

A person with long dark hair, wearing a tan leather jacket over a black and white striped shirt, is seen from the chest up, holding a large white book open. They are standing in a library or bookstore, with wooden bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. The lighting is warm and focused on the person.

# SELL YOUR BOOK

AN AUTHOR'S GUIDE TO  
PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

BY SUZANNE ALYSSA ANDREW

**WRITERS' HOW-TO**  
THE WRITERS' UNION OF CANADA  
& THE LEAGUE OF CANADIAN POETS

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# INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! You wrote a book! Not everyone can say that. Whether you're working with a publisher or self-publishing, you've made a tremendous effort, and now it's time to send your work out into the world.

Launching your book can be exciting, daunting, overwhelming, or a combination thereof. It's the culmination of thousands of hours of your time, energy, creative genius, and outpouring of ideas. And now, you're tasked with the job of marketing it.

## WHY ARE WE MARKETING OUR OWN BOOKS?

It's nice to think there was a "back in the day" when authors didn't have to market their own work, but you can bet Shakespeare and Dickens were down at the pub talking up their latest plays and books every chance they got. That's networking. Except for the unusual few, like the mysterious Elena Ferrante, or the publicity-shy Harper Lee, most authors make an effort to represent their books.

In the digital era, that representation is more important (and varied!) than ever before. We live in a prolific, multi-platform, media-saturated, and noisy time when everyone has something to say and a means to say it. It's extra challenging to make a name or gain attention. And, like the music industry did before it, publishing is going through a massive market adjustment. It's a new landscape, and if you're an author, musician, performer, or artist of any kind and you want to be read, heard, or seen, it's up to you to get out there and help make that happen.

This applies to you even if you have a publisher and publicist on your team. Canadian publishing houses and their publicity departments are often stretched to the max in terms of resources. Your publishing house can give you a welcome short burst of publicity and promotional support, but it's up to you to play the long game.

In this game, there's publicity — which usually refers to activities undertaken to attract media attention — and promotion — which encompasses advertising and everything else you do to attract readers. Sometimes the lines between the two are blurred, but it's all work under the same umbrella of marketing.

## DEVELOPING YOUR OWN APPROACH

You know your book better than anyone else. You know who its target readers are, why it's important, and why people should read it. Your intimate knowledge and infinite passion makes you the best person to market your book.

That said, marketing your book is a fine art in and of itself. Sharing your work is a wonderful thing that will help you connect with readers in a magical, alchemical way, and that rewarding connection will help you feel like the whole thing was well worth it.

But remember today's audiences are sophisticated: If you're perceived to be overzealous, harried, or hasty about hustling for readers, you might turn some people off. If your game plan is to copy whatever your author friend did six months previous, you'll come across as inauthentic and unoriginal. And even when you remain faithfully true to the spirit of your book, marketing is infinite: It's easy to get carried away. You may find yourself trying to do too much, saying yes to things you're not actually good at or interested in, spending too much money, and ending up burnt-out and overwhelmed.

It doesn't have to be that way if you know what you're getting into and plan ahead.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

When I launched my novel, *Circle of Stones* (Dundurn Press, 2015), I knew I had one shot at a debut, and I decided I was going to do everything in my power to help it succeed. I was passionate about the book, eager to share it, and I didn't want to live with any regrets.

At the same time, however, I run a busy freelance business, and, like everyone, I have bills to pay. I knew my promotion time would be limited. That's why I went into the process from the very beginning with a plan.

*Circle of Stones* garnered national media attention and positive reader feedback. I even took it on an exciting five-city indie book tour. Having a plan helped me work

through promotional tasks in a timely, and manageable, step-by-step way. I stayed on track and beat overwhelm (well, for the most part! It was new terrain, after all). My only regret was that my plan wasn't even more detailed! I'm happy to share what I learned along the way.

## **A NOTE ON LOBBYING FOR MORE MARKETING RESOURCES FOR AUTHORS**

Remember that The Writers' Union of Canada, the League of Canadian Poets, and other organizations are here to support you in your book marketing efforts. With the new publishing landscape in Canada, it's important to recognize authors need marketing support in the form of funding. This is one of the many important issues the Union and the League are researching and will continue to lobby on our behalf for over the coming years. They also run programs like National Public Readings and Writers-in-the-Schools to help create promotional opportunities for authors. The Union and the League offer valuable programs, services, and resources, and I encourage you to join one or both. For information on membership and their programs and services, please visit [writersunion.ca](http://writersunion.ca) and [poets.ca](http://poets.ca).

## **KEEP READING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FINE ART OF BOOK MARKETING**

This booklet will provide you with

- ideas for publicity and promotional activities that work,
- advice from authors and industry experts,
- worksheets to help you decide on the best approach for you, and
- most importantly, a blueprint for your own personal book marketing plan.

# CREATING A PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION PLAN

## PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING 101

In the marketing and advertising industry, every creative team typically starts each project with a creative brief outlining four things in a succinct and clear way:

1. What's the product or project vision?
2. What's the market?
3. Who's the target audience?
4. What are we trying to achieve?

The book industry is unique in many ways, but the basic marketing principles still apply. After working on a book for many years with your brain mired in hundreds of pages of its glorious detail, it can be a challenge to boil it all down to a succinct idea. But once your book comes out, even if you do nothing else to promote it, you'll be asked over and over, "What's your book about?"

Be ready for this question! The best place to start promotional efforts for any book is to write and practice your "elevator pitch," a short, exciting statement (two to three sentences) about your book. Read it out loud and tell it to your family and friends until you can say it with no hesitation and it makes perfect, clear sense to everyone. You'll move forward from there with confidence!

Here's the elevator pitch for Claire Cameron's recent novel:

*The Last Neanderthal* is about a female Neanderthal who has just come of age. Her family is dwindling, and it's the story of her struggle to survive. I used the new scientific thinking about Neanderthals, advances in DNA for example, to underpin the story. There is also a modern strand about a pregnant archaeologist who is trying to excavate a huge find of Neanderthal artifacts before her baby comes.

## SETTING YOUR OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The business of the publishing industry is — you guessed it — to sell books. As many books as possible.

But this is your book and your very own promotion and publicity plan. Like anything else, promotion is a process, and there are no guarantees on sales, so it's helpful to set your own objectives and goals. That way, you'll define what success means on your own terms.

