially recommend it to others.

Nearly \$1.8 billion worth of books were purchased by libraries in 2005, according to the Book Industry Study Group. Don't miss out on this potentially lucrative market.

## How to Sell Your Book to Libraries

America's 123,000 libraries purchase nearly \$2 billion worth of books annually, according to statistics from the American Library Association and the Book Industry Study Group. Here are some ways to capture your share of this lucrative market:

- Get your book reviewed in a library journal.
- Solicit testimonials from librarians.
- Make sure your book is available through major library wholesalers.
- Apply to work with a library distributor such as Quality Books or Unique Books, if you have a nonfiction book.
- Contact libraries in your area to inquire about speaking opportunities and programs for local authors, and contact libraries in towns you visit.

- Send direct mail to libraries, either on your own or through [co-operative mailings](#). Address mail to the Collection Development Librarian for your subject area, and include a flyer with book details and a list of wholesalers and distributors that carry your book.
- Consider donating a sample copy of your book to a few top library systems, to encourage purchases for branch libraries.
- Exhibit at library tradeshow through co-operative exhibit programs such as those offered through IBPA and other organizations.
- Advertise in a library journal through a co-op ad.

Nonfiction books are especially well suited to library sales. To sell fiction to libraries, it's helpful to have reviews in journals, book awards, or a strong local tie-in, such as a novel being set in the region.

*For more in-depth information about selling to libraries, along with contact information for top library systems, wholesalers, and review journals, check out [The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Selling to Libraries](#).*

## **Discover Which Libraries Have Your Book**

Do you know how many of your books are available in libraries? Because libraries tend to order through distributors and wholesalers, it can be difficult to know how many library sales you have made and which libraries have your books.

[WorldCat](#) lists the collections of more than 10,000 libraries worldwide, and it's useful for estimating how many libraries have purchased your book and finding out which libraries have the book. Enter your book title in the search field at WorldCat to get a list of participating libraries that have the book.

The WorldCat results page is arranged by physical location, sorting the results by the libraries nearest to you. If you have a lot of listings, you may need to enter several different states in the "enter location information" field in order to see all of your listings.

Because not all libraries participate in the WorldCat database, the information on your library book sales will not be complete. Approximately 75 percent of U.S. public libraries catalog their books on WorldCat, and it varies by state, with all libraries in some states participating.

WorldCat also offers some social features. Users can create lists of books, write book reviews, and assign keyword tags to books. You can add keyword tags to your book, to make it easier for others to find. Reader reviews from Amazon.com appear on the review page, but you can enter other reviews on that page, or invite someone else to write a review there.

# Publicity for Books and Authors

## Think Like a Journalist to Get Publicity

To get media coverage, you have to provide value to readers and viewers. Make sure your news releases pass the "who cares?" test. The headline and lead paragraph of your news release must be compelling and grab the interest of the reporter by offering something their readers would be interested in. Then the release needs to deliver on the promise delivered in the headline and lead.

In crafting your news releases, it may be helpful to try to think like a journalist. Try this exercise, substituting your own field or genre:

Imagine that you are a staff health reporter for a newspaper. You write on a variety of health topics, including diet, exercise, heart disease, cancer, diabetes and more. Your job is to write quality articles that inform readers about important health issues, but you need to write about topics that will attract a wide readership. Subscribers and readers are the name of the game—they attract the advertisers that pay your salary.

You're really busy, researching and writing stories to meet a daily deadline. You receive dozens of news releases each day, and most days you only have time to skim their headlines to see if anything grabs your attention. You probably don't care that Jane Doe wrote a book (unless Jane lives in your area). You are interested in health-related topics that are timely, local, unusual, important and/or will attract a wide readership. So, what type of topics might grab your attention in a pile of news releases?

