
Bright Communications Marketing Plan

The Goals

The goals of this marketing plan are to help you reach your target audience and readers, sell more books, and help readers learn more through your writing!

The Plan

This marketing plan is designed to dovetail with your book's creation and publishing—so when your book launches, you have already laid a strong foundation for promoting your book!

This program is timed to coalesce with our publishing process—so while your book is off of your desk, being edited and designed by our team, you have time to focus on each marketing step!

For every one of the six steps in this marketing plan, we'll explain:

- When you should do it
- Why you should do it
- How you should do it

Here are the six steps, which we'll discuss in more detail next.

- Step 1: Social Media: Do this while your book is being edited.
- Step 2: Develop Your Presentation: Do this while your book is being designed.
- Step 3: Create Your Contacts List: Do this while your book is in final corrections.
- Step 4: Work with the Bright Communications Launch Team: Do this while your book uploads.
- Step 5: Request Reviews: Do this after your book releases on Amazon.
- Step 6: Ongoing Promotion!

Step 1: Social Media

When you should do this

Do this while your book is being edited.

Why you should do this

Social media is free. It's easy. It's where most people tend to be. And it's probably where you already are! In fact, readers almost expect you to have a social media presence. It's an easy way to create a brand for yourself and your book at no cost.

How you should do this

- Although you might already have social media platforms, it might be best to choose one (or two) to focus on. You're most likely already on Facebook and LinkedIn, and while those websites are great for networking, try opening up an Instagram and/or TikTok account. Many of the best-selling books within the last 2-3 years took off by going viral on social media. Now, while it seems like every single person is posting their book online and trying to get the attention of the masses, it doesn't matter because *you* haven't posted yours yet! Always take a leap of faith and put yourself out there in the online world, you never know who will come across your post.
- Decide if you want to use your own personal social media account or if you want to create a new one for your book or business—or both. A benefit to using your own personal social media account is that you probably already have connections there. However, you don't want to exhaust your friends and family by talking about your book all the time. Consider opening a business Facebook page dedicated to your professional life and products. (Facebook doesn't allow the use of personal pages for business.) Having a business page also gives fans the opportunity to post testimonials, opinions, and questions.
 - i. One very important fact: You must have a personal page before creating a business/author page.
 - ii. You will need to create this business page through your personal one. (From the Pages section, click Create New Page.) You will then be asked to choose the Community or Public Figure option. Through that choose Author.
 - iii. Another reason to open a business FB page: For personal pages, there's a limit of 5,000 friends. Lastly, the business page has more abilities/options than the personal one to sell and promote products.

- Develop a posting schedule that works for you. For example, you might post once a day, once every other day, or once a week.
- Search for and friend authors and readers of your book's genre. Also search for and join groups and organizations of your book's theme or purpose.
- Follow FB leaders in the industry. This keeps you connected within the community. And through this, become part of the conversation by liking and commenting on other people's posts.
- Start small. Begin posting about your author journey. Why did you decide to write a book? How did you write it? When will it be released? Bring people along on the adventure. Gradually create a media story that allows for deeper roots to grow your book, author message, and branding. This is all about creating your brand. How do you want to illustrate that to others?
- As your book is created, share sneak peeks and previews of the book and cover. *Don't overdo it, or you can turn off your fans.* The goal is to motivate people to share your posts and *spread word of mouth.*
- Consider asking your audience for their opinions on things, such as the cover or a character's name. Ask people for their thoughts. Readers love to offer their opinions!
- Later, you can add valuable coverage, such as reviews, media listings or mentions, a chapter sample, or an author interview.
- Show a behind-the-scenes look at your "work" environment, such as where you write, what kinds of books you read, and places you go for inspiration.
- Conduct a Q&A
- Encourage sharing, whether it be a post, video, your website link, etc.
- Always take advantage of hashtags, no matter the platform. Some examples: #amwriting, #authorlife, #bookstagram, #writercommunity, #booktok, etc.

Instagram

- Use Instagram [Video Feature for Marketers](#). Video posts generate more user engagement than photos.
 - i. Posting on Instagram is all about consistency! It's imperative to post around the same times each day with only 1-3 hashtags. If you're constantly posting using tons of hashtags, Instagram will hide your posts,

and you won't get as many views as you'd like. The Instagram algorithm is finicky, try to set up a posting schedule to follow.

- Reach out to relevant categories like "Bookstagrammers."

