

Book Marketing Timeline:

An Interactive worksheet for Authors

Marketing a book is a complex part of the overall publishing process and takes proper planning. With so much information to digest and so many strategies available, it's best to give yourself plenty of time to set these strategies in motion.

No matter where you are in your book marketing journey, you're sure to find helpful tips to apply to your strategy. In this worksheet, we're going to walk through seven different phases of the book marketing timeline—and marketing activities you can do during each one!

7 Phases of the Book Marketing Timeline

1. Before You Begin Writing
2. As You Begin Writing
3. While You're Writing (3-6 Months)
4. While Your Book is Being Edited (1-2 Months)
5. Two Weeks Before Release
6. Release Date
7. Post Release

Let's Get Started!

Before You Begin Writing

Before you create a marketing plan, it's a good idea to think through these questions as they will affect your overall book marketing strategy.

- Who is your target audience? _____

- What are your goals? _____

- How many books do you want to sell? (You can break this down into pre-release, first month, first quarter, first year) _____
- What is your marketing budget? _____

As You Begin Writing

Build Your Author Brand

Create a unique author brand and display it across all social platforms, websites, and collateral material. A brand might be a logo, your name, or series name, and include specific colors, font styles, or wording. It might represent the message of your book.

Be creative and brainstorm 3-5 words that define your brand:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Craft Your Book Metadata

Write your author bio.

Research and list [3 BISAC Subject Codes](#) that your book could potentially fit into:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Build Your Author Website

Consider what you'd include on your five-page author website:

- About the Author
- About the Book
- Blog
- Contact
- Homepage

You can add pages as time goes on, but this is all you need to get started.

Create Your Social Media Strategy

Begin formulating your social media strategy by using the platforms you feel would be best for reaching your target audience. Create a mix of memes, posts, tweets, articles, and other content relevant to your book's message. 20% of the content should be promoting your book and 80% of the content should be interesting to your followers (not directly promoting your book).

Choose 2-3 social media platforms

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Brainstorm content your reader would be interest in:

While You're Writing (3-6 Months)

Create a Media Kit

Create a media kit including information about the book and your background, your professional author photo, and any publicity surrounding the project. Add this to your website on the 'About You' page.

Brainstorm content your reader would be interest in:

Research Book Reviewers

There is a growing list of reviewers, bloggers, and companies who accept advance digital copies. Think about any influencers you might know who would read and review your book and make a list of book review companies and their requirements.

Influencers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Book Review Companies

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

While Your book is Being Edited (1-2 Months)

Start Creating Promotional Material

Create video content to promote on social media, your website, and/or your YouTube channel. Design and print any collateral material such as bookmarks or sell sheets.

Consider authors you admire. How were their books promoted? What did the author's website and social media look like? Did they do anything creative to promote it that stuck out to you?

Find three examples of creative promotional material to inspire your marketing efforts.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Create a Review Strategy

Professional book reviews matter, but so do reviews from everyday readers! From friends and family to social media followers and email subscribers, there are several ways to ask for reviews.

Step 1: Set a Goal

How many reviews would you like one week after release?

Step 2: Make a Plan

Create an email template, a social media post, or a text asking for honest reviews. Consider adding an incentive such as free exclusive content for the first 25 people to leave a review

Two Weeks Before Release

Check Your Book Metadata

Make sure that your metadata is showing up correctly on retail websites.

Enhance Your Presence in Online Book Communities

Create an Author Central account on Amazon and populate it with information about you and your book.

- Author Bio
- Author Photo
- Biography
- Import Your Blog
- Upload Videos
- List Events

Release Date

This period is about keeping the momentum moving.

- Update social media and your website about the book release.
- Follow up on any promotions and giveaways to make sure they are launching.
- Watch your ranking and book numbers on Amazon. If you hit bestseller status make sure you take a screenshot of your book page with the icon Amazon adds to promote on social media.

Keep stroking the marketing fire!

Post Release

Follow up with each strategy on this timeline to make sure that you have completed all the tasks. This isn't an exhaustive list of ideas, but it's a great place for indie authors to start!

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