

BUILD BOOK BUZZ



12 ways to keep your nonfiction book in the news

By Sandra Beckwith

Publishers are willing to publicize nonfiction books when they're released, but they rarely do much after the launch to keep books in the news, even though most deserve ongoing media exposure. Here are some easy things you can do to generate continuing publicity for your title. Use a mix of these ideas to develop a 12-month publicity plan that will provide the support your book needs.

- 1. Turn the advice in your chapters into a series of monthly tip sheets.** A tip sheet is a press release that offers tips or advice in a bulleted or numbered format. Start your tip sheet with an introductory paragraph that explains why the tips you're offering are important, list your bulleted advice, then tie it all together at the end with a concluding paragraph. Send it to appropriate media outlets; the distribution list will depend on your topic.
- 2. Contact the press immediately when your topic is making headlines to offer your expert perspective.** This is a sure thing with most local media outlets when it's a national news story because you're giving them a local angle. Fax or e-mail (no attachments) your bio and a cover letter explaining your position on the breaking news to the appropriate media contact. If you've done enough interviews to prepare for the big time, pitch the national news outlets, too.
- 3. Add the media to your newsletter distribution list.** The same useful advice or information you offer subscribers in your print or electronic newsletter could be of interest to reporters covering that topic, too. I got a book contract several years ago from the publicity that resulted from adding the media to the distribution list of a newsletter I publish.
- 4. Repackage your book content into by-lined trade magazine articles.** Depending on the terms of your publishing contract, you might need to do some rewriting so it's "new" material. Make sure the author credit at the end of the article includes your book title.
- 5. Capitalize on holidays and special months, weeks and days by distributing a press release with useful, newsworthy information related to the topic, or by contacting the press to offer yourself as an expert information source.** For example, many daily newspapers run articles in December about how the holidays are especially difficult for people who are grieving the recent loss of a loved one or facing the anniversary of a loss. This presents many coast-to-coast interview opportunities for the author of a book on grief and loss - but only if the author reaches out to the press.
- 6. Contact the public relations department of your industry's trade association to offer yourself for media interviews.** Association public relations people are often contacted by writers like us looking for members with a particular expertise to interview. Make sure your

association knows about your qualifications and the topics you can comment on, and you'll get referral calls.

7. Conduct a newsworthy and relevant survey on your topic and announce the interesting results in a press release. The author of a cookbook designed to make cooking simple and easy can survey people about why they don't cook more, and release the findings in a press release sent to newspaper food editors and cooking magazines. The release should include information about your book's connection to the survey topic.

8. Sponsor an attention-getting contest and announce the results in a press release. To promote my humor book about men, I conducted a "Worst Gift from a Man Contest." The resulting press release led to nationwide media attention, including a holiday appearance on a national cable TV talk show.

9. Subscribe to [Reporter Connection](#) and [HARO](#) and monitor them for publicity opportunities. These free services connect journalists with experts and anecdote sources. Respond only to queries where you can make a definite contribution, and respond thoughtfully with information that helps the journalist understand why you're an excellent resource for the article or segment.

10. Monitor writer forums for source requests. Members frequently post requests on the magazines and newspapers forum for interview sources.

11. Tell the media when you're visiting their market. Reporters love to interview experts who aren't local, so if you're in another city for any reason, contact the appropriate media people two weeks before your trip to offer ideas for articles they can write based on an inperson interview with you. If you're in town to speak, send an announcement press release several weeks in advance and offer to do a pre-event telephone interview.

12. Repurpose your best tips into a free booklet. Write and distribute a press release that describes the booklet and how people can get a free copy; make sure both the booklet and the release include information about your book, too.

Generating ongoing publicity is work, but it's not rocket science. Invest the time so you boost sales while contributing to your author platform. You'll see the rewards at the end of the year.

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