

How to Market Your Book in the Social Media Age

David Strom

The most important phase of writing your book has nothing to do with the actual act of writing. It is about finding the right people who will promote the book to the world and turn potential readers into your buyers.

Back in the old days, before the internet became popular, book authors hired publicists to promote authors and get them booked on talk shows and book tours. This still happens, but now there are other paths toward promotion. And what is good is that you can largely do much of this work on your own, if you have some self-promoting skills. The biggest part of that is in understanding how social media influencers work. (Start your research at socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-develop-buyer-personas-using-facebook-insights.)

These influencers are people who have the right kinds of followers in their networks. They can become very powerful allies in your book marketing plan, and the cost to use them is pretty much just your time... and tenacity.

So how do you find these folks? First, look at your own social media networks and make a list of the people who would be relevant to the topic of your book. What, you don't have many friends on your net-



works? Now is the time to get busy friending people and seeking out folks who could become pathways to promotion. You don't need thousands of names, but you do need to approach this task on a regular basis and friend new people every day. For those of us who are introverts, this can be painful and can run counter to our instincts to hide behind our computer screens. Try to fight this, and

reach out to people among your neighbors, your work colleagues, your social organizations, and so forth.

One thing you don't want to do is to buy lists of names. While this is certainly possible, you don't know the quality of the names you are getting, and chances are many of these names aren't going to be helpful to your book promotion anyway. Save your money.

Next, figure out the keywords that describe your topic, focus, and audience and what they are interested in and why they would buy your book. This means using these keywords to do many Google searches. Many means hundreds. Sometimes, you want to combine two or three keywords to be more effective.

Next, pick your social media network where your audience will hang out. If your book has a visual component, then stick with Pinterest or

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SLPA Vendor Showcase

Publishing a good book requires teamwork. Turning a manuscript from a draft into a finely crafted book requires skilled editors, designers, and printers, and the process (especially if you want to make sales) can involve talent from illustrators, book marketers, publicists, book coaches, web designers, publishing companies, or more.

The St. Louis Publishers Association's annual Vendor Showcase brings together publishing experts of all specialties to answer questions for inquiring authors. Don't miss this opportunity to meet a roomful of people who can help you at any or every stage of your book project. This is a chance to ask questions and get a feel for who they are and how they work.

- If you're near the beginning of your book's journey and trying to make it work, talk to one of the book coaches, ghostwriters, or developmental editors to figure out where to go from here.
- Undecided about whether to go indie or find a publisher? Talk with local publishers, printers, and independent service providers to learn about your options.
- Does your manuscript need to be organized, critiqued, or revised? Do your sentences need polishing? Chat with an editor!
- Do you need an eye-catching cover and help laying your book out for print or uploading to Amazon? Get to know graphic designers with the knowledge and talent to turn your manuscript into a book.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Jul 21, 9am @ WESTBOROUGH COUNTRY CLUB:

Amazon & Beyond

with Amy Collins

stlouispublishers.org/event-2899943

Aug 8, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:

SLPA Vendor Showcase

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

stlouispublishers.org/event-2874475

Sep 12, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:

Audiobooks: From Your Words to Their Ears

with George Sirois

Oct 10, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:

Author Discussion: Successes and Failures



Amazon and Beyond

Saturday, July 21 @ 9am

Amy Collins is a speaker and marketing expert and a highly recommended sales consultant for some of the largest book and library retailers and wholesalers in the publishing industry. She is on the national advisory board for IngramSpark and is a board member of Author U, a featured columnist for *The Book Designer*, *BookWorks*, and IBPA, and a trusted teacher in the world of small press publishers. Reserve your ticket now at stlouispublishers.org/amycollins.

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- Need illustrations for a children's book or visual aids? Talk with illustrators and check out their portfolios.
- Are you almost ready to publish, but you want to make sure your book doesn't have any embarrassing typos? Find a proofreader!

The SLPA Vendor Showcase is a FREE event and open to the public.

Service providers: to apply for a table, please contact SLPA President Warren Martin at president@stlouispublishers.org.



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Instagram. If you have news-related content, Twitter. If it is general interest fiction, Facebook. Business-related topics, LinkedIn. These aren't hard and fast choices, and feel free to experiment with more than one social network if you have the time. This doesn't mean you need to craft a separate collection of Tweets, Pinterest pins, etc. In fact, you can share announcements across multiple social networks. A good tool to do this is Hootsuite.

While you are doing all of this, you should settle on your book title and domain name for your book's website. Yes, you need a website. Part of that website should be an email newsletter, where you tell your potential readers what is going on with your book so they can get involved in its writing and production. You should commit to writing one post every week in the months leading up to your book launch on your website. After all, you are a writer!

Next, start collecting email addresses from your social media connections and use them to populate an email list. There are plenty of low-cost web hosting providers out there, and plenty of choices with email server companies such as MailChimp, Constant Contact, SendGrid, and others. Many of these services have free plans if your list is small, so take advantage of them. You can send out a new email with a copy of each blog post to save time if you wish.

Finally, start thinking about collecting reviewers. There is an entire universe of Amazon influencers, but I won't get into that here. Look at NetGalley, especially if you want to join the IBPA (visit netgalley.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/115003981574-As-a-publisher-how-can-I-list-my-titles-on-NetGalley). This is a website that is used to promote new books to a list of active readers and reviewers.

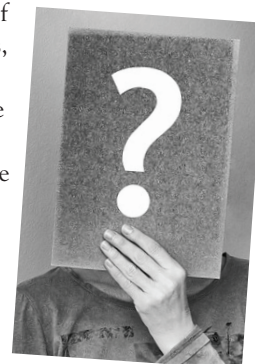
Good luck with your marketing!

THE BOOK CORNER

Your Book Could Be Featured Here!

This Could Be You!

One of the many perks of membership in the St. Louis Publishers Association is that your book can be featured on the organization's website, which is viewed by hundreds of weekly visitors, where it will also be eligible to be selected for **this** feature of the SLPA's monthly newsletter: **The Book Corner**.



This is your opportunity to **make your book more visible** and **make more sales!** This SLPA newsletter is emailed to a thousand subscribers every month and picked up by dozens more at our meetings and event tables. Send your book to the SLPA webmaster today at stlouispublishers.org/page-803008.

Meetings on the Second Wednesday of the Month

Richmond Heights Community Center (THE HEIGHTS)
The Argus Room • 8001 Dale Ave.
Richmond Heights, MO, 63117
(Child care available at THE HEIGHTS)

Doors open for networking at 6:30pm
Program begins at 7pm

The meeting concludes around 8:30pm
Networking until 9pm

Regular meetings are free to members
Membership \$60 per year
Guests: \$10 at the door

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