

OVERVIEW OF MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS

A great deal of Marketing's work occurs before the book is published. This work includes analysis of comparable titles to advise pricing, print run, and format; creating marketing copy for catalogs, book jackets, and various websites; coordinating and supplying metadata to vendors; putting together title information for sales reps; printing and mailing the seasonal catalog; and updating the press's website. Marketing activity typically begins about 3-6 months prior to the date of publication and continues for about 3 months afterward. Thereafter, a book continues to be promoted at conference exhibits, in catalogs, and online, ensuring that the book is for sale on our own website and vendors like Amazon and B&N.

If and when a book is approved by our faculty editorial board, authors are sent a Marketing Questionnaire to complete.

What is a Marketing Questionnaire? Much like the Editorial Questionnaire you will likely will already have filled out for your Acquisitions editor, the Marketing Questionnaire gives you the opportunity to share your specialized knowledge about the readership for your book. In it you will provide information such as a description of the book (one short, one in more detail), a short bio for use on your book jacket and our website, a list of similar competitive and comparable titles, suggestions of relevant contacts who might provide a pre-publication endorsement or blurb for the book, a lists of relevant journals and publications you think might review your book, pertinent alumni magazines, campus news outlets, hometown newspapers, and scholarly associations to which you belong and any scholarly or trade conferences you may attend, awards for which you think your book might qualify, and key words for metadata and search engine optimization (SEO). The information an author provides in a marketing questionnaire informs the marketing plan and helps identify potential sales channels for a book. The more thorough your responses to the questions posed in the Marketing Questionnaire, the better informed your publisher is to market your book effectively.

METADATA

Metadata, or the essential data about your book, is used to quickly and efficiently inform book vendors, including library jobbers (companies that cater to purchasing librarians), wholesalers, and online retailers such as Amazon and B&N, and sales representatives about your book. Metadata must be reported by Marketing *well before* the date of publication, typically while your book is still in or just entering production. The metadata comprises details such as final title and subtitle, book description, author bio, keywords for SEO, subject categories, page count, number and type of illustrations, formats

(hardcover, paperback, eBook), ISBN, Library of Congress cataloging number, series name (if applicable), price, pub date, and review quotes—all of which and more become a part of your book's unique metadata, essential to attracting interested buyers. Prior to publication, we will upload your book's description and cover design to commercial websites as well as our press's website. Our print books are available through all major online retailers, and most of our new books are available as e-books through Amazon and other online retailers and libraries.

ONLINE MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Our website and social media accounts are our primary online marketing tools. Each book has its own dedicated web page, from which perspective buyers can purchase it directly. Your book's page will include information such as title, author, description of the book, author bio/cv, cover image, list price, format, page count, blurbs, review excerpts, and supplement links such as author webpages, links to book reviews, interviews, etc. In the months before your book's publication, customers may pre-order your book through our website, Amazon, and other online vendors such as B&N.com.

The University of Missouri Press maintains Facebook and Twitter accounts to promote our books. If you are interested and willing to be active on social media in the promotion of your work, and haven't already done so, we advise you to create a Facebook, Twitter, or other social networking account that you feel comfortable using to help publicize your book. You will want to do this at least six months to a year before the publication date in order to establish a group of followers. The posting and maintenance of individual social media pages are the responsibility of the author. If social media is not your thing, that's okay, the Press is active on Facebook and Twitter and we are happy to look for opportunities to promote your book through our own platforms. The Press also maintains a blog, for which book-specific or topic-specific author posts are always welcome.

CATALOGS AND DIRECT MAIL

We publish two catalogs per year announcing new titles for our Spring/Summer (Jan-June/July) and Fall/Winter (Aug-Dec/Jan) seasonal lists. Each new title will be featured in the seasonal catalog in which it first appears. Our seasonal catalogs are distributed while the new books they feature are still in production, and in addition to print form are available as a pdf (before and well after your book's publication) on the press's website.

We also use email marketing as a part of our promotional efforts and maintain a house list of email subscribers segmented by subject areas. Announcement emails are typically sent upon a book's publication, or in junction with a major event the author may have

arranged. We also send emails as part of special promotions such as seasonal or holiday sales.

ADVERTISING, CONFERENCE EXHIBITS, AND AWARDS

Our marketing budget is limited, so we must be very judicious with advertising. We generally limit print ads to specialized journals, magazines, and conference programs.

Each year, we attend a number of conferences (history, Missouri history, military history) at which we exhibit and sell our books. Sometimes, in the case of conferences we are unable to attend, we send select titles to be displayed collectively, through the host organization or a co-operative book exhibit service such as Scholar's Choice or Association Book Exhibit.

As a part of your book's promotion, we will, at our discretion, submit it for book prizes and awards. We can submit each book for 3 awards, based on the author's suggestions in the marketing questionnaire in addition to the organizations to which we routinely submit all of our titles. We do not submit to book awards that charge fees for consideration.

