



# THE FAMED ATMOSPHERE PRESS BOOK PROMOTIONAL GUIDE

...EXCLUSIVE TO ATMOSPHERE PRESS  
AUTHORS



## ATMOSPHERE PRESS

Atmosphere is an author-friendly book publisher and author services provider, founded in 2015 by an author and PhD in Literature. They are the only publisher that puts Rewarding and Meaningful author experiences above all else.

# Book Promotional Guide

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## So, your book is published...now what?

Congratulations on your awesome book! Writing it, editing it, choosing a cover, proofreading it, going crazy over it...you've survived the behind-the-scenes labors that go into every bookmaking process, and you're now a part of a hallowed authorial tradition that includes greats from Ernest Hemingway to Virginia Woolf, from Rachel Carson to Stephen Hawking, from Walt Whitman to Maya Angelou, from Beverly Cleary to Dr. Seuss.

But now, the real work begins.

It would be nice if merely having a book out there in the world resulted in fame and glory, with roses thrown at your feet, but alas, it's not that easy. There are a lot of books out there, so people need help choosing your book instead of Shakespeare or *50 Shades of Grey* or, well, Netflix. So, while we at Atmosphere will do our best to make your book available to whoever wants it, wherever in the world, and will promote it on our site and social media and through our own marketing events and efforts, you as the author will be the primary driving force behind the success rate your book sees in terms of sales.

With this in mind, we've found one thing to be consistently true: authors who work just as hard to sell their book as they did to write their book...sell their book.

But we don't expect you to know everything to do, so that's why we've put together this document to help. It's broken into two parts:

- Part One is about Distribution, Printing, Retailers, and Royalties...in other words, all the nitty gritty industry stuff that you'll absolutely need to know to be a well-informed author. It's not all glamorous or fun, but Part One will show you the ropes and enable you to be prepared for whatever may come your way.
- Part Two is about Publicity, Sales, and Promotion Strategy...in other words, all the salesy stuff you need to consider if you actually want your book to make

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an impact with readers. Some of it you'll love and some you may find unbearable, but we want you to know what there is to know to make your book a success, however you choose to define that.

We recommend that you read Part One *now* because it's going to be the most important early in your book's journey. Part Two you'll want to come back to again and again over the course of your book's lifetime.

Tackle each and every step with vigor, and you'll soon find that even the parts of "marketing" that you think you hate, can actually be fun and rewarding. Because, honestly, there are few things better than hearing that a total stranger read your book, and loved it, and told his or her friend about it. So let's make that happen.

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## Part 1: Distribution, Printing, Retailers, & Royalties

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## Knowing the lay of the land

To help get your book into as many hands as possible, you'll need a deep, precise understanding of a few big things.

There are some details about the industry and pricing and retail that you should understand. It's not all exciting, but it'll help you grasp the marketplace better, and inform your strategy for getting your book into the world. First off, for any new book sold there are typically five elements grabbing a piece of that retail price: the retailer, the manufacturer/distributor, the publisher, the author, and the good old postal service. With Atmosphere, the author also gets the typical publisher's share, so you're already in a better-than-average position!

### *The book proceeds hierarchy*

Because of this pie getting divided, though, there's a profit hierarchy in terms of what the best routes are for getting your book into the world:

1. Hand-to-hand. Literally, selling your book from your hand to your reader's hand is ideal, as this way you completely avoid shipping and retail costs. If your book costs \$18 retail, and \$6 per copy to print, this means you'll net \$12 per copy sold. Not too shabby!
2. From your own website. This is next in line, as you still avoid retail costs, though now shipping is something you'll have to deal with. If your book costs \$18 retail, and \$6 per copy to print, and \$3 per copy to ship, this means you'll net \$9 per copy sold. Still pretty nice, and you can make quick headway like this.
3. Through a retailer such as Amazon or a bookstore. Both of these options are great for expedience, but because they get a large retailer discount (Amazon, for example, gets from 40% to 55% off your retail price), this leaves slim pickings for you in terms of profit. On that \$18 book, you may only come away with between \$2 and \$6 per copy, depending on the manufacturing/shipping cost of your book. Much less than the above options, so Amazon is only going to be a great route if you're selling a lot of books and racking up Amazon reviews, which will bring more traffic to your book



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through organic searches. You are, though, also able to go to your local bookstores and pitch your book to them. Many authors find success in selling their author copies directly to a bookstore near them.

Despite retailers being a bit bleak for per-book profit, many people will buy through retailers, even if you tell them you'd prefer otherwise. That's okay! A sale is a sale, but you want to be clear-eyed about the process. Another thing to know about Amazon and other retailers (including places that sell your book "used" even though it just came out) is that they are actually allowed to sell your book for whatever price they want; they can even sell your \$18 book for \$16, if they want. This is at their discretion, but don't worry: you still get paid the same amount either way, based off of your \$18 MSRP.

As for e-books, the system is much the same, though instead of "manufacturing" cost being determined by page count and book weight, it's determined via the megabyte size of your e-book file. A bit strange, but that's how it works! Also, the return on e-books ranges from 35% to 70% of the retail price minus fees, which is a rather large range and is determined by your e-book's price and the retailer selling it.

We do also encourage you to send buyers to the [Atmosphere's website](http://atmospherepress.com) because it's exciting and encourages your readers to buy the books of other Atmosphere authors—never a bad thing!

## Selling on Amazon

Amazon is a massive company that doesn't always listen to the little guy. That means you need to be prepared to roll with the punches if they change policies or are listing your book differently than you'd like. We're here to be your advocate and to work to navigate whatever curveballs Amazon will throw our way. But patience is often required, and listed here are some things to keep in mind when looking at your book's Amazon listing.



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## ***Author Central***

As a way to help hone your book's listing on Amazon, you may want to sign up for Amazon's [Author Central](#) platform. With an account through there, you can "claim" your already-listed book as your own and set up an author profile for yourself on Amazon. You really won't be able to do much more than that! In the past, we have recommended Author Central to authors to track sales and "claim" their book on their Amazon listing, but Author Central has changed their permissions, and unfortunately they now don't give Author Central authors much insight. We now recommend using Author Central only for claiming your book and setting up your author profile.

While we don't have a sales dashboard for authors to see daily sales, we do send out quarterly royalty reports. It can certainly be frustrating to not have your sales figures on hand all the time, but a quarterly report is actually *very* quick in the publishing world! Other publishers only send out reports only once or twice a year. Please visit the royalties section of this document for more details regarding the royalty reports.

## ***Third party sellers***

Amazon is a hub for all types of sellers to peddle their products for all to see. This can cause your book to be sold by those outside of Amazon on Amazon.com. You might see your book being sold by all manners of retailers in all sorts of countries and for all sorts of crazy prices. There isn't anything you or Atmosphere Press can do about how third parties decide to list your book. That's the free market, and these intrepid sellers will help get your book out there, even though some of them seem a bit dodgy. No need to worry about royalties, as you still receive your normal amount of royalties from these third-party sales.

Additionally, as third-party sellers are able to sell your book for whatever price they choose, Amazon.com reserves the right to increase the list price for greater than our suggested retail price. We aren't able to persuade Amazon to lower the price when this happens either - Amazon has the final say. The good news is that you can always direct your customers to your other listings, such as Barnes & Noble, which usually show our suggested retail price. Also, there are other prices offered by third-

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party sellers on Amazon, which can be lower than what Amazon.com itself is offering. Most customers are always looking for a deal and they'll try to find the cheapest price.

