



MARKETING 101

**FOR AUTHORS
ON A BUDGET**

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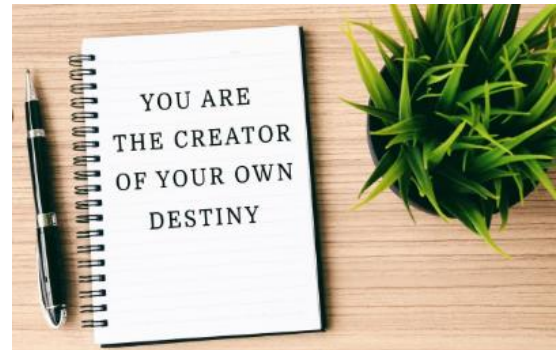
ALYBLUE MEDIA, LLC
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PURPOSE

VALUE OF MARKETING

Market to your best customers first, your best prospects second, and the rest of the world last.

JOHN ROMERO



You published a book, congratulations! Now what?

A publisher offers distribution of your book, as outlined in the publisher's contract. Marketing a book is a different branch, and requires either a dedicated budget or creativity. The big question is:

- ◆ Does the author have a career, and the book is a side venture?
- ◆ Does the author intend to work full-time to promote his/her book?

For most authors, the published book is a goal they've always dreamed of fulfilling. It is a vehicle for sharing your story, your experience, and your wisdom. The challenge is that unless you market your book, nobody will know you wrote one.

The good news is that no matter your budget, all efforts by the author to maximize reach will improve book sales.

INSIDE

- ✓ Option 1: Retain a publicist
- ✓ Option 2: Self promotion
- ✓ What you need to start

OPTION 1

RETAIN A PUBLICIST

Being a publicist is like management in a lot of ways—you're their friend, their mother, and their confidante.

DEBI MAZAR

Did you know you can retain a publicist just for the book launch? You can, and it will maximize your reach.

The main purpose of PR is to promote awareness of the book and/or your brand. Very rarely does PR directly generate sales of a book in large quantities. However, you can't put a price tag on landing stories in media outlets. Such editorial placements legitimize and elevate your book with consumers.

The publicist will read your book in its entirety, make recommendations on where to send the press release for maximum publicity, identify media who are interested in promoting first-time authors, and follow up with key editors.

Examples of places where a book can be publicized on a limited basis:

- ✓ Podcasts
- ✓ Blogs
- ✓ Niche publications, such as women magazines, men magazines, popular culture, etc
- ✓ Radio stations
- ✓ Local media outlets

As income is generated by book sales, you can elect to invest in additional PR, especially if the book has a strong potential for national media exposure (TV networks and cable, top tier magazines, etc). Publicists reach out to editors to promote your book. It is at the discretion of the editor as to whether s/he feels the book warrants space in their media outlet, but a strong pitch by a publicist increases your odds.

PUBLICIST'S ROLE

- ✓ Read your book in its entirety
- ✓ Make recommendations on where to send press release
- ✓ Identify media who are interested in promoting first-time authors
- ✓ Follow-up with key editors by email or phone
- ✓ Develop a plan to help your audience grow

ESTIMATE: \$1,500 to \$2,500, depending on scope of project

A good publicist understands the difference between personal posts and business posts. A publicist will develop an essential plan to help your audience grow.

OPTION 2

SELF PROMOTION

Without promotion, something terrible happens—nothing.

P.T. BARNUM

Whether it's a full- or part-time effort, there are a number of ways for an author to generate awareness for the book and drive sales.

Think about executing these initial steps before taking action:

✓ ACTION PLAN

Write an action plan to identify and track activities that will help you drive book sales.

✓ BUILD A DATABASE

Begin building a database of friends, relatives, business colleagues, and other people in your network who might be interested in purchasing your book, either for themselves or as a gift. Successful authors continually build their database to keep in touch with their network to share important news, updates and events.

✓ BOOK EVENTS

Identify a local bookstore or library who is willing to help you host a book event. You can give a short book review and then sign books. If the business doesn't provide media coverage, work with your publicist to help.

✓ WRITE MORE

Seek one or more columns to write for magazines or other entities. For example, an author who wrote about retirement (which features a novel way to view this new phase of life) successfully identified two regional magazines who were interested in columns. Typically, they include a byline—a short bio about the author where you can include the title of your book.

✓ LITERARY AWARDS

Consider submitting your book for literary awards. Some national and regional awards can be very inexpensive, and any awards your book earns gives you instant credibility and exposure. Some genres to consider include first-time author, women authors, memoirs, etc.