TikTok aka BookTok

- TikTok has transformed the ways in which book-related content is shared. Short-form content is the way to go nowadays.
- There are many ways to post on TikTok, it doesn't just have to be you in front of the camera talking about your book. Create a TikTok that showcases the imagery of your book with music that aligns with the mood, so viewers can understand the feel of your writing. Or, go through one specific scene in your book, one that you know will pull in and intrigue viewers. You can also do a 'favorite quotes' video, showing your favorite lines from your book. There are *so many ways* to advertise your work, get creative!
- It's also possible to partner with booktok influencers. If you have the necessary funds, you can hire an influencer to promote your book.

~~Hashtags are vital when it comes to platforms such as TikTok.~~

- Here are a few BookTokers to get you acclimated to the platform:

- i. [@edensarchives](#)
- ii. [@vinopapi23](#)
- iii. [@heaths.bookclub](#)
- iv. [@newlynova](#)
- v. [@bookish.hb](#)
- vi. [@kateslibrary](#)
- vii. [@lauralovesreading](#)
- viii. [@scottreads](#)
- ix. [@alannagraceauthor](#)
- x. [@vestcody](#)

Besides you posting on your own account, others can repost your videos, and even make their own videos talking about your work. Anything can happen online, the possibilities of gaining attention are endless!

YouTube aka BookTube

Consider creating a channel and posting videos about your writing process, your book, and your promotions. This is where they can get to know *you*. TikTok is for shortform content, YouTube is for longform.

- Create a “getting to know me” video, a short and sweet video that helps you get acclimated to the platform. Down the line, you can have Q&A videos as well; this will create a greater bond with your audience.
- Video ideas: Show a behind-the-scenes look at your life as a writer, your writing space, what inspires you to write, and where you get your ideas.
- Film and post a mix of both shorts and “regular” videos. Shorts are only 1-3 minutes, watched vertically, while regular videos are longer and watched horizontally. Shorts can only capture so much, which urges the creator to stick with trends and create punchy plots, while regular videos typically vary in topics and trends.
 - i. You can use your TikToks and upload them onto YouTube Shorts as well, expanding your work.
- Here are some examples of BookTubers:
 - i. [KidTime StoryTime](#)
 - ii. [Jesse the Reader](#)
 - iii. [Haley Pham](#)
 - iv. [Jack Edwards](#)
 - v. [Rachel Catherine](#)
 - vi. [The Book Leo](#)
 - vii. [The Traveling Publisher](#): This is my channel, and I always love to feature my authors on it. Please feel free to schedule a launch interview. Plus, I like to interview authors when they have questions or situations so that their interview content may help other authors.
- A final note on BookTube: There are many kinds of book videos, including a roundup, those tagged with a certain theme (like yours), reviews, unboxings, and a wrap-up. This [link](#) provides a great explanation of those types of videos, if you’d like additional information.

LinkedIn

If you haven’t done so already, create a LinkedIn professional page to connect with other authors and professionals in the writing world, as well as organizations and groups related to your writing topics and genres.

- When writing in the About section of your profile, be detailed. Show others your skills and experience, alluding to the person you are. You can even provide contact information for media inquiries regarding your brand.

- Have a professional-looking headshot for your profile photo. It's your first impression.
- Be sure to add your book to your profile.
- For more tips, visit <https://authornews.penguinrandomhouse.com/maximizing-your-author-presence-on-linkedin/>

Step 2: Develop a Presentation

When you should do this

Do this while your book is being designed.

Why you should do this

Old-fashioned book signings aren't as popular as they used to be. Stores don't want to do them, and few people stop by. They can be very uncomfortable, boring, and discouraging for authors.

Instead, create a presentation that offers value and draws people into stores or libraries. If you pitch that idea, stores and libraries will want to host you. You are giving them something of value to promote. Invariably, this is one of the most important steps.

People will want to spend their time with you—and once they meet you and learn about you, they will want to buy your book. It is about creating a quality atmosphere, not only in your book, but in reality.

How you should do this

- Create several presentations that you can give to stores, libraries, and organizations. Make sure to have options, don't just use the same presentation for each place. Think of it like tailoring your resume. You don't submit the exact same resume for every role, you edit it a bit so it fits what you're applying to, highlighting your skills that match the position. For this, create presentations that are tailored for the location you want to present at.
- People want to know what's in it for *them*, so offer them value. What will coming to your presentation do for their life? What will they learn, get, or do? It shouldn't share your whole book, but it should be tangentially related to your book. For instance, an author whose memoir is about making it through a challenging time wouldn't talk about her story, rather she would talk about how *you* can lean on your faith to get through *your* challenge. Focus on the core purpose of *why* you wrote your book, and its value.