## ***Corrections to your book***

One important thing for you to know is that you absolutely should avoid corrections to your book close to release day. Changing your book's interior or cover close to release day greatly increases the odds of delays in customer order delivery, and even the possibility of your book being taken off Amazon. Even making a revision to the uploaded files a month before your title is released could cause Amazon to delay pre-orders on release day. To avoid this, we allow only one revision to your book's files after you receive the proof copy. Any revisions after we upload your paperback's files can cause a delay in orders and the possibility of something else going wrong. These are scary situations, and avoiding them are why we have this rule of only one revision.

## ***Amazon categories***

Amazon is constantly changing how they assign categories to books, and how they determine sales and category rankings, and we have no ability to change those; Amazon reps themselves often can't change these items, as they are largely determined by proprietary algorithms that Amazon may or may not feel inclined to explain to publishers or authors. Atmosphere can suggest categories through the distributor, but it is up to Amazon from there. We also aren't able to directly change the websites of retail sites; we can make alterations to the book's listing with the distributor, but from there, it's up to any individual retailer what they do, as only they have autonomy over their own product, and the products they choose to sell.

## ***E-books and the Amazon app***

Due to Apple and Android restrictions, you can no longer purchase Kindle e-books on the Amazon app, and you now need to purchase Kindle e-books on a website browser (Chrome, Safari, etc.) going forward. So don't be alarmed if it says your ebook isn't available—it may just be a case of being in the wrong platform. Unfortunately, Atmosphere is unable to persuade Amazon to change the wording of their message.

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The good news is that if anyone asks, you can just let them know that they must use a website browser. There was not a lot of news surrounding this policy change, but hopefully as time goes on, e-book readers will know the new normal.

We have a *lot* more to say about Amazon, but these few points we wanted to get to you first. Read on and we'll cover a lot more!

## A few hundred words on printers/distributors

Your book is out with a selective press, and that's something to be proud of! By going with Atmosphere Press, you have agreed to us publishing your book. This means that we upload your files to our Ingram and KDP accounts for them to distribute and print your book. Having a publisher will legitimize your book in the eyes of readers and bookstores, so this is great news!

Not only do we upload your book through our accounts, we upload all of Atmosphere Press's titles to our accounts. FYI that we aren't able to "transfer" books in our account over to the author's account nor do we give out any of our account information to any author or anyone else. That protects your book and all of our authors' books from piracy, which runs rampant in the literary world. We want to do our best to protect and represent your work!

There can be a lot of confusion regarding who is printing your book, who is distributing your book, and what the differences between different printers/distributors is. So we want to help spell this out and make it as clear as possible, because it certainly can be a bit of an information overload! In short, it boils down to the big two: KDP and Ingram. Both do the printing *and* the distributing, both have global print and distribution, and both have distinct pros and cons. For paperback books, we upload them to both KDP and Ingram so you get the best of both worlds.

KDP is Amazon-owned, and they are faster, only do paperback, don't allow pre-orders, aren't loved by bookstores, give you higher royalties, and your book is only



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for sale through the Amazon universe. Ingram is independent, slower, does hardcover and paperback, allows pre-orders, is bookstore-friendly, gives you lower royalties, and your book is available through a bunch more online retailers, including Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop, and others. Here's all of that broken down into a simple chart:

Printer/ Distributor	Speed	Royalties	Manufacturing	Pre-Orders	Retailers/ Bookstores
KDP	Faster	Higher	Paperback-only	No	Amazon-only
Ingram	Slower	Lower	Paperback/ Hardcover	Yes	Amazon & others

For hardcover books, books that have previously been published in whole or part via KDP, and books by authors from select international nations not well-served by Amazon, we will use only Ingram. That way we can take advantage of their heightened international reach and ability to print hardcover, while avoiding KDP's inflexible "can't publish the same thing twice" policies. For these limited circumstances, Ingram really is the only choice, so we make the best of it!

## ***Ingram: pros and cons***

To take advantage of preorders (the book will be searchable and purchasable on retail sites in advance of the publication date, but customers won't *receive* their copies until the publication date), then Ingram is the printer and distributor you're looking for. They also don't have the tricky "live" and "launch" distinction that KDP does, as they just set a single date and that's when your book is available to the world, with you being able to order author copies in advance of it. When your proof copy is approved, your book is enabled for distribution with Ingram. Once this happens, Ingram is hard at work creating your website listings.

Ingram also has a more expansive distribution than KDP. When we upload your book to the Ingram system, Ingram populates the book for preorder on Amazon (but the books are printed by Ingram, not KDP), as well as Barnes and Noble Online, Book



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Depository, Bookshop.org, and elsewhere. Bookstores with Ingram distribution accounts also will have access to order your book for their shelves through their Ingram database.

Ingram is sounding mighty ideal and dandy here, until you consider the fact that Ingram pays authors less because they grant a higher discount to retailers and also have higher print cost. To illustrate this stark contrast in royalty payments, we've actually seen cases in which a KDP author can sell 200 books through KDP/Amazon alone and receive a quarterly check for \$1000, while at the same time, an Ingram author can sell 200 books through Ingram and receive a quarterly check for \$500. That's with the same book size and retail price, so it can be a notable difference in profit outcomes!

Another disclaimer regarding preorders: there have been a few instances over the years where Ingram wrongly printed and shipped copies of a book prior to the book's release date, so that's an outlier concern to consider! If that happens, there's nothing Atmosphere can do to pull the book back—after all, we listed the release date correctly—so you'd just have to roll with the punches of them giving your book a "soft launch."

Additionally, because Ingram is only a distributor—not a retailer like Amazon—it is up to online book retailers to decide whether or not to list your book. There is no way to guarantee that a book is selected for listing by any individual retailer. In one particularly obnoxious case, we have been seeing more and more instances where Amazon chooses to not list Ingram-printed titles, and for seemingly no reason other than squabbling between these two giant companies. Unfortunately, there isn't anything we can do about this, as it's always at the retailer's discretion which products they sell. Because Atmosphere Press titles—regardless of whether they are Ingram-printed or KDP-printed—are print-on-demand and are always available, it's never an availability issue that is causing a retailer not to list a book. Luckily, with your paperback also printed through KDP, you are guaranteed to be on Amazon.com.

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One important note regarding author copy orders is that Ingram orders usually take the longest leading up to the holidays. There's a worldwide ordering rush that happens from the end of October through December, and author copy orders can take one to two weeks longer than normal because of it.

## ***KDP: pros and cons***

When printing with KDP, there are a few considerations, including the clunky difference between “live” date (when your book becomes available for purchase on Amazon) and “launch” date (when you officially announce that your book is available for purchase). We'll turn your book “live” with KDP on your release date to avoid KDP's no duplicates rule and to allow you to fully experience the pre-order period. There is no “preorder” option with KDP. If the paperback Amazon order link is not up, then customers and authors can't order books. It's not ideal, but this is how the industry functions for thousands of authors, so we put your book on Ingram first to get around this.

