

STEPS Marketing Strategy

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OVERVIEW

Your book marketing strategy lays out how you'll reach your ideal readers. Done well, your book should not need constant, dedicated promotion – in titling, describing, and designing your book, we've optimized it for organic discovery and for converting your target readers.

That said, there are tactics you can use to 1) give your book an initial boost that will help search and recommendation engines discover it, and 2) to embed your book into you're your business so that your business naturally promotes your book and your book effectively supports your business.

Though foundational book marketing is something any author can do themselves, many entrepreneurs find value in working with a professional publicist or book marketing agency to handle the planning and execution. If this is something you're considering, we've included a short list of agencies and publicists in [Appendix F: Resources](#) at the end of this document.

While not the only approach to book marketing, this document provides a strong and executable strategy that any entrepreneur can use to effectively promote their book.

RUN THE R.A.C.E.

The four pillars of book promotion can be neatly encapsulated in the RACE framework, which stands for:

1. Reviews – setting a strong foundation by orchestrating reader reviews
2. Asset Creation – developing a foundational set of assets you can use to promote your book and yourself as its author
3. Campaign Promotion – a short but focused, 1-week campaign to seed your book in the marketplace
4. Exposure – getting you and your book in front of your ideal readers

The elements of the strategy that follow are organized into these pillars.



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1. REVIEWS: ORCHESTRATING READER REVIEWS

Reader reviews, especially those on Amazon, are a critically important aspect of marketing your book. And because they persist, putting in effort at launch to generate a strong volume of positive reviews, will set your book up for long-term success.

Beyond the text content of reviews, there are two metrics to be aware of that work together: the average rating, and the number of reviews.

Average rating

The first thing people look at is the average rating of all reviews (out of 5 stars on Amazon). Having a high rating is especially important early on, when you don't have many reviews, because readers don't have much else to go on.

Number of reviews

The next thing readers look at is the number of reviews. While a high average rating gives proof that those who read your book liked it, the number of reviews says something different. Lots of reviews means that many people read your book, which is a different type of social proof.

These two metrics work together to provide social proof, and as you accumulate more reviews, the importance of the average rating typically goes down.

How to get reader reviews

We recommend using a combination of sources for generating a minimum of 10 reader reviews for your book on Amazon.com. Some of the paid promotional opportunities we will cover later are only available for books with a minimum number of reviews (usually 5 or 10) and with a sufficiently positive average rating (usually between 3.5 and 4.0 stars out of 5.0).

1. Tap your network

Identify people within your professional network who would be willing to read it and provide feedback in a timely fashion. Aim to reach out to around 30 people, expect around 20 to agree to do it, and expect around 10 to follow through by the deadline you give them.

When you contact them (see an email template in [Appendix B: Reviewer Outreach Templates](#)), you'll simply request that they read it and provide feedback, not specifically mentioning leaving a review on Amazon. It's important to give people a deadline (two-three weeks is reasonable) and it's good practice to reach out with one week left before the deadline in case they've put it off and have forgotten.

Once you receive their feedback, if it's positive, thank them and ask if they'd be willing to leave a review on Amazon once your book is published.

If they agree, copy and paste their feedback somewhere safe. Once your book is live on Amazon, reach back out asking if they're still willing to leave a review and include both the text they'd previously sent you and the link to your book listing on Amazon.

A good time to reach out for reviews is once you have a final, proofread manuscript that is going into the design phase of publishing. That said, if you plan to use this feedback to solicit quotes for the front section (or back cover) of your book, or if you plan to make changes based on feedback, you'll need to send an early version – likely after your first structural edit comes back – to not jeopardize the publishing schedule.



2. Engage reader communities

Another good source of reader reviews is online communities like Facebook groups, LinkedIn groups, or discussion forums where your ideal readers hang out.

The process is identical to that laid out above, however the message is more general and you post it to the group requesting volunteers rather than reaching out to specific individuals.

You can find a templated message as a starting point for posting to relevant groups in [Appendix B: Reviewer Outreach Templates](#).

IMPORTANT

It's important to realize that in addition to positive feedback you WILL get "constructive" (aka: negative) input also, and you'll be tempted to want to make changes to your manuscript based on these. Unless you're soliciting early input after your first editing round, I can't emphasize enough that **BY THIS POINT, IT'S TOO LATE TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE LOCKED MANUSCRIPT**. If you get constructive input that you feel makes sense to address, save it in a safe place so that you can consider it if/when you choose to publish another book or a future edition of this one.

Note: Amazon rules about reviews

There are some important rules to be aware of when asking people to leave reviews.

- You cannot pay people to leave reviews, however you *can* provide a complimentary copy of your book for people to review, provided they indicate in their review that they received a free copy for review.
- You cannot ask for *positive* reviews, instead, ask people to provide an *honest* review.
- Amazon actively seeks out and removes reviews left by people who are closely affiliated with the author. This is easier for them to do when an author DIY-publishes directly with Amazon KDP as they are able to associate Amazon accounts that have common addresses, have logged in from the same I.P. address, etc. Irrespective, it's good practice not to request reviews from close friends and family.
- A reviewer need not to have purchased your book to leave a review on Amazon. However, if they *have* purchased your book on Amazon, their review will be shown:
 - With a "Verified Purchase" indicator and will have greater weight in Amazon's recommendation algorithms
 - On *all* Amazon marketplaces, not just the one where they left the review (e.g., Amazon.com / Amazon.ca / Amazon.com.au / Amazon.co.uk / etc.)
- Further to this point, a reviewer must have spent a minimum amount in the past 12 months on the Amazon marketplace on which they leave a review. This amount varies by marketplace, but here are the current minimums for major regions:
 - Amazon.com – USD \$50
 - Amazon.ca – CAD \$50
 - Amazon.com.au – AUD \$50
 - Amazon.co.uk – GBP £40
- For more information about Amazon's guidelines, please visit <https://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=201929730>



When to execute this

Activity	Timing
R.1 - Create list of prospective reviewers	Any time
R.2 - Contact prospective reviewers / send advance copy (ARC)	Once manuscript locked
R.3 - Collect initial reviews / testimonials	2-3 weeks after ARC sent
R.4 - Ask for Amazon.com review	As soon as Amazon listing is live

2. ASSETS: CREATING BOOK MARKETING ASSETS

There are a variety of assets you should consider creating to make it easier to promote and leverage your book, both at launch and on an on-going basis.

