

Top 10 Tips for Book Marketing

** How to market like a pro, focusing only on what's important.*

** How to not waste time and money on gimmicks and scams.*





Congratulations on your publication!

Marketing your book is one of the most challenging things you will ever do. The reason for this is the saturated market (over one million books are published every year), and the technological learning curves and logistics involved. It is a marathon, not a sprint, and consistency is more important than sporadic, intermittent efforts.

Tip Number 1: Don't Burn Out:

There are many, many marketing options out there for authors, and a long list of "you shoulds," constantly propagated by blogs and so called "book marketing gurus." Promoting your book is all about perseverance and finding your super fans, however, with finite energy and time, it's important to know what to focus on so that you can maximize the impact of your efforts and avoid long-term burnout. Select a few methods that work for you, focus on those, and avoid time consuming busy work that doesn't yield results.

Some authors choose to do all their marketing themselves, but I highly recommend hiring a tech savvy assistant, because there are many moving parts that require a lot of time investment and high level technological expertise. If you do choose to do it all yourself, realistically assess how much time and effort you have available, then commit to doing one or two things consistently over time. Based on my years of intensive work with authors in marketing their books, and seeing the results of all these efforts, I recommend focusing on two things: paid advertising and newsletters.

Tip Number 2: How to rein in the time-intensive social media machine

To build your author platform, the basics I recommend are a high quality author website from a service such as Authorbytes, a Facebook author page, Instagram and Twitter profiles, Pinterest account and YouTube channel. YouTube can be used for hosting, sharing and embedding videos only, you don't need to create regular content. It can also be used as a Media Appearances showcase for interviews and podcasts. You don't need to post a constant stream of content on these channels, just have a presence, and make sure you have a professionally created header image with your book cover and branding that is correctly sized for each profile.



Connect your Instagram account to your Facebook author page and Twitter account, so that any posts on Instagram automatically go to Facebook and Twitter as well. This can be done in your Instagram app settings. I recommend focusing on Instagram as your main channel to post on, because it has a highly sophisticated reader base, as well as bookstagrammers that you can network with to promote your book. Make sure to research and use the relevant hashtags to your genre, and the book market in general, and also use seasonal / event hashtags such as #ValentinesDay etc. Try to make your posts fun, and include your book in as many images as possible. You can create nice graphics with services such as BookBrush and Canva. I recommend creating a batch of images about 20 at a time that contain excerpts, quotes, and reviews, along with a 3D book cover from the free online service [DIY Book Covers](#). This pre-stacking of content will allow you to post regularly over time.

Tip Number 3: Avoid Goodreads Giveaways

This one is really short: Goodreads giveaways are, in my opinion, a scam. They make you pay to give your books away, but you don't get any benefit such as an e-mail list, of those who sign up. Instead, Goodreads uses your book to drive more traffic and engagement for their site, and to make themselves more money. I recommend creating a Goodreads profile and not doing any of their paid promotions.

Tip Number 4: Avoid Publicists, Unless They Are Small and Have Limited Clients. Look Into Becoming Your Own Publicist.

I have seen so many authors paying tens of thousands of dollars to big book publicity firms (I won't name names!), and getting almost nothing in return, perhaps one or two blog mentions and reviews. These companies get away with this because they have contracts that state that results are not guaranteed. Unless you have a small publicity firm that has a dedicated team and they take only a select number of clients, you simply won't see the results you'd like.



I recommend instead, look into becoming your own publicist, using these steps:

- Create a media kit. You can learn more about how to do this on my [Media Kit Must Haves](#) blog post. Upload the media kit to your website, and include the link in your e-mail to potential media. Never attach it to the e-mail, as they won't open it for security reasons.
- Create a cover e-mail template about three short paragraphs long, introducing yourself and explaining how your book connects to current events, or why you think it is a good fit for their audience, then below that include your media kit link, and book purchase link. It can help to have a nice e-mail signature, such as ones you can create using [WiseStamp's](#) free tool.
- Build your publicity e-mail list in an Excel spreadsheet or Word table, and start reaching out one by one. Never send mass e-mails, as this can get your e-mail address blacklisted. Address each person by name. Start locally in your town, because they are more likely to feature you, and after that each far and wide, including places like Australia, which has some very interesting, quirky book review websites and blogs. You can download my Word document table template [here](#), with a lot of publicity connections to contact.