There is a limit to which Amazon regions KDP distributes to. You might have noticed that there are many regions/countries that Amazon has a base in, but KDP does not distribute to all of these. KDP is limited to Amazon United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Japan, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Australia, and India. Although KDP is a direct distributor to these regions, it unfortunately does not guarantee that your book will be on all these regions' Amazon websites. KDP may be a part of Amazon, but it is unfortunately not Amazon itself. Confusing, we know!

The best news about being Amazon-exclusive through KDP is that you receive higher royalty rates on sales. By selling through the Amazon marketplace alone, KDP is able to print and sell your books more cost-effectively, which results in authors receiving higher proceeds.

KDP is Amazon-owned, which limits their distribution to only Amazon. This gives authors higher royalties since other online retailers don't take a cut of the royalties.

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Ingram populates your book online in places other than Amazon, such as Barnes & Noble Online, Book Depository, Thriftbooks, and Bookshop. Since we upload books to both distributors, readers will have those other purchasing options, though most will still buy from Amazon out of convenience and reduced cost of shipping, so you will mainly see those higher royalties.

And, just to zip back to that paragraph about those folks whose books have a hardcover edition, who live in one of those rare locations not well-served by Amazon, or for whom part of their book was already published via KDP (and was therefore disqualified from republication there: because your book is automatically on Ingram), much of this discussion of pros and cons is moot. That way we can take advantage of their heightened international reach and ability to print hardcover, while avoiding KDP's inflexible "can't publish the same thing twice" policies. For these limited circumstances, Ingram really is the only choice, so we make the best of it! Thankfully, hardcover books are beautiful, avoiding copyright problems is essential, and getting a proof to you no matter what it takes...all of those take the sting out of that higher manufacturing cost and lower profit!

As mentioned earlier, your paperback will be printed with both KDP and Ingram. If you are adamantly against one of the printers, please let us know once you receive your proof copy. We just want to be clear about that, because we want your book launch to go as smoothly as possible!

In the end, we know that selling books is not easy, and we truly want you to reap the benefits of your hard work and to have the smoothest and most reliable journey for your book from publication into the marketplace. So, we do implore you to weigh your options and goals thoroughly, and we'll be ready to proceed accordingly!

## How do royalties work?

And, of course, there's the question of how you get the funds generated by your book. In terms of how the logistics of this work, the distributors aggregate all retailer



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sales for both print and e-book and send Atmosphere a series of quarterly reports. We actually get nine different reports that we have to compile for all of our authors, and it's a complicated process that takes a number of days and a software program to complete. For example, some reports list authors "first name last name," and others list authors "last name, first name," and that all needs to be realigned! Also, two of the reports come in non-USD currencies, so the currencies need to be converted. The end result is a single document with a column for total book sales and a column that says "Net Publisher Compensation," and for your book, 90% of that column we send to you.

## ***When are royalties paid?***

Quarterly disbursement dates are the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, April, July, and October, and they are payable for the quarter ending 45 days before that date. That means the January 15<sup>th</sup> disbursement, for example, is for proceeds registered between September 1<sup>st</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup>. The reason for the delay is that we have to wait for reports to come in, and because of this, we aren't able to provide real-time data on sales. We always have to wait, and in fact, we have to wait for two more months *after* we send you your royalties for us to receive the corresponding payment from the distributor. Their payments run a full three months behind, but we don't want authors to have to wait that long without data or a payment. Do know that if you're part of a multi-author project, the main contact author will be the recipient of any royalties payment, as we aren't privy to the payment arrangements between co-authors, and the distributors only disburse in one contact name per book. So, heads up about that if you have a writing partner with whom you're splitting royalties!

## ***What information is on the royalties report?***

One note: unfortunately, the distributors' reports to Atmosphere, though complex, aren't very detailed, so we won't have information to pass to you regarding when exactly copies were sold or through what retailer. We wish we had this kind of data, but we're at the mercy of what the distributors deem to be "proprietary" data regarding the consumer profile. As for information, we receive the total amount a title has sold per version, per distributor, and that's about it. Also of note: the reports



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track prints of your book that correspond to sales, so resales of your book don't factor in. Authors only get paid for the first sale, just like how the original creator of an item you sell on eBay doesn't get paid again for your resale of their product. Because of this, know that places you might be tracking sales online, such as via Amazon Author Central, don't necessarily provide accurate data, as they may include resales, and also may log a sale for a different date than when it will show up on the official report, which is the only final declaration of true, payable data. Good news is that the quarterly report does *not* include the author copies you purchased yourself, as those are yours to track and profit from. In the end, rest assured that we want you to get 100% of every dollar possible for the sale of your book!

## ***Royalties and taxes***

Regarding taxes, most authors just log their income and file it as a sole proprietor Schedule C business. If you are a U.S. author who earns more than \$10 in royalties in any given calendar year, you will receive a 1099. We'll send out a W-9 request form to royalties-earning authors, so keep an eye out for that! But that's just for official royalties payouts, so keep track of your individual sales from readings, events, to friends, etc., on your side, as you'll have to account for those independently; if you are a non-U.S. author, you'll also want to track your royalties payouts, as we won't send out tax forms for countries other than the U.S. We recommend consulting an accountant regarding profits and deductible expenses, and your local laws and requirements regarding sales tax, as we at Atmosphere are certainly not tax professionals!

## ***Returns are scary***

And then there's the tricky matter of bookstore "returns," which is a cause of much confusion. Although some bookstores prefer (or require) that books are "returnable" because it protects them from ending up with stock they can't sell or return, we by default list our books as "non-returnable." Why do we do this? It's simple: because protecting our authors is more important than protecting bookstores. Here's how: because bookstores can order books and then return them for a full refund (this is a well-known anomaly existing pretty much nowhere but publishing), it can leave

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authors in the red on their royalties because returns charge extra for return shipping and also a handling fee. In other words, *one return costs an author more than one sale benefits an author*, if that makes sense.

For example, a bookstore can order a bunch of books—say, 50—and then six months later they'd return 36 of them that hadn't sold. Seems like no problem, right? It would be no problem, except that the shipping to them and back from them, and then onwards to us, plus a "return handling fee penalty" means that even though the author actually sold 14 copies of the book, the author would be substantially in the red because of all the needless shipping and handling fees and penalties. We actually had one author who ended up with nearly 100 returned books from a variety of large bookstores, and the author got stuck with a bill for \$800 because he had already received the royalties for those books in a previous quarter and now had to pay that back plus more. Terrible! Because of situations like this—in which a bookstore's over-aggressive ordering can damage an author—we set the default as non-returnable to save authors from this risk.

The harsh fact is that it costs a bookstore nothing to order 100 copies of your book in hopes that they fly off the shelves, but if even 30 of those were returned, you'd see none of the profit for the 70 that had sold. And if 90 are returned? Even though you'd sold 10 books, you'd be hundreds of dollars in the red, and perhaps six or twelve months later you'd get this unexpected bill when in an earlier quarter you'd been celebrating selling 100 copies to a bookstore. Bookstores are great...for readers and for bookstores...but they can be a real problem for authors. That's why we recommend consignment instead.

