

BuildBookBuzz

Book Marketing Plan Template

A marketing plan is your blueprint for success. It will guide your book promotion activities.

PART 1: Your Book Marketing Plan Elements

It helps to understand the seven book marketing plan elements before using your fill-in-the-blanks template on page 5. Read each element description before filling in your form. (*Note: Underlined text links to more detailed information online.*)

1. Situation/Overview

In one or two paragraphs, describe your book and what makes it different from the competition. What makes it marketable? And what makes *you* marketable as its author? Do you have unique credentials? Include your publication date, whether it's in the past or the future.

2. Target Audience

Who will buy the book? What media outlets do they read, watch, or listen to? If you want to reach "married women with no children and a household income greater than \$50,000," say so. The more focused you are, the more likely you are to reach the right audience efficiently. (Need help with this? See "[Who Will Buy Your Book: How to Figure Out and Find Your Target Audience](#).") List as many target audiences as you need.

3. Goals

A goal is a broad statement of direction that is determined by your needs. In this case, your goals are related to marketing your book. With good goals in place, you can look at each marketing tactic and ask, "Does this step help me achieve my goals?" If the answer isn't "yes," the tactic should be removed from the plan. Goals are well-defined. They tell you which direction you want to go.

Use these *sample* book marketing plan goals to jumpstart your thinking:

- To [become an Amazon category best-seller](#) within two months of my book's publication date. (Note: That link is an affiliate link for a free how-to e-book.)
- To develop a fan base that will lead to increased sales of more books in my fiction series.
- To generate book sales through increased visibility in city business journals coast-to-coast.
- To use book publicity to generate paid speaking engagements.
- To help position me as an expert in a way that will generate more clients.

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4. Strategy

A strategy is your over-arching approach to promoting your book. It's a "big picture" view that summarizes the thinking behind your efforts. What's your strategy for getting exposure for your book? Record it with a bullet point or two.

Here are a few strategy *examples* to get you thinking:

- To generate great word-of-mouth by distributing free copies in exchange for reviews, and to give free copies to people who influence my target audience.
- To focus on public speaking because I've learned that I sell a lot of books after people hear me speak.
- To do as much marketing online as possible because [I'm shy](#) and don't want to do interviews or in-person events.

Your strategy will set the stage for your tactics selection.

5. Tactics

Tactics are the "meat and potatoes" of your plan. The tactics are the things you're going to do to get exposure for your book.

Tactics vary from book to book – it's not a "one-size-fits-all" situation – but tactics to consider (among others!) include:

- Getting [pre-publication endorsements](#) (blurbs)
- Seeking [reader reviews](#)
- Writing and distributing a [book announcement press release](#)
- Writing and distributing [tip sheet-type press releases](#)
- Creating a [Facebook page](#)
- Using [Facebook advertising](#)
- Using [Twitter](#) effectively
- Creating a [Facebook group](#)
- Doing [podcast interviews](#)
- Pursuing local, regional, or national [media attention](#)
- Writing bylined articles for [trade magazines](#)
- [Pitching article ideas](#) to the press
- Doing [radio interviews](#)
- Building an [email list](#) and sending a regular newsletter
- Going on a [virtual book tour](#)
- Scheduling [book signings](#)
- Creating an [image quote](#) campaign

Tactics are the tangibles. The tactics you select are those that will help you achieve your goals. To select the right tactics, go back to your goals and ask yourself, "What do I need to do to make this happen?"

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Think in terms of specific activities, such as “Write a New Year’s resolution tip sheet providing advice on how to organize your office for greater efficiency and productivity,” or “Identify thought leaders on my topic and contact them about writing a pre-publication endorsement for the cover.”

Caution: Don’t try to implement too many tactics, especially if you haven’t done this type of work before. In the beginning, pick two or three that will help you reach your target audience and learn to do them really well. When you’ve mastered them, add in another solid tactic.

6. Budget

After you create a list of tactics you believe will work, pull out the calculator to determine what they will cost (if anything) and which or how many of them you can afford. If your budget is limited, select those you believe will have the most impact for the least amount of money.

7. Timeline

A timeline will help you manage the tasks and tactics included in your plan. For example, if you want to get [pre-publication endorsements](#), make sure you do that far enough out from your publication date so that you can get any stellar endorsements onto the cover and sales page. Planning a [virtual book tour](#)? Start building relationships with key bloggers at least six months before your publication date.

Once you’ve created your marketing plan, incorporate the tasks and deadlines into your daily calendar so that you make certain you follow through on your assignments. Remember to reward yourself when you complete a task, particularly if it’s one you dislike.

Pulling It All Together

To create your book marketing plan – your blueprint – transfer the information you record on the following form to a new document with the same headings:

1. Situation/Overview
2. Target Audience
3. Goals
4. Strategy
5. Tactics
6. Budget
7. Timeline

You can use bullet points – there’s no need to agonize over the language.

Finally, track your activities and outcomes. If you’re self-published, you have access to your book’s dashboard on retail sites so you can see how many copies you’ve sold and when they were purchased. Use that information to guide your activities.

If you’re traditionally published, you’ll have to rely on less specific metrics, such as changes in your sales rank on Amazon. When it goes down (the lower the number, the better you’re selling on Amazon), you’ll know you sold books. Here’s a great clue you’re doing things right: You’ve sold out and your publisher has to do another press run!

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Set up an Excel file that has a column for a tactic and the date you used that tactic plus a column for book sales or Amazon sales rank during that period. If you do this faithfully, you'll start to see patterns – you'll see which virtual book tour “appearances” sold books and which ones didn't, whether your Twitter strategy led to sales, if that Facebook ad paid off, and so on.

*Your fill-in-the-blanks book marketing plan template
is on the next page!*

PART 2: Your Book Marketing Plan Template

1. Situation/Overview

2. Target Audience

- Audience 1 _____
- Audience 2 _____
- Audience 3 _____

3. Goals

- Goal 1 _____
- Goal 2 _____
- Goal 3 _____

4. Strategy

5. Tactics

- Tactic 1: _____
- Tactic 2: _____
- Tactic 3: _____
- Tactic 4: _____
- Tactic 5: _____
- Tactic 6: _____

6. Budget

\$ _____

7. Timeline

Week/Month for Activity	Activity