Website

We recommend a book website landing page that can act as the destination for media, event organizers, and influencers interested in learning more about your book. This page can either be hosted at a dedicated URL (e.g. www.yourbook.com) or as a page within a business website (e.g. www.yourbusiness.com/book/) or individual website (e.g. www.yourname.com/book/).

Regardless of where the page is hosted, it should contain, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. Your book description and an image of your book cover
2. List of the key benefits your reader can expect from reading your book
3. Links to major retailer websites (once book listings are live)
4. Email capture form using a valuable lead-magnet to incentivize sign-up (e.g. two 2 free chapters of the book, an interactive assessment, a downloadable worksheet or report, etc.)
5. Your author bio
6. Your contact information

Here are some examples of book website landing pages for reference:

- <http://fitfordisruption.com>
- <http://beyondthemoney.com.au>
- <https://endoftheretirementage.com>

Social media accounts, professional bios, email signature

Many authors ask whether they should create dedicated social media accounts related to their book. The correct answer depends on your goals, but for most authors we recommend not creating accounts that are separate from your business or personal social media accounts.

The exception to this would be if your book title represents a key brand that you intend to use as a within your business across a wider set of products and services, in which case registering accounts with the name of the book on all major social media channels is wise.

Regardless, in the week before your book listing goes live, update your social media profiles, professional bios, and email signatures to include "Author of *Book Title*", and where platform limitations allow, include a link to your book website or landing page.



Social content

After launching your book, we recommend that you consistently post relevant content related to your book on from your social media accounts. The specific social media platforms that you post to should align to where your those your ideal readers use regularly, so rather than making specific platform recommendations, our recommendations are instead focused on type of content and posting frequency.

Type of content	Suitable social platforms	Posting frequency
52 x short social posts (< 280 characters)	Twitter	Weekly
52 x longer posts	Facebook, LinkedIn	Weekly
52 x image quotes (1080 x 1080 px)	Instagram	Weekly

It's easy to get distracted with other things once your book is launched and you're focused on using it to generate business, so we suggest creating at least a full year's worth of social content in advance from the content of your book, and using a content scheduling service (see [Appendix F: Resources](#) for recommended tools you can use to do this) so that you can set everything up have it executed automatically.

The purpose of this content is to keep you and your book top of mind on a consistent basis, without posting so frequently that it becomes difficult to maintain. Where the platform allows it, link from the post to your book website landing page, your business website, or to an article or video, roughly in equal proportion.

Blog posts / articles

Your book provides an excellent source of well-thought-out, well-structured content that you can use to reach a broader audience and further position yourself as an expert. As with social media, creating longer-form content assets in advance based on your book allows you to publish consistently and quickly take advantage of opportunities for added exposure as they arise.

We recommend you create a minimum of 12 blog post articles, each between 500 and 1,000 words in length pulling from topics in your book.

When selecting content from your book to turn into articles, consider which topics could be covered sufficiently in 500-1,000 words to answer a specific question your readers might have. Most sub-topics within your chapters will already be structured with a brief introduction and conclusion, but you may need to tweak them slightly, especially if the subtopic assumes knowledge that was covered previously in your book. You'll also need to craft a compelling headline title for each article that draws readers in.

A good formula to follow in your blog articles is to cover the following four things:

1. Clearly describe the problem or question that the article addresses (introduction).
2. Then explain why the topic is important.
3. Share your answer, solution, or point of view on the topic.
4. Finally, give the reader a next step for what they should do straight away to put this into action.

Plan to post one of these articles each month to your business website, and then share it on your social media channels.

Video and audio

With your articles written, it's a relatively easy exercise to turn them into scripts you can use in short videos and audio segments.



Depending on how your audience likes to consume content, consider hiring a video producer for a half day to film you, turning all your blog articles into videos that you can upload every month to your website and YouTube channel. You can then send the video to an audio engineer to extract the audio, add a musical intro and extro, and package each one up into a short podcast episode.

Creating multiple content assets from a single master content asset and publishing them out regularly in multiple formats and platforms is an incredibly efficient way to stay in front of your audience and increase your profile as an expert on your subject.

When to execute this

Activity	Timing
A.1 - Create book website / landing page	Once cover finalized
A.2 - Register book-specific social media accounts (if needed)	While building website
A.3 - Create 52 weeks of social media posts	Once manuscript locked
A.4 - Create 12 months of blog articles	Once manuscript locked
A.5 - Turn articles into videos / podcast episodes (optional)	After blog articles are written
A.6 - Update social media and professional bios and email signature	Week before Amazon listing is live
A.7 - Post content to social media platforms	Daily through launch campaign, weekly and ongoing thereafter
A.8 - Publish articles to website, video to website and/or YouTube (optional), audio as podcast episode (optional)	Monthly and ongoing, starting the first day of launch campaign

3. CAMPAIGN: EXECUTING A PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

Promoting your book shouldn't normally feel like a separate activity to what you're already doing on a regular basis to keep yourself and your business top-of-mind with clients and prospective clients. Instead, it should provide additional reasons, content, and opportunities to connect with your market.

However, there are instances when a more focused, time-limited period of specific promotion can be helpful. Typically, this will be just after your book is published or to capitalize on current or seasonal events related to the content of your book.

The ideal duration for most book promotion campaigns is one week, and normally consists of direct promotion through the author's own channels (e.g., email and social media) along with paid promotion. For current-event or seasonal promotional campaigns, media outreach (which will be discussed later) can be effective layers to add if it can be timed to coincide with the timing of the rest of the campaign.