DO IT YOURSELF

- ✓ Create an action plan
- ✓ Build a database
- ✓ Host book events
- ✓ Write for magazines
- ✓ Literary awards
- ✓ Speaking engagements
- ✓ Workbook companion
- ✓ Licensing
- ✓ Start a movement

✓ **SPEAKING EVENTS**

Think about organizations and companies in your region who may be interested in hearing you give a talk on the subject of your book (many look for speakers). Always have a case of books on hand to sign and sell. Consider creating bookmarks that list where your book is available. If you aren't comfortable with public speaking, consider hiring a professional to train you and help hone your skills. You can sign up with speaker bureaus or seek your own opportunities with trade associations, trade shows, conferences, or other small events.

Speaking opportunities:

- Libraries
- Book clubs
- Rotary Club
- Lions Club
- Women organizations
- Academic institutions
- Literary Guild

Research book clubs both in and outside your region (use Zoom for long distance events). Book clubs are looking for good literature, and love the opportunity to speak with the author and ask questions.

Research national clubs and organizations (this can also be done by your publicist). There are numerous opportunities to speak and either write or be featured in e-newsletters.

Reach out to colleges and universities. Some authors have successfully sold their books as curriculum requirements. Authors are also invited to speak at academic institutions.

✓ **WORKBOOK**

Consider creating a companion workbook which expands on your topic, includes exercises and more information.

✓ **LICENSING**

Consider developing a brand and working with a licensing agent to license your work for other industries.

✓ **START A MOVEMENT**

If you have a powerful message, consider starting a movement with readers and consumers. Consider joining Patreon to start building your fan base and generate an income which you can use to invest in hiring a publicist to help you assess the potential for developing and executing a strategy.

PRESS KIT

WHY YOU NEED ONE

Media kits indicate that you are a serious author with a book that deserves to be considered.

HANNAH HARGRAVE

Also known as an author media kit, a press kit gives you a polished and professional air, and makes a reporter's life easier when you're pitching your book to bookstores and reviewers. Your press kit gives you the chance to present yourself the way you want to be seen.

KIT COMPONENTS

- ✓ Contact Information
- ✓ Full length bio
- ✓ High res head shot
- ✓ Sell sheet
- ✓ Tip sheet
- ✓ Press release
- ✓ Excerpt

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Make it easy for bloggers, reviewers, and reporters to contact you. If they have to search for it, they won't. Put everything at their fingertips.

- Full name
- Email
- Links to professional online platforms
- Agent's or representative's name, if applicable

FULL LENGTH BIO

Written in the third person, the bio tells your audience about you. Keep it concise yet interesting, and give reporters an easy angle with which to work. The information you include in your bio should be relevant to your work. Include prior publications, media coverage, and any other qualifications.

HIGH RES HEAD SHOT

Be sure to include a high resolution shot of yourself from the shoulders up. If possible, invest in professional photos, as they carry more credibility than selfies. A white back-ground is preferred because it goes with everything.

SELL SHEET

A one-page sheet for retailers and bloggers who want the details with no fuss. Include:

- Author
- Genre/price/# of pages
- ISBN
- Publication date
- Synopsis
- Formats available
- Retail outlets where the book is available
- Book cover jpg
- Author jpg
- Testimonials/reviews

TIP SHEET

The tip sheet offers the media a variety of discussion topics should they wish to interview you. A good tip sheet hands the conversation to the reporter, making it less work for them to come up with questions to ask.

Offer 5 to 10 questions with sample answers, such as the following:

- What inspired you to write the book?
- Is there a backstory to it? If so, share that.
- Who are your favorite authors?

PRESS RELEASE

Designed to grab a reporter's attention, a press release packages information about your book when it's released, and showcases it. Angle your press release so it becomes something the press wants to cover. The more interesting it is, the more attention it will grab. Components should include:

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—It's conventional to put this at the top so reporters know what it is.
- Headline—Less than 20 words, choose words that captivate and create interest.
- Subheadline—Optional, but common.

