

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR MARKETING A BOOK: LAUNCH JUNE

JANUARY: Assume the manuscript is completed. Either the publisher has indicated the release date or you are just beginning the formatting/final revision/production cycle (uploading, digital proof; review; printed proof; final approval)

If you are traditionally publishing, make sure you clearly understand what the publisher will do for you in terms of marketing (not much) and what the publisher expects from you specifically. Do you have access to their company website where you might suggest information or suggest people or organizations they might send review copies of your book to?

Now is the time to finalize the cover. You will need the cover art to prepare many of the marketing items. If it is not yet done, focus on that. If you do have the cover done and are self-publishing, submit the cover to the publisher to make sure it meets their requirements. If not, work on that. If it does, create artwork files: full cover, front only, back copy only. Make sure the dpi is high enough to allow both thumbnails and enlargements for posters/banners, etc.

Do you want to have an in-person book signing? Is there a store in your area where you might do that? Note that if you are self-published you may not be able to have a signing at a large book chain. An independent store however might be willing to offer your books on consignment for you. Start looking into this, approach the stores you are interested in. Phyllis will help with marketing info here, esp. as to elevator talk.

FEBRUARY: Begin creating an online presence. Consider creating a website (cost is under \$20 a year for a domain name; \$200-300 for website hosting). Choose your domain name carefully. If you will ever only write one book, it's OK to have a domain of your book title. If you think you'll ever write more books or articles, poems, essays or offer your services as a writer, consider using your name as your domain so people can find you.

A blogspot is an alternative to a website. They are free to set up and fairly easy to do for us untechnical folks. The drawback is that people have to type in a longer URL xxx.blogspot.com. That's harder to remember.

At the very least set up an author Facebook page. This is separate from a personal page. This is where you will tell folks about your writing and your upcoming book launch and help grow your fan base. It's free and easy to do. Make it professional but make it yours.

Set up other pages on Goodreads, LinkedIn, etc. as you feel led.

Make sure to set up an author page at Amazon. It also is free. You probably won't be able to publish that page until your book is actually released. But you can plan for that page and write the copy; collect images and even reviews you may have from test readers. Get that ready to hit the day your book releases.

Do your internet research and determine if there are other people's blogs you could visit the week of your release; they may review the book for you or allow you to be interviewed or post a blog about your book. Consider a blog hop or a joint marketing blog chain where you market each other's books. Phyllis will probably tell us more. Make a list of 3-10 blogs to approach about doing something the week of. Offer reciprocal reviews and/or guest blog postings.

MARCH: By now your art work should absolutely be completed and ready to go.

Look into having bookmarks/postcards/flyers made with your book cover. They are inexpensive online or you can make them yourself with free downloadable templates.

You should also have at least one online presence set up by now. Start posting about yourself; your writing journey; your writing mission; introduce the topic of your book

By now you should have completed your manuscript formatting if you will self publish. Upload the manuscript and cover and submit it for preliminary review.

END OF Q1: Reevaluate. How am I doing? Am I ahead of schedule or behind or on track? Do I need to change what I am doing to achieve my goal? Is it even relevant to me or has life or another project gained priority? If so, that's OK. How do I want to change this goal to be relevant?

APRIL: If self publishing, get printed proof and review closely; make changes as needed, re upload and submit again for review. Order another proof copy (optional).

If traditional publishing you should have received and okay'd galleys and received final copies (or will soon). Make sure to have access to clean cover art, including back copy.

Finalize any plans for in person book signings (store; library; book fair, etc.) Make sure you have plenty of books on order for the event. Have a good pen for signing (sharpies are great), bookmarks/postcards to hand out; cookies or candy giveaways planned.

MAY: Provide blog posts, interviews or other promised things for guest blogs. Keep writing and posting on your personal blog, Facebook page, other.

JUNE: Release book. As soon as it is released, upload your prepared Amazon author page. Announce your book everywhere.

END OF Q2: Reevaluate and revise goals as necessary.

JULY: Keep writing posts; keep sharing your story; keep offering reciprocal reviews and guest blogging opportunities to other writers.

AUGUST: Look for new marketing places. If your novel takes place in a specific location, approach the town chamber of commerce or library or local newspaper. Write up an article for them to share. If nearby, offer to speak at the library or local church/school/festival/book club. Then put that information of what you are doing on your social media, author page(s) and personal website.

If there is an unusual animal in the book, approach online groups who love that animal; zoos; shelters, vets who might sell your book. Join online groups who might love your book subject matter, character, genre or setting.

Keep looking.

SEPTEMBER: Is there a book or craft festival in your area you might join to sell your book? Become known in your community. If the cost of participating doesn't fit your budget right now, still attend the event. Network with other authors. Find people who might like to cooperate in joint marketing or reciprocal reviews. See how the event operates to know if it might be something you would do in the future.

END OF Q3: Reevaluate and revise as necessary.

OCTOBER: Look at ways to market your book in the coming months for Christmas gifts. If you have a self-help book, think of ways to market your book for the New Year when people are ready to tackle improvement goals.

Be thinking of ways to augment your book on your website. If it is a novel, what material can you create on the side to interest your readers into buying your book: a short story about one of the secondary characters? Something interesting about the setting? A recipe one of the characters made in the book?

If it is a non-fiction book, what additional subject matter can you provide your readers to supplement the book topic? What questions might you pose to interest readers into finding the answers you supply in the book?

Continue to post any good reviews of your book you have received. Yes, most will be posted up on Amazon, but those reviews are basically "yours." You should feel free to copy and post them on your website as well, referring back to them at Amazon, of course with a link to where they can be purchased.

NOVEMBER: Consider creating supplementary items to purchase that go with your book. For example, I have a line of Bible studies that look at the character and circumstances of women in Scripture. I have also created a line of body scrubs, called Esther's Spa and have created a fragrance for each of the women: Mary frankinsense and sandalwood; Eve pomegranate and grapefruit; Esther Persian garden flowers. You may or may not be able to offer those items online and may need business tax permits, etc. But consider the idea and start brainstorming.

Create a gift package idea for Christmas: a copy of your book, a bookmark, a set of 8 greeting cards related to your book; a set of recipe cards; whatever. Or go in with two other authors and create a gift package. Be creative.

DECEMBER: Keep up the good work; keep thinking ways to offer your book for holiday giving. Hopefully you have also been thinking about the next book you will be writing. What's stopping you from beginning that process now?

Phyllis will be sharing the what's and hows of marketing. After her talk, take this goal outline and plug in her ideas.