Anatomy of a promotional campaign

As with any product, there are many ways to run a promotional campaign for your book. However, given the dynamics of online book retailing and the ecosystem of reader communities, the style of campaign we recommend is specific and replicable. It can be repeated, however we suggest not doing so more than quarterly to avoid promotional fatigue (in fact some of the promotional partners we recommend won't accept the same book more frequently than every 90 days for this reason).



Note: A caution about early sales

Before describing the campaign strategy, it's important to highlight an issue that can hurt your book in the long-term. Many authors make a critical, though understandable, mistake when they launch their book. They want early sales, so they push their book to anyone and everyone they know. The early result is often positive as friends and family show support and buy up copies in the first few days. As great as this sounds, it's not. Here's why...

Whenever someone buys your book, the retailer's recommendation algorithm tries to figure out why they bought it. It looks at the listings that the buyer browsed before yours, the products they bought, where they live, what their interests are, etc.

If your early sales are to friends and family who aren't your ideal readers, the algorithm will struggle to find useful commonalities that it can use to recommend your book to others who will respond favourably.

As anxious as you are for early sales, only promote your book to those that fit your ideal reader profile. The tighter you can keep your sales to this group, the more effectively Amazon can bring similar people to your listing in the long run.

How to run your Amazon bestseller campaign

Whether or not you're concerned about your book becoming a bestseller, the tactics employed to reach bestseller status are the same ones we recommend for promoting your book through a campaign.

Like the famous *New York Times Bestseller* lists and those of other newspapers, Amazon bestseller lists recognize top-selling books in various categories over a period of time. Two things make Amazon's approach distinct (and beneficially for independent authors). First, Amazon has thousands of categories, which gives authors more opportunities to rank in one that's relevant to their specific niche. Second, Amazon calculates rankings every hour, which provides more chances to rank in these categories.

Apart from the social proof of being able to call your book a bestseller and yourself a bestselling author, books that rank higher are given preference in search and recommendation algorithms, so pushing your book up the rankings helps your book get discovered.

How does a bestseller campaign work? Here's the strategy in a nutshell:

1. Reduce the price of your e-book to \$0.99 (we can schedule this for you with 2-week's notice)
2. Drive lots of traffic to the listing on Amazon over a 1-week period
3. The traffic converts efficiently to sales / downloads thanks to the promotional price
4. Track your rankings regularly and grab a screenshot for proof as your book climbs the rankings
5. After the campaign week is over, we put the price back up to the original price

Below is our recommended schedule for your promotional week. Book pricing changes are submitted on Fridays and can take a few days to take effect on Amazon, so we suggest having your promotional week begin on the Wednesday following the price drop, then putting the price back up the following Friday (two weeks after the price drop).

Many of these promotional sites book up in advance, so we recommend booking them at three weeks ahead.



Full week

- **Books Butterfly – USD \$170**
<http://booksbutterfly.com>
 - Choose the *Platinum 100* package.
 - Submit for full week.
 - Submit the amazon.com link as primary (reach out to BB and ask them to include secondary link with the link to your listing on your local Amazon marketplace if outside of the US)
- **Book Goodies – USD \$49**
<https://bookgoodies.com/advertising/>
 - Choose the 1-week *Home Page Feature*
- **E-Reader News Today – USD \$55**
<https://ereadernewstoday.com/bargain-and-free-book-submissions/>
 - Submit as a “0.99 bargain book” to “Non-Fiction” category
 - Submit for full week
- **E-Book Booster – USD \$20**
<https://www.ebookbooster.com/orderguaranteed.html>
 - Submit as “Bargain eBook Promotion (99 cents - \$4.99)”

Day 1

- **Direct Email promotion** – send email to your email list(s) to promote \$0.99 limited time offer
- **Social Media promotion** – post to your social media accounts to promote \$0.99 limited time offer

Day 2

- **BKNights – USD \$5**
<https://www.fiverr.com/bknights/promote-and-market-your-self-published-kindle-book-to-4800-active-kindle-readers-on-my-facebook-page-during-your-promo-or-marketing-period>
 - Submit to “Self-help and How-to” category
- **Bargain Booksy – USD \$25-30 (depending on category)**
<https://www.bargainbooksy.com/sell-more-books/>
 - Recommend submitting to “Self-help and How-to” (\$30) or to “General non-fiction” (\$25)
- **The Fussy Librarian – USD \$14-16 (depending on category)**
<https://www.thefussylibrarian.com/advertising/making-book-marketing-easier/>
 - Typically recommend submitting to “General nonfiction” (\$14), “How-to” (\$16), or “Business” (\$14)
- **BookSends – USD \$40**
<http://booksends.com/advertise.php>
 - Submit as “0.99 bargain book” to “Non-Fiction” category
 - Note: Requires min of 5 reviews on Amazon
 - Submit ASIN as their system adapts the link for regional recipients



Day 3

- **E-Book Soda - USD \$29 (email blast), USD \$9 (Twitter post), USD \$9 (FB post)**
<http://www.ebooksoda.com/authors/>
 - Submit for email, Twitter, and Facebook
- **Reading Deals - USD \$29**
<https://readingdeals.com/submit-ebook>
 - Choose *Guaranteed promotion*
 - Note: Requires min of 5 reviews on Amazon
- **Discount Book Man - USD \$15**
<https://discountbookman.com/book-promotion/>
 - Choose *Featured Book Listing*
- **My Book Place - USD \$25**
<https://mybookplace.net/submit-your-book/>

Day 4

- **Kindle Nation Daily - USD \$129.99**
https://indie.kindlenationdaily.com/?post_type=product
 - Choose *KND Dedicated Excerpt Email*

Day 5

- **n/a** - no promotions planned for Day 5 other than those running all week

Day 6

- **Direct email reminder** - send reminder email to your email list
- **Social media reminder** - Post reminder to your social media accounts

Day 7

- **n/a** - no promotions planned for Day 5 other than those running all week

Tracking your campaign results

We're often asked how many book sales are needed to rank as an Amazon bestseller. The answer depends on a number of variables, including:

- Which categories does your book fit into and how competitive are these categories?
- How many other books are launched into these categories at the same time as your promotion?
- How much promotional activity is there for competitive books during your promotional period?
- How are your book sales distributed over the promotional period? (Amazon rankings are calculated hourly)
- How are your sales distributed across Amazon marketplaces (Amazon rankings are calculated by category, by Amazon marketplace)?



