



THE FAMED ATMOSPHERE PRESS BOOK PROMOTIONAL GUIDE

...EXCLUSIVE TO ATMOSPHERE PRESS
AUTHORS



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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. 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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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.

Things you should know

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 better-than-average position!

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 the Atmosphere website. Please see page 6 for a discussion of eligibility, benefits, and terms, but in short, if your book is sold through the Atmosphere site, we always make sure it will garner you a greater financial reward than a retailer sale.
4. 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

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\$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 through organic searches.

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.

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. Then you can customize your book's page more fully; just be sure to proofread!

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

How do royalties work?

And, of course, there's the question of how you get the funds. In terms of how the logistics of this work, the distributors aggregate all retailer sales for both print and e-book and send Atmosphere a series of quarterly reports. We actually get *nine*

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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.

Quarterly disbursement dates are the 15th of January, April, July, and October, and they are payable for the quarter ending 45 days before that date. That means the January 15th disbursement, for example, is for proceeds registered between September 1st and November 30th. 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!

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. Also of note: the reports 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

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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!

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 towards the end of the year, 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!

A few hundred (very important) words on printers/distributors

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. KDP is Amazon-owned, and they are faster, more reliable, only do paperback, don't allow pre-orders, aren't loved by bookstores, give you higher royalties, and your book is only for sale through the Amazon universe. Ingram is independent, slower, less reliable, 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:

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Printer/ Distributor	Speed	Reliability	Royalties	Manufacturing	Pre-Orders	Retailers/ Bookstores
KDP	Faster	More	Higher	Paperback-only	No	Amazon-only
Ingram	Slower	Less	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 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!

But for standard paperback scenarios, KDP is the go-to. That’s because, after years of debate internally while utilizing both of these options with authors, we decided that reliability, speed, and greater profits for authors would be our top priority. Though Ingram distributes more widely, history says that the vast majority of online paperback sales are through Amazon anyway, so taking advantage of their higher royalty payout balances that equation. So, if your book is a standard trade paperback without any atypical exceptions (e.g., you previously self-published the book through KDP, you live on a remote tropical island, etc.), we always upload the book to KDP by default, and plan for your book to be printed and distributed exclusively by KDP. This also allows you to get your physical proof copy as quickly as possible.

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). Here’s the tricky part: in order for you to purchase your author copies from the KDP printer, we first have to turn your book “live”, which will put your book online on Amazon and will make your book immediately available for purchase by consumers; there is no “preorder” option with KDP, and even authors themselves can’t order books before the book is “live”. It’s not ideal, but this is how the industry

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functions for thousands of authors, so we have to roll with it. For our part, we typically plan to turn the book “live” at least 4-6 weeks prior to the official release date so you have ample time to receive your books before your book's “launch” celebrations. After your book is publicly “live” on Amazon, we can move forward with ordering books for you.

So, while your official “launch” date may occur several weeks after your “live” date, people who purchase and receive early copies of your book—often because they just stumbled inadvertently upon the book’s Amazon page—will be able to start leaving reviews on Amazon. The big silver lining is that those pre-launch reviews are great for SEO and algorithmic purposes! Think of these pre-launch purchases as Advance Reader Copies going out to your most eager supporters.

Do note that Amazon’s KDP platform does not distribute to anywhere else beyond Amazon, and that includes brick & mortar bookstores. Luckily, you are welcome to sell your own KDP-printed author copies in your local bookstore via consignment agreements (later in this document we explain a bit about those). The exact arrangement depends largely on the particular bookstore that you’re dealing with, of course, but we have seen authors find success with getting their books in stores through this route.

The best news about being Amazon-exclusive through KDP—in addition to better speed and reliability—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.

But what if you're an author who wants to have preorders and distribution beyond Amazon? There is the other option for you: Ingram.

If you’d like 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, as they just set a single date and that’s when your book is available to

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the world, with you being able to order author copies in advance of it.