- A local public presentation this week on a health topic
- How to prevent whatever disease a celebrity recently died from or was diagnosed with
- New medical research findings and how they might help current patients
- How the bills being debated in Congress will change the way we get health care
- An unusual treatment for a common disease
- How to mentally cope with a particular medical condition
- How to get the best health care for your family

Remember, the media are not in the business of giving you free advertising; they are in the business of providing news, information, and entertainment to their readers and viewers and generating an audience to attract advertisers. You'll have more success getting publicity if you put yourself in their shoes and deliver what they need.

## Promote Your Book on Radio Talk Shows

Nonfiction authors often appear as subject experts on radio talk shows, and fiction writers may be interviewed as well. Authors are sometimes interviewed on drive-time music radio shows too.

A good way to approach broadcast media is to pitch a show or segment idea, briefly outlining what you would talk about and why their listeners or viewers would find it valuable or entertaining. Contact the station's program director or the show's producer.

As with print media, it's generally better to start small and local and work your way up to the big time. Below are three sources for national radio talk show databases. All three of these databases are produced by authors who have been successful promoting their own books on the radio.

- [Gordon's Radio List](#) includes 1,100 locally produced and nationally syndicated radio shows that interview guests. <http://www.radiopublicity.net/>
- [Jo Sabah](#) offers a how-to book, an audio program and a database. His book, *How to Get on Radio Talk Shows All Across America Without Leaving Home*, is also available on Amazon.com. <http://www.joesabah.com/radio.html>
- [Alex Carroll](#) offers a radio station database and training materials. <http://www.radiopublicity.com/>

## For Book Publicity Success, Start Small

Sure, many authors dream of being on a major talk show and selling mega books. There's nothing wrong with shooting for the stars, but the authors you see on major talk shows probably didn't start out there. Chances are, it took them quite a while to build their author platform and their publicity skills.

Here are some tips for climbing the publicity ladder:

1. Create a media page for your website, containing information about you and

your book, along with downloadable images of you and the book cover.

2. Start small by getting publicity in your local media, then work your way up from there. The "local resident publishes a book" angle is often considered newsworthy, especially in smaller towns. Other possibilities include local radio or television talk shows, regional magazines, your college alumni publication, and newsletters and journals of your professional associations. As you gather print and broadcast media clips, post them in your online media room.

3. Seek varied types of publicity, including interview-style print stories, feature stories, how-to articles, book reviews, and radio and television interviews.

4. Get tips on reporters seeking sources for articles they are writing by joining free alert services such as [HARO](#) (Help a Reporter Out), [PitchRate](#), and [Reporter's Source](#). [BloggerLinkUp](#) provides leads from bloggers looking for content.

5. Learn more about book publicity by reading books or attending teleseminars on the topic.

6. Consider getting media training to better prepare you for radio and television appearances.

## **Where to Research Magazines and Newsletters**

Consumer and trade magazines and newsletters are a great place to pitch feature stories and book reviews as part of your book publicity plan. [Wooden Horse Publishing](#) at [www.woodenhorsepub.com](http://www.woodenhorsepub.com) has an extensive database of U.S. and Canadian consumer and trade magazines. Listings include address, phone number, editor-in-chief, managing editor, website URL, email addresses, circulation, frequency, subscription price, editorial concepts, writer's guidelines, reader demographics and editorial calendars. Subscriptions to the database are available by the day, week, month or year.

# Social Marketing for Authors

## The Golden Rules of Social Networking

Social networking is a terrific way to make contacts and develop relationships. Here are some tips for putting the social into social networking:

- Be selective about which networks you join and who you invite as a friend. Only invite people who appear to share common interests with you.
- Send a personalized friend request, introducing yourself and stating why you want to befriend the other person.
- Get involved in the community. Remember that you need to give more than you get. Offer helpful comments and links, compliment others, share a bit of personal information about yourself, and be a friend.
- Don't be overly promotional. It's okay to promote your products and services on occasion, but don't make that your main focus. Be careful of appearing too promotional. Sending out an announcement of your book launch is fine; sending frequent promotional messages about your book is not.

## Use Social Follow to Attract Followers on Your Social Networks

These days, it's vital to make it easy for people to find you on social networks and to encourage them to connect with you there.