Step 3: Create Your Contacts List

When you should do this

Do this while your book is in final corrections and uploading.

Why you should do this

Once your book is out, you will want to tell all of your family, friends, and fans about it. But at that point, it's too late to try to gather all of their contact information together.

Plus, your network is wider than you think! It takes time to create this list.

How you should do this

- Create a note on your phone, get a notebook, or create a document or spreadsheet on your computer. Write down everyone you can think of, especially their email addresses. This is everyone who you think might have an interest in reading, buying, selling, and promoting your book. Include family, friends, colleagues, schoolmates, neighbors, media, stores, and organizations—literally anyone.
- Then Google contacts near and far, such as bookstores, organizations, and libraries.
- You can email this list of email addresses to Bright Communications, and once your book is out, we will send them the blast about your book.
- The most important detail here is the email addresses; this is how we will reach others, so make sure not to forget!

For a spreadsheet, it can look something like this:

Name	Email	Phone	Social Media	Extra Notes
John Smith	johnsmith@gmail.com	123-456-7890	@jsmith on IG and TikTok	Met at Barnes and Noble.

Step 4: Work with the Bright Communications Launch Team

When you should do this

Do this while your book uploads.

Why you should do this

This comes with your publishing package!

How you should do this

As your book is coming together, members of the Bright Communications Launch team will work to help your book launch.

- Our Amazon Review Director will begin checking your Amazon page weekly for reviews. She will mark them as helpful and email them to you. This saves you from having to check. Plus, this activity feeds the algorithm.
- Our Accounts Director will order a copy of your book to print and ship to you, to me, and to the Library of Congress.
- Our Communications Director will create an eBlast about your book, send it to you to review, then email it to our lists of dozens of local:
 - Stores
 - Websites
 - Media
 - Libraries
 - Team
 - Partners

As she receives interest, she will forward it to you.

- Our Website Developer will add your book to our:
 - Catalog
 - Website
- Our Promo Products Director will create your book's:
 - Bookmark: Designed to print commercially, such as Vistaprint
 - Flyer: Designed to print at home
 - Review request insert: Designed to print at home

We hope you will share these materials far and wide!

Step 5: Request Reviews

When you should do this

Do this after your book releases on Amazon.

Why you should do this

Everyone buys based on reviews. The algorithms reward books that have more reviews. Book reviews and media coverage are important because they're evidence that people have read and have liked your book. It matters to them and plays a part in their purchasing decisions.

How you should do this

- Remind people that you don't have to buy a book on Amazon to review it there!
- Include a review request insert with books you gift or sell personally. (We create and send that to you during Step 4.)
- Ask friends and family to review your book.
- If you know other authors, consider asking them to do a review swap with you.
- If you have a personal Facebook page, ask your family and friends to post pictures of themselves reading your book with a link to your website or its Amazon page.

Amazon

Amazon is a *critical* component to achieving success in overall book sales. Something to note: Many Amazon visitors use the site simply as a catalog and buy the books elsewhere. It is often used as a search engine for books.

- i. Register as an author on Amazon Author Central. Include your bio or a part of it. Access their Author Guidelines for how to best promote on their site.
- ii. Try to get fans to post additional reviews and testimonials. Getting starred reviews by verified purchasers within the first week of your on-sale date will make a huge difference in the long run.
- iii. Use [Amazon Advertising Services](#) to execute "keyword" and "targeting" advertising promotions, which match ads with potential customers based on their interests, search history, and experience. Use their "conversion" goal to drive sales for your product from consideration to purchase.
- iv. [KDP Select](#) This is a 90-day exclusivity agreement to sell your eBook (not paper) on Amazon, and it gives you promotional opportunities not available to authors not enlisted, such as countdown deals, free promotions, entry in their lending library, and increased royalties in some instances.

- v. Use [BookSirens](#) to help get reviews to use for Amazon.

Industry/Trade Publication Reviews

[School Library Journal](#): This journal includes articles on timely topics of interest to school library media specialists, and reviews thousands of new books for children and teenagers annually. Free review if the submission is chosen.

[The Children's Book Review](#): The Children's Book Review (TCBR) reviews fiction and non-fiction literature for children and young adults. From \$20 for editorial reviews to \$289+ for dedicated reviews.

[Booklist](#): The review journal of the American Library Association has a well-organized, easy-to-use online version that includes a generous selection of current reviews, selected feature articles, and a web-only cumulative index to the printed version of the magazine. The print version reviews thousands of new titles for children, young adults, and adults annually, and includes special focus features. Free reviews if submission is chosen.