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 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."

Still, if you would like to have the preorder option and wider distribution through Ingram, while accepting the lower profits, please send us your request for this change *in advance of your book going "live" on Amazon*. Otherwise, if we wait until after your book is already "live" in KDP, we would have to obtain a new ISBN for your Ingram-printed book, which could result in duplicate listings of your book on Amazon. We don't want that! So, if you do want wider distribution or preorders, make that decision as soon as possible, because it only becomes more complicated the longer it's delayed.

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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. 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!

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!

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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, haha, 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.

For example, 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. 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.

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

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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 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.

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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 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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Who are your readers?

Whew. We just covered a lot of stuff, right? All of this information is to prepare you to have 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 hesitate 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 opportunities that will be most likely to reach them. Be careful not to think "oh, my

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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 of 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. They should also be released within the last five years.

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.

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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, if you'd like, 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 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 [Indie Reader](#), 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](#). *Kirkus* has a lot of publishing street cred, and often a positive *Kirkus* review can be valuable in 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 tip is to contact other writers with new books, as doing review swaps is a good way

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to “scratch each other’s backs.”

If you do have a journal or magazine publication record, reaching out to them directly about a review 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! We highly recommend checking out Reedsy’s wonderful [database of book review blogs](#)—just make sure to click “Accepts Indie Books” in your search. This list, though, is just a start—there are many more.
- Personalize your message; include why you think the reviewer is a good fit.
- Be concise, pay attention to your subject line, say thank you.

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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

So 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. So here's some info to know.

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. 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 \(Twitter\)](#), 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, 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 matter of people come to learn more about you, your book, and any other things you might

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have in the pipeline.

Because your website is the place where you're going to reap the greatest dividends on book sales (because you don't have to share proceeds with a retailer), we recommend directing your early "friend and family" traffic to your website to buy the book. This will help give you some financial traction in the early going, and will build momentum. This also will allow you to run pre-orders through your site well before the book is available on retail sites such as Amazon. Though do remember to tell readers to leave reviews on Amazon, even if they bought the book elsewhere!

Do make sure your website has all of the essential pages, including a place to buy your book, ability to accept credit card, and an about the author page. 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, 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 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.

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](#).

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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](#).

Advertising Online

Over a thousand books being 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.

There are a slew of book promotion services out there, from small and free ventures to larger paid opportunities that will get your book in front of the faces of thousands. 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 people with products and services they're likely to buy is unprecedented.

You'll need to have 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](#).

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

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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 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 run down 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 amount of books they may need, or worse, they didn't realize that they set the date for a time before their books would actually arrive! Don't

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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. 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.

Get Readers' Contact Info If You Can

Book launches are a great way to start building a mailing list. Be sure to ask people to provide their email addresses via a sign-in sheet, by giving you business cards, or by making that information necessary in order 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 speakers you may want to invite to do a 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.

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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 half-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 audience.
3. Tour with one person, but not more, as you don't want to overly divide proceeds.
4. Do quantity discounts with 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. Bookstores are less excellent than other venues, as they often take a 35-45% cut.
6. Practice your craft—most authors stink at reading, so make sure you don't! Be 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

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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 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 and 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. Other bookstores will have you sign a consignment agreement in which they'll pay you a portion of the sales proceeds once the books sell; this, though, puts the burden on you, since you have to give them the copies up front and, six months later, if they haven't sold, you still haven't seen the proceeds. And also, even if they *did* sell, you may need to "remind" the store that they owe you money.

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:

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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 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.

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, though, as restrictions on unsolicited emails have become more stringent in recent years.

Consider Libraries

If having your book in a library is your goal, your local library would likely take a donated copy of the book for their collection from a resident author. While this is a donation and not a sale, it can help expand your brand and name awareness, and whoever gets it from the library may rate it on online review sites.

If you'd like to open your book to being purchased by multiple libraries, *Writer's*

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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?

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