With the above caveats in mind, the following table provides a very general estimate of the number of book sales needed to hit certain ranking levels on Amazon.com.

Target Amazon.com ranking (category level)	Estimated sales over a 1-week promo period
#1	200+
#5	150-200
#10	100-150
#20	75-100
#50	50-75
#100	25-50

When to execute this

Activity	Timing
C.1 - Book launch week paid media	3 weeks before Day 1 of campaign
C.2 - Advise Grammar Factory of campaign timing so we can coordinate promotional pricing	At least 2 weeks before Day 1 of campaign
C.3 - Grammar Factory submits \$0.99 e-book pricing	Friday before campaign Day 1
C.4 - Execute and track campaign	3 ½ weeks (or more) after listing goes live on Amazon, starting on a Wednesday with a 1-week duration
C.5 - Announce launch and promo pricing to your email list and social media followers	Day 1 of campaign (Wed)
C.6 - Send reminder of promo end to your email list and social media followers	Day 6 of campaign (Mon)
C.7 - Grammar Factory submits end to \$0.99 e-book pricing	Friday after end of campaign

4. EXPOSURE: GAINING EXPOSURE FOR YOU AND YOUR BOOK

Big name, professional authors launching mass-market titles at a grand scale go on big publicity tours to launch their books. Their publicity agency books them on television and radio talk shows and arranges interviews with journalists to generate newspaper and magazine coverage. They'll often arrange book readings, author Q&As, speaking engagements, and other live events, all in an effort to generate buzz, earned media, and ultimately drive book sales.

Whether or not this sounds appealing to you, as an author, it's not our recommended approach for most entrepreneurs, for a number of reasons:

1. **It's time consuming:** These authors are generally full-time, professional authors, whose job it is to first write, then promote their book. They generally don't have a service business to run and clients to serve. If they have a business, it's usually centered around writing and promoting their expanding series of books.
2. **It's expensive:** Large-scale, mass-market book launch campaigns get expensive quickly. While there's no magic number, you'll likely need to spend between \$25,000 and \$100,000+.



- 3. It's (generally) not effective:** Obviously, these campaigns can be effective for the right books or they wouldn't be done, however most books by entrepreneurs are intentionally written for a specific niche that can be effectively monetized through their broader business. The books that warrant large, mass-media marketing campaigns are typically written for a much wider reader audience.

For these reasons, the marketing strategy we propose doesn't include these mass-media elements. If this is the type of marketing you want for your book, contact one of the agencies or publicists listed in [Appendix F: Resources](#) as it's not the kind of campaign you can realistically hope to run yourself. Instead, we recommend focusing as tightly as possible on well-targeted, digital media brands and influencers who already have the attention of your ideal readers.

3rd party digital media

Digital media outlets are excellent places for promoting your book and your business for two reasons. The democratized nature of the medium means that audiences can be hyper-targeted making your topic relevant enough for specific producers. Also, online audiences have come to expect and enjoy authors and books being featured, especially in podcasts and vlogs.

a. Guest posting

Guest posting is when you write an article that is published on someone else's blog or website. You benefit because it gets you and your ideas in front of an audience you don't already have a relationship with, and it further establishes you as a recognized authority in your field. When you include links back to your own site, it also improves your site's SEO performance by providing backlinks, an important factor in Google's search algorithms.

When identifying websites to reach out to, consider the following factors, in this order:

1. Niche – how well does the site's audience and content fit with yours?
2. Reach – how many people consume the site's content?
3. Engagement – how active is its audience and its owner / staff in sharing its articles via social channels?

Start by doing some Google research by searching your relevant keywords. While not a must, you could try adding "guest post", "submit guest post", "guest post by", "guest post guidelines", etc. to your search. This will turn up submission pages or guest posts written by others on sites relevant to your topic, which confirms that the site accepts guest posts. Make a list of those sites that seem to be a good fit for your goals.

Next, use a tool like Domain Authority Checker (<https://websiteseochecker.com/domain-authority-checker/>) and search the top-level domain (e.g., "website.com" rather than "website.com/articles/specific-article/"), noting the Domain Authority (DA) score returned for each site. While not exactly a reach metric (the metric is more complex than just reach), DA is a good proxy that you can use to rank and prioritize the sites you've identified. A site's DA score is a number out of one hundred, with larger numbers representing sites with more influence than those with a lower score. For reference, here are some scores for a few sites:

- YouTube.com: 100
- Forbes.com: 95
- FranklinCovey.com: 61
- CanadianBusiness.ca: 55



- BirdCagesNow.com: 33
- Running-Mom.com: 19

As you can see, the more niche the site, the lower the DA, so there's a trade-off between finding sites that are focused enough to reach a relevant audience vs. one with large reach and influence that is more general.

A good rule of thumb is to check the DA of your own site, and only target sites with a higher DA than yours. This ensures you're reaching a wider audience than you otherwise would.

Finally, choose the top 10 sites on your list and reach out to them to enquire about guest posting on their site. See [Appendix C: Guest Post Outreach Template](#) for a templated email you can use as a starting point when reaching out if the site doesn't have a submission form or pre-defined submission process.

When writing a guest post, try to mimic the styling of articles on their site, in term of how they use sub-headings, lists, quotes, bolded or italicized text, etc. Also try to include internal links back to some of their other posts and pages. Be sure to include your bio at the bottom, including a link back to your website and preferred social media profile(s) (we've included a template for a boilerplate bio in [Appendix E: Article Author Bio Boilerplate](#)).

b. Podcasts and vlogs

Podcasts and vlogs (video blogs) are another important promotional channel. The format for these (at least for those that are relevant for you) is interview style. The benefits of being a guest on a podcast or vlog are similar to those of guest posting – reaching an audience you otherwise wouldn't have access to and further establishing your credibility as an expert on your topic.