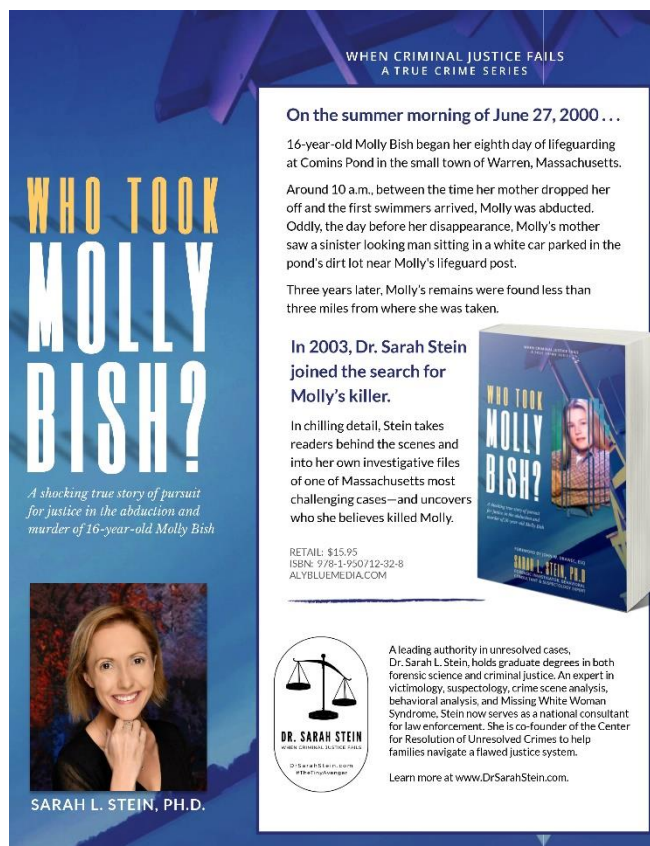


Figure 1. Sell sheet sample.

- Dateline—City/state and date.
- Intro—Attention grabbing paragraph that can include a problem/solution hook.
- Author quote—Make it compelling, avoid bland statements.
- Mini bio—Make every sentence impactful.
- Book information—Again, make it impactful.
- Contact details—Links to your website, email, phone number, social media, and how to get review copies.
- Call to action—Pay attention to this.
- Hashtags (optional)—Use hashtags only if they will be used.

EXCERPT

Intrigue your audience with a few pages or the opening chapter to draw the reader in. They're more likely to report on your book if you leave them wanting to read more.

LAUNCH CHECKLIST

PLAN, PREPARE, LAUNCH

It's such a luxury to open a new book that's highly recommended by friends.

KELLI O'HARA

PREPARE

- ✓ Website
- ✓ Social media
- ✓ Endorsements
- ✓ Local media
- ✓ Opportunities
- ✓ Pre-order

Preparing for your book's release is a very exciting time. A well thought out plan can keep everyone on track and ensures maximum success of your launch when the time comes. Whether you're employing a team or doing it yourself, use the checklists below to create your timeline of action items to help you plan and prepare for a successful launch

WEBSITE.

Build your website to include the following elements:

- Bio
- High res photo of you
- High res photo of book cover
- Book testimonials
- Point of sale for book purchases
- Media (articles, videos, podcasts)
- Contact page

SOCIAL MEDIA.

Identify and build your chosen social media platforms. You don't have to build all of them, just those you are naturally drawn to. It's more important to establish a strong presence on a select few than to build a weak presence on all platforms. Consider the following platforms, and begin posting relevant content. Err on the side of caution . . . useless content won't drive traffic, making it a waste of time. Make it esthetically pleasing using paired colors and fonts, and keep it inspiring, useful, funny, and worth sharing.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> YouTube | <input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram | <input type="checkbox"/> Reddit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Quora |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> GoodReads author page |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pinterest | <input type="checkbox"/> Amazon author page |

❑ ENDORSEMENTS.

Solicit book endorsements. Invite the highest caliber colleagues you know to write a one- to two-sentence endorsement of the book and send them a watermarked PDF of the manuscript. They need not read the entire manuscript (most don't), just peruse it enough to understand the book's purpose and get a feel for the story and your writing style.

❑ MEDIA.

Comprise a list of local media who are likely to cover your book when it's released. When the book is released, AlyBlue Media will send out a national press release on your behalf. You can send that press release to the list of local journalists and reporters you prepared in advance, inviting them to interview you as a local author. Be sure to have your sell sheet ready.

❑ OPPORTUNITIES.

Consider the following piggyback opportunities to help establish your audience:

- ❑ Teach an online course
- ❑ Lead workshops
- ❑ Offer coaching services
- ❑ Seek speaking engagements
- ❑ Start a podcast
- ❑ Answer questions on Quora and Reddit
- ❑ Starts monthly newsletter. Add sign-up link on website.
- ❑ Readings in local bookstores, hospitals, assisted living facilities, children's nonprofits.

- ❑ **PRE-ORDER.** If you plan to offer pre-orders of your book, consider offering an incentive, such as access to a class you're teaching, free custom bookmark, etc. Be sure to add the pre-order link to your website.

❑ CELEBRATE. Schedule release day festivities.

- ❑ Announce on social media
- ❑ Newsletter announcement
- ❑ Live announcement on Facebook and/or YouTube. Explain the backstory of the book, how it came to you, why you wrote it, and read a paragraph or two. Announcing your book isn't enough. Keep it interesting so people will watch and engage.