When preparing to release your book, there are many tasks to be completed. The following list can help you get organized and be prepared to make a big splash! But first, some considerations for you before you begin...

**A Note About Amazon Best Seller Campaigns**

Many authors have a goal of getting their books on an Amazon best seller list, and have been told that the way to do that is to hold a big one-day launch campaign. The way this works is that you try to convince everyone you know to promote and buy your book on launch day.

While this can be a way to get your book in the top 10 of a sub-category on Amazon, there is absolutely no long-term value. Once the promotion is over, books fall right off the list. Even the term “bestselling author” has lost its luster because so many authors have manipulated the system by using this strategy.

Instead of a one-day campaign, why not hold a week-long or even month-long launch promotion? On-going efforts will have much more meaningful long-term results, allowing you to raise visibility for your book throughout your campaign. And yes, you can still make it on to a best seller list on Amazon. But perhaps rather than hoping to land on there for a minute, you could set a goal of getting on the list and *staying there for a while!* Ongoing effort is the best way to make that happen!
Decide on a Launch Strategy

You can simply ask people to buy your book or you can offer some added incentive—which can help boost sales. For example, you can compile some bonus items for buyers who register their purchase receipt number (you’ll need to create a registration form on your website). Bonuses could include reports, whitepapers, digital workbooks, audio recordings, training videos or any other downloadable content. And this content can come from you or you can ask peers to contribute bonus items. This can be a wildly popular feature for a launch!

Another option, which is quite a bit more complex, is to host a contest during your launch. You would need to acquire prizes to award and then provide a way for buyers to register to win. Though contests can be complicated, they can also generate a lot of buzz.

Whatever you decide, it’s important to plan out your launch strategy in advance. One of the biggest mistakes new authors make is to not think about book marketing until after the book is released.

Also keep in mind that book marketing is a marathon. Authors who see the best results are the ones who commit to ongoing effort and keep those marketing wheels turning. You can do this!

Tip:

Create a file for keeping track of your launch plans. A simple spreadsheet should do the trick. Now, on to your checklist...
BOOK LAUNCH CHECKLIST (NONFICTION)

✓ Consider hosting a pre-sale (optional). Making your book available for pre-sale allows you to build some momentum before the book is officially released. Not only can you generate some buzz, but all the pre-sales you accumulate will count toward your total sales ranking on launch day! This can impact where your book appears on the best seller lists on Amazon, not to mention the ebook best sellers list on the New York Times!

✓ Consider utilizing beta readers (optional). Beta readers can be a group of 10 to 1,000 or more people who get early access to read your book for free. Yes, free. The goal is to get people talking about your book as soon as it’s launched while you build a base of raving fans. Beta readers can be organized in a private Facebook group and given special privileges, like access to a course you offer to thank them for their efforts. They should also be asked to post book reviews on Amazon, Goodreads and other sites, and encouraged to help you spread the word.

✓ Plan your launch announcements to happen within a week AFTER the book is available online. It can help to give yourself some cushion in your timeline and make sure all sales channels are working properly before you pull the trigger and announce to your audience.
Build anticipation for your launch:

- Put your book cover on your website with a big “coming soon” announcement. This can be done months in advance. In fact, you can leverage your social media audience to help vote on your book cover, book title or any other book-related details.

- Build your mailing list. Make sure you have an email sign-up box on your website, and add it to your Facebook page as well. Don’t have email yet? We like Constant Contact.

- Get your social media accounts set up if you don’t have them already. You don’t need to do it all—pick at least two (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram). Start sharing news about your book months in advance.

- Join Goodreads and set up an author profile. Also, get involved with reading groups on Goodreads, contribute to reading lists, compile your own lists, and get involved in the Goodreads community.

Do pre-launch research (or delegate these tasks to an assistant):

- Build a media list or purchase a list from a resource such as Gebbie Press (note that members of the Nonfiction Authors Association receive a 50% discount off Gebbie Press products). Your media list should begin with local print, radio and television since local media attention is always the easiest to get. Then expand your list to include media outlets across the country.

- Build a list of trade association opportunities. What associations do your potential readers belong to? Visit association websites and look for
opportunities. Can you contribute posts to their blog, write for their newsletter or magazine, apply to speak at local meetings or a national event or even join their board of directors?

- Research bloggers to pitch. Find blogs that reach your target audience and look to see if they post book reviews, accept guest blog posts, conduct interviews or host book give-away contests. You will tailor your pitch based on the results of your research.

- Research internet radio shows and podcasts to find programs where you should be a guest. Look for their guest submission guidelines (they all need guests!).

- Build a list of book reviewers from Amazon. Look at books in your genre and find out who has reviewed them. Each reviewer has a public profile on Amazon and many list their email address and website link because they WANT to be offered review copies of books. To make this process even easier, check out the Book Review Targeter software (disclosure: affiliate link). It does all the work for you—we love it!

- Look for groups that reach your target audience on Facebook, LinkedIn, Yahoo and Ning. Join the groups and start engaging so you aren’t a total stranger when it’s time to announce your book.

✓ **Write copy to be used for all aspects of launch:**

- Write and schedule several blog posts to go out during your launch campaign.
o Write and schedule social media posts to go out during launch campaign (use Hootsuite to schedule posts).

o Write an announcement for social media groups.

o Write a pitch for traditional media. Find an angle that isn’t just about your book launch (such as tie-in with an upcoming holiday or recently released statistics).

o Write email copy and sample social media posts for peers, clients, family and friends to share (this makes it as easy as possible for them to do so).

o Write a pitch for bloggers to review your book, interview you, accept a guest post from you or host a contest with your books as a prize.

o Write a pitch for podcasters and internet radio shows. See a sample pitch here.

o Write copy you will use to announce to your own email list.

o Write a pitch for book reviewers.

o Write a pitch for trade association opportunities (contribute to blog/newsletter/magazine, speak at events, get listed in their bookstore, etc.).

o Write compelling book jacket copy (to be used on your website and other promotional opportunities).

o Write a new author bio with details about your book.
- Write blog posts for your own site.