Begin by identifying a list of 10-20 podcasts and vlogs you'd like to be a guest on using, for example, some of the following techniques:

- Search in iTunes for specific keywords (podcasts) or YouTube (vlogs)
- Or search Google for "*keyword + podcast*" or "*keyword + episode*" (for both)
- Identify an influencer or authority and search Google for podcasts or videos they've appeared in by searching "*name + episode*"

Note the name of the show, URL of the show's website, the topic it covers, and the name and email of its host. If the email address isn't readily available, leave it blank and come back to it later (you may need to search on the show page, the host's personal website, the show or business website, or conduct some investigative googling).

Next, draft one (or both) of the following two pitch types.

1. Book launch pitch

This is most successful when reaching out in advance of your book launch. Share that your book is being published, including the date it will be available. Include a brief introduction to you, a short description of your book and briefly describe why you feel your book is relevant to the show's audience. It's also a good idea to connect the dots for the host and mention 2-3 topics related to you book that are top-of-mind for the audience and/or timely, given current events.



2. Expert pitch

This pitch is best used when reaching out *after* your book has been published. This pitch focuses not on your book, but on you and your authority on topics that are important to the show's audience. You can (and *should*) mention your book as an authority signal to the host, but it's important to share 2-3 topics that are relevant to the audience that you could talk for 20-30 minutes about. Bonus points if you can tie these into current events and trends.

Now, reach out to each of the shows on your hit-list with one of the two above pitches. Find a templated message in [Appendix D: Podcast / Vlog Outreach Template](#) that you can use as a starting point for your outreach.

Traditional media

Traditional media, apart from outlets focused specifically on reviewing books and speaking with authors, is not typically receptive to pitches about book launches, however, your book can be an excellent door opener for media exposure on topics related to your book and your professional expertise.

For this reason, we generally do not recommend spending effort on outreach to traditional media as part of your book launch or targeted promotion. The one exception to this is if there is a close link between your book topic and a hot, trending topic or highly relevant current event.

Launch events

In-person book launches used to be commonplace. They're less common today, and we normally do not recommend them as a vehicle for selling books, as it's rare to sell enough to offset the costs of the event. However, if you treat it as reason to bring together existing clients with prospective clients, a book launch can have a good return on investment for your business overall.

The current reality of Covid-19 means that in-person events aren't likely viable for some time yet, but if you choose to organize a physical launch for your book in the future, plan the attendee list thoughtfully, mixing happy clients with promising prospects. Give a brief talk about your book and what inspired you to write it, then consider having a couple of existing clients say a few words about how the methods in your book have already helped them. Consider giving away copies of your book, rather than selling them, with a goal of getting it into the hands of your ideal readers and ultimately converting them to clients.

The result can be an authority-building event that quickly delivers value for you and your business.

Goodreads and Amazon Author Central

There are two author-related online communities that you may want to consider creating a profile on: Goodreads and Amazon Author Central. These will be most interesting to you if you're keen to engage with readers over the long term to build your profile as an author and build your author platform, for subsequent book launches.

1. Goodreads (<https://www.goodreads.com>)

Goodreads is a reader-focused social network, owned by Amazon, but operated more or less independently from it. You can sign-up for an account at <https://www.goodreads.com/user/create> at any time, but can only join the author program (by "claiming" your book)



Once your book listing goes live on Amazon, you can claim your book listing on Goodreads by following these steps:

1. Search for your book on Goodreads
2. Click on your name below the book's title
3. Scroll down the page to the bottom of the main content area and click, "Is this you? Let us know"
4. On the next screen, you'll need to enter the following information:

Requested information	Information to provide
Your email address.	Your preferred email address
Email address of your most recent publisher or agent. If self-published, indicate "Self-Published Author."	Publisher: Grammar Factory Publishing (info@grammarfactory.com)
Link to a publisher site (such as Amazon, Createspace, Smashwords, etc.) that confirms your book(s) have been or will be published.	Copy/paste the Amazon link for your book
Link to your Twitter or Facebook page, if available.	Copy/paste a link to either your Twitter or Facebook page
If some titles listed are not yours, please list each book that is not yours.	Along the top of the page you'll see thumbnail images of books that are associated with your name. If your name is unique, then there shouldn't be any other than your book. If there are books by another other, hover your mouse over each thumbnail and note the title of the book and list all the books that aren't yours

5. Once you're approved, you'll receive an email confirming your enrolment.
6. You can then login and visit your Author Dashboard (<https://www.goodreads.com/author/dashboard>) and do a variety of things:
 - Click Edit My Author Profile (link at the top-right of your Dashboard) and customize your profile
 - View your author stats, such as total ratings and reviews (on Goodreads), followers, number of members who've added your book to their "to-read shelf", etc.
 - As the verified author of your book, you can also click the Edit Details link at the bottom of your book listing and make additions or edits to much of the metadata about your book or you can visit the Goodreads Librarian group and ask the librarians to make changes for you (<https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/220-goodreads-librarians-group>).
7. The real power of Goodreads comes from engaging with readers who are an active and engaged community. Among many other things, through the platform, you can:
 - [Sponsor a book giveaway](#). This is a key way to help readers discover your book and generate reviews. Giveaways allow new readers to take a chance on your book.
 - Turn on *Ask the Author* from your Author Dashboard to allow readers to ask you questions. You can answer them in your own time and be generous with your answers. Goodreads primes it all by providing some starter questions you'll find already waiting for you.