That said, if you want us to switch your book to returnable, we can do that. It does make bookstores more likely to stock your book; just know that it carries with it a substantial risk, and because you reap 90% of the benefits of your sales, any return penalty could really chew into that, or put you far in the red. The good news is that many indie bookstores will take books from you directly on consignment (where the author is only paid after/if the book sells), and I think that's often a better model: no

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real risk, and no surprise bills just because a bookstore got overeager and ordered more books than they could sensibly sell.



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## An important note regarding what we can and can't control

Before we go any further (and into the good stuff about how to actually promote your book!), we do think it's important to put a disclaimer in here regarding what we can and can't control once your book has been listed with the distributor. With the distributor we input your book's initial "metadata," which is the MSRP, release date, and the description from the back cover of your book, as well as the interior content of the manuscript and the cover files. Once those items are taken up by companies outside of Atmosphere, it's at those companies' discretion what they do and don't list. Sadly, we do not own Walmart or Amazon or Barnes and Noble, and as independent companies, only they know and control exactly how their product selection methods, search algorithms, page presentations, pricing mechanisms, print technologies, and shipping policies work.

In terms of the physical books themselves, there is often variance in print outcomes, color shadings, text tones, and paper stock, as the book manufacturers use different printing and binding machines across many different U.S. and global locations; because of this, it's not uncommon for individual books to be slightly different from each other—the yellow on the cover of one book may be slightly lighter or darker than on another book, for example—and we aren't able to dictate or predict exactly how any particular book order will turn out. Importantly, though, book buyers never seem to notice, as they aren't likely to compare individual copies side-by-side! Relatedly, we also aren't able to see exact delivery dates for book orders, as the world of manufacturing and shipping can be a variable and mercurial one, and because we aren't manufacturing the books ourselves, we don't have much control or insight over when exactly your books will run off the printer, whether the quality of the prints is 100% perfect, or how fast the delivery truck will drive down the highway. There are a lot of variables in that equation!

And even for ebooks it's impossible to account for every outcome! Because ebook



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text is reflowable and varies from device to device, and from user to user, there's no way to know or control how an ebook will present in every single case. That's why—because it commands more than 2/3rds of the ebook market—we focus on making sure our ebooks look as good as possible on Kindle. We'd rather it looks beautiful on Kindle than make sacrifices there just to accommodate a marginal e-reader used by very few of your readers.

Also, we often are left in the dark about the exact proceeds you'll receive from any individual sale, and though the information a few pages back is a very good and time-tested sketch of what you can expect, there are always vagaries in the relationships between printers, retailers, and the postal service that are completely beyond our control, and they can effect changes in your exact outcomes. Even government taxes varying from state to state or country to country can throw a wrench into things. Because of this, we never know exact figures until a royalties report comes out, and even on these, there is variance, as a book printed in the UK and shipped to France and paid for in euros will result in a different bottom line than a book printed and shipped in the US and paid for in dollars. We do, though, trust the reports we receive, because they are used with faith by hundreds (if not thousands) of publishers, and we highly doubt that any multi-national distributor would want an enormous class-action suit against them, should it be found that they were fudging their royalties reports.

If the lack of exactitude is a bit frustrating, take heart! We're in this with you. And because our business model and our contract with you both rely on our providing you with 90% of royalties, and we want you to be successful in your authorial enterprise, we have a very simple stated internal policy: we'd rather pay any author *twice* what they're owed in royalties than accidentally short them five cents. We try very hard not to err, but when in doubt, we always err on the side that pays authors more.

In short, we're your advocate through all of this, as our goal as your publisher is to provide you with the best author experience we can. But we do have to admit that

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once the book is out of our hands, and in the hands of printers, distributors, retailers, bookstores, and consumers, there's only so much we can do, and only so much we can know. So, embrace what the eminent poet John Keats said about uncertainty: that a person of achievement, especially in literature, should be capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, and doubts. In other words, come along with us for the ride!

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## Frequently asked questions

**Q: My author copy order arrived damaged and/or with printer errors! What do I do?**

A: As Atmosphere Press is not the printer or distributor, we need to submit a claim to the printer to get replacement copies. These claims have the best chance of being accepted if we have pictures of the issue. If there is an issue with your author copy order, please reach out to our Atmosphere Press Distribution Team with pictures and they can assist you with issues.

Please note that depending on what printer you are with, the team will either ask you for a photo of the Batch Number or Product ID of one of the books in the order. The Batch Number is located on the left-hand side of the last physical page of a book printed through Ingram, and a Product ID will be located on the last physical page of a KDP printed book, underneath the barcode. The Product ID will contain the letter R. Take photos of these and any damage and we'll get a claim filed to try to get your books replaced.

**Q: Is my book copyrighted?**

A: According to the U.S. copyright website, "your work is under copyright protection the moment it is created and fixed in a tangible form that it is perceptible either directly or with the aid of a machine or device. Do I have to register with your office to be protected? No. In general, registration is voluntary." Because of that broad automatic coverage, we do not send your copyright to the U.S. Copyright Office. But as the copyright is in your name and you hold the rights to your work, you are welcome to still register with them if you wish.

**Q: Do I need to charge sales tax to customers?**

A: Most of our authors who "hand-sell" don't charge additional sales tax, since it's already been paid for once (when the author bought the books from the printer) and they don't want to double-dip. If you sell books to a bookstore on a consignment basis, the bookstore will most likely tax customers, so you don't have to.



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That said, we strongly encourage you to check with your local tax laws and professionals on how best to handle the bookkeeping, as we at Atmosphere are certainly not tax professionals!

**Q: Can you send one copy to \*blank\* address?**

A: For one-off books sent to reviewers, we would ask you to pay a flat-rate fee of \$20 (or the print/shipping cost of your book if it's more than \$20), which would cover the printing/shipping/tax and labor. Let us know if this is something you wish to do!

**Q: I've previously self-published this book. How does this impact my publishing with Atmosphere Press?**

A: By republishing a previously self-published book with Atmosphere, there are a few things that we need to watch out for. Your book will have a different ISBN with us, but there are some challenges that come with republishing. Even if you "turned off" distribution and canceled the book with the printer, the old version may well remain on Amazon. This means that once we upload your final files to distribution, we will need time to get your new ebook, paperback, and/or hardcover listings merged onto one page. This also means that it's possible that reviews from your old listings may very well appear on your new listings. We are limited to what we are able to do in these situations, but we will work with the printers and distributors to get the best outcome possible. Also, regarding Goodreads, they pride themselves on listing *every* edition of a book. Goodreads will not delete books from their catalog, but they can set the new version as the main edition. This will require you to reach out to Goodreads, but we can help you with that.

**Q: How can I set up a sale or promotion for my ebook?**

A: Since your book is published in Atmosphere's account, you'll need to let us know that you wish to change the price of your ebook. We request that you notify us at least a week before the date you plan to hold the sale, and we'll walk you through what you need to know. Ingram and KDP have their own guidelines and limitations when it comes to changing prices, but the team is well versed in these and what it means for you.



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**Q: Customers are telling me that their pre-orders are delayed.**

A: Sometimes this happens when the book is printed through Ingram, but customers pre-order from Amazon. The problem has more to do with Amazon than the printer Ingram, and if the buyer wants their book sooner, they can cancel their current order and reorder right away. This solves the problem of there being a delay with the pre-order, although Amazon does not allow the cancelation of orders when an order has been “shipped.”

