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Book Marketing

Basics:

The 5 Ps

Applying the Fundamentals to your Book



Jodie Toohey
(the Wordsy Woman)

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**BOOK
MARKETING
BASICS:
THE 5 PS**

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Book*

Jodie Toohey

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Jodie Toohey

Visit my author website at www.jodietoohy.com

Visit my author services website at www.wordswomanforauthors.com

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Dedicated to all authors, soon-to-be authors, and want-to-be authors with a story to tell and words to share.

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INTRODUCTION

Getting Ready

MY BOOK MARKETING PHILOSOPHY

I have something controversial to tell you. You are not required to market your books. Book marketing is a choice, and you are entitled to choose to not do it. You most likely won't sell a lot of books, but if that's not what you're after as a writer, that's okay.

I have something else to confess to you. You may have heard of imposter syndrome, which is essentially that you feel like a fraud and that you don't deserve the praise you get because you're not as good as people think you are. It can also be a fear that one day people are going to wake up and realize that you have no idea what you're talking about and that you actually suck. Imposter syndrome is common in writers; many times, there is absolutely no basis upon which to base this fear, but sometimes (at least in our own minds), we have pretty convincing reasons to believe it.

In addition to my occasional feelings of being an imposter in other areas, one area in which I feel like a true imposter is in book marketing. I don't have a best-selling book. I'm not listed on any best seller lists. I haven't won any major awards. I don't even earn a livable income off my book sales. But here I am, giving book marketing advice, selling book marketing services, and offering book marketing courses. Sometimes I feel like I should just give it up.

But then I give a book marketing presentation or talk with authors about book marketing, and they tell me how helpful I've been. So here's what I tell myself to keep going. First, marketing is more than just book sales. It also involves the product, which involves a solid story, good editing, and physical

(or digital) book design. I truly believe (most days) that though of course, my books could be better, they are good products. I believe in them, and when writing imposter syndrome isn't getting me down, I believe the people who tell me they've liked them.

My philosophy when it comes to book marketing is that there is no one-size-fits-all magic bullet tactic that's going to work for every author and every book. There is no proven system you can follow that will guarantee your book to become a best-seller. What works for one author, one book, or one reader may not work for another. So, just because I'm not selling millions of books with my ideas, it doesn't mean someone else won't. And since I consider myself a creative, idea person, I may help someone else come up with something that will work for their book but that wouldn't fit mine. There are a lot of things in play, and luck seems to be one of them. So I advocate getting back to the marketing basics, looking at your book as a product, so not only does marketing cover all of those promotional things you do online and offline to sell your book, it also includes the book itself (inside and out), its price, and where you're selling it. It also relies heavily on one more factor: people. People includes not only the readers of your book, but it also includes yourself, your goals, and your personality.

There are no guarantees with book marketing. You may do everything someone else does and not get near their results. You may also do everything I advocate in this book and not get the results that matter. You are not working for a guarantee. You're working for a chance. Evaluating your book as a product, its price, its distribution, its promotion, its readers, and yourself will provide the best chance of selling and helping you to meet your goals. If you just publish your book and hope for the best, you're relying solely on luck. Luck still comes into play, but there are at least some focused, purposeful things you're doing to boost the book's chances.

I'm not an expert on publishing or marketing books or anything else. I have yet to find that perfect combination that nets me a best-seller. But I don't think that really matters. Because just because none of my books have found their way onto any best-seller lists yet, doesn't mean that your book

won't. It's so individualized that you can't make that assumption. What I do believe gives me the authority to give such advice is my experience with publishing seven (now eight) books of my own, working on helping other authors publish and market their books, and years of study, including reading countless books and earning a Master's of Business Administration degree with emphasis on strategy and marketing. I've seen some common themes along the way. I don't provide any guarantees; what I provide is the best chance.

The publishing industry and marketing strategies are changing nearly constantly, and I'm still learning. I'm always reading and trying out new things to see what works. What I propose to do in this book is give you a toolbox and help you fill it with as many tools as possible, from which you can pick and choose which ones to try based on your book, your reader, and yourself. I'll try not to get too technical in the main portion of the book because technology changes so fast, but instead will reserve notes on specific programs and technology in a Resources section.