- Use status updates to talk to your followers. Just like on Twitter or Facebook, you can post general updates about what you're doing and share links to interesting information. To do this, click on "General update" on the left side of the homepage.
- Write a blog or import your existing blog. Authors are the only members of Goodreads who can have blogs, and author blogs are a great place to start a conversation. If you already have a blog outside of Goodreads, maximize the time you are spending on that by setting it up to import to Goodreads for your fans there.
- Join a group around a topic or genre related to your book. Groups are a great place to meet readers or other authors who share your passions.

2. Amazon Author Central (<https://authorcentral.amazon.com>)

An Author Page on Amazon is where readers can learn about you, which is an effective way to introduce them to — or better educate them about — your books. It displays information like bibliographies, biographies, author photos, and can even include feeds to your blog posts.

You can't join the Author Central program until your book is live on Amazon, but once it is:

1. Visit <https://authorcentral.amazon.com> and click Join Now
2. Follow the instructions for joining the program (also summarized here: <https://authorcentral.amazon.com/gp/help?topicID=200620850>)

Author Central offers much of the same functionality as Goodreads, though it's more of a public profile than a social network per-se. Importantly, however, participation in the program provides the following benefits:

1. **More information.** By using Author Central, authors are able to manage not only what buyers see about them in their biographies, but also what buyers see on their book pages (including book synopses, Search Inside, and other features).
2. **Improved appearance in search results.** Author Central also improves the likelihood that an author's books will be discovered by the search algorithm. The more active one is on one's Amazon page, the greater the likelihood that the books will appear in keyword searches.
3. **Sales tracking.** Authors are able to identify where their book is selling well.
4. **Personal connection.** With the features of Author Central, including options for reader feedback and author-initiated discussions, authors are able to extend a personal touch to their readers, and that connection is good for ongoing sales.

Participating in Goodreads and Author Central require time and commitment, and for that reason, it's not for every author. We do, however, recommend active participation if your long-term goal is to build an author platform, grow a following of engaged readers, and ultimately write and publish additional books over time.

When to execute this

Activity	Timing
E.1 - Outreach to website and blog owners about guest posting	Once initial bank of blog posts has been created, on-going
E.2 - Outreach to podcast and vlog hosts - with Book Launch pitch	4-8 weeks before campaign week - where possible, target episodes that launch in Weeks 1-4 (i.e. campaign week and the 3 weeks following it)



E.3 - Outreach to podcast and vlog hosts – with Expert pitch	From Week 2 (week after campaign ends) onwards and on-going
E.4 - Setup author profiles on Goodreads and Amazon Author Central (optional)	As soon as book listing is live on Amazon.com
E.5 - Actively post and engage with readers on Goodreads and Amazon Author Central (optional)	Weekly and ongoing

FINAL THOUGHTS

Truthfully, book promotion can easily take an author down a deep rabbit hole. For professional authors, whose primary focus is writing and selling books, it's a hole worth diving deep into. For entrepreneurs, whose primary goals are to build their authority and grow their business however, our strong recommendation is to spend a bit of time around the launch of your book to get the foundations right, then focus on integrating your book into your broader business activities.

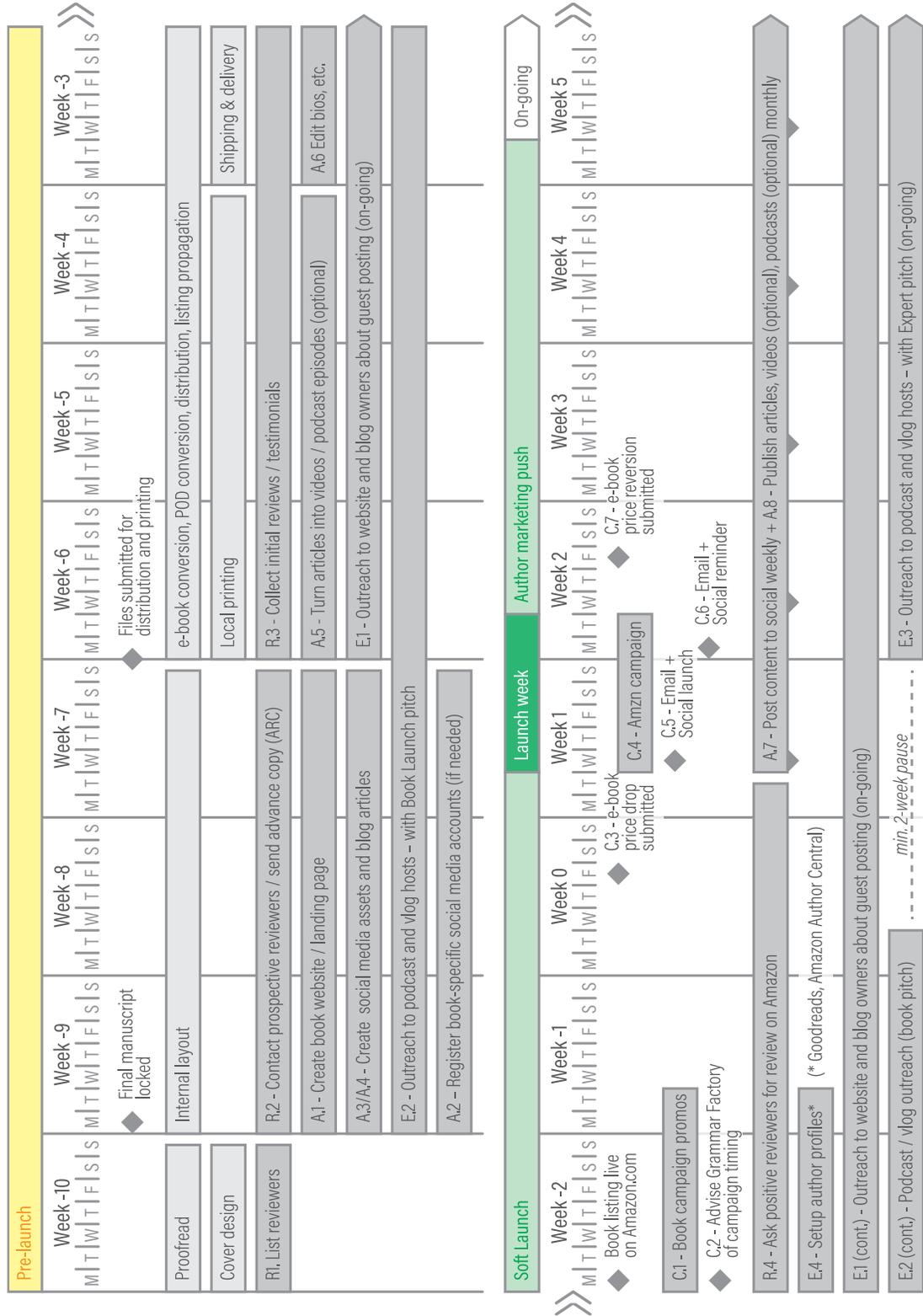
If there are additional promotional tactics that you've heard about and are curious if they're worth exploring, we encourage you to reach out. We're more than happy to share our perspective, give tips and advice, and direct you to further resources you might find helpful.