That is a bit inconvenient, we know, but unfortunately, it really is on the customer to take action with the retailer they bought the book from...just like any other product order from any other retailer. Due to privacy reasons, Amazon will absolutely not work with us on orders that are made by consumers.

**Q: Why is Amazon discounting my book? Should I be worried?**

A: You don't actually have to worry about the low price they're offering—you get paid the same for a sale (your proceeds are always based off of the original list price) regardless of what they're selling it for. They usually just price it low like that when someone returns a one-off copy and they have it at a warehouse and are trying to clear the inventory.

So, it's not actually a bad thing if they're selling it at such a low price like that, as it increases the likelihood of someone buying it. We've heard of cases where the author actually buys these discounted copies themselves, and then sells them at retail price. There's always opportunity if you look for it!

**Q: Why are my sales ranking in Amazon changing?**

A: Fluctuation in ranking on Amazon like this is completely normal and a part of the publishing ride. Amazon algorithms recalculate their category rankings hourly, but it may take up to 24-48 hours to appear on a book's purchase page. Rankings are relative to the other titles and activity occurring in that particular category, so your sales rank can change, even when your book's level of activity stays the same. Our

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recommendation, for your own sanity, is to not check your rankings too frequently, or to make too much of them. Just work to sell the copies you want to sell, and the rankings will take care of themselves.

**Q: Can you create A+ content on Amazon for me?**

A: A+ Content is an Amazon-only feature, so only applicable to books uploaded through KDP, not Ingram. Luckily, because your ebook listing is through Kindle, you qualify. Atmosphere does not design A+ Content for our authors, but if you provide us with the graphics, we can upload it to Amazon so the A+ Content appears on your public-facing book detail page. There are certain restrictions to the sizing of images, as all images need to fit 970px x 300px dimensions. Our authors have been successful in editing images to this size using the website Canva, so feel free to give that a try if you'd like to pursue this.

# Book Promotional Guide

## Part 2: Publicity, Sales, & Promotion Strategy



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## Who are your readers?

Whew. We just covered a lot of stuff, right? All of this information is designed to help you successfully launch your book into the world, and to concoct a strategy that works best for you and your goals. But, of course, to leverage any strategy, you need to know who wants your book in the first place!

So, let's talk about the friends and family who will likely be your first purchasers. Bless those people, as they're essential to your early grassroots build-up, and will likely constitute your first fans and the first reviewers of your book. Make sure to reach out to these people vigorously using all the methods we describe in this document, and don't hesitate to be a bit of a nag. Don't be afraid to expect them to pay for your book, and let them know how important it is to you.

It's true that some of those friends-and-family buyers will buy your book without ever having a true intention to read it, because they're buying it not necessarily because it's "their kind of book," but just because they like you as a person. But that's okay! We've all got to start somewhere, and this early audience is a great place to break through any shyness you may have about promoting your work, and will also give you a wonderful opportunity to learn how to talk about your book and hone your "elevator pitch" and spoken synopsis.

But beyond these folks, and before we begin discussing the pieces of your book's marketing plan, you need to have a thorough understanding of the kind of people who will ultimately be looking at your book on the shelf or in a bunch of search results and think "Yes, that's what I'm looking for!" These are the people who would get your book because it is, truly, "their kind of book." In other words, the strangers who will see your name and think of you as an author, and not just "some person I know who wrote a book."

With that in mind, think about your readers in terms of age, gender, and interests. Having a rounded out understanding of your audience can help you identify the

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opportunities that will be most likely to reach them. Be careful not to think “oh, my book is for everyone!” That “I like all kinds of music” approach to marketing isn’t very specific, and probably isn’t totally true.

So, for example, you’re about to release a novel about a rogue fossil hunter that women in their late twenties who are interested in paleontology would love. This audience would be active on social media platforms like X (Twitter) and Instagram and likely visit local natural science museums. Knowing these things would allow you to create targeted social media posts, utilize hashtags, and perhaps contact the gift shops of museums with stellar fossil collections in your area to see if they could carry your book.

In another instance, let’s say that your readers are likely to be men and women who are in their forties and are looking to advance their careers. Perhaps they get their information from podcasts or *The Harvard Business Review* or blogs like *Ask a Manager*. You might be able to reach out to some of these podcast hosts or blog runners and secure an interview or review for your book.

Can you think of who would be picking *your* book off the shelf, or would click “Add to Cart” when they see it online? Where do they get their information? The more you know, the more you can use targeting to make sure the right people are seeing your book.

## ***What are your competitive titles?***

Another crucial bit of information that will help you uncover marketing opportunities is having a short list (3-5) of books that are similar to yours. The ones that might eventually be sitting next to it in bookstores or libraries, and not just because of the alphabet.

These “comp titles” should be about a similar topic to yours or appeal to a similar audience. Additionally, they should have been released within the past five years.

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It's important to think about comp titles more as a helpful tool than as your competition. Booksellers and readers will often need a little bit of context about your book in order to make a purchasing decision—especially if this is your first book.

An added bonus is that once you identify comp titles, you can also look at how that book was marketed and where it is sold, and use that as a guide for your own efforts. The famous quote goes “Art is theft,” and the art of selling a book can always benefit from a little theft!

So, try this: who is my audience? And what are some comp titles? You can even use the space here to jot it down, if you're so inclined.

Now that you've identified your audience and your comp titles, you're ready to begin creating a marketing plan for your book. And while you're working through this, and



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being out there in the world as an author with a book to sell, we want to remind you of one big thing: don't be too humble! People are not doing you a favor by buying your book; you are doing them a favor by letting them read it. This may seem cocky, but remember that you are a trained professional and that people will benefit from interacting with your words!

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## Reviews and Getting Traction

Getting reviews for your book ranges from the big leagues of Kirkus and the newspaper circuit, to the smaller (but perhaps more effective) realm of having someone write two sentences on Amazon. But how on earth do you drum up willingness from people to take this labor upon themselves? Sometimes, it's as simple as asking. Other times, you need to offer a little more incentive, so be ready to deploy a plan that works for you.

### *Paid Reviews*

If you're looking for a guaranteed review, there are a few services out there that can connect your book with readers for a price. One of these is [IndieReader](#), which also can have your reviewers leave verified reviews on Amazon or GoodReads. The gold standard in book reviews, though at a higher price point, is [Kirkus Reviews](#). *Kirkus* has a lot of publishing street cred, so a positive *Kirkus* review can be valuable marketing material for a book. Do know that paying for a review from such places does not guarantee a *positive* review, so be mindful to target paid reviews at places that will be amenable to your content and style. If you're interested in getting help curating a reliable list of paid reviews, write to us and we can help.

### *Asking for Reviews*

Readers and book reviewers often reference online book reviews before deciding to purchase a book. With this in mind, you've got to get some testimonials for your book out there in the world.

Rather than send your book blindly to literary journals and newspapers asking for reviews (this approach can lead to your book sitting in a pile for years with dozens of other books), tap friends and other writers you know for reviews and promotion, as personal connections are far more successful on this front than relying on chance. If someone you know writes a full-length or capsule review, they'll often have more luck placing that review in a reputable place once the review is already in-hand; some journals appreciate this, as the hard part of the work has already been done. A pro

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tip is to contact other writers with new books, as doing review swaps is a good way to “scratch each other’s backs.”

