

Authors share most effective book marketing methods, with hard data.

Best Bang for Your Book: Where to Spend Your Marketing Bucks

Buy The Complete Version of This Book at Booklocker.com:

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/1228.html?s=pdf>

Introduction

Why This Book?

There are many good books out there about marketing your book, but as a new author, what I found lacking was a sense of where to begin, and which methods would get me the best results. Or even, what kind of results, in concrete terms I could explain.

I published my first book, "My Life at AOL," a memoir of my career at that company from 1988 - 1997, with 1stBooks Library in April of 2001. It came out as both a paperback and an ebook, so I was trying to figure out how to best promote it both in bricks-and-mortar bookstores and on the Internet.

What did I do?

- I bought books about book marketing.
- I joined ebook and author listservs.
- I contacted bookstores.
- I did radio interviews.
- I took out an ad on a major Internet newsletter.
- I sponsored a page on a women's magazine.
- I phoned journalists.
- I sent book reviewers copies of my book.

Best Bang for Your Book

I even listed signed copies of my book on eBay (don't laugh...it actually works! You'll read more about that in the pages ahead).

I did a lot of things. Some of them worked; some didn't. Looking back on the year, I thought, "Gee, I wish someone had told me about what all these efforts would bring...I would have done some things before I did others." I would have not done some things at all. I would have done some things sooner and more often.

While I still have much to learn, as no doubt do most of us, I've learned a lot, and I figured other authors had too.

So I set out to write a book that will tell you, using stories by other actual authors and my own experience, where to spend your marketing efforts for maximum results. (You could spend your whole life marketing your book; it's a very time-consuming endeavor!). But most of us would rather be writing than promoting. And most of us have other books we want to write...we don't just want to spend all our days faxing press releases, posting to listservs and courting reporters!

That's what this book does. Hopefully you will find it a valuable resource. And if you find something you think I should add to a future version, please email it to me (to juliawilk@aol.com) and if I use it, I will plug your book in the future version, along with the other authors who helped.

So, enjoy. And don't neglect other resources, such as John Kremer's "1001 Ways to Market Your Book." (See my Resources Section for a complete list of recommended reading and other references). But this book should give you a feel for where to best spend that precious energy and time.

I. My Story

In 1997, I left the company where I'd worked for eight-plus years of my life, from age 23 to 32. I had an idea for a book in my head, about the incredible ride I'd had at this company, America Online, which was a tiny little firm called Quantum Computer Services when I joined it. In the beginning, no one had heard of it. No one had a clue what I did, even after I tried to explain it to them. By the time I left, the Internet was taking off like a rocket, and AOL was far and away the largest Internet and online service and a household name.

I spent months writing the book. I found an agent (let's call him Agent X) through a friend, who showed me sample book proposals and helped me fine-tune mine.

After several weeks of working and reworking the proposal, I was ready to show it to publishers. And my agent had some very good contacts. But he was so busy with his day job as an entertainment lawyer that it was sometimes weeks (or even months) before I heard back from him. I became very worried about the delay, because I had heard that another writer was working on a book about AOL, the Washington Post reporter who covered AOL in the mid-'90s. I repeatedly urged X to hurry because of this fact, but it seemed not to concern him, or perhaps he just wasn't processing the information.

He did get an editor at a major New York house interested. They wanted to "take on" the book, but with a different focus, as more of a business and not a personal story. I will never forget the conversation with X, who told me my book was "right for their list," and then adding, "Don't take this personally, but you're basically a nobody." (Gosh, how could anyone possibly take that the wrong way?).

Well, I was certainly willing to make changes, though it was not my vision of the story and I was not happy about it. However, the point became moot, when my worries about the other AOL book became

Best Bang for Your Book

reality, and “aol.com” was published. Big House X was no longer interested.

I regretted the time lost with Agent X, although I did appreciate his help with my proposal and his good contacts. I was still determined to get the book out, but on my own terms.

After weighing my options, I decided to go with print-on-demand (POD)/e-publishing via a company called 1stBooks.com. I did this for mainly two reasons: 1) time was of the essence; my book was time-sensitive, and POD would allow me to have a paperback product within 2-3 months, which is lightning-fast compared to traditional print publishing timeframes of 1-2 *years*.

And 2) I would retain the rights to my book, and be in control of it. Which would make me totally responsible for promotion of it – but, I knew this was true for almost all authors anyway.

Where to Start?

Need for Promotion

I don't care if you're Stephen King or a new, self-published author, you are going to need to promote your work. Even writers who are published through major houses need to promote their work, because major houses only do major promotion for a very select number of books.

The good news is, some of your shoestring promotion may be even more effective than a fancy print advertising campaign. That's because, with the tactics detailed in this book, you'll learn to market to those folks who are genuinely interested in what you have to offer, not the teeming masses. (OK, so maybe all of the teeming masses want your book...but that's generally not true for most books and new authors!).

Julia L. Wilkinson

Since we all need to promote our book, we all need to learn about marketing strategies, and their relative effectiveness. We all have only 24 hours in every day, so we need to use what precious time we have when we are not writing our books, doing our errands, and taking care of our personal lives, to our best advantage. This book's goal is to show you which methods you should spend more time doing and in what order.

Success Stories

You've probably heard of the success story of "The Christmas Box" author Richard Evans, who self-published his book, sold thousands of copies, and later went on to get a print publishing contract and see his book as a bestseller on major newspaper lists.

But did you know Evans got his book on USA Today's bestselling book list based on placing it in ONE independent bookstore? Yes, that's right! How could that be? Because the list is put together by using a selected sample of independent bookstores across the country, and because the bookstore his book was selling in happened to be selected at that time for the list, it was able to get on it. (Granted, at a lower placement, but still, getting on the list was enough to spur further sales).

That's a success (not to mention some luck) we can all envy. And yet that's only one technique -- placing your book in independent bookstores -- you'll read about in this book.

So while the odds may be daunting, the possibilities are immense! Now let's get right on to the strategies you can use, and how effective they are.

One way to use this book is to read it straight through. But you can also skim the table of contents, and the Author Rankings of the methods in the back, and get an overview of which techniques authors say worked

Best Bang for Your Book

best for them. If one jumps out at you, or would be particularly effective for your book, do that first.

Read on for more!

Authors share most effective book marketing methods, with hard data.

Best Bang for Your Book: Where to Spend Your Marketing Bucks

Buy The Complete Version of This Book at Booklocker.com:

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/1228.html?s=pdf>