[Kirkus Reviews](#): Kirkus Reviews publishes nearly 5,000 book reviews every year, including adult, young adult, and children's titles. Their website requires a subscription for full online access to reviews, but browsers can see what was reviewed in the most recent issue and read the start of each review. Varies from \$399 to \$599.

[Booklife](#): by Publishers Weekly: The "Booklife" is the section of Publishers Weekly dedicated to self-published authors; *however, it's \$399*.

[Readers' Favorite](#): Not a review outlet but they do provide reviews for free, so this is a good place to start to get the ball rolling.

[BlueInk Review](#): Only reviews independently published books. Packages range from \$445 to \$799.

Goodreads

- Register as an author on Goodreads. Include your author bio and other platforms (i.e., Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn).
- Join and participate in Goodreads groups relevant to your category.
- Make sure your book's metadata (such as title, author, and date created) is correct, accurate, and up to date. This is because Goodreads sends an email to people who click Want to Read, and they will send an email on the release date. If your book isn't available at that time, it loses possible sales.

- Make sure to add any teasers, links, and reviews to your review section.
- There are different ways you can get into all of your followers' newsfeeds.
 - i. Anytime someone writes or comments on a review, it will then show up in their newsfeed and remain there.
 - ii. Comment "thank you" on 5-star reviews
 - iii. "Share" your own book
 - iv. Provide your own reading/status updates
 - v. Support your own author friends, you will show up on their feeds.
- Never comment on bad reviews. Goodreads is a way for readers to simply be honest, engaging with bad reviews only gives the negativity more power.
- Promotional Emails:
 - i. Event invites - when you create an event and invite friends, it will send them an email
 - ii. Release of book - Your followers or those who have signed up will receive a "this book is live" email

Important tip: *Always* carry your book! It's a simple thing to do because you never know who you will run into—who might be from the press, in publishing, in radio—who can help you further your book and/or career. Have your book with you to start a conversation and leave it with them, if need be.

Step 6: Ongoing Promotion

Here are some optional ideas to do any time after your book is out!

Media Interviews, Local Book Tour

Why it's important: It's free publicity!

- Reach out to podcasts, newspapers, and websites and pitch yourself to be an interview guest. Be sure to explain what you have to offer to their fans. How will your interview improve their lives?
- Contact your local radio station for an interview or profile. The local angle is always interesting to them. Even better if you can honestly say you listen to their show/station.
- Also, consider places within a reasonable driving distance or places you will be visiting. If you email Bright Communications a list of the dates and locations six+ weeks out, we will help you develop a list of stores and libraries and pitch you to them!
- When it comes to a local book tour, it's all about the price. What can you do to make it as inexpensive as possible while creating as big a fanbase as possible?

Collaborations

Consider contacting other people to collaborate. This could be with a specific creator/author or podcaster, which will allow you to interest readers throughout and even after your launch period. Even YouTube is a great place to collaborate with others. You can film videos, and each publish them on your respective channels.

Follow this fairly simple process to plan.

1. Identify which creators/authors/podcasters you'd like to contact.
2. Compile a list of contact info and when/if you contacted them, so you can keep track.
3. Select dates around your launch time or within one month.
4. Create a short pitch or even use the presentations you created prior.
5. Share your tour schedule, which would be around two or three weeks, on all of your social media and your website.
6. Make sure your book is available for purchase and share the links to buy it.
7. Share videos of the events on your website and/or social media.

Testimonials, Reviews, and Further Promotion

Reach out to special interest groups and related organizations with a cover letter (adapt to reflect promotional/endorsement instead of "review") and a finished book (you can also try digitally with the front and back cover of your book if that is more economical).

Reasons to request a testimonial: to further promote yourself...

- A testimonial or endorsement can be included on the back cover, front cover starburst, or in advertising or blurb copy.
- Inclusion in their mailings with a promotional item such as a bookmark or doorknob hanger as a leave-behind in their place of business, their convention, their offices, or on their website (printout).
- If they have a newsletter or online blog, or article section, ask to have the book featured, or for an interview with you.
- Inclusion as a resource on their website for parents and teachers. Sample spread with a link to purchase.
- Consider discussing a special sales opportunity with them for bulk buys (for instance, as a giveaway at a conference or convention).
 - Include an organization's name such as one of the aforementioned special interest groups and organizations in your book content or visibly on your back or front cover (or inside front page), then get the company to buy a large quantity of your books and use them as a promotional tool and additional advertising at conferences, conventions, or mailings.