I'm sure you've heard numerous times about things that were a "marathon, not a sprint" and it's true of book marketing as well, particularly in today's publishing industry and especially if you are an indie publisher (self-publisher). With e-books and print-on-demand, books remain available a lot longer than they used to. So long as you keep your files uploaded to the printers, they can be available indefinitely. They are essentially available for print until you decide to take them out of print. The bigger, traditional publishers still have relatively short opportunity windows before they give up on a book and move onto the next one, but there really isn't anything lost in keeping a book available as an e-book or print-on-demand. It just takes a little storage space. As a result, though it's important to think about your book's launch and emphasize its initial release, marketing doesn't end there. You should keep doing it, and as you're planning your marketing, think about it in the long term. John Kremer, in his *1001 Ways to Market Your Books*, says that it takes an average of seven touch points (seven times someone must see

something about your or your book) over 18 months to get them to buy.¹ That book was published quite a while ago, but I think it's still true today. If nothing else, it may take more touch points with all the distractions and competition you have for someone's attention.

¹ Source: Kremer, John. (2006.) 1001 Ways to Market Your Books (6th Ed.). Open Horizons. Page 36.

MINDSET AND MOTIVATION

For over a year, I went to a gym for organized exercise classes. I have always been a walker and I know the importance of strength training, but I'd never been able to sustain the discipline needed to complete workouts at home. I have hand weights, a weight bench, and dozens of workout DVDs, so you'd think that would be convenient and I would do it, but I didn't. And when I did get to a workout, I always quit when the weights started to get heavy.

It wasn't until about three months in that I started going to regular classes that start at 7 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Because this is no ordinary gym; this gym is smart. They set you up with one coach who you meet with individually for 12-18 sessions (I did 12 over about six weeks) at a time convenient to you. They knew throwing me into a 7 a.m. class wouldn't work.

So I met with my coach around vacation and meeting schedules about two days per week at two in the afternoon. She eased me into working out, starting where I was, somehow challenging me enough so that there were times I thought I might die but at the same time making sure I was successful so I built confidence that I could do it. Then she said, "I think you've got the fundamentals down. Why don't you just try this one class?" At 7 a.m.! I'd rarely seen that time of day. I agreed, got up on time, got to class, and survived. The night before the day I started my regular attendance, I didn't

get to sleep until after 3 a.m., but I didn't let myself cancel. I made myself go anyway; again I was challenged, but I did it.

I couldn't believe it when several weeks later, I was actually looking forward to going to class again the following Monday. (Those endorphins must've been kicking in or something.) I didn't jump up out of bed or anything and never did, but still...

I have heard for years that one needs other people to be successful, and I didn't want to believe them. My success had been in having a coach. I finally decided to try to give a fitness coach a try when I finally admitted how much other people have helped me in my business life.

So, what's this got to do with book marketing? Well, like exercise, book marketing is really practicing skills and developing habits. If you're having trouble doing your marketing, maybe it's time for some help, like a class or a coach (coincidentally, I can help – just contact me). If you're starting a new habit, don't just jump into the proverbial 7 a.m. class, but work up to it.

Also, you will still feel a certain degree of resistance and will probably have to force yourself to do the book marketing you plan to do and sometimes step out of your comfort zone, but you will be more motivated if you make it as convenient as possible. Do what challenges you but also makes you feel accomplished or successful. Keep the logistics convenient. If you hate to travel, don't schedule far-flung out-of-town appearances. The gym I went to was less than ten minutes away. Finally, make sure the timing works. I was really tempted to sleep instead of going to the gym but getting done at 8 a.m. did leave my whole day open for productive writing and work.

Once you get into a habit using your skills, sometimes it will still be difficult to stay motivated when marketing books, especially when it gets toward the end of the year with all the holiday preparations, family get-togethers, and so many other things taking your attention. And this is fine. I see nothing wrong with taking some time off to regroup and prepare for the next year. But if you feel yourself losing your motivation too often, earlier than you'd like, or you'd just prefer to push through until the very end, make

sure you have defined your why. Your why is the reason you do what you do. It involves your author as well as your life vision and goals.

My ultimate vision/goal is to live abundantly while writing, traveling, and helping other authors. How does book marketing fit in? In order to live abundantly doing anything, I have to be bringing in an income. Selling books allows me to do that largely from home, which can help me to travel more. I could even market books while I travel. I also find it difficult to help other authors market their books if I'm not at least trying to market mine. Selling more books also begets selling more books, which will allow me to keep writing books. For me, it's all intertwined, so book marketing is very important to my why.