Think about what's unique for your book and what will bring you the greatest personal satisfaction. Is your book set in a specific city or area you'd love to do an event at? Maybe you want to connect with certain readers. Perhaps you want to send it to that English teacher, professor, or editor who supported your early work. There might be something special about sharing this particular book with your friends and family. What would make you feel proud of your book? Give all this some careful consideration during your planning, and take the steps to make these things happen. Here are some fill-in-the-blanks to get you started:

The unique thing I want people to know about this book is:

I really want these people to read this book:

My ideal reader is:

If I take sales numbers out of the equation (which are out of my control) my picture of success for this book looks like:



## THE TYPICAL BOOK PROMOTION TIME WINDOW

The window of time a publisher and publicist will devote to your book is usually short — from six weeks to six months, if you're lucky, before they heartlessly move on to other titles. For them, your book is very special indeed, but so is everyone else's! There's a definite advantage to the long, slow build in gaining a readership, though, especially if this is your first book. Depending on what your goals are and what your availability is, your own personal promotion window for your book might be up to a year: six months prior to the publication date and six months after.

Starting early will mean you're less likely to miss out on event bookings that are scheduled well in advance (sometimes up to a year in advance for certain reading series), you'll be able to reach out to magazines and publications that work far ahead in their editorial calendars, you'll get the launch party venue you really want before someone else reserves it, and you'll be able to take your time to do things just the way you want them.

## TIME MANAGEMENT AND AVOIDING OVERWHELM

Here's the secret to a successful book promotion and publicity plan. Ready?

### DON'T TRY TO DO EVERYTHING!

Remember you're a human being, not a publicity department. This is not your job, and no one's paying you to do it. You're electing to do it, hopefully because you're passionate about your book and want to share it, and not just because you think you have to. And since marketing is infinite, there's so much you can do: It's easy to burn out.

The best piece of advice I received prior to the launch of my novel was from Farzana Doctor, author of the novels *All Inclusive*, *Six Metres of Pavement* (Dundurn Press, 2015 and 2011), and *Stealing Nasreen* (Inanna Publications, 2007). She told me to figure out how much time I could realistically devote to book promotion each week and stick to that. Maybe for you that's fifteen minutes a day, a few hours every weekend, or perhaps you have the luxury of a little more.

Setting a time commitment and following through with that consistently every week will help you avoid overwhelm. A little bit every day or weekend over six months to a year will feel less stressful than trying to do it all in a few anxiety-fuelled, sleep-deprived weeks. This is especially true if you're working through a step-by-step plan, because you'll know what to do and when.

## FACING FEARS AND HANG-UPS ABOUT SELF-PROMOTION

Some people feel like promoting their own work is tacky, awkward, scary, strange, or even an introvert's nightmare.

That's so Canadian. And limiting. Yes, your uncomfortable feelings are valid, and many others feel the same way, but this is the best time of your life to leap out of your comfort zone. Be daring!

Something I had to overcome during the book promotion process was a fear of public speaking. It turned out I just needed more encouragement and practice. The more events, readings, and interviews I did, the easier it became to connect with audiences and the better I was onstage. By the end of my promotions year, I was doing interviews like a pro, with my own speaking style and steady nerves.

If you're fretting or stuck, talk out your feelings with an author friend, family member, personal coach, therapist, or anyone else you trust to give you the advice and encouragement you need to move forward. Try a few new things you're not sure of — you might surprise yourself! And remember that this is your plan. If there's a task you'd really rather not do, you don't have to do it.

### AUTHOR ADVICE: ON FACING YOUR FEARS AND STAYING GROUNDED

Maria Meindl, *Outside the Box: The Life and Legacy of Writer Mona Gould, the Grandmother I Thought I Knew* (McGill-Queens University Press, 2011)

I was scared about promoting my first book. There's something very vulnerable about asking for attention, and it was added to the general feeling of exposure that came from bringing out a book — an autobiographical one — in the first place. But I enjoyed the process. It felt wonderful to talk to people about subjects I care enough to write a book about, and to hear what they had to say.

That said, it's hard to get a review, and sales are often low, even for brilliant books. When things don't fall into place, don't blame yourself. Because we are expected to do so much for promotion these days, there's always the feeling that if only we did just that little bit more, we'd have the success we hear about in the newspapers. There are lots of opportunities for overspending: time, money, and energy. Let yourself off the hook if something doesn't feel worth the effort. Beyond that, give it your best shot and enjoy the ride, even the hard parts!

## DRAFTING A PLAN THAT FITS FOR YOU

As Twyla Tharp says in her fantastic book *The Creative Habit* (Simon and Schuster, 2003), “It’s your world. Own it.” Your publisher may either give you a lengthy laundry list of suggested promotional to-dos or no guidance at all. In developing your personal plan, it’s important to take an honest look at what appeals to you, what you’re good at, and where you think your time and energy are best served. As you read through this booklet, take the time to answer the worksheet questions at the end of every chapter, and you’ll be well on your way to developing a plan that’s a perfect fit for both you and your book.

### AUTHOR ADVICE: ON STAYING REALISTIC

Russell Smith, ten books, including *Confidence* (Biblioasis, 2015), *Muriella Pent* (Doubleday Canada, 2004), and *Noise* (Porcupine’s Quill, 1998)

How do you reach the vast public who has never heard of you? The honest and sad truth is that it’s pretty much out of your hands. The machines that make stars in Canada — the Giller Prize, Canada Reads — are pretty much randomly triggered. To win them is to win a lottery. Sometimes a book will spark with the book clubs and become a bestseller through word of mouth, but those books are almost always surprises. Some of the biggest marketing campaigns in publishing history have flopped dismally. Some completely unexpected books, by shy authors, have sold in sixty countries. My best marketing advice is to write the best book you can.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUR GENRE

Your book is indeed rare and original, but you can look to other books and authors within your genre or reader niche for guidance and inspiration. Promoting a book of adult market literary fiction is far different from how you’d go about things for a young adult book, for instance. In the first case, you’ll be talking directly to readers, and in the second, you may be engaging with parents and teachers as well as youth. Marketing a sci-fi trilogy series is a different case study from that of a one-off poetry collection. And nonfiction is its own thing, with lots of opportunities for journalism and guest posting in which you can assume the role of an expert on your topic (because you wrote the book on it!). As you’re working on your plan, keep in mind what’s also going to work for your target readership and what opportunities might be available in your genre.

## AUTHOR ADVICE: FOR POETS

Chris Chambers, *Thrillows & Despairios* (Wolsak & Wynn, 2015), *Lake Where No One Swims* (Pedlar Press, 1999), and *Wild Mouse* (with Derek McCormack, Pedlar Press, 1998)

There are so many poetry books published each spring and fall in our beautiful arts-funded country, it's tricky to distinguish among them — especially for first-timers. Writing a book that gets nominated for the Griffin is the best way to get noticed and sell books, but that only works for three poets a year. The rest of us organize launches, get invited to readings, and publish.