PUBLICITY

For scholarly books, we send review copies immediately after publication to a list of reviewers we compile based on our experience and author input in the Marketing Questionnaire. In the case of most scholarly journals, it can take as long as 12 to 24 months after publication for a review to appear. Newspapers, on the other hand, will typically review a new title before or shortly after publication, although newspapers are much less likely to review a scholarly book.

Book Talks and Author Events: A good way to spread the word about your book is through author events and speaking engagements. Although we cannot do the work of a publicity agency in setting up events or launching a full-scale "book tour" or book receptions, we are happy to support author-initiated events with promotional materials and making announcements on our website and social media. We highly encourage our authors to set up events and speaking engagements as soon as we inform them of their book's publication date—meaning well in advance of the pub date. Keep in mind that you must schedule events *after* the slated date of publication in order to ensure you will have copies of the book on hand to sign and sell for those in attendance. If you choose to schedule a book signing or reading, please give Marketing staff at least one-month's advance notice of the event.

Here is a list a best practices and other useful information to keep in mind as you go about planning events:

We generally discourage in-person bookstore appearances because of the low attendance and small sales they typically garner. The managers of independent bookstores are also very selective about what events they will agree to host, as they need to ensure large audiences to make in-store book signings worth their time and effort. That being said, if you frequent a local bookstore and are confident you can attract a good-sized audience of prospective buyers, it is worth your broaching the idea with the bookstore's manager. Even better, is to line up an event conversation partner who is well known in the community and might help draw a sizeable audience. We recommend focusing your efforts on events that have a built-in audience, e.g., college campuses, libraries, historical societies, professional associations, and community organizations. Your university's public relations office can sometimes help set up on-campus events and campus promotions. Keep in mind that event calendars fill up quickly, so event coordinators typically need about 3 to 6 months advance notice to plan.

A few other things to keep in mind in planning events:

Audience: Target a select audience for your book to make the most of your time and your host's time and resources.

Travel: The costs of any event travel required for an event is the responsibility of the author. Unfortunately, like many university presses, we do not have the resources to fund author travel. When relevant, we encourage authors to approach their parent institutions to cover such costs.

Books sales: In the course of setting up an event, please ask the event coordinator how they handle book sales. Will their campus bookstore sell your book on site? Will book sales be the responsibility of the author? Do they work with an outside bookseller? Do they discourage book sales at such talks? To limit confusion, keep marketing staff in the loop no matter what answer you receive.

WHAT AUTHORS CAN DO TO HELP PROMOTE THEIR BOOK

To a large extent, the commercial success of a book depends on the author. Authors who actively engage in their book's promotion are far more likely to reach their intended audience. Our efforts are most successful when we work in tandem with our authors, time and again having seen a positive correlation between an active author and sales numbers. Again, when your Marketing team asks you to

complete a Marketing Questionnaire, please take the task seriously and fill it out as completely as possible. The MQ is the starting point of all marketing, sales, and promotional efforts for your book.

Here are some helpful book promotion tips for authors:

- Add/share your book's URL (web address) to the signature line of your emails, your website, blog, or social networking sites, your university/professional website bio page, and other venues.
- Post information about your book on online listservs, newsgroups, or forums in your field, such as H-Net.
- Work with your institution's public information/ public relations office to promote your book and to see what kind of publicity your school can help set up around your book (this can include on-campus events, outreach to local media, coverage in university news publications).
- Utilize your personal connections to promote your book. Let us know of any connections you have with members of the media, any connections you have with academic journals, etc. Tell your friends and colleagues about the book and direct them to your book's page on the press's website. Ask them to spread the word as well; word-of-mouth is a powerful tool!
- Create an Amazon Author page. Easy instructions are available at authorcentral.amazon.com. Using an account that you can create there, you can create an author page with a bio, which is useful for promotion, but this platform will also enable you to file help tickets with Amazon if any issues arise with your book's Amazon page.
- Reach out to your local library, or your academic department about doing a talk.
- If applicable, think about your colleagues or peers who might use your book in courses they teach. Urge them to request exam copies of your title (from the press) and consider adopting your book as a text. Provide a list of possible course adopters or academic influencers in your field and their contact information.
- Write op-ed pieces, articles, or essays relating to your book's subject matter for outlets like your school paper, local paper, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, online newsletters like *Inside Higher Ed*, and blogs, magazines, or journals that

deal with either your book's subject matter or are scholarly in nature, making sure to identify yourself as "author of ... and the title of your book, and publisher name."

- If you're active on social media, mention your book in your Twitter/Instagram/LinkedIn bio or Facebook "About" section, and feel free to begin promoting your book and getting involved with online conversations about related topics.
- Be realistic about the audience for your book. While your work may be the premiere research in your given field, the general reading public may not be interested.