Tip Number 5: How to Build Your E-mail List

Here, I will focus on three ways to build your e-mail list: giveaways, back matter, and sign up forms.

Giveaways are one of the most effective ways to build your e-mail list. They generate a lot of excitement and reader / follower engagement, and can also be tied into fun events such as Valentine's Day, Christmas specials, 4th of July, and really anything you can think of. Here is a comprehensive [list of events](#) to tie into marketing. I recommend creating your own giveaways (I use the highly effective MailerLite) and running a targeted Facebook ad to promote it. This gives you a lot of control. You can see an example of a good landing page [here](#), and a giveaway tied to [Christmas](#). Goody bags are also highly effective, and readers love them. That one got 800 sign ups.



Back matter is very important and something that a lot of authors overlook. Feature a sign up link at the end of your book, before any other links, so that as soon as they have finished reading they see the prompt to subscribe to your mailing list. You are most likely to find your super fans here, because they are already engaged and have read your book. Especially if you have a series, or are going to publish more books, having these subscribers will make future launches easier, because they're that much more likely to buy and leave reviews.

Sign up forms can be put on your website in the form of embedded forms in the footer, contact page, and also pop ups. You can also create a dedicated landing page that you can share on social media and in e-mails. MailerLite has all these capabilities, including the ability to save landing pages as templates for future giveaways, reducing work load.

Tip Number 6: Send Newsletters At Least Once a Month, and Content Tips

Newsletters are the most important book marketing tool to focus on. The reason is, they are affordable and put you in direct control and not at the mercy of social media algorithm changes. It gives you a direct means of contacting your readers that is independent of outside technology shifts and trends. All too often I see authors who join a giveaway to build their e-mail list, then send perhaps three newsletters, and stop. This allows their newsletter list to go cold, meaning when you do send a newsletter again, your subscribers will have forgotten who you are. In this fast paced world it's important to stay top of mind, and sending one per month is not too overwhelming for the author, and allows readers to keep up to date.

Newsletters are a long-term engagement strategy to build a relationship with your subscribers. Make them no longer than 300 to 400 words and always try to include three or four engaging images. Examples: your pets, you doing various activities, you holding your book cover and smiling into the camera, beautiful nature, or book signings etc. Never try to hard sell your book, rather create a recurring section at the end of each newsletter that features your 3D cover, and a review / excerpt. Then include the Call to Action "Learn More." Never say "Buy My Book," but rather go for the soft sell. You can see a well laid out newsletter that I created for a client here, although I recommend they not be this long (she had a lot to say, as it was her first one). You can also create your own fun recurring segments, as she and I did, with Karola's Korner.



Tip Number 7: Create a Universal Amazon Link

Go to BookLinker.net and follow the steps for creating a Universal Amazon Link. This is very important to use on social media, in newsletters, and all content marketing. The reason is, it will direct visitors to their local Amazon storefront, for whichever country they're in. This will avoid them having to pay international shipping fees, which would make it more likely you'd lose the sale. You can also track the clicks by country in the stats dashboard (you'll see the country flag icons). The link is case sensitive so make sure you copy it directly and paste it into your Tech Form. If you don't have a central Tech Form where you store all your book marketing information, you can download one [here](#).

Tip Number 8: Run Paid Ads on Amazon, Facebook and Instagram:

Paid ads are a cornerstone of book marketing. It would be great if authors could get all the sales they wanted just by posting on social media, but that's not the reality. In this section I will go into detail on Facebook and Instagram ads.