If you do have a journal or magazine publication record, reaching out to them directly about a review or a book publication announcement is a great way to make connections and find opportunities. They’ll often be thrilled to learn that one of their authors has released a new book, and they’ve proven that they like your style, so don’t let that connection pass you by!

And then, of course, there’s Amazon. Amazon is the most popular site for reviews. Increase your rating on Amazon by asking 20 of your friends and colleagues to write an honest review of your book. You can provide promotional copies in order to secure reviews or offer copies at a discount. *Getting people you know to support your book through concrete action is an essential part of building traction.* With this in mind, we recommend adding a bookmark or note to every book you sell or give away, requesting a review from the reader.

And while we’re here, this is a great time to mention Amazon’s Author Central. As Amazon, love ‘em or hate ‘em, is a major player in book sales, you’ll want to be able to leverage their author tools from behind the scenes. Learn how to sign up [here](#).

Beyond Amazon, there are the websites for dozens of other online retailers. For a book-centric and reader-beloved place to seek reviews—though it’s not a bookseller itself—[Goodreads](#) is an incredibly effective platform for building excitement in your book, and engaging in a community of people who are active readers.

If you’d like to have bloggers, podcast hosts, and more review your book, here are some great tips for making the request:

- Identify the bloggers most relevant to you and your book. Don’t just ask anybody!
- Check out Reedsy’s database of book review blogs, filtering for “Accepts Indie Books.” This list is a starting point, but many more options are available.



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- Review their blog to determine how often they post and when their last post was. Avoid contacting those with outdated or infrequent posts.
- Read and follow their review request guidelines. Look for a page detailing the genres they review and whether they are accepting requests. Adhering to their guidelines shows respect and improves your chances of a positive response.
- Personalize your message by explaining why you think the reviewer is a good fit. Be concise, use an effective subject line, and always say thank you.
- Use this template as a guide, adjusting the wording to fit your style and ensuring it meets the reviewer's guidelines -

Hi \_\_\_\_\_,

I love your review site! After looking through your page, it seems like my book, a [specific genre, i.e. cozy murder mystery] may be of interest to you. I would be thrilled if you would consider taking a look.

[Book Title] by [Book Author]

[publication date]

[page count]

[2-3 sentence elevator pitch, potentially including a comparable title]

Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,

[Name]

- Consider participating in blog tours, especially on Instagram. These services often include a “book blitz,” where various accounts post photos and short reviews of your book on a specific date during the tour. Suzy Approved Book Tours has received positive feedback from our authors, and other budget-friendly options are also available. This could be a good choice if you're active on Instagram.

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## You and Your Book on the Internet

Of course we need to address the Internet! This is where a lot of the action happens in this post-analog world, and whether your book is best in paper or as an e-book, making its presence known online is a key part of building your brand.

### *Linking Up with Atmosphere Press*

First, let's talk about partnership! We at Atmosphere will be posting about your book and promoting it to our reading audience, and these efforts will be far more effective with your participation.

We have a dedicated marketing email, and you can send all announcements and events and deals and goings-on regarding your book to it. Here it is: [marketing@atmospherepress.com](mailto:marketing@atmospherepress.com). Our Social Media Manager will be happy to post about your book up to three times (we have a lot of different books to cover!), and of what you send, we'll choose content to share. Please do make sure to give our team some runway, though, as we always plan our social media editorial calendar weeks in advance.

Nextly, you should be aware of our social media platforms. We focus primarily on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), [TikTok](#), and [LinkedIn](#). We'd love it if you liked/followed/friended Atmosphere Press on these platforms. Also, please send your online "handles" to [marketing@atmospherepress.com](mailto:marketing@atmospherepress.com), as we will follow you as well, which will make it extra-easy for us to repost your content on Atmosphere's pages. And of course, do please like and share our posts as well, whether they be about your book, another author's book, or about anything else. We are much stronger together than we are individually!

### *Website*

It is absolutely essential for authors to have a website, not just for selling copies of your book, but for legitimizing your status as an author. This will ultimately be the first place that your readers, reporters, booksellers, reviewers, and all manner of

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people come to learn more about you, your book, and any other things you might have in the pipeline.

If you manage sales through the “shopping cart” function on your website, you’ll benefit the most from book sales since you won’t need to share proceeds with a retailer. We recommend directing early “friend and family” traffic to your website to purchase the book. This will help you gain financial traction and build momentum. However, remind readers to leave reviews on Amazon, even if they bought the book directly from your site!

Whether or not you decide to manage sales on your website, you should include links to third-party retailers where your book can be purchased, like Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and of course, Atmosphere Press. The goal is to make it as easy as possible for visitors to your website to be able to purchase and read your book.

Do make sure your website includes all the essential pages: a page with information on how to buy your book, an "About the Author" page, and a contact form. Of course, Atmosphere Press loves to build websites, and can build one for you if you don't already have one. Just send us [an email](#) and we can make it happen!

## ***Social Media***

Social media is an effective way to promote your book and author brand. You can engage with your audience directly, connect with fellow writers, and have fun. Whether you're an avid poster and hashtag user, or someone who'd rather eat rocks than post on the internet, there's no denying the power of social media to enhance and build your reputation as a known author.

The good news is that there are many tips out there for how you can capitalize on social media to help your book. [Here's](#) a good primer.

Regarding Facebook, beyond having a personal account, you can have a Facebook page for yourself as an author that is separate from your personal account. You can



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learn how to set up a Facebook page [here](#). This can allow you to take advantage of the business metrics and advertising tools that are available to businesses but not to individuals.

Instagram is a fantastic platform to bring your book to life for your audience. Share vibrant photos of your book alongside engaging videos of reviews and author interviews. Learn how to set up an Instagram account [here](#).

We also suggest setting up an X account and starting to share content and ideas ahead of your book's launch. You can learn some of the beginning X skills [here](#).

Depending on the publication package you selected, Atmosphere Press will showcase your book upon release and post approximately three times on our social media profiles. These posts may include book reviews, author interviews, events, and more.

If the thought of running multiple social media platforms is overwhelming, don't worry about being on every social media platform out there. Think back to your audience and what they're likely to be on. If you're writing business nonfiction, you'd be better suited for LinkedIn instead of Instagram. Conversely, if you're a children's book author, Instagram will give you a better chance to show off your book's artwork.

Also, check out tools like Hootsuite and Buffer as a way to schedule posts across multiple platforms. This can be a huge time-saver, and will allow you to maximize your reach without going crazy staring at your phone or computer.

And remember, because you are someone who's written a book, you've actually got a lot of content at your disposal that can be repurposed for social media. Corrin Foster has a plan for turning your book into a year's worth of social media [here](#).

If you are published in at least 6 well-known literary journals or have another book out with a traditional publisher, you may be eligible to create a Poets & Writers listing in their directory! This would be a huge legitimizing force in your writing journey, and

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you can link to the listing in your social media and on your website. Here is the [link](#) to apply where you can also check if you meet the criteria.

## *Advertising Online*

Over a thousand books are published each week. Once your book and ebook arrive on Amazon and in other marketplaces, your words will need your help in order to stand out among the crowd.