Reminder: In Step 4, we'll send your print-at-home review request insert that you can print and put in books you sell or gift personally.

School and Library Marketing

Schools and libraries are vital to spreading word of mouth, especially for children's books. Consider doing the following to maximize your relationship with them.

- Librarians are powerful referrers and can help build exposure for your book. Many avid readers find out about new authors by simply looking at the seasonal and promotional book displays in the library.
- For public and private libraries: Meet with your local librarian and give them a copy of your book. Offer to do a book reading or some other special event at their library, such as a Meet the Author night.
- For school and library author visits: Start by arranging visits to your local schools through the librarian. You'd be surprised at how much momentum you can build simply by starting on the local level; they typically like to support a neighborhood writer.

- For schools, approach it like you're a teacher. Teach a class that falls in line with what you wrote. If you wrote a fiction novel, speak with English classes. If you wrote something science related, speak with science classes, etc. Next, create a lesson plan that falls in line with your book, make it an opportunity to not only inform about your book, but actually teach the students something about writing or the field you work in. Don't just make it a way to advertise yourself, really try to teach something to the students!
 - If you are visiting a school, they will ask if you have clearances and may require paperwork to be completed, or have special requirements, such as leaving your ID at the main office and being accompanied by a security guard.
- For the visit, make sure to drive sales in addition to the reading and Q&A. Pre-orders allow for your book sales to run smoothly. Provide a book pre-order form to the librarian or teacher that may be sent home with the students in their backpacks the week before your visit. Take time to personalize the form for each school. It can be a simple document with name, price, quantity, book image, and contact info, something like this can be made on Canva. Don't forget to ask for the name of the recipient for your autograph.
 - *Virtual Visits:* If in-person visits are not an option, approach schools and libraries about a virtual author visit and discussion. A successful virtual visit can be accomplished by:
 - i. Partnering with independent booksellers for book sales
 - ii. Using Zoom or Google Meet for interactive discussions
- School and library literary conferences: Present yourself to teachers and librarians at local and national [library conferences](#) by becoming a speaker. While at these events, share a booth with other local authors and be available for networking, questions, and feedback.
- Social media is another great way to reach out to teachers and librarians remotely.

Connect Locally

- *Contact your local bookstore or other local venue about having a book launch party.* It's really a celebration with friends, family, colleagues, and people who have "been there for you" through this process to come together and buy your book. If you choose to have a book launch party, consider having it somewhere meaningful to you or your book. Make sure the media is aware of your event.

- No in-person events? You can have a “virtual launch party.” Ask your local bookstore to email a flyer to their mailing list.
- *Go to your local town meeting or contact local organizations.* See what local events you can participate in, including fairs, picnics, festivals, or book gatherings.
- *Speak at local children’s groups or events.* Consider book clubs, summer camps, and storytimes. Decide if you are going to sell the books yourself—if so, get an app for your phone so you can take credit cards, or ask your local bookstore to do an off-site event with you.

Optional Advertising (Some Paid)

Giveaways

- Print giveaway bookmarks or doorknob hangers with your photo, book cover, and addresses to your website and social media profile pages. Leave at the library counters or local venues like coffee shops and independent bookstores. Have a supportive local retailer put them in takeaway bags. Printers like Vistaprint are easy and inexpensive, and you can self-design them on your computer (Canva is easy to use).

Website

- Create an author/book website if you don't already have one. Keep it short! And make it as evergreen as possible, so you are not constantly updating it. It could be only one page with your book info, bio, and Amazon link! Or those could be three separate pages.

Paid Advertising

Instagram

- Run an Instagram advertising campaign including “automated targeting,” “behaviors,” and “interests.” [Instagram Advertising](#)
(only available on professional accounts)

Facebook Advertising

Facebook ads can be powerful if you know when to use them. Here are the best times to use Facebook ads:

- Book launches
- Promotions, such as if you are doing a KDP promotion, Countdown Days, or Freebie Days
- Boost your posts: can help you reach new people by providing exposure, leading to increased interest and engagement. Boosted posts do have a fee, which varies

according to your budget and the duration for which you are advertising. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/lessons/boost-your-post>.

Book Promotion Platforms:

- Use book promotion services that cater to your audience; some do reviews, others offer features, discounted deals, etc.
 - Reedsy Discovery, paid reviews \$50
 - Online Book Club, review packages vary between \$148 to \$398
 - BookBub, prices vary depending on book genre and book price

Conclusion

The entire team at Bright Communications is very grateful for the opportunity to work with you! We are eager to support you in promoting and selling your book!