Wolsak & Wynn organized a launch for *Thrillows & Despairios* with their two other spring-season authors, but I also set up a second launch at Supermarket in Toronto a month later with Gary Barwin and Stuart Ross. The party is a chance to celebrate and hopefully sell a few books (the week of the Wolsak launch, *Thrillows* was the bestselling book of poetry in Canada!), but most nerve-wracking, it is the time to read and introduce your book the way only its author can. Prepare! Read your best poems. If you have a big gun, shoot it. You are the talent: Put on a nice shirt and play your part. It's only poetry, but on that night, you are the star. All the years of writing and hustling, the editing and seeing the real book — all those years end (start?) with the launch. That night can be the apex. Unless you get nominated for the Griffin.

I also recommend small-press book fairs, where you can have a conversation, find support, and maybe meet someone who can turn a suite of your poems into something magical. To me, these little presses and small magazines, like *Taddle Creek*, are a lot closer to the spirit of poetry than harping on about yourself on social media is. Of course, social media can help publicize the party. Good luck.

## COORDINATING WITH YOUR PUBLICIST AND PUBLISHER (IF YOU HAVE THEM)

If you're working with a publishing house and a publicist, lucky you! You have support on your side, but remember three things:

1. Your publicist is busy: This is not his or her only title right now.
2. You're working together as a team: Don't annoy or let down your team.
3. Your publicist wants to hear from you.

## INDUSTRY ADVICE: ON ESTABLISHING A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PUBLICIST

Margaret Bryant, Director of Sales and Marketing, Dundurn Press

Share information! If you have events or interests, establish expectations early on, and if you are unclear about the process, ask questions. A good relationship with your publicist is all about transparency and collaboration. You are on the same team, and you both want the book to be successful.

Let your publicist know the best way to contact you and keep freely in touch with them. If you're considering an event, interview, or something on the horizon, give them a heads-up as soon as you know it's a possibility. The earlier they know what's coming up, the more they can do for you! Similarly, be open to any promotional opportunities that come up, and don't hesitate to explore new avenues that will work for your book.

## BUDGETING

Marketing is expensive. It's an odd thing that sometimes you have to spend money to make some.

Not setting a budget from the outset was the biggest rookie mistake I made when marketing my book. You'd be surprised how quickly it all adds up!

Different publishers pay for some things and not others, and if you're self-publishing, you're on your own for all of it. Here's a heads-up about some of the things that can be out-of-pocket expenses for authors during the promotions process.

Expenses often (but not always) covered by publishers (self-published authors will need to pay for these)

- Book cover design
- Design and printing of promotional materials (e.g., bookmarks, postcards, fridge magnets)
- Group launch event
- Advertising

Expenses most authors pay for out of pocket (whether you're with a publisher or self-publishing)

- Professional author profile photos
- An outfit or two, shoes, and a decent haircut for events
- Transportation to and from events

- Any advertising you want to do that your publisher isn't paying for
- Solo launch party (including venue rental, food, and drink)
- Book tour transportation and expenses
- Book trailer production
- Personal website design, URL/domain name registration, and web hosting fees
- Your time (You may be especially conscious of this if you're freelancer and are used to charging by the hour: Any hour you're spending on book promotion, you're not billing clients for.)

Additional expenses to keep in mind when you're self-publishing

- Distribution costs, such as shipping or postage
- Or, if you're going with an on-demand platform such as Lulu or Blurb, the book production base price, distribution costs, and other fees will be included in the payment structure: Read the fine print to understand the cost breakdown for each copy sold.

If you're not sure what your publisher will cover, ask!

The best way to help keep expenses down (besides being conscious of not overspending) is to call in favours. Enlist the help of your graphic designer, photographer, DJ, cupcake baker, video producer, stylist, or other talented friends. See if they'll do a work-in-trade deal with you, or at least cut you a sweet "artist's rate" deal.

You should also be sure to keep all of your book promotion-related receipts as you may be able to report these on your taxes as business expenses.

Keep your eye out for grant opportunities that will help with your expenses as well. The Canada Council offers some travel funding, for example, but only under specific circumstances. Be sure to read the guidelines.

## WORKSHEET: CREATING A PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION PLAN

Questions to ask yourself when starting your publicity and promotion plan

1. What's my book about, in fifty words or fewer?
2. What's my book's genre and market?
3. Who's my target or ideal reader?
4. What do I want to achieve by getting my book out into the world?
5. Who am I going to practise my book's elevator pitch on?
6. What are my personal promotion objectives and goals?
7. What's my personal promotion time window for this book?
8. How much time can I realistically commit to book promotion each week?
9. What publicity and promotion tasks scare me?
10. Who in my network will I talk to about my concerns?
11. What aspects of publicity and promotion appeal to me?
12. What am I really good at that I can bring to this?
13. What publicity and promotion tasks do I already know I don't realistically have the time, energy, and skill set to pull off in an effective way? Which ones feel false to me?
14. Which authors in my genre are doing a great job at promotion, and why do they stand out?
15. What's my budget for promotion for this book?

# BUILDING A PRESENCE

## YOUR WEBSITE

If you're trying to choose what to invest in as an author, a website with everything a reader or journalist may want to know about you and your book(s) is a great thing to prioritize. If you're wondering why you need an author site even when you have a page on a publisher or self-publishing distributor, it's because if you're truly looking at the long game, you'll know that an author's site is the home for *all* their work: past, present, and future. Your next book contract may be with a different publisher. Having your own website puts you in control of your online presence.

I've written for Canadian magazines and newspapers and can attest to the fact that personal websites are still the first thing journalists look for when Googling you. Make it easy for them to find you, and offer the information they're looking for to increase your chances of coverage.

What you include on your website is up to you, but most author websites include these basics:

- Short author bio and photo
- Brief synopsis, publishing date, purchasing information, and a book cover image for each of your books
- Blurbs, book reviews, and media coverage you want to feature
- Event details
- Links to your social media profiles
- Contact information\*



*\*A note on posting your contact information on your website. This is usually limited to an email address only. Some authors are reticent to provide this, but if a journalist wants to contact you for an interview and is on deadline, it's always easiest and faster to get in touch with you directly instead of going through your agent or publicist.*

*I've included my email address on every personal website I've had since 1999, and for me, the author events, media inquiries, and freelance gigs I've received from it outweigh the risks and the spam. The spam goes straight to my spam folder, anyway.*

*If having your email address on your website ever becomes a problem, you can always remove it later, or create an author email address that's separate from your main inbox. You can set up multiple email inboxes on your phone and in your email program.*

Make sure to provide production credits on your website, too. These are always appreciated by photographers, designers, programmers, and other people who help you with your website. In some cases, you may also need to ask for permission to use materials. I find it's best to be clear about how you intend to use materials up front to help avoid any possible confusion later. So, for instance, when you're getting your author photo done, you may wish to tell your photographer something like, "I intend to use this on my book jacket and on my website, and to send it to any media requesting a bio photo. I promise to provide a photo credit in each instance."