To find yours, keep asking yourself why until you can go no further. It could be as short as why do I want to market books? So I can sell more books. Why do I need to sell more books? To bring in income. Why do I need to bring in income? So I can write my next book. Why do I need to write my next book? Because I love it, I have something to say, and it's what makes me feel whole and satisfied. When the why seems to be intrinsically motivated, you've found yours.

Developing habits and staying motivated is part of mindset. In working with other authors, it seems that mindset is the biggest hurdle to overcome in marketing books. If I ever start to wonder what is holding me back from being successful in selling my books, I remind myself to look in the mirror. Once I get my mindset back on track, I chalk the rest of it up to luck (or lack thereof). People say they feel like a sleazy used car salesperson trying to sell their books. They need to get over that; they are just telling people who may be interested about a book they might want to read. Of course, being clear on your target/ideal readers will also help here. Mindset is a hurdle that plagues all authors at some point or another, and it never really goes away. You just figure out how to manage it and do it anyway. *The Successful Author Mindset* by Joanna Penn is a great book to read for more details on this topic.

When you think about marketing your books or yourself as a “marketer,” what thoughts come into *your* mind, and what feelings come into *your* body? Do *you* feel like a sleazy used car salesperson (and no, not everyone in used car sales is sleazy)? Do you think only already rich and famous people can sell books? Do you have doubts about whether or not your book is even good enough to deserve to be sold? These thoughts and feelings are called limiting beliefs. Some examples of additional limiting beliefs I’ve had include: You have to master social media to sell books, only a lucky few make money off writing, and my writing isn’t good enough.

These limiting beliefs work against you by giving you an excuse to resist starting or continuing to market your books. It’s just your ego’s way of protecting you from feeling threatened, or unloved, or out of control. It’s okay to have these feelings. Anyone who’s being honest with themselves and others has had limiting beliefs surrounding marketing their books.

The difference between the ones who market their books and the ones that let these thoughts and feelings cripple them is a matter of releasing. Laura Leigh Clarke of Prosperity QM (prosperityqm.com) can teach you, in detail, about releasing limiting beliefs (and all kinds of other emotional baggage), but for you as a book marketer, it’s essentially a matter of acknowledging you have those beliefs, visualizing letting them go (or symbolically by writing them on a piece of paper and destroying it), and then doing what you need to do to market your books anyway.

To learn a specific technique based on Laura Leigh Clark’s teaching for releasing your limiting beliefs around book marketing, check out my YouTube [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvForOL6LLk&t=8s) here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvForOL6LLk&t=8s>

Of course, as I said, this is all assuming that you want to market your books. So first, it’s best to examine your goals for your books and define what success looks like for you as an author. If it’s to win a certain award or simply to just keep writing, you may actually need to do very little marketing. If your definition of success is to be listed as a *New York Times* bestseller or sell a million books, you’re likely going to need to do some book marketing. Unless

your book marketing plan is to rely on luck, and maybe fate, which is entirely your choice.

Limiting beliefs are just one aspect of mindset. Keeping other things in mind and developing a healthy attitude toward book marketing are also part of it. If you believe a certain marketing strategy or tactic isn't going to work, it's not. Try to get out of your comfort zone, but if it truly makes you miserable, don't do it. If you feel you must to meet your goals, then hire someone to help you or trade services with someone who loves to do what you hate to do. Remember that nobody is forcing you to market your book. If you'd rather write and share with just family and friends, you have every right to do that.

So remember... You are not like a sleazy used car salesperson; you are simply an author letting readers know about a book in which they might be interested in reading. There is no one-size-fits-all, magic formula, silver bullet, or another get-rich-quick cliché in book marketing. It all needs to be tailored to what makes sense for your author goals, success definition, readers, book, and available time and finances. You can never know for sure if a certain marketing tactic is going to work until you try it, but if you believe it's not going to work, it won't.

Give up any sense of entitlement. Forget about whining that you shouldn't have to market your books. The truth is that everyone must market their books. Even those celebrities had to become celebrities before they had an audience scrambling to buy their books. Rid your vocabulary of "if only"; if only I could do this, then I could sell a million books (or accomplish your definition of success).

Marketing a book is not easy. But it can be less painful, and dare I say it, even fun and satisfying, if you develop a healthy book marketing mindset. So let go of those limiting beliefs and tell your fears and doubts, "Thank you, but I think I'll try it anyway."

