

Marsha Ward – Publicity Tips, Materials & Resources

Blatant Self-Promotion Tips:

Use your phone-answering machine as a promotional tool. My message promotes my book every time someone calls and I don't answer the phone. I try to change the message at least every month so regular callers don't get frustrated by hearing the same message ad infinitum.

Use your word processing program to print up bookmarks with the rave reviews you get from readers and reviewers. Make sure you include ordering information for your book(s), and put something on the reverse side of the bookmark, like your forthcoming appearances. People always check to see if there's something on the back. Print from your own printer, or take to the copy shop. Use whatever paper you deem best: colored paper, regular paper, card stock, or photo paper.

Send out a flyer promoting your book to every friend, relative, and acquaintance for which you have a mailing address.

Double or triple your mailing list by adding books by a second or third author to the flyer and having them split expenses with you as they provide additional names for the mailing list.

I take a wedding guestbook with me to signings, and ask my customers to sign it while I sign their books. I explain I want to let them know when my next book comes out, and they are happy to do it.

Rules of speaking engagements: Have a copy of your book in your hands, so when people tire of looking at your face, they can focus on your book. Make sure the cover is facing out! (Lorna Tedder)

E-mail Signature Line. At the end of your e-mail you can promote your book. It's simple to go into your e-mail options and add a standard line – the signature – that will be attached to all outgoing messages. (Brenda Nixon)

Don't overlook your own yard sales. Next time you decide to have one, set up a display of your books. They will definitely be a conversation piece that could lead to who knows what? Contacts, sales, readings, book signings, or more work. (Anika Logan)

Make friends with local business people. Not just book sellers, but department stores, restaurants, hair dressers. For a free book, my dry cleaner put fliers announcing my book signing on all their outgoing orders. For a free book, my hair dresser and manicurist place promotional material in their shop and talk up my books. I've gotten interviews in the local paper and free PR on the radio via the local bookstore's ad. When I have a book signing, I post fliers in the computer store, the beauty salon, our favorite restaurant, and the veterinarian's office. (Catherine Snodgrass)

Get acquainted with your area Chamber of Commerce secretary. They love having local talent to boast about in their advertising pamphlets. Volunteer to speak at schools, churches and organizational activities. Speakers are always welcome. Take along books to sell (Priscilla Maine)

Take bookmarks everywhere you go. Leave them on countertops at the post office, with your tip at a restaurant, or (extra blatant warning) tape them at eye level in restrooms. (Lorna Tedder)

Post your business card and small posters you have made about your book on every bulletin board you can find. If it has a free space, tack yours up there with all the "for sale" and "to rent" signs. Shopping malls, recreation centers, schools. The more exposure you get, the more chances that your book will be a winner! (Anika Logan)

The Value of Printed Marketing Materials for Your Book:

Printed marketing materials serve as a visual cue every time someone sees them. Collateral (as printed marketing materials are sometimes called) such as bookmarks, business cards or postcards promoting your book, remind people that they either met you or were referred by a friend to learn more about you. They build legitimacy, increase your book's visibility, and serve as a stepping stone for an eventual sale.

Below are suggested uses for some of the most common printed materials used by authors. Be sure to include key information about your book on all printed materials, such as your website address. Viewers should always be told what action they can take to gain additional information.

Top uses for bookmarks promoting you and your book.

1. Use as innovative and memorable business cards
2. Give them away at your book signings and other events (people will be coming across them for years to come)
3. Write-in the date and time of your next book signing and hand-out as a reminder
4. Ask your friends to give the bookmarks to their friends

Top uses for postcards featuring your book.

1. Cost-effective and relatively inexpensive direct mail piece (send them to everyone you know and ask close friends to send them to ten friends each)
2. A large business card which contains more useful information
3. Doubles as a flyer or a mini-brochure that can be posted in key locations, left on tables, or handed out at events
4. Frame one as an informative display near your books
5. Order form for autographed copies of your book

Top uses for business cards about you and your book.

1. Networking. Being able to pass out a business card featuring info about you and your book will help people (agents, publishers, reporters, book buyers, etc.) remember who you and your book
2. Doubles as a book mark for readers
3. Give out at book signings and speaking engagements for people to pass along to others
4. Write-in the date and time of your next book signing and hand-out as a reminder

Top uses for posters featuring your book.

1. Put on view in advance of, and at, book signings
2. When giving a speech where a sales pitch isn't appropriate, a poster of your book will send a subtle, yet powerful, message
3. Place near your writing desk for inspiration
4. Display at book fairs and other events
5. Use for guerilla marketing - attach to a sandwich board and hire a student to wear at large community gatherings.

Books:

Publicize Your Book! – An Insider's Guide to Getting Your Book the Attention It Deserves
Jacqueline Deval
Perigree/Penguin Putnam

1001 Ways to Market Your Books
John Kremer
Open Horizons
P O Box 205
Fairfield, IA 52556

Guerilla Marketing for Writers – 100 Weapons for Selling Your Work
Jay Conrad Levinson, Rick Frishman & Michael Larsen
Writer's Digest Books

How to Publish and Promote Online
M.J. Rose and Angela Adair-Hoy
St. Martin's Griffin

The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing – Everything you need to know to write, publish, promote, and sell your own book
Tom & Marilyn Ross
Writer's Digest Books

Internet: Sites with Lists of Articles on Promotion:

AuthorPromote.com – Author and Book Promotion Articles:
<http://www.authorpromote.com/articles.php?PHPSESSID=55438f87ca008894c521d1fabaacd123>

Author Promotions – Author & Book Promotions
<http://www.freewebs.com/authorpromotion/articles.htm>

Author Insider "is the premier source for **book marketing articles and ideas.**"
<http://www.authorinsider.com/>

Useful Promotion Information Sites:

John Kremer – Book Promotion Expert
Promoting Your Books
<http://www.promotingyourbooks.com/index.htm>

M. J. Rose – Buzz, Balls & Hype Blog
http://mjroseblog.typepad.com/buzz_balls_hype/

Blog Book Tours
<http://blogbooktours.blogspot.com/>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/blogbooktours/join>

Useful Articles:

Katherine "Kat" Smith - The Five Golden Rules of Publicity for Authors
<http://www.writerswrite.com/journal/oct02/ksmith.htm>

Harriet Hodgson - Free Book Publicity: It's Out There, but You Have to Work for It
<http://www.wheatmark.com/articles/view.cfm?aid=56>