Not sure where to begin with building a website? The details on how to create a website would make for a whole booklet in and of itself. If you're stuck on how to get started, consult

- a professional web designer (this is a great time to call in one of your favours if you happen to know a designer or programmer!),
- other authors you know with websites, or
- popular easy DIY website companies online like Wix, WordPress, or Squarespace.

Although I created my first two websites myself, my next two iterations of it were created by professional web-designer friends. Both were work-in-trade deals in exchange for my copywriting and editing services (the first one a straight service-for-service trade, and the second was partial payment plus copywriting). This made it affordable for me to create professional websites. If you go this route, be sure to ask for the designer to make it possible for you to publish updates on your own, because you don't want to have to bug (or pay!) someone every time you want to add an event or update the copy on your site!

## YOUR PUBLIC SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

The jury's still out on whether time spent on social media really sells books, but it does help to establish you in the literary community, and engaging in that can be both fascinating and fun.

### INDUSTRY ADVICE: ON WHAT AUTHORS CAN DO TO MAKE A REAL IMPRESSION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Margaret Bryant, Director of Sales and Marketing, Dundurn Press

Social media is important! If you don't already have a well-developed online presence, start now. Don't wait for the publication of your book to build up your platform — your social media following will help promote your book, not the other way around! But don't just use social media as a platform for plugging your book. Find your niche and your audience. Engage with the communities who are most relevant to you and your topic. It's best to be active in a real, ongoing conversation, rather than just plugging your book all the time. Share other books you're reading, articles you enjoy, and so on.

To get started, find a platform you enjoy (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are very popular), and once you set up your account, follow people you admire and get engaged with the writing/book industry. Like, retweet, and best of all, respond and comment on other users' posts. It's worth spending time creating a real connection to others, who will likely reciprocate.

If you're not sure what social media platforms to focus on, refer to the chart in the worksheet at the end of this chapter. (It's tough to do all of them well yourself, so it's best to pick and choose the right fit.) And as an advanced tip, sometimes the best way to connect and engage with communities on social media is to simply use hashtags. If your book is about gardening, for instance, use the #gardening hashtag in your posts. Anyone searching under #gardening will see your posts. If you wrote a novel or poetry collection, #CanLit is worth using.

## PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE ONLINE POSTS

Trying to find the right balance on social media can be a challenge. You want your personality to shine through, but it's also a good idea to remember you're a professional representing your book, too. If you want to post tons of personal information or gag jokes on social media, you might consider keeping some personal accounts private for friends and family and some for your professional

author self. This is easiest to do on Facebook, where you can have a personal account shared with just friends and family and a professional public author page anyone can follow.

## OTHER ONLINE TOOLS

Besides social media, you can set up author pages and promote your book on many online sites and blogs. Do a bit of research and see what fits best for your book and genre. Examples include

- Goodreads author page,
- Amazon author page,
- Wattpad page,
- alumni updates with your university or college alumni association, and
- your member page on [writersunion.ca](http://writersunion.ca) or [poets.ca](http://poets.ca).

## BOOK TRAILERS

A book trailer is brief promotional video for your book. Most are somewhere between thirty seconds to two minutes long. Video can be expensive and challenging to do well. Movie trailers can be made by pulling together the best clips, but when you're making a book trailer, you're starting from scratch, with no footage yet. I ended up making a book trailer, but only because I knew a skilled video producer/director who was willing to help me with it. I'll cut to the expert right away:

### AUTHOR ADVICE: ON BOOK TRAILERS

Lana Pesch, author of *Moving Parts* (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2015)

A book trailer video is a multimedia tool. If the book trailer features the author answering questions about their work or reading a passage, a publicist can send it to festivals or reading series as part of a pitch package. Depending on the content, a trailer can also serve as an opportunity to get the book mentioned on a website that might not do a full review.

Here's my advice for producing a book trailer:

- Do your research.
- Watch trailers and decide if this is something you want to do.
- Find some money.

- A video worth producing is worth producing properly. Production will take longer and be more involved than you think.

Talk to other authors to see what they did. Get referrals. Find producers and directors with experience producing book trailers. Ask publishers and media what they need/want.

You are a writer, and now you need tell your story, visually. What is at the heart of your book? How will you show that seed, kernel, idea, theme, character in the form of a video that will pique readers' curiosity?

## PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

You don't need to create any promotional materials for your book, but they're a handy sales tool, especially when you're at an event. Not everyone will be prepared to buy your book on the spot, but if you tell them about it and hand them a bookmark, flyer, sticker, postcard, mini-card, or fridge magnet with your book cover and title on it, they'll be more likely to remember to order or buy your book later. People often can't remember titles or names anymore! Without a physical reminder, they'll wind up at the bookstore asking a baffled clerk the name of "that book with the blue cover."

There's no need to get carried away with promotional materials, though. One per book is usually enough. There's no rule about what works best, so choose something you feel comfortable handing out and that fits your book. For instance, if your book is about travel or a journey of some kind, you might choose a postcard. If it's a cookbook, perhaps a fridge magnet. Bookmarks are always appreciated by readers, of course!

If you're collaborating with your publisher, be sure to request promotional materials you think you can use, and plenty of copies. If you're creating them on your own, there are lots of print design sites online now, such as [VistaPrint.com](https://www.vistaprint.com) or [Moo.com/ca](https://www.moo.com/ca), that make DIY easy at reasonable prices.

## WORKSHEET: WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS APPEAL TO ME MOST?

✓	What do I want to do?	How can I do this?
	I love posting images.	Instagram Snapchat Facebook Twitter Pinterest Tumblr
	I love posting videos and I want to share my book trailer.	Instagram Snapchat Facebook Twitter YouTube Tumblr
	I prefer to post articles and links.	Twitter Facebook Google+ Tumblr
	I want to share the books I read.	Goodreads
	I want to share new work in progress.	Wattpad
	I want to share my professional portfolio or CV.	LinkedIn
	I want to share a talk or slide presentation.	SlideShare YouTube
	I want to set up an author page.	Facebook Goodreads
	I want an easy way to share my blog posts.	Tumblr Facebook
	I want to have conversations with readers.	Twitter Goodreads

# CAMPAIGNS

## PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS

If you have a publicist, s/he will have the industry contacts and experience to pitch your book to the media for reviews, interviews, and other coverage, and will run a publicity campaign for you during the time s/he is assigned to your book. That said, you can still be as hands on as you'd like to be. If you're self-publishing, do your research. Not every traditional publication covers self-published books, but there are still lots of ways you can get coverage. Read on.