RESOURCES

Resources

In the interest of saving time and space, I've included resources with links to those I have used personally and that have been around long enough they are unlikely to change drastically in the near future.

If you'd like more information on any items, please check my Wordsy Woman for Authors website at <http://wordswomanforauthors.com> because I'll be posting more detailed how-to articles for the platforms in the coming weeks and months. If it's not there yet, feel free to email your questions to me at jodie@wordswoman.com and I'll help as best as I can.

(Note: Amazon links are affiliate links to help me earn a commission on any books I recommend, which would be greatly appreciated as it helps to support my writing life.)

Mindset

The Successful Author Mindset: A Handbook for Surviving the Writer's Journey book by Joanna Penn:

<https://amzn.to/2CmMVfc>

Prosperity QM and Laura Leah Clark:

<http://prosperityqm.com/>

General Book Marketing

The Frugal Book Promoter book by Carolyn Howard Johnson:

<https://amzn.to/2RQD7PI>

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1001 Ways to Market Your Books book by John Kremer:

<https://amzn.to/2COBJc7>

A Simple Guide to Marketing Your Book book by Mark Ortman:

<https://amzn.to/2CiLA98>

Dan Poynter's *Self-Publishing Manual* books: <https://amzn.to/2RSqYK7>

90 Days of Promoting Your Book Online book by Angela Hoy and Richard

Hoy: <https://amzn.to/2NKjMMW>

How to Market a Book book by Joanna Penn:

<https://amzn.to/2EsuXdf>

Your First 1000 Copies: The Step-by-Step Guide to Marketing Your Book book

by Tim Grahl: <https://amzn.to/2NJGCnC>

Business for Authors book by Joanna Penn:

<https://amzn.to/2NKjVQu>

People

Brand Now: How to Stand Out in a Crowded, Distracted World book by Nick

Westergaard: <https://amzn.to/2NLHbNY>

The Audience Revolution: The Smarter Way to Build a Business, Make a Difference, and Change the World book by Danny Iny:

<https://amzn.to/2AePZIC>

Product

Revision and Editing

Finding Your Voice: How to Put Personality in Your Writing book by Les

Edgerton: <https://amzn.to/2IYlmd8>

A Pocket Style Manual book by Diana Hacker: <https://amzn.to/2Cjr5ck>

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Random House's Handy Grammar, Usage & Punctuation book:

<https://amzn.to/2IZZ2Qt>

The 38 Most Common Fiction Writing Mistakes (And How To Avoid Them)

book by Jack M. Bickham:

<https://amzn.to/2CMYrF5>

On Writing Well book by William Zinsser:

<https://amzn.to/2RTG16b>

Everybody Writes book by Ann Handley:

<https://amzn.to/2CiBWTt>

The Elements of Style book by William Strunk, Jr.: <https://amzn.to/2NJF78Y>

Copyediting & Proofreading for Dummies book by Suzanne Gilad:

<https://amzn.to/2CijyDE>

Developmental Editing: A Handbook for Freelancers, Authors, and Publishers

book by Scott Norton: <https://amzn.to/2RPdHBY>

The Plot Whisperer: Secrets of Story Structure Any Writer Can Master book

by Martha Alderson: <https://amzn.to/2NJFXm8>

Grammarly: <https://www.grammarly.com/>

Natural Reader: <https://www.naturalreaders.com/>

Publishing

Larger Self-Publishing Companies (Author House, iUniverse, Outskirts Press)

Like many authors, I'm not a fan of these so-called vanity publishers for the simple reason that they charge way too much for their services. They are huge companies, and as far as I know, the only entity that ever makes any real money is them. You really do not need to pay thousands of dollars to publish your book on your own. There is so much you can do on your own for hiring out for needed services, and there are many more reasonably priced

author services companies available who can help. These companies, however, do have access to more distributors, though, but this doesn't mean these other distributors will automatically buy your book. Plus, when you publish, you must remember to set your discount for no less than 40%, but more likely 55%, or it won't matter.

Smaller Publishing Services Companies

Absolute Publishing Services:

<http://absolutepublishing.com>

Wordsy Woman for Authors (Me):

<http://wordswomanforauthors.com>

Book Locker: <https://booklocker.com/>

Other ones include Book Baby, Smashwords, and Lulu but I haven't worked with them

Other

Kindle ROI (<https://www.kdroi.com/>) and Kindle Spy (<https://www.kdspey.com/>) help to find the best keywords or phrases to use and research how books linked to them rank on Amazon.