I've recently added a new button in the sidebar of my website, using a service called Social Follow.

In addition to these major social networks, you can add icons for numerous other services including Blogger, WordPress, Digg, Delicious, StumbleUpon, YouTube, Flickr, Squidoo, Hub Pages, MySpace, Ning, Shelfari, and more.

You can create multiple buttons for different sites within the same Social Follow account, and you can also set up a Profile on the Social Follow site. To get started, register at [Social Follow](#) and follow the steps to create your button. If you're a TypePad user like me, you can copy the button code into a Notes TypeList and place it in your sidebar.

Before you begin, you will need to already have an account on the social services that you wish to include on your button, and you'll also need to know your personal URL for each of your social sites. Usually, you can find the URL by looking at the URL in your browser when you are on your profile page for your favorite social sites. For example, my URL on Twitter is <http://twitter.com/BookMarketer>.

Give Social Follow a try and watch your followers and contacts increase!

## **Are You Making These 10 Mistakes on Facebook?**

Some authors try sites like Facebook for a while and then conclude that social networking doesn't work as a promotional tool. The keys to successful book promotion on Facebook are to learn how to use the site effectively and to stay with it over the long term.

Here are some common mistakes that you may be making on Facebook, along with tips on how to avoid them.

### **1. Failing to showcase (or even mention) your books on the Facebook profile.**

I am amazed at how many authors don't even mention their books on their Facebook profile. Be sure to include a description of your books in the "About You" section, which is on the Info screen of your profile.

Another good strategy is to call yourself an author in the current job title that you list in the Employers section of the profile, then list your business name or book name as your current employer. Both your job title and employer name show up at the very top of your profile, which gives you great visibility.

### **2. Forgetting to add website and social network links to the profile.**

Be sure to link to your website, Amazon sales page, Facebook Fan Page, and other social network accounts in the About You area and also in the Contact Information area.

### **3. Being too promotional or pushy.**

If you're too passive, you probably won't get much benefit from social networks like Facebook. If you are too aggressive, you may turn people off. No one wants to read a constant stream of "buy my book" messages, and it's not a good idea to

post blatant promotional messages on other people's profiles and pages. Find a balance where you can actively network and share news and information about your book and your business, without being annoying.

#### **4. Sending blank friend requests with no introduction.**

It's good manners to introduce yourself when sending friend requests to people you don't know, and to greet people that you already know. Click the "add a personal message" link on the friend request screen, say hello, and mention why you want to connect.

#### **5. Failing to set up a Fan Page to promote your books or business.**

Many Facebook users still rely on adding friends and networking through their personal profile. But the Fan Page is more suited to business use and Facebook users are getting more used to "liking" and interacting with Fan Pages.

#### **6. Forgetting to be social and let your personality come through.**

It's fun to meet new people from around the world and learn a little about each other, and you'll get much more benefit from the site if you interact with people and develop relationships.

#### **7. Trying to befriend everyone you see on Facebook.**

It's tempting to collect lots of friends and fans, but it's more important to concentrate on meeting people that you share common interests with—other experts and authors in your field or genre, people who have an interest in your book's subject or topic, and existing contacts and customers.

#### **8. Posting too many status updates and messages.**

Facebook users tend to post less often than Twitter users. I recommend posting one to three status updates a day. Also be cautious about using direct messages for promotional purposes—some people annoy their friends by abusing the message feature.

#### **9. Violating Facebook's terms of service.**

Breaking the rules can get your Facebook account suspended or permanently deleted. Some of the most common errors include creating multiple Facebook profiles, setting up profiles in a business name rather than your personal name,

and being overly promotional. You can read the current terms of service here. <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>

## 10. Giving up too soon.

It takes time to build a network on Facebook (or anywhere else) and reap benefits from it. Begin your online networking as early as possible, learn how to use the site effectively, and keep with it for the long term. And have fun with Facebook—but not so much fun that it sucks up too much of your time!