### INDUSTRY ADVICE: ON GAINING MEDIA ATTENTION IN A CROWDED MARKETPLACE

Sue Carter, Editor, *Quill & Quire* magazine

I'm not going to lie; it's a tough one. All book editors receive giant piles of mail each day (check out *Maclean's* book writer Brian Bethune's weekly videos of opening his packages for proof), and you're competing with hundreds of titles each month. That said, there are things that writers can do:

1. Work with your publicist, and trust their expertise, but also keep on top of marketing yourself. If you want coverage in a certain publication, know their scope and deadlines (*Q&Q*, for instance, schedules reviews and profiles months in advance, and does not cover self-published authors). The earlier, the better.

2. Engage local and specialized media. There are only so many review slots in national publications, but never underestimate the power of free local neighbourhood/regional newspapers and websites. Does your book touch on any specific themes, characters, or settings? Are there publications or writers connected to those beats? On that note, get to know your local indie booksellers, too. They can become your biggest champions.
3. Get to know the reviewers' names, too. Most are freelancers and are writing for multiple outlets. Have they written about other books that you feel are connected to yours in some way?
4. Easy to say, but try not to get too nervous; think of media interviews as conversations. We are just people who love books, and who are lucky enough to talk to authors for a living. And if you get multiple interviews — and even if you're asked the same questions over and over again — try not to give the same quotes to all writers. As for handling reviews (also easier said), never take a bad one personally, or fixate on a critical point within an otherwise positive review. It's all part of the process.

## YOUR MEDIA KIT

If you want to take charge of the story about your book and also make life easier for journalists covering it, create a media kit. If you have a publicist, s/he will likely do this for you, but you can still feature media kit details on your website for easy access.

Here's a checklist of handy materials you can include in your media kit:

1. High-resolution author photo
2. Author biography
3. Book synopsis: Either the full-length version that appears on your book jacket or your elevator pitch
4. Your publisher or self-publishing details and release date
5. Blurbs and review quotes and/or links to other news clippings
6. Contact information (yours and your publicist's)

If you have a publicist, talk to him or her about which news outlets (print, radio, TV, digital) might cover your book, who s/he plans to pitch, and whether or not you should reach out to any journalists yourself. When pitching journalists, keep things short and to the point. A brief email with a note about why you think the journalist should cover your work and why it's a good fit for the publication with

direct links to your media kit is all you need. Don't forget to include radio in your pitching. The big CBC radio literary shows are really challenging to get on, but there might be a smaller regional show or college program interested in hosting you for an on-air interview.

## PROFILES AND INTERVIEWS

When Claire Cameron's novel *The Bear* came out (Doubleday Canada, 2014), I remember watching a TV interview with her on CTV's *Canada AM* and thinking, "Wow! She's such a pro." I was in awe, so I asked her to share her interview secrets.

### AUTHOR ADVICE: ON INTERVIEWS

Claire Cameron, *The Last Neanderthal* (Doubleday Canada, 2017), *The Bear* (Doubleday Canada, 2014), *The Line Painter* (HarperCollins, 2007)

For me, the problem with feeling anxious is that it causes me to turn into myself. I give much better interviews when I am outwardly looking at, listening to, and focussed on the questions from the person who is interviewing.

My trick is to consciously turn my triangle of focus outward. If I do that, I'm no longer focused on my nerves, myself, or the boring back of my own skull. I can take in what is going on around me, which works: I am more interesting because I am more interested.

I have to practise and over-prepare in order to wing it. Before I start doing publicity, I develop a longer spiel about my book that hits on all the important or interesting points. I chop this into a 30-minute, 20-minute, and 10-minute talk — there are usually obvious examples or digressions to cut. And then I practice delivering it to my cats. After I have done that work, I feel ready. It gives me a set of key points I want to discuss and examples are on the tip of my tongue. I can then relax, wing it, or riff depending on the context.

## BOOK REVIEWS ONLINE AND PROMO SQUADS

In the online marketplace, it helps if good reviews pop up when people type your book title into Amazon, Indigo, Barnes and Noble, Kobo, or other retail sites. Positive Goodreads reviews make a difference, too. But you can't review your own book! It's up to others to do that for you.

One way to receive good online reviews is to ask for them, and that's something you can reach out to a promo squad for. A supportive promo squad is a team you



create from friends, family, and other connections that can help you grow word-of-mouth marketing. Novelist Farzana Doctor successfully promoted her books with the help of her squad by inviting friends and contacts to help her, and then if they agreed, giving them a few easy tasks to do, like submitting an online review.

### AUTHOR ADVICE: ON PROMO SQUADS

Farzana Doctor, *All Inclusive* (Dundurn Press, 2015), *Six Metres of Pavement* (Dundurn Press 2011), and *Stealing Nasreen* (Inanna Publications, 2007)

I don't know who invented the idea, but I first learned about promo squads while helping a friend with her municipal political campaign. Here are a few tips: Ask a lot of people who are not in the writing/publishing world to be a part of your promo squad to widen your reach. Keep your requests easy and brief. Remember to thank people for their time and reciprocate often.

For details on how to set up a promo squad, refer to the article “[Promo Squads: A How-to Guide](#)” in the Appendix on page 39.

### GUEST BLOG POSTS

Readers love browsing book blogs as a way to discover new books. If you have the time, writing guest posts for your favourite blogs is an effective way to expand your reach, boost recognition around your name, and build goodwill within the online book community. You're unlikely to be paid for this work, but it can be fun. Reach out to your favourite bloggers and sites and send them an email pitching your post idea.

### ADVERTISING

If you have a publisher, and it has a substantial marketing budget (and you're very lucky) you might see your book title in advertising campaigns, for instance in print or on poster ads in the transit system in your city. That daydream-y experience is rare, and if it happens, it's something your publisher takes care of and will decide upon. If you'd like to try advertising your book yourself, and have a budget for that, clear it with your publicist first, or if you're self-publishing, go for it. There are many places you can advertise your book yourself on a modest budget.