Google Ad Keyword Planner:

<https://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/>

Book Formatting for Self Publishers: A Comprehensive How To Guide book by Jennette Green: <https://amzn.to/2Cno76P>

Place or Distribution

Print

It is possible to simply have books printed with a printer and sell them directly all on your own or through Amazon as a merchant. Some would classify this as pure, true self-publishing, though I think there are shades of

grey. Sometimes you can get your books printed much cheaper by going through a printer, but then you have to do more legwork to try to get them picked up by distributors. The largest distributor of small press books is Small Press Distribution (<https://www.spdbooks.org/>). Check out Dave Poynter's *Self-Publishing Manuals* for lots of information and contacts for distribution. Absolute Publishing Services (above) also works with several short and long run printers and can hook you up with editors, cover designers, etc.

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP at https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/) now includes print as well as e-book distribution since Amazon phased out Createspace and shifted everything over to KDP in 2018. If you use their ISBN (free at the time of this writing) or if you use your own ISBN (which you can purchase directly from Bowker at the time of this writing), they will distribute your books for free. They can only distribute through libraries and academic institutions if you use their ISBN. So long as your book is a standard trim size, Amazon will distribute books with their own ISBNs through Amazon, bookstores and online retailers, amazon.com in the U.S. and several other countries, among others.

IngramSpark (<https://www.ingramspark.com/>) is another popular company for publishing print books. Retailers can get your books through Amazon/KDP, but the biggest advantage for only offering your print books for sale on Amazon through Amazon/KDP and offering it everywhere else through IngramSpark is because they offer more options for discounts, and they let you set up your account to allow returns, which the bigger stores usually require.

E-book

Kindle Direct Publishing will distribute your Kindle e-book on Amazon. To get on other e-readers like Kobo, Nook, iBooks, Draft 2 Digital (<https://www.draft2digital.com/>) will distribute your book for free.

Promotion

Podcasts

Search on iTunes or your favorite podcast listening platform for:

The Creative Penn Podcast

The Story Studio Podcast and back episodes of their previous show, *The Self-Publishing Podcast*

The Sell More Books Show

The Author Hangout

Website

WordPress Websites Step-by-Step book by Caimin Jones:

<https://amzn.to/2RUihPC>

My Book Table: <https://www.authormedia.com/all-products/mybooktable/>

Leadpages: <https://www.leadpages.net/>

Book Giveaways

BookFunnel: <https://bookfunnel.com/>

Instafreebie n/k/a Prolific Works:

<https://www.prolificworks.com/>

Giveaway Promote:

<https://www.giveawaypromote.com/submit-giveaway/>

You can also upload your files to Google Docs or DropBox and set their sharing settings so anyone you send the URL to can open the document, view, and download it.

Book Marketing Tools e-book submission tool:

<https://bookmarketingtools.com/submission-tool-features>

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Mail Chimp for email marketing and/or e-newsletter distribution:

<https://mailchimp.com/>

Social Media

Social Media Platforms you may consider using at the time of this writing for connecting with readers and other authors include Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Goodreads, Google +, Linked In, and Snapchat. If you use any others, please drop me a line at jodie@wordswoman.com to tell me about them. I've personally used Facebook, Goodreads, Twitter, Pinterest, and Linked In for connecting with readers and writers, in that order of frequency.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jodie Toohey is the author of seven other books, four novels – *Missing Emily: Croatian Life Letters*, *Melody Madson – May It Please the Court?*, *Taming the Twisted*, and *Taming the Twisted 2 Reconstructing Rain* – and three poetry collections – *Crush and Other Love Poems for Girls*, *The Other Side of Crazy*, and *Versed in Nature: Hiking Northwest Illinois and East Iowa State Parks*. Her next novel, *Shattered Pearl*, is scheduled for release in late 2019 or early 2020.

When Jodie is not writing poetry or fiction, she is helping authors, soon-to-be-authors, and want-to-be authors from pre-idea to reader through her company, Wordsy Woman Author Services. She lives in Iowa with her family.

Learn more about Jodie's books, download bonuses, and sign up to receive updates at jodietoohey.com. Learn more about her authors' services at wordswomanforauthors.com.

If you enjoyed this book, please consider leaving a four- or five-star review on your favorite online book retailer.

Thank you!