Since we have published your book in Atmosphere Press's account, you aren't able to make price changes or changes to your online description yourself. If you ever want to have an ebook sale or add your awards to your online description, let us know! We have even worked with outside publicists to coordinate promotions for authors. Just as we aren't able to give out our account information to authors, we don't give access to outside companies. This is the acknowledged best practice in the industry, from Harper Collins to Penguin Random House to Atmosphere Press.

There are many book promotion services available, ranging from small, free options to larger, paid opportunities that can put your book in front of thousands of readers. As an excellent place to start, we recommend checking out [Reedsy's database](#), which will give you a list of possibilities for outreach. You always need to weigh the cost and benefit of advertising in places like this, and we recommend subscribing to a few of the newsletters to see in which ones you'd like to see your book.

A Facebook ad is another way to expand your book's reach. There are over a billion users on this platform and Facebook's ability to connect people with products and services they're likely to buy is unprecedented.

You'll need to set up a Facebook author/business page (not a personal page) in order to utilize a Facebook ad, but the process from there is pretty simple. You can get an overview of the steps and a breakdown of cost [here](#).

When you create your Facebook ad, keep in mind that you can be creative and even

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incentivize your audience with free giveaways or a sample chapter. You can learn additional tips for making your ads effective [here](#).

And lastly, if you think your audience might be better suited to other social media platforms—you can advertise there, too. You can learn how to create Instagram ads [here](#) or LinkedIn [here](#). There are endless opportunities, so think about your target audience and reader base, and envision what types of tactics may work best to catch their attention!

## *Pitching Related Articles or Blog Posts*

A great way to build your author platform, grow your audience, *and* develop your next book idea is to write articles and blog posts.

Again, using your understanding of your target audience and what media they're likely to consume, you can guess what publications they're likely to read. And, as someone who has thought deeply about the topic of your book and who has a knack for communicating clearly, you're a great candidate for creating content about it. If you've written a romance novel, you're qualified to discuss relationships. If your book is a collection of poems exploring a theme of mortality, you could pen an interesting article about funeral trends. The possibilities are endless.

If you're interested in contributing to an established blog, magazine, website, or other publication, the preparation of a good pitch is similar to asking for a review. You need a keen understanding of what publications would be a good match for your voice and topic. You can read more about this [here](#).

You'll also need to be able to write a convincing pitch. You can learn the basics of a pitch letter [here](#).

One of the greatest things about articles and blog posts is that they allow you a short form to play around with ideas and see what your audience responds to. Pay attention! If you have a particular article that generates a lot of buzz, you might have



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found something that you should develop into something larger. You could even find your next book topic!

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## Readings and Other Events

But enough of the Internet for now! Let's get to the fun stuff.

### *Throw A Launch Party*

A book launch event should be one of the highlights of your marketing plan. These parties are not only a great way to gather the people you care about so as to celebrate your hard work; they are also an effective way to generate public interest and to encourage direct hand-to-hand sales, which are always the most profitable way to sell an individual copy of your book—no shipping, and no cut going to a retailer.

As you are thinking of possible places for your launch party, have fun with it! See if you can connect the place with the topic of your book or a key element of your story.

If you'd like to look beyond bookstores and libraries, you can have an event pretty much anywhere. Coffee shops and art galleries are great. You can even throw a party on an abandoned bridge or on a street corner—if it's interesting and people will come, go for it! A key is to think about venues that would appeal to your book's audience and also make sense for your book. You can ask yourself these questions:

- Where do your readers go?
- Is there an important place in your book that's similar to a real place nearby?

Author Marketing Experts have a great rundown of how to ask stores or other venues to host an author event [here](#).

Joel Friedlander has a great list of suggestions [here](#) that covers some of the practical questions about budget and venue, but we'll highlight a few things here.

### Make Sure You'll Have Books

You'd be amazed how many times I show up to an author's event only to find out they have underestimated the number of books they need, or worse, they didn't

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realize that they set the date for a time before their books would actually arrive! Don't be this person! Make sure you have enough books for your launch party or any other launch readings at least a week prior to your party date. This means you should place an order for author copies at least a month before your party date, just to be safe. You don't want to be sweating, and explaining to people that you'll mail them a book later if only they buy it now.

## Make Sure People Can Buy Those Books

Most people don't carry cash these days—so don't expect the people who come to your launch party or book tour to have cash or exact change. If you plan on doing a lot of readings, it will be essential for you to invest in a mobile credit card reader, such as Square (You can review some of these options [here](#)).

At the very least, have an active PayPal or Venmo account, and have the app on your phone updated and ready to go.

Even if you bring plenty of books, you might sell out before everyone has a chance to buy one. This is a good problem to have! To be prepared, have a QR code ready that links to your author website or Amazon listing, so attendees can still purchase the book on their own.

## Get Readers' Contact Info If You Can

Book launches are a great way to add to or start building a mailing list. Be sure to ask people to provide their email addresses via a sign-in sheet. You can also make that information necessary when they RSVP online to receive an invitation. This mailing list will be an excellent resource for you to build for other publications like a monthly newsletter, or for future books. Yes, future books! It's always good to think ahead.

## Make the Launch Entertaining

If you're asking a group of people to gather for an hour or more, you should be prepared to entertain them. Think of prizes you could raffle off or possibly other



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speakers you may want to invite to do a reading, panel discussion, or Q&A. Whatever you do, don't bore your audience!

## ***Tips for Author Events***

But the launch is just the beginning, and for it and for future appearances, you'll want to make sure you do it right. You'll want to find the best venues, invite the right people, and put on a great performance. So here are some tips to help you navigate a future in which you are a writer in front of an audience.

### Readings

After your initial launch, you can still promote your book at readings! There may be writer communities in your city that host reading nights you can be a part of. Or, you can reach out to your personal network of writers and organize a reading yourself.

It may be especially useful to reach out to any schools that you've attended, as they often will host alumni authors.

In short, schedule readings. Lots of readings. Readings both locally and around the country sell books, and this will remain the case even after your book has been out for years and years: if you're reading right in front of them, they won't care if your release date was a decade ago. Here are a few quick pieces of advice:

1. Reading series are great, as they have established audiences.
2. When on the road, read with a local, as they'll bring in an audience.
3. Tour with one person, but not more, as you don't want to overly divide proceeds.
4. Do quantity discounts with your tour partner(s), as that'll help you get your book into the hands of someone who may be more naturally inclined towards someone else's book.
5. While bookstores often take a 35-45% cut of sales, they can still be valuable venues. Bookstores that host readings might be more inclined to stock your book, so it's worth weighing the pros and cons of each option.
6. Practice your craft—most authors stink at reading, so make sure you don't! Be

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confident, loud, work on your banter, use humor, sell assertively, don't be shy. You are, in the truest sense of the economic term, a “professional,” so make sure you are an exceptional performer.

## Talks

If you've written a nonfiction book, or you'd like to talk to other writers about the process of writing a book, you may want to explore opportunities where you can speak to a group of people or be on a panel discussion. If you have a topic that you'd like to speak on, you may want to reach out to businesses or relevant industry organizations to see if they are looking for conference speakers or professional development workshops.

If you've written a novel or memoir, you may find that writers' communities may be interested in having you come and discuss not only the craft of your writing, but what the publishing process has been like.