Is Facebook worth the effort? In my own case, I have made lots of valuable professional contacts and connected with customers and potential customers through social networks like Facebook. I even landed a 7-page cover story in a magazine as a result of meeting a magazine publisher on Facebook. I know that a good percentage of my website traffic is referred from Facebook and Twitter, so it definitely works for me.

To learn more about using Facebook successfully to promote your book, rely on the [Facebook Guide for Authors](http://bit.ly/Facebook4Authors), available at <http://bit.ly/Facebook4Authors>. In this step-by-step guide, you'll learn how to create an effective Facebook Profile and Fan Page, and promote yourself and your books on the site. Detailed instructions and screen shots make it easy for you to quickly master this powerful networking tool.

## Top Ten Ways Authors Can Use Twitter

[Twitter](#), the wildly popular micro-blogging site where users communicate in 140-character messages, is a terrific tool for developing relationships and keeping in touch. Here are some ways authors can benefit from Twittering:

1. Help others by sharing information, while you gain a reputation as an expert. You can post links to helpful articles, recommend resources, and teach mini-lessons.
2. Meet potential customers and stay in touch with existing customers. Promote your Twitter URL everywhere you're listed online, and include keywords in your tweets to attract followers who are interested in your topic or genre.
3. Stay on top of news and trends in your field and get ideas for your articles and blog by reading the tweets of the people you follow.

4. Meet other authors, experts, publishers, marketer, and vendors. Twitter is ideal for networking and it's a great place to meet potential joint venture partners.
5. Promote live and virtual events such as book signings, podcasts, virtual book tours, teleseminars, and book launches.
6. Gain visibility and new followers by hosting a Twitter contest where you give away a prize to a randomly chosen winner, or give a free gift to everyone who follows you and re-tweets your contest message.
7. Ask for help and get instant responses. When you request product recommendations, referrals to experts, or help with a technical issue, it's amazing how helpful folks are.
8. Spread good will by helping your peers. Introduce other people in your field or genre, or recommend other related books or products.
9. Promote your book and other products and services. The key is to be subtle and make promotional tweets a small percentage of your overall communications, so people feel like they gain value from following you, not just a stream of sales pitches.
10. Keep in touch when you're on the road. There are a number of applications that facilitate twittering from mobile devices.

Have fun! It's fascinating to meet people from all over the world, gain a glimpse into their lives, and develop a cyber-relationship.

If you don't yet have a Twitter account, [sign up](#) today and follow [@BookMarketer](#) for book promotion tips. Go forth and tweet!

## How Often Should You Tweet?

Twitter can be a terrific networking tool, but many users wonder how often they should tweet. It's best to post several tweets a day, but it is hard to say what is the optimum frequency. I generally make about seven posts a day. Some people post several times an hour, but that takes a lot of time and it may annoy your followers. And it's not a good idea to post unless you have something interesting to say.

Think about how the posts appear to your followers. As each new tweet appears on their home page, it pushes the earlier ones down a notch. Most people probably don't read beyond the first page when they log onto Twitter. If you make several posts at once, they will all be bunched together on your follower's screen. But if that person doesn't happen to be on Twitter at that time, they might not see any of your tweets if they have already been pushed beyond the first page. If you make several posts spaced out during the day, it's more likely that one or more of them will be seen.

If it's not practical for you to post several times during the day, you can use a scheduling service such as [HootSuite](#) (my top choice) or [SocialOomph](#) (formerly TweetLater) to pre-schedule your tweets. These services can also pre-schedule posts to Facebook.

## How to Make Your Tweets Appear on LinkedIn

Many people use a utility such as at the [Twitter Facebook](#) application to make their tweets automatically flow through to their status update on Facebook. Now there's an easy way to flow your tweets to LinkedIn.

Because LinkedIn is a professional network, it may not be appropriate for all of your tweets to appear there. The beauty of this system is that you can selectively decide which tweets go to LinkedIn. Even if you don't want your tweets to flow to LinkedIn, you can create a clickable link to your Twitter account from your LinkedIn profile.