Finally, know that we're also on the look-out for opportunities to promote you, your book, and your business. Each year, we submit books we've published to book awards. We also keep abreast of changes and new opportunities for marketing and distribution and share those with our authors whenever relevant.

We're here to support you, not just during the publishing process, but as you continue your entrepreneur to author journey. This is, after all, just the beginning.



APPENDIX A: RECOMMENDED TIMELINE



Activity List and Recommended Timing

Activity	Timing
R.1 - Create list of prospective reviewers	Any time
R.2 - Contact prospective reviewers / send advance copy (ARC)	Once manuscript locked
R.3 - Collect initial reviews / testimonials	2-3 weeks after ARC sent
R.4 - Ask for Amazon.com review	As soon as Amazon listing is live
A.1 - Create book website / landing page	Once cover finalized
A.2 - Register book-specific social media accounts (if needed)	While building website
A.3 - Create 52 weeks of social media posts	Once manuscript locked
A.4 - Create 12 months of blog articles	Once manuscript locked
A.5 - Turn articles into videos / podcast episodes (optional)	After blog articles are written
A.6 - Update social media and professional bios and email signature	Week before Amazon listing is live
A.7 - Post content to social media platforms	Daily through launch campaign, weekly and ongoing thereafter
A.8 - Publish articles, video (optional), to website, video to website and/or YouTube (optional), audio as podcast episode (optional)	Monthly and ongoing, starting the first day of launch campaign
C.1 - Book launch week paid media	3 weeks before Day 1 of campaign
C.2 - Advise Grammar Factory of campaign timing so we can coordinate promotional pricing	At least 2 weeks before Day 1 of campaign
C.3 - Grammar Factory submits \$0.99 e-book pricing	Friday before campaign Day 1
C.4 - Execute and track campaign	3 ½ weeks (or more) after listing goes live on Amazon, starting on a Wednesday with a 1-week duration
C.5 - Announce launch and promo pricing to your email list and social media followers	Day 1 of campaign (Wed)
C.6 - Send reminder of promo end to your email list and social media followers	Day 6 of campaign (Mon)
C.7 - Grammar Factory submits end to \$0.99 e-book pricing	Friday after end of campaign
E.1 - Outreach to website and blog owners about guest posting	Once initial bank of blog posts have been created, on-going
E.2 - Outreach to podcast and vlog hosts - with Book Launch pitch	4-8 weeks before campaign week - where possible, target episodes that launch in Weeks 1-4 (i.e. campaign week and the 3 weeks following it)
E.3 - Outreach to podcast and vlog hosts - with Expert pitch	From Week 2 (week after campaign ends) onwards and on-going
E.4 - Setup author profiles on Goodreads and Amazon Author Central (optional)	As soon as book listing is live on Amazon.com
E.5 - Actively post and engage with readers on Goodreads and Amazon Author Central (optional)	Weekly and ongoing



APPENDIX B: REVIEWER OUTREACH TEMPLATES

For direct emails

Subject: Feedback on my book?

Hi [NAME],

I hope you're well!

On [date], my book [Book title: Book subtitle] will be published. It teaches [brief description of your ideal reader] how to [brief description of your book's promise to its reader]. I'm reaching out because I'd love to send you a complimentary copy.

Given [brief reason why you've chosen to reach out to this person] I think you'll find it relevant and for my part, I'd really value your feedback on the book and its content. If you're able and willing, I'll send you an electronic advance reader copy (ARC) to review and will also send you a signed copy of the book once it's published.

Caveat – I'm on a very tight publishing deadline, so I'd need your feedback within [timeframe] weeks (i.e., by [DATE]). Because of this, please don't feel you need to agree to help if you aren't able to read a [approx. book word count]-word book in the next [timeframe] weeks.

Thanks so much for considering it,

[YOUR NAME]

For general posts in relevant groups and online communities

Subject: I'm looking for volunteers!

My book [Book title: Book subtitle] teaches [brief description of your ideal reader] how to [brief description of your book's promise to its reader]. It will be published on [date] and I'm looking for volunteers to test it out and give me feedback.

What's in it for you – if you've been struggling with [problem(s) your book helps your reader address], this book will teach you how to [how your book will tangibly help]. You'll also get a signed copy of the book once it's published.

Caveat – I'm on a very tight publishing deadline, so I'd need your feedback in the next [timeframe] weeks (i.e., by [DATE]). Because of this, please don't volunteer unless you can read a [approx. book word count]-word book in the next [timeframe] weeks.

Thanks in advance!



APPENDIX C: GUEST POST OUTREACH TEMPLATE

Subject: PITCH: Guest Post about [TOPIC]

Hi [NAME – be sure to find the blogger/owner’s name and address the email to them personally],

My name is [YOUR_NAME]. I’m the author of [book name] and [other brief reason(s) why you’re qualified to write on topics of interest to the site’s audience].

