

DIY Book Launch Best Practices

The following recommendations are for those authors who are either self-publishing or working with a small-to-mid-sized publisher with a modest marketing budget, and who themselves have a limited amount of marketing dollars to spend. It has been developed through participating in the launches of several books, and researching what others have learned and said about this process. However, there is no “one size fits all” - every situation is different, and these are by nature generic recommendations. If you have suggestions for improvements please let us know.

Two Years Prior to Book Availability

If you don't already have one, now is the time to build your platform - your community of readers or followers who follow you and who would be most interested in purchasing your book. This should include a strong social media following and a robust list of subscribers to your email newsletter. You should have, at a minimum, a website, Facebook professional page, Twitter and Goodreads pages, and (once you have a book published) an Amazon Author Page. For additional information, see [Marketing 101 for Spiritual Writers](#) or contact Writing for Your Life at brian@writingforyourlife.com.

Six-to-Nine Months Prior to Book Availability

- Plan your in-person book tour
 - With the help of your publisher and personal connections, identify speaking and book signing opportunities before and after your book's availability date.
- Plan your virtual book tour
 - With the help of your publisher and personal connections, reach out to bloggers, podcasters, magazines, journalists, book reviewers, and others who might have an interest in interviewing you in advance of your book's introduction
- Develop the creative pieces to be used later to generate interest in your book
 - PDF Lead Magnet
 - PDF Discussion Guide
 - Memes
 - Design a landing page on your website
 - Business cards with your book cover image
 - Create question for media interviews
 - Set up a private Facebook Group for your launch team
 - Video book trailer (optional)
- Begin recruiting the leaders of your launch team
 - Author friends (and volunteer to be on *their* launch team for their next book launch)
 - Marketing manager at your publishing house

- Close publishing industry contacts
- Consider hiring a book PR (Public Relations) specialist
- Consider launching your own podcast program
- Identify target list of people to provide ARCs (Advanced Reader Copies that are given away)
- Identify target list of locations where you can be a guest blogger

Three Months Prior to Book Availability

- All of the items in the “Six-to-Nine Month” section should be finalized
- Recruit your launch team (target 50-80 people)
 - Launch team receives:
 - An ARC
 - Access to the private Facebook Group, where you post excerpts of the books and lead/moderate discussions
 - You should be available to answer questions and discuss any aspect of the book, or being a writer more generally
 - Access to other like-minded members of the group
 - Access to launch team FAQs
 - Access to launch party
 - Access to memes and other book launch materials
 - Launch team agrees to:
 - Tell other people about the book via social media
 - Review the book on Amazon, Goodreads, Barnes & Noble
 - Be an ambassador for the book and its message
- Send out ARCs to publications and high-priority priority book reviewers
- Outreach to communities and groups with whom you are associated (church, denomination, professional organizations, service groups, writer groups, alumni associations, etc.)

From Two Months Prior until Book Availability

- Send out ARCs to launch team and others on your target list
- Send out 4-6 special emails to your subscriber list (also post these all to social media); Include:
 - Pre-order announcements
 - Lead Magnets
 - Video book trailer
 - Discussion Guide (as a pre-order bonus)
- Execute your in-person and virtual book tours

- Get your guest blogs posted
- Start your paid social media advertising program
- Respond to the opportunities generated by your PR specialist (or you!)
- Hold a couple of Facebook Live sessions

At / After Book Availability

- Send review links to your launch team
- Send official release announcement to your email list (and ask them to post a review if they enjoyed the book) and to other industry contacts, and post to social media
- Update your website and social media pages
- Continue paid advertising and book tours
- Launch party!
- Reach out again to media, bloggers, etc.