The number one rule is: only run video ads, not image ads on Facebook and Instagram.

The reason for this is a video ad allows you to create a custom retargeting audience in your ads dashboard. A video ad retargeting audience means you run an ad again to people who have watched part of the video. They are considered a warm audience, and are interested in your book. This warm audience stays in your ads dashboard for 365 days and updates with each ad you run. You can do this by following these steps:

1. Go to Facebook.com/adsmanager and click on All Tools, the three horizontal lines, top left.
2. Click on Audience, Create Audience (blue button), then Custom Audience..
3. Select Video under Facebook Sources, then click into the box under Engagement (choose content type),
4. Select People who viewed at least 3 seconds of your video.
5. Top right, click on the blue text, Choose Videos and select the video ad you ran.
6. Give the audience a name, Custom (book name and date) Audience.
7. You can now target this audience when running an ad.



Facebook in-stream video ads can be a maximum of 15 seconds long. I recommend creating a custom video with three scenes to convey your book's value and storyline, finishing with a call to action in the last scene. You can see examples of custom ads I've created for authors [here](#).

How to target and narrow Facebook and Instagram ads:

In the interests section, target authors who have very high profile or bestselling books in your genre. Try to use at least 10 names and have your audience size above 250,000.

Below that, you'll see Narrow Audience. Narrow it to: Kindle Books, Amazon Books, Kindle, Kindle Fire (Behaviors), E-book Readers and Engaged Shoppers (people who bought something from an ad in the last week). When creating new audiences, always give them a date, and never overwrite an old audience, save as new. This will give you a history of the targeting, so you can keep track of what is most effective. Take a screenshot of the audience, as well as the ad itself, and save them in your marketing folder. You need to keep screenshots for each ad you run so you can see at a glance the performance of each. A high performing ad means clicks should be 10% or more of Reach. For ad budget, a \$10 / day or more ad has a much higher performance than \$5 / day, more than just double, but you can choose whichever budget you need.

Tip Number 9: Self or Traditional Publishing?

I recommend that each author make this choice for themselves, as there is still perceived value in the prestige of being traditionally published, but my recommendation is self-publishing. The reasons for this are listed below:

1. Unless you have guaranteed placement in stores and marketing resources, traditional publishers don't support and market books to the degree that occurred in the past. There are exceptions, but oftentimes traditional publishers have not kept up with the latest online digital marketing tools and don't provide support in building your e-mail list or running ads.
2. Self-publishing allows you to see digital sales in real time in the Amazon dashboard, which is not possible with traditional publishing. Amazon does not share that information unless you publish through them. Not having accurate, real time sales numbers makes marketing very, very difficult, because you cannot see if a campaign is working or not. With traditional publishers, if they share physical book sales stats with you, they are often delayed by months, complicating any marketing efforts.



Tip Number 10: If You Are Struggling or Overwhelmed, Hire Help

If you feel overwhelmed or are struggling with any aspect of book marketing, including the technological side, I recommend hiring temporary, or ongoing support. One of the biggest reasons authors give up on book marketing is because of the learning curve. Struggling without help can lead to burnout, and abandoning book marketing completely. This is a shame, because each and every book can find its audience. Hiring help frees up your valuable time for writing and other life activities.

I can provide support in the following areas:

Facebook and Instagram Ads coaching for authors

Video ad creation

E-mail list building, giveaways, and integration of sign up forms with your website

Newsletter set up, sending, and / or coaching

Customized social media header creation

How to be your own publicist.

Here are my references: UniversalByDesign.com/testimonials

And my portfolio: UniversalByDesign.com/portfolio

You can see custom video ads here: [CustomAds](#)

I can't wait to talk to you about your vision for your book, and how I can help you find your audience and super fans. Please fill out your information at the link below to book your free consultation.

[Request a Consultation](#)

Have a lovely day, and hope to talk soon!


Melissa