- Write guest blog posts that you will contribute to other websites.

**Prep your website:**

- Create a killer book sales page on your website. Make sure to include links to purchase on Amazon and other booksellers. If you plan to also ship books yourself, you’ll need a shopping cart button (you can get one from [Paypal](http://Paypal)).

- Add a media page that includes your bio, at least one professional photo, your contact information and a list of any previous media coverage you’ve received (or start building that list now). A media page makes it easy for reporters, editors and producers to learn about you and gather information. Plus, having one on your site will make you look like a pro.

- Add your book announcement on your home page, with a link to your book sales page.

- Note: if you are accepting pre-orders ahead of the launch, you’ll need to get your website ready in advance.

**Set up an Author Central account with Amazon and claim your book as soon as it is available.** Visit [http://AuthorCentral.Amazon.com](http://AuthorCentral.Amazon.com). Here you can update your book’s sales page on Amazon, add your bio, blog feed and social media links, and monitor your sales history and book reviews. This is an ESSENTIAL tool for authors.
✓ **Send Pre-Launch Media Pitches** (typically up to three months ahead of launch):

  - Send out traditional media pitches (print, radio, television).
  - Send out blogger pitches.
  - Send out internet radio/podcast pitches.
  - Note that you can send multiple media pitches over a period of time. Find new angles for your pitches if you don’t get a response the first time around. Persistence pays off!

✓ **Plan a party (if you want one).** Make sure to include a table where you can sign books, and a way to collect payment ([Square.com](http://Square.com) provides credit card processing on your smart phone!).

✓ **Send Launch Day Announcements:**

  - Send email announcement to your mailing list on launch day, and then again throughout the duration of your campaign.
  - Send email announcing launch and asking for support to peers/clients.
  - Send email announcing launch to family and friends.
  - Share social media posts on launch day and beyond.
  - Send announcement to your beta readers, if you have some.
o Announce via social media groups that reach your target audience. (You may need to get permission from the group leader first.)

✓ Monitor your sales rank on Amazon during launch day. The lower the rank, the more books you are selling. She [how Amazon calculates sales rank here](#).

✓ Go live on launch day. Utilize Facebook Live and/or Periscope to engage your audience on launch day, report on happenings for the day, and thank your audience.

✓ Interact with your audience via social media and blog comments throughout your launch period. Make sure they know you are engaged and grateful for their support.

✓ Generate book reviews. Make this a high priority and an on-going task to keep book reviews coming in since book reviews have a big impact on Amazon sales.

  o Ask beta readers to post reviews.

  o Ask close friends, peers and clients, but be careful. Amazon does not like authors’ friends to post reviews and could remove them. Ideally these should be genuine reviews from people who’ve purchased and read your book.

  o Reach out to Amazon book reviewers and offer a review copy of your book (ideally one to two months prior to the book’s release).

  o If self-published, submit your book for review through [Midwest Book Review](#)(free) and [Kirkus reviews](#).
Apply to make your book available through NetGalley (paid service).

Follow up on review copy readers to ask for a review if one hasn’t been provided.

Get in the habit of asking people for book reviews. Example: when a reader sends you an email to rave about your book, reply and respectfully ask for a review!

For more resources on book reviews, download our free report: 50+ Ways to Generate Book Reviews.

Other Tasks to Consider

Participate in a Goodreads give-away promotion. LibraryThing and Shelfari also offer similar promotions.

Promote a sale of your ebook through BookBub.

Leverage Facebook ads to promote your book.

Think outside the box. What other connections do you have that could help you promote books? Do you belong to an alumni association? Do you serve on the board for a nonprofit? Where can you expand your reach?

Submit your book in awards programs, which can improve credibility and give you something exciting to promote to your audience. The Nonfiction Authors Association hosts a year-round book awards program.
Host your own free webinars to teleseminars. These should be educational in nature (not just about your book). You can build your mailing list and audience with events like these.

Launch your own podcast. Podcasting is hotter than ever and soon cars will come off the assembly line with the podcast app built right into the dashboard! It’s easy to start your own show and distribute to iTunes with a tool like Liberated Syndication.

Don’t forget to have fun! Marketing a book is no easy task, but if you can find a way to enjoy the process, it can go a long way in helping you sell more books and reach more people.

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Top Book Marketing Strategies to Utilize Long-Term

✓ **Blogging** – Statistics show that the more often you blog, the more traffic your site will receive. Aim for at least twice per week, though more is even better.

✓ **Social Media** – It’s not a fad and it’s not going away! So embrace at least two of the networks. Share your blog posts, useful content, funny content, and anything that helps to engage your audience.

✓ **Speaking** – Speakers tend to sell a lot of books to attendees at the back of the room. If you enjoy public speaking, get out there and book yourself to speak at trade associations, schools, conferences, non-profits, service organizations, chambers of commerce and corporations.

✓ **Guest Blogging** – Write for websites that reach your target audience.

✓ **Radio/Podcast Interviews** – It’s relatively easy to land radio gigs, provided you can develop interesting pitches that appeal to the target audience. Pitches can be made around the results of industry studies, holidays that you can tie into, recent industry statistics, popular trends, and current news.

✓ **Book Reviews** – Always put effort into generating high quality book reviews!

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