



Post-publication Promotion

by Julie H. Ferguson

Author and professional speaker, Julie H. Ferguson leads live and tele-workshops that provide aspiring authors with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to approach publishers and succeed. Her workshops are available as downloadable booklets and as fully-narrated CD-ROMs through Beacon Literary Services at www.beaconlit.com, then click on Writers' Tools.

Post-publication book promotion is a huge topic that could easily fill a book – indeed many have been written, which first-time authors should read. All that can be done in this short piece is point you in the right direction and identify some proven components of a promotional campaign.

The top 20% of authors always get 80% of publishers' promotional efforts. Yes, it is the authors that sell the most copies who get the most publicity. Seemingly unfair, but a fact of life. First-time authors are often surprised with the dismal sales effort their publisher provides because they have failed to understand the current reality in publishing and their own responsibilities. The paid national book tours or the morning talk shows on national TV are not for the majority of authors; most of us are more likely to appear at the local library and rate two column inches in the local rag. **Authors must take charge of promotion** and keep their publisher aware of their efforts.

Just as most first-time authors learn to be their own literary agent, now you must also become your own publicist (or hire one). The best time to start is early in your book's production process. Buy the book, *Guerrilla Marketing for Writers* (Writer's Digest Books 2001), then study it thoroughly, and draft a promotion schedule (a sample is available at www.beaconlit.com/beaconli/freearticles.htm) and stick to it. Other useful assistance on the subject can be found in books for those that self-publish their work. Try the Canadian book, *How to Self-Publish and Make Money* (Sandhill Publishing, 1997), and the American, *The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing* (Writer's Digest Books, 2002).

Here are some components to consider including in your promotional campaign:

- **Media kit with well-targeted press releases**
- **Book signings that are mini-seminars**
- **Your own website with a “Press Room”**
- **Lots of speaking engagements**
- **Flyers, bookmarks, post-cards, etc.**
- **Articles for magazines enjoyed by potential readers of your book.**

Knowing your target market and the places, conventions, associations and magazines, etc that your readers are likely to frequent is the basis for successful book promotion. Another key is being able to speak in front of audiences....

Good luck!

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