I’ve read and enjoyed your content on [name/URL of site] and am wondering if you accept guest post articles. Based on what I’ve read on your site and your audience, a few topics that I think would be appropriate are:

- [suggest a topic by drafting an example article headline]
- [suggest a topic by drafting an example article headline]
- [suggest a topic by drafting an example article headline]

Of course, I’d be happy to consider other related topics if you have some alternatives in mind.

Here are some examples of other articles I’ve written to give you a sense of my writing style and tone:

- [link to previous article – ideally on another 3rd party site, otherwise on your own]
- [link to previous article – ideally on another 3rd party site, otherwise on your own]
- [link to previous article – ideally on another 3rd party site, otherwise on your own]

Please let me know if this is something we might collaborate on, and if you have submission guidelines, please pass them along as well.

All the best,

[YOUR NAME]



APPENDIX D: PODCAST / VLOG OUTREACH TEMPLATE

Subject: PITCH: Podcast guest on [TOPIC]

Hi [NAME],

I'm [a big fan of / an avid listener of / incredibly impressed by] [PODCAST NAME], especially the recent episode (episode [#]) on [TOPIC].

I'm a [brief description of you] who teaches [target client] how to [outcome(s) you specialize in] and I'd love to teach your audience about any of the following topics:

- Topic #1 – short description and benefits to the audience of learning about it
- Topic #2 – short description and benefits to the audience of learning about it
- Topic #3 – short description and benefits to the audience of learning about it

Do these sound like topics that your audience would be interested to learn about?

A quick reply is fine to let me know which topic resonates best. You can also let me know if I should work directly with you or with a scheduling assistant on solidifying the details.

Many thanks,

[YOUR NAME]



APPENDIX E: ARTICLE AUTHOR BIO BOILERPLATE

You can adapt this boilerplate as needed, but keep in mind the following suggestions:

- Keep it short and sweet (ideally under 75 words)
- Write it in the third person
- Brag (a little) – explain what you do and why you're worth listening to
- Include a call-to-action (typically how/where to contact you) at the end
- Include a professional headshot (square aspect ratio)
- Customize for the specific outlet you're submitting to

Boilerplate

HEADSHOT PHOTO	<p>[YOUR NAME] is a [x], [y], and author of [book main title]. [He/she] is [position] at [business – with hyper-link] where [he/she] helps [your ideal customer] to [key benefit of working with you]. [He/she] also [additional details if desired]. You can reach [FIRST NAME] on [platform – with link to your profile] or [platform – with link to your profile].</p>
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Examples

As you can see from the examples below, you need not stick rigidly to the above script, but it does provide a good template if you're stuck on how to craft yours.



Danny Wong is an entrepreneur, marketer and writer. As [Conversio's](#) resident Tale Spinner, he authors in-depth guides that teach Ecommerce store owners ways to manage, grow and scale their business.

In a former life, Danny co-founded Blank Label, a custom menswear company, which generates 7-figures in annual revenue through its website and retail locations in Boston, Chicago and D.C.



Andy Crestodina

Strategic Director of Orbit Media

Andy Crestodina is the Strategic Director of Orbit Media. He's also the author of *Content Chemistry: An Illustrated Guide to Content Marketing*. You can find Andy on LinkedIn and Twitter.



About Mark John Hiemstra

Mark John Hiemstra is a content marketer who formerly worked out of Unbounce's Montreal office. A writer by day and a reader by night, he is loathe to discuss himself in the third person, but can be persuaded to do so from time to time. Find him on Twitter here:

[@markjohnh](#)

» [More blog posts by Mark John Hiemstra](#)



APPENDIX F: RESOURCES

Disclaimer: We've used some, but not all of these resources and therefore this list should not be considered a recommendation regarding the quality of services offered. We do not earn affiliate payments from any of these services at this time.

Book marketing and publicity agencies

- NGNG Enterprises (<https://ngngenterprises.com>)
- QuikMark Media (<https://www.quikmarkmedia.com.au>)
- Smith Publicity (<https://www.smithpublicity.com>)
- MindBuck Media (<http://www.mindbuckmedia.com>)

Podcast booking agencies

- The Expert Bookers (<https://www.expertbookers.com>)
- The Talent Squad (<http://thetalentsquad.com>)
- Podcast Guests (<https://podcastguests.com>)

Social media automation tools

- Meet Edgar (<https://meet Edgar.com>) – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
- HootSuite (<https://hootsuite.com>) – Twitter, FB, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube
- Buffer (<https://buffer.com>) – Twitter, FB, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest
- Sprout Social (<https://sproutsocial.com>) – Twitter, FB, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, FM Messenger
- Sked Social (<https://skedsocial.com>) – Instagram focused
- Later (<https://later.com>) – Instagram focused

Email marketing platforms

- Mailchimp (<https://mailchimp.com>)
- ActiveCampaign (<https://www.activecampaign.com>)
- HubSpot Marketing Hub (<https://www.hubspot.com/products/marketing>)
- Keap (formerly Infusionsoft) (<https://keap.com>)
- AWeber (<https://www.aweber.com>)
- ConvertKit (<https://convertkit.com>)



APPENDIX F: CAMPAIGN PROMO BOOKING SHEET

Author name

Title

Subtitle

Title: Subtitle

Your email address

Author website / email signup page

Regular price

Promo price

Promotional dates

 to

Major promotional push date

Listing / links

ASIN:

Amazon.com:

Amazon.ca:

Amazon.co.uk:

Amazon.com.au:

Book category/genre

Book sub-categories/sub-genres

Book length (in pages)



Book synopsis (full)



Book blurb (<900 characters)

Short blurb (<300 characters)

Author bio (<100 words)



Booking checklist

Status	Media channel	Rate	Start	End	Notes
	Books Butterfly				
	Book Goodies				
	eReader News Today				
	eBook Booster				
	Bknights				
	Bargain Booksy (Written Word Media)				
	The Fussy Librarian				
	Book Sends				
	E-Book Soda				
	Reading Deals				
	Discount Book Man				
	My Book Place (Liz Fogg Consulting)				
	Kindle Nation Daily				