Here are some inexpensive places to advertise:

- Social media promoted posts, for example, Facebook promoted posts or promoted events from your author page (You set your budget and pay by the impression or number of people who see it. Each social media site does this a little differently, so visit the advertising or promotions page of the site and read the fine print before you sign up.)
- Google AdWords
- Small ads on book blogs (There are thousands of book blogs and many are genre-specific, so check to see if your favourites feature ads, and if so, how much they charge.)
- Small ads in indie or niche magazines and local newspapers
- Sponsoring a podcast or book blogger's e-newsletter

**WORKSHEET: WHICH OF THESE PUBLICITY ACTIVITIES APPEAL TO ME, AND WHEN AM I GOING TO DO THEM?**

Activity	Level of appeal (low, medium, high)	My timeline strategy and availability for this
Creating or engaging in my book's publicity campaign		
Creating a media kit and/or posting it on my website		
Practising a talk and interview questions		
Organizing a promo squad		
Writing guest blog posts		
Advertising		

# GETTING OUT THERE

## CONNECTING, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, AND NETWORKING

If you're semi-addicted to reading author interviews, like I am, you'll note many authors talk about the sharp contrast between the solitary book-writing life and the very social realm of book events. Yes, sometimes this can be awkward, but it's a community where people are enthusiastic, engaged, interested in what you have to say, and often kind. Like any other community, the more you participate in it and support it, the more people will get to know you and be there to support you and your book. To put it simply, if you want your author friends to show up at your book launch, attend theirs!

## YOUR BOOK LAUNCH EVENT

Great book launches are fun parties. This is when you can celebrate your work together with friends, colleagues, and family. Some publishers schedule a group launch every book season that they'll organize (and pay for!), so check in about that before you plan your own. For self-publishers, a busy book launch event will give you a terrific initial sales boost. Where you host it and what you schedule for the program (if any) is up to you. You can do a whole reading, a Q&A, or just a few words to thank everyone for coming. A great way to figure out what feels right for your book launch in terms of a venue, format, or program is to attend other launches and consider what you feel would work well for your book.

A note about your publication date. Sometimes, despite a publisher's best intentions, book shipments are delayed. Hosting a launch and not having any

books on hand to sell is a worst-case scenario! To avoid this, plan your launch party a safe time frame *after* the official publication date, or the date you expect to receive copies of your book from the self-publishing printer. This might be two weeks, or three. Ask your publisher for advice on timing to ensure there will, in fact, be copies of your book available in time for your book launch event.

## READINGS, TALKS, AND AUTHOR APPEARANCES

Your publicist may provide leads for you on readings, talks, and other appearances, and sometimes organizers of such events will contact you with invitations. For the most part, however, it's going to be up to you to book your own events. Look at the book event listings in your community and contact the organizers — preferably well in advance of your book's release, because most plan a whole season ahead.

Tips for a successful event

- Read the organizer's instructions, requests, or guidelines carefully before the event.
- Help promote the event within your network and on social media.
- Ask friends, colleagues, and family to attend.
- If you're asked to read, find out how long, and don't go over the time limit. (Practise at home in advance first: Your selection may be longer than you think when read out loud.)
- Show up fifteen minutes to half an hour before an event begins.
- Bring copies of your book(s) to sell and a pen to sign them with.
- Talk to and thank the event organizers.
- Talk to people who attend the event.
- Bonus tip: take a photo or selfie at the event to post on social media afterwards with a thank you to everyone who attended.

## FESTIVALS

It can be tougher than you might think to get into major Canadian book festivals, and usually pitches and invitations are handled by publicists. But if you're self-publishing or your publisher doesn't have the resources to reach out or there's a smaller, local festival in your area you're interested in attending, contact the organizers — well in advance of when they announce the line-up. In your pitch, you may want to include your media kit, media clippings, blurbs, and any other materials you think may help your case, including a link to your book trailer.

Remember to ask for payment to appear at a festival. Many Canadian festivals and reading series are eligible to apply for funding to pay you through The Writers' Union of Canada's National Public Readings Program and the League of Canadian Poets' Canada Poetry Tours. Visit [writersunion.ca](http://writersunion.ca) and [poets.ca](http://poets.ca) for more information.

## REACHING OUT TO BOOKSTORES AND BOOK SIGNINGS

Bookstore owners and staff are usually hardcore book enthusiasts. They love it when authors stop by to say hello and sign copies. Plan a bookstore day to travel around your city or town and visit all the bookstores. Talk to staff, sign copies in stock, and if they don't yet have your book, tell them your elevator pitch and let them know how to order it. You can also organize formal book-signing and reading events at bookstores.

### INDUSTRY ADVICE: ON EVENTS AT BOOKSTORES

Chris Harrow, Events Coordinator, McNally Robinson Books, Saskatoon

1. Contact the events coordinator at a bookstore and send along information on your book with a publication date, quick synopsis, and author bio. If you have any accolades or sales successes, highlight these.

It is necessary to contact the coordinator as early as possible, sometimes even two to three months prior to the event, to give the coordinator time to bring in books and do publicity.

2. It can be a real hit and miss for successes for an evening reading. I am often surprised by expected turnout and actual turnout. The strongest successes we typically have are when a reading is populated by the author's friends, family, and co-workers.

My personal favorite and most successful and fun readings as an audience member are when the author is in conversation. The conversation need not be formal.

With a conversation, remember the host and the author must prepare. One can be surprised how many questions thirty minutes can need.

## ATTENDING BOOK CLUBS

A real benefit of getting your book into book clubs is sales: A whole group of people will be buying your book for each club. Find out about book clubs in your area through your network and online. Check with your local library, as they often organize book clubs. The book clubs I attended were small and fun, with lots of snacks, and, most importantly, engaged readers who had lots of great questions for me. Remember, if you're invited to appear at a book club out of town, or have a busy schedule, you can Skype in!

## HAND SALES

Every publisher offers a different deal to authors on author copies. I received a dozen complimentary copies and then purchased additional copies from the distributor at a discounted wholesale price. In some cases, you might need permission from your publisher to resell your book. Make it a priority to find out about and understand the arrangement with your publisher.

Once that's cleared up, it's a great idea to have copies of your own book on hand and to get used to selling them to friends and neighbours. You can also sell them at book tables at various events and book fairs. Be sure to charge the list price, not the wholesale author price you pay, so you'll make a profit. You'll have to report hand sales on your taxes as income, so don't forget to keep track of your hand-sale numbers.

## GOING ON TOUR

These days, unless you're a very big name bestseller, very few publishers are sending authors on tour because it can be expensive and a lot of work to organize. But if you're willing to do a lot of the legwork yourself and couch surf with friends and family to keep your expenses down, some publishers will provide some funding to help you out. I went on a modest indie book tour with an author friend for my book and I loved connecting with readers across the country. We sold quite a few copies of our books en route, too. If going on tour is important to you, you may forego vacations and other trips the year your book comes out and tour instead!

Remember to look into travel funding from the Canada Council and other sources when you're planning your tour. Check the guidelines, because you might qualify!

## INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION

International promotion through traditional media and channels is challenging and expensive. If your book is coming out in multiple countries, check in with your publisher to see what, if anything, you can do to help with the promotion. You may be able to organize a U.S. launch, for example. But no matter what, remember when you engage in social media, you have access to promote your book to the whole world — from the comfort of your home!