You can look for writing organizations at the city, state, regional, and national levels. [Here](#) is a good place to start.

## Writing Conferences

Presenting a panel at a regional or national writing conference is a great way to not only meet other writers and build your professional network, but to build interest in your book—and what you're working on next.

[Here](#) is a list of conferences and trade shows that might be useful for promoting your book.

You may find it useful to have a one-sheet to hand out about your book at these author events. [Here's](#) more information about how to create one.

## *Collateral*

Beyond the internet and your face and your book itself, building your brand means

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producing physical objects associated with your book and your persona as a writer. With this in mind, create personal promotional materials for your book, readings, and other events. This means posters, magnets, pens, keychains, postcards, bookmarks, pamphlets, signage, t-shirts, buttons, etc. This collateral is helpful in building a lasting brand that can engage people and create conversation about your book, even when the book's not in the room. And this is another thing we can help you with, so just email us if you want assistance!



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## How to Get Your Book into Stores and Libraries

Getting your book from your publisher and into your local bookstore or library can be a little tricky. Many large bookstores (like Barnes & Noble) and stores (such as Walmart) aren't favorable to titles that come from independent presses, choosing instead to fill their shelves with books that are coordinated with wholesalers from large commercial publishers who pay tens of thousands of dollars for shelf space.

Don't let this discourage you! Those big-box stocking deals are often exploitative of authors, and there are plenty of independent bookstores and libraries that would likely be a better fit for your book—and will have a more passionate and knowledgeable staff to champion it for their readers.

One thing to note: because independent bookstores are independent, they don't always do things the same way, so you'll have to be flexible. You'll want to have physical copies of your book to bring to bookstores directly, as some bookstores are happy to take those off your hands.

Additionally, some bookstores will pay you a portion of your book's retail price up front to stock it, and then they are free to sell your book and you're off the hook to follow up with them; this puts the sales burden on the store so they can recoup their investment. Many bookstores, though, offer only consignment agreements to independent authors. In such arrangements, you provide the books upfront and receive a portion of the sales proceeds once the books sell. However, this approach places the burden on you, as you may not receive any payment if the books don't sell within the agreed timeframe. Even if they do sell, you might need to follow up with the store to ensure you receive your payment. Despite these challenges, consignment can be a good option if your primary goal is to see your book on a shelf, and many authors have had success with this path.

And do make sure to read the section called "Returns are Scary" in Part One of this guide. It includes some very important information about how bookstore returns

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work, and can potentially benefit or cause you considerable harm. As always, being informed will be the best way for you to know what to do.

All told, bookstores can be a tricky thing to navigate, and you'll want to keep good records. Still, though, there are few things as romantic as seeing your own book on the shelf! So, where to begin?

## *Think Local*

The markets that are most likely to stock your book are the ones that you can get to know in-person. Many small bookstores have a section reserved for local talent (and they would be happy to coordinate author events with you!). They also have more control over their stocking decisions. So if you can literally walk into the store and say "I live here, and I wrote this," that's a great way to break the ice and get your book placed up front and center.

## *Going National*

If you want to tap into bookstores far and wide, it requires a little more tact, as email and phone will be your primary methods. You can read some advice on how to frame this discussion and what incentives you can provide booksellers to help persuade them to offer your book [here](#). Though the article is targeted towards self-published authors, it's helpful to anyone who's had a book published!

And, as a helpful resource, remember that Atmosphere Press has a database of more than 1000 independent bookstores in the United States, Canada, and the UK. [Here's a link to it!](#)

Do be careful not to spam bookstores, as restrictions on unsolicited emails have become more stringent in recent years. For example, keep your message concise, avoid including multiple attachments, and send it to one recipient at a time to ensure your message makes it through to their actual inbox.

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## Consider Libraries

If your goal is to have your book in a library, donating a copy to your local library could be an effective strategy. While this is a donation rather than a sale, it can help expand your brand and increase name awareness. Additionally, local libraries often participate in Interlibrary Loan, which means your book could be shared with libraries across the country. This broader exposure might lead to more readers discovering your book and leaving reviews on online sites.

If you'd like to open your book to being purchased by multiple libraries, *Writer's Digest* has some good tips [here](#). In this day and age, though, many libraries are most interested in ebooks, and Booklist has a great selection of advice on how to approach libraries to pitch your ebook [here](#).



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## What Else?

So that's a lot to think about, right? It's okay: don't be overwhelmed, and remember that you don't have to eat the whole cake in one bite. Just a nibble here, a nibble there, and maybe enjoy a big piece at midnight. Your book exists now, and you have the rest of your life to enjoy that existence.

Being a writer involves the hard work of writing, but being an author is truly a different beast altogether. It means being out there, and learning that now your identity is not just in the deep focus of creating a character just so you can kill the character, or in helping your reader through his or her own existential crisis. Now your identity is also part celebrity, part salesperson.

If this makes you uncomfortable, that's okay! There's no pressure on you to do any of this, and it's completely okay if you'd prefer to avoid all of this. After all, it's worked fine for J.D. Salinger, and Emily Dickinson sure wasn't going door-to-door with her fascicles of complicated poetry. But do know that those authors are extreme outliers, and most successful authors do a lot of "content creation" beyond the books they write. For example, Steven King may have more than 7 million followers on X...but he's also written more than 10,000 tweets. That's a lot of work that is not just book-writing, and it takes time, dedication, and perseverance.

Following is a questionnaire that could prove helpful, but whatever route you choose, whatever strategy you deploy, from hyperactive to easygoing, just make sure you're enjoying yourself. Because why wouldn't you?

And lastly, do remember that building a brand as an author very rarely happens overnight. Don't get discouraged if you're not lighting up the world in the first few months. Make a foothold in your community, embrace the challenge, and believe in your work!

And of course, remember that we at Atmosphere Press are on your side!

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## A Helpful Questionnaire

Please provide as much information as you can. The more you dive in, the more reward you'll reap.

1. What independent bookstores are located in your immediate region and in cities near you? How do you plan to contact them to stock your book?

2. What reading venues or reading series are located in your immediate region and in cities near you? How do you plan to contact them to schedule readings?

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3. What type of advertising do you want to do? What is your budget for paid reviews or giveaways or other promotional approaches that require financial investment?

4. Can your workplace/job help you make sales? Can anyone assist with organizing a reading for you within your job community? How can you drum up interest among colleagues?

5. What newspapers or cultural periodicals are located in your immediate region and



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in cities near you? How can you market yourself to them for exposure?

6. What radio stations or podcasts are located in your immediate region and in cities near you, or will interview remotely? How can you get you and your book on air?

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7. What libraries are located in your immediate region and in cities near you? How can you get your book on their shelves, or arrange for a reading/book signing?

8. What is your plan for promoting the book on social media? What platforms are you going to use, and how often will you post? Can you link to other groups or “influencers”? Do you have an ad budget to help get your book in front of more eyes?

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9. What other geographic areas might you travel to during your first year after publication? Know that when touring, you'll want to answer these questions for these other geographical areas as well!

10. What is your long-term plan? Can you offer specials or discounts? How can you keep the energy alive for your work (and in your own mind) after the initial splash has worn off? Remember that there is *a/ways* more audience for your book, even if you feel you've sold as many as you can!



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And here's some space for you to write additional notes, should you so desire!