It's easy and just takes a few moments to set up. First, you'll need to sync your Twitter and LinkedIn accounts. Just check the Twitter box under your Network Updates box on the homepage and then specify the Twitter account that you'd like to sync and/or display on your LinkedIn profile.

As part of the setup process, you can choose whether to send all your tweets or just select tweets from Twitter back to LinkedIn as a status update. If you choose to be selective (which I recommend), just include the hashtag #in at the end of any tweets that you wish to appear on LinkedIn.

See the article at <http://bit.ly/7uk0G9> for a more detailed explanation of the set up process, and get more tips on [how authors can use LinkedIn](#).

## Build Buzz With a Twitter Contest

Twitter contests and giveaways are a fun way to build buzz, increase your followers, and promote your book at the same time.

With a prize drawing, a winner is drawn from the contest entrants. You can give away a free copy of your book or put together a prize package that includes several related books or products. One advantage to inviting others to contribute to the prize package is that they can help promote the contest. You may want to create a web page or blog post that describes the contest, so you can link to it.

Typically, people enter a Twitter contest by following you and then re-tweeting a specific message such as this: "Just entered to win an autographed book: The Garden of the Soul. Just follow @LynnSerafinn & Retweet. See <http://bit.ly/beq28> #GOTS"

You get the promotional ball rolling by tweeting about your contest, then others pass the message on for you by re-tweeting.

You can keep track of the entries by searching Twitter to locate the re-tweets. Another idea is to add a unique hashtag, such as #GOTS in the example above, to your message. Then you can search Twitter for the hashtag to bring up a list of your entries. Make sure no one is already using your hashtag by searching for the hashtag on the Twitter [search](#) page. It's a good idea to copy or print out your entries each day, to make sure you don't lose any.

An easy way to select a winner is to generate a random number at [Random.org](http://Random.org). For example, if you have 224 entries, this free service will generate a random number between 1 and 224. If your number is 53, then count down to the 53rd entrant to find the winner.

The optimal length of time for a contest is about seven to ten days. If it goes on too long, people may lose interest and get tired of seeing the promotional tweets.

At the close of the contest, notify the winner and then announce the winner publicly by tweeting about it or even sending all the entrants a direct message.

With a giveaway promotion, everyone who enters receives a gift, such as a free ebook. You could direct people to a web page where they fill out an opt-in form and the free ebook is delivered instantly through an autoresponder service such as [Aweber](#).

You could also combine these two types of promotions by giving everyone a gift, then holding a drawing for the grand prize.

Before you begin your Twitter contest, make a note of the number of followers you have and compare it to the number at the end of the contest.

When planning any type of promotion, it's a good idea to review the Twitter [rules](#) at <http://help.twitter.com/forums/26257/entries/18311>, to make sure you're not violating any of their terms.

## Promote Your Book in Virtual Reader Communities

Reader communities are a specialized type of social networking site where readers and authors network, and readers recommend books to others. For authors of fiction and children's books, reader communities may be even more useful than the more general social networking sites like Facebook.

Many reader community sites allow authors to set up a profile page to promote themselves and their books. Some sites allow users to create a "friends" network and join groups composed of readers and authors of a particular genre, and some offer promotional opportunities to authors.

Look over the various reader communities to find those that are the best fit for your book and your audience. You may want to set up a profile on several sites and visit them occasionally, but it's probably best to focus your time on just two or three sites.

[Goodreads](#) claims to be the world's largest social network for readers. The site has 1.8 million members who have added more than 41 million books to their bookshelves. Authors can [promote](#) their books in a variety of ways.

[LibraryThing](#) has 600,000 book lovers who have cataloged 35 million books. Registered LibraryThing authors can promote book readings and events, participate in author chat, offer review copies, and add photos and information to their author page. See this [page](#) for details.

Authors can build profile pages on [AuthorsDen](#) and interact with readers. [Nothing Binding](#) is geared toward independent publishers. [Shelfari](#) is owned by Amazon and it's popular with Facebook users. [Red Room](#) is another popular site.