### WORKSHEET: WHICH OF THESE NETWORKING ACTIVITIES APPEAL TO ME, AND WHEN AM I GOING TO DO THEM?

Activity	Level of appeal (low, medium, high)	My timeline strategy and availability for this
Hosting a book launch event		
Readings, talks, and author appearances		
Festivals		
Reaching out to bookstores and book signings		
Attending book clubs		
Hand sales		
Going on a book tour		

# FINE TUNING AS YOU GO

## LEAVING ROOM FOR EXPERIMENTATION

Marketing is always experimental. Developing and sticking to a plan gives you a road map through the process so you don't get stuck or lose momentum, but be open to opportunities and new ideas that pop up along the way!

## RUN WITH WHAT'S WORKING AND DROP WHAT'S NOT

Some tactics that work for other authors may not work for you. Everything's worth trying, but if it's not working, or feels like more effort than it's worth, just drop it and move on. The market's finicky, and it's not your fault. Try something else!

Christine Fisher Guy, author of the novel *The Umbrella Mender* (Wolsak and Wynn, 2014), found her niche marketing her novel by doing more of what she already does as a freelance journalist and adding her book title to her journalism byline, and saying yes to everything she was asked to do.

### AUTHOR ADVICE: ON SAYING YES TO OPPORTUNITIES

Christine Fisher Guy, *The Umbrella Mender* (Wolsak and Wynn, 2014)

I made sure I had some pieces out in advance of the novel, a few reviews of fiction and some author interviews at the *LA Review of Books*. It wasn't so much a plotted strategy as a feeling that I should have a place I could say, "Christine Fischer Guy's debut novel is....," so I got busy pitching things.



As it turned out, a short story I wrote was published in December of the year my novel came out in an Austin-based journal, so when I was invited to the launch, I went to that and organized an event at a bookstore there, too, which gave me some more U.S. exposure.

I also did the usual bunch of print and voice interviews after the novel. I said yes to everything I was asked to do, including guest-editing the Afterword section at the *National Post* (five days of mini-essays about going north) and a radio interview with CBC's *Up North*. It's hard to quantify how well these things worked, but my book did sell well, so I think they did have an impact.

## LOOKING AT SALES NUMBERS

In every other industry in the world, marketers monitor sales figures during campaigns to see what's working so they can adjust tactics. For some reason, some Canadian publishers are often reticent to share sales numbers with authors except in annual sales statement form, which are mailed to authors long after most promotion and publicity plans are already over. If you're self-publishing, you have the luxury of seeing your sales stats in real time. If you have a publisher, ask for your sales numbers midway through your plan's progress. They might say no, but if they do share them with you, this information can be very valuable for you in determining your progress and next steps.

## WHEN TO CALL IT A WRAP AND FOCUS ON YOUR NEXT BOOK

Some authors finish a manuscript and start on the next one the next day. Some authors take a break and go outside into the sunshine to refill the creative well. I focussed on marketing my book for a year, until my agent kindly gave me the nudge I needed to stand down and start writing my next. Set yourself a target end-date on your book marketing efforts. But whenever momentum on your next book or writing project emerges, run with it!

## CELEBRATING YOUR SUCCESS

The fact you wrote your book and got it into the world will always be a badge of success, no matter what happens with sales and what you do with your promotion and publicity. Put that book on prominent display on your own bookshelf or desk, and congratulate yourself!

## WORKSHEET: WHAT'S WORKING AND WHAT'S NEXT

Questions to think about as you work through your promotion and publicity plan

1. What's working right now with my promotions and publicity?
2. What's not working the way I thought it would with promotions and publicity, or feels energetically draining?
3. What book or writing project do I want to start on next?
4. When do I want to begin the new project?

# MY BOOK PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY PLAN

A BASIC PLAN YOU CAN TAILOR TO YOUR NEEDS

## PART 1: OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

What are my personal objectives, goals, and markers of success for this book?

## PART 2: MY AUTHOR PRESENCE

List the website, social media, online tools, and other materials you've decided to use to help build your author presence and promote this book.

Activity	Maximum budget

### PART 3: CAMPAIGNS

List the campaign activities you've decided to take on to help promote this book.

Activity	Maximum budget

### PART 4: GETTING OUT THERE

List the event activities you've decided to do to help promote this book.

Activity	Maximum budget

## PART 5: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER IN A WORK-BACK SCHEDULE

My book's release date is: \_\_\_\_\_

What activities listed above do I need to do BEFORE the release date?

What activities listed above can I leave until AFTER the release date?

My promotion and publicity work plan begins on this date: \_\_\_\_\_

My promotion and publicity work plan ends on this date: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX

## PROMO SQUADS: A HOW-TO GUIDE BY FARZANA DOCTOR

A promo squad (PS) is a group of people who complete small publicity tasks to extend your publicist's and/or your self-promotional reach. Here's a guide to using them effectively.

### WHO TO ASK

I suggest asking twenty-five to fifty friends, family members, and colleagues. Go bigger if you want. Most should be social media users, but don't exclude people who might be able to help in other ways. For example, perhaps you know a social butterfly who prefers to spread the word at his cocktail parties. Think broadly in terms of geography, interests, and social networks. Don't limit yourself to people in the publishing industry, who are inundated with book news. Think about the readers you'd like to reach. Maybe that friend who is active in her mosque or your uncle who is part of a bowling league would be good people to ask.

### HOW TO ASK

Here's a sample invitation that I sent to fifty people:

Hi Everyone,

By now you probably know that my third novel, *All Inclusive*, will be released in late September by Dundurn Press. I'm incredibly excited to have this book come out! You can find out more about it, and get a glimpse of its cover and synopsis at [dundurn.com/books/all\\_inclusive](http://dundurn.com/books/all_inclusive).

It's important to include the book's info so that they have a sense of what they are being asked to promote.

I've learned much about the book business over the last few years, including

- I need lots of help from my family and friends,
- word of mouth sells books, and
- small acts, done by many people, make a big difference in book promotion.

Most people will never have heard of a PS, so you'll need to explain the concept.

So, I'm compiling a list of people who are willing to help me. I'm contacting you because you've been so sweet and supportive in the past.

Will you join the *All Inclusive* promo squad?

Here's what's involved (aka, fifteen minutes, spread out over four months):

Between September and December, I'll send out one email every couple of weeks asking you to complete a specific task. There will be a total of five tasks.

Each task will take only one to five minutes and will include things like

- inviting people to my launch,
- circulating a book trailer video link to your networks,
- requesting/placing a hold on the book at your library,
- posting/tweeting something (if you are on Facebook or Twitter), and
- writing a one-sentence review.

