

Showcase Marketing Ability in Your Book Proposal

By Karen Whiting

An author's marketing ability should shine throughout the proposal. Publishing experts indicate we need to either build a platform or gather and engage a tribe. Basically, authors need to clearly pinpoint the target buyer's motivations to buy the book and how to reach that audience.

Reader Motivations

List takeaways that inspire buyers to purchase the book. This is first done within a good hook that shares both the uniqueness of the book and main reader benefit. Add a section on demographics to assess the potential audience size with supporting facts about the possible market size. Add links to articles and studies to demonstrate the need for the books and its benefits.

For fiction authors this means crafting a great hook that grabs attention. In the book's description share 'what if' questions and emotions the characters will experience.

Benefits motivate people to buy a book, while affinity groups identify tribes or readers.

Tribe of Buyers

An author starts characterizing the tribe by naming affinity groups. Add demographics of potential readers to communicate additional information about where readers spend their time and money. Recognizing what social media your readers use helps determine a strategy to reach those buyers. An author confirms reader connections through listing endorsers from affinity groups, blogs that will allow them to be guests, and reviewers from these organizations.

Fiction authors also need to identify readers who like the genre of their book and why the book will be unique enough to impact lives. Specific marketing plans explain how they will reach those fiction fans. That may mean providing a database of blogs and social media groups in the genre who will let you guest post. State what readers (tribal members) will receive in the posts, such as behind the scenes message, research, and story in blogs and places to engage readers. Next, make sure your book stands out.

Analyze Competing Titles

Analyzing the competition challenges authors to explain the book's uniqueness and position in the market. Various titles help authors build a case that the topic is saleable and popular. It's also an opportunity to define the distinction of the author's book slant, solutions offered, treatment, and overall message. It's not an opportunity to put down other books, but an occasion to highlight the proposed book's distinctiveness.

For the author, dig deeper to see what the authors of the best sellers in the categories do to promote their books. Glean ideas to apply in your marketing plans.

Marketing Plans

Showcase actual ideas you will put into action. Each one is a promise you make that you'll need to keep. The main outlets for marketing can be boiled down to five: media, social media, print, speaking, and expertise. If you have a proven record in any category note those credentials and experience followed by ideas to apply.

- For media, list past interviews, media training, or your own experience in creating videos and FB live. Then share a sample pitch for interviews. Add connections you have for interviews (radio, television, podcast hosts, and print).
- With social media, provide information on number of followers, what social media engage your readers and how you will connect to them. Include experience with media posts that engaged followers, Facebook live, and ability to create memes. It's more important to get followers to engage in conversation than to simply collect followers who may not actually read your posts.
- For print, list article pitches and publications, what types of materials you can create to augment your book such as charts, tip sheets, and facts. Indicate if you write a column or frequently contribute to any periodicals.
- With speaking, share your experience, speaker training, and ideas of possible speaking opportunities. This may include meetings of affinity groups, book clubs, and events your target audience attends. Outline your efforts to book speaking engagements through sharing ideas of seminars or talking points that will be used to develop keynotes and workshops.
- Expertise is becoming the person people contact for interviews and quotes. This comes as you get known. Increase opportunities to be quoted by subscribing to services such as PR newswire or Help a Reporter Out (HARO) and send press releases to media and meeting planners when your book releases or you speak. If you have published quotes and profiles list those.

Endorsements

Publishers view endorsers as influencers for the book. For nonfiction, find endorsers with ties to affinity groups or expert authorities to validate your ability to write the book.

For fiction, endorsers should be well known authors within the same genre to help readers develop trust in your ability to write.

Author Bio

This section specifies your authority and experience. Published articles and books, speaking and media experience, degrees and certificates in related fields to the book's topic, and media experience verify your qualifications to write and market the book. Add some personal notes about your background and hobbies that adds interesting facts for readers and interviewers.

Work carefully on each of these elements to present a professional vision for marketing the book. It will help garner the interest of traditional publishers and guide you to develop a strategy for selling the book as a traditional or indie author.