[JacketFlap](#) focuses on children's and young adult books. [Amazon.com](#) offers groups (called communities) and forums (called customer discussions). Customer discussions appear just below the customer review section on book detail pages.

For more information about promoting yourself and your book through social media, check out [The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Successful Social Marketing](#).

## Build Your Author Platform With Online Forums

Forums are online communities where people who are interested in a particular subject can ask questions, offer solutions, and share experiences. They are also called discussion groups, list serves, bulletin boards, and newsgroups. Some are web based and others function as email lists.

Typically, members post questions and others offer answers. Some posts are informational, passing along a resource that would be of interest to the group. Many forums are moderated, which means that each message must be approved before it is posted to the group.

Forums are free and they are a great way to network with people who share your interests, build your reputation as an expert, learn from others, and subtly promote your book.

To find forums related to your topic and target audience, search [Yahoo Groups](#) and [Google Groups](#), and also type "your keyword + forum" into a search engine. You can also search for a keyword on Google, then click Show Options (near the upper left) and click Forums. Larger and more active groups will give you more exposure, so it's best to concentrate your time there.

On some forums, you can specify whether you want to receive each message as it's posted or receive a daily digest. If the forum has a place for member profiles, upload your photo and enter biographical information and links to your websites.

For maximum benefit, you'll need to participate regularly. When you receive the digest of posts, it's easy to skim over the discussion topics looking for anything that you can respond to. After you make a post, check back to see if you need to respond to any replies it receives.

When you join a forum it's best to lurk for a while first, to get a feel for the group and the level of expertise. Also read each group's rules. Then look for

opportunities to respond to posts in a helpful way.

Forums usually allow you to list promotional information in the signature at the end of posts, but signatures may be restricted to a certain number of lines. Your signature can include your name and other details such as your book title and website addresses.

In most forums, it's okay to mention your book when responding to a question, as long as you are subtle. For example, you might say "In researching my book XYZ, I found that ...". Some forums allow purely promotional posts, such as announcing a new book or an author event. Just make sure you're following the rules for each forum.

Here are some publisher forums to consider:

- [Self Publishing](#)
- [POD Publishing](#)
- [Publish-L](#)

Excerpted from [\*The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Successful Social Marketing\*](#).

## About the Author



Dana Lynn Smith is a book marketing coach with a degree in marketing and 17 years of publishing experience. She develops marketing plans for nonfiction books and teaches authors how to market their books online. Dana is the author of the *Savvy Book Marketer Guides*, a series of ebooks on key book promotion topics.

### ***Networking Connections***

- Like The Savvy Book Marketer at [www.facebook.com/SavvyBookMarketer](http://www.facebook.com/SavvyBookMarketer)
- Friend Dana on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DanaLynnSmith](http://www.facebook.com/DanaLynnSmith)
- Join the Savvy Book Marketing group on Facebook at <http://bit.ly/savvygroup>
- Follow @BookMarketer on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/BookMarketer>
- Connect on LinkedIn at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/danalynsmith>

### ***Resources for Authors***

Find book marketing tips at the Savvy Book Marketer blog at [www.TheSavvyBookMarketer.com](http://www.TheSavvyBookMarketer.com) and keep up with ebook publishing news, how-to's and trends at <http://bit.ly/EbookPublishingResources>

The free Savvy Book Marketing Newsletter is available at <http://www.BookMarketingNewsletter.com>

The *Savvy Book Marketer Guides* series of ebooks help authors market their books successfully. Titles available at [www.SavvyBookMarketer.com](http://www.SavvyBookMarketer.com) include:

- *How to Get Your Book Reviewed*
- *How to Sell More Books on Amazon*
- *Virtual Book Tour Magic*
- *The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Selling Your Book to Libraries*
- *The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Successful Social Marketing*
- *Twitter Guide for Authors*
- *Facebook Guide for Authors*