Each task will be laid out to be simple and quick, with clear directions. In some cases, I'll send you sample text you can use or adapt. And of course, if you don't feel like doing a specific task, you can ignore that particular email.

This section is quite specific because people need details about your expectations. They also need reassurance that you know they are busy and that your request will be time limited!

If you're not interested, or too busy, I completely understand. If you ARE interested, please hit reply and I will add you to the list. If you don't reply, that's OK too!

I suggest giving two weeks for people to respond.

Thanks!

Farzana



## WHAT TO ASK

My sample invitation lays out a list of the requests I made. You may have other needs to consider. Other ideas could include asking your PS to post a selfie with your book, walk around with the book, leave it on their desks at work, or suggest it to book clubs. I recommend scheduling your PS requests to work with your overall marketing plan.

Once you've recruited enough people (I recruited thirty-two people out of the fifty I asked), send out your first request. Here's the middle section of an email I sent:

My Toronto launch is coming up in four weeks! Would you share the link today or tomorrow? Even if you don't live in Toronto, it's really helpful; the post will serve as a general book announcement.

It is useful to give people a timeline for the task. Some PS users I know will get more specific, suggesting 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. as the most optimal time for Facebook and Twitter.

1) Here's an example of a post that you can cut and paste on Facebook (edit as you'd like):

Farzana Doctor's third novel, *All Inclusive*, is coming out this month! Here's her Toronto launch info: [facebook.com/events/1618575708414348](https://facebook.com/events/1618575708414348)

2) Here's an example of a tweet that you can cut and paste on Twitter (edit as you like) OR just go and retweet my tweet.

Toronto launch of @FarzanaDoctor's novel in 4 weeks! #AllInclusiveNovel  
[facebook.com/events/1618575708414348](https://facebook.com/events/1618575708414348)

It's important to provide these sample posts and tweets, and all relevant links and tags. Ensure that these tasks are almost effortless. For example, a later request involved asking people to place holds at their library. I included a list of my book's links at all the city libraries of my PS members. If you ask people to write reviews, include links to your book on Goodreads, Amazon, etc.

3) If you prefer (or are not on social media), consider emailing/phoning a few friends to invite them. Here are the details: September 29, 7 p.m., Gladstone Hotel.

It's helpful to provide an alternative suggestion for members not on social media.

## A FEW MORE DOS AND DON'TS

- Don't be afraid to ask people for help, but do remind people that they can opt out. In my experience 60 percent will reply and say yes.
- Do keep to your word. If you promised that you would only make five requests, stick to that.
- Do send a final wrap-up/thank-you email so that your PS knows that their work is completed.
- Do help others on a regular basis.
- Do include your publicist on your PS list so that they are in the loop.
- Do plan your PS requests in advance but leave one task open. Maybe you'll get a stellar review or invitation that you'll want them to promote.
- Don't expect everyone on your PS list to complete every task. I've noticed that most will be able to do about half of them. This is why your list should be fairly large.
- Do write personal invitations to individuals who might find a group email off-putting.
- Do make your PS emails easy to read. Keep them as brief as possible. Use formatting tools (bullets, underlining, etc).

*Farzana Doctor is a novelist and registered social worker in private practice. All Inclusive (Dundurn Press) was released in Fall 2015.*

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# ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

**SELL YOUR BOOK: AN AUTHOR'S GUIDE TO PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION** is part of the Writers' How-to series, which offers professional guides on a variety of topics for writers.

**SUZANNE ALYSSA ANDREW** is the author of the novel *Circle of Stones* and the associate editor for the beloved literary magazine *Taddle Creek*. She works as a freelance story director, writer, and editor, and plays bass for fun.

**THE WRITERS' UNION OF CANADA** is the national organization of book authors. Founded in 1973 and now with over 2,000 members across the country, the Union promotes the rights, freedoms, and economic well-being of all writers.

**THE LEAGUE OF CANADIAN POETS** is the professional organization for established and emerging Canadian poets. Founded in 1966 to nurture the advancement of poetry in Canada and the promotion of the interests of poets, it now comprises over 700 members.

# WRITERS' HOW-TO

## EXPLORE ALL THE GUIDES IN THIS SERIES

All guides in the Writers' How-to series are available for purchase online at [writersunion.ca/writers-how-to](http://writersunion.ca/writers-how-to). Members of The Writers' Union of Canada can access the full series at no cost. Print copies are available upon request.

**ANTHOLOGY RATES AND CONTRACTS** provides notes on contributions to anthologies, suggests minimum rates, and provides a suggested anthology contract.

**AUTHOR & EDITOR** (by Rick Archbold, Doug Gibson, Dennis Lee, John Pearce, Jan Walter) describes the relationship between author and editor, including a list of dos and don'ts for both parties.

**AUTHOR & LITERARY AGENT** offers guidelines and responsibilities governing the relationship between the author and the literary agent.

**FROM PAGE TO SCREEN** is a reference guide to options and film and TV contracts for original literary works, including information on minimum and maximum rates paid.

**GHOSTWRITING** (by Marian Hebb) includes various details to consider when negotiating a ghost writing agreement, including a sample contract.

**GLOSSARY OF PUBLISHING TERMS** is a user-friendly guide for authors dealing with the book publishing industry, usually during contract negotiations.

**HOW TO SELF-PUBLISH** (by Eve Silver) covers the why and how — and how much — of self-publishing, from editing and design to distribution and marketing, for authors with unpublished and previously-published materials.

**INCOME TAX GUIDE FOR WRITERS** is a tax guide for those in the business of writing and includes details about the GST as it pertains to writers' income.

**INCORPORATION FOR WRITERS** covers the advantages and disadvantages of incorporation.

**SELL YOUR BOOK: AN AUTHOR'S GUIDE TO PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION** (by Suzanne Alyssa Andrew) provides ideas for publicity and promotional activities that work, including a blueprint for your own personal book marketing plan, and is filled with advice from authors and industry experts.

**WRITERS' GUIDE TO CANADIAN PUBLISHERS** is a searchable online database of publishers who currently accept unsolicited manuscripts.

**WRITERS' GUIDE TO GRANTS** lists grants available to Canadian writers and includes information about writing samples, types of juries and how they judge, and application procedures.

**CONTRACTS SELF-HELP PACKAGE** helps writers evaluate and negotiate contracts offered by publishers.

**MODEL TRADE BOOK AGREEMENT** is a comprehensive model contract, complete with a model royalty statement, which provides reasonable minimum terms for trade book contracts and is a useful comparative tool for evaluating your publisher's contract.

**HELP YOURSELF TO A BETTER CONTRACT** (by Marian Hebb) is designed to aid writers in book contract negotiations with their publishers, and includes a checklist of favourable contract provisions with advice on what to ask and what to watch for.

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