

Marketing with Ooligan

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So, your book has been acquired by Ooligan. First of all, congratulations! We are thrilled to help you realize your authoria goals. Like every creative endeavor, we honor your book's journey from start to finish. Every book is the culmination of splintering concussions of magic, self-doubt, despondence, and passion; we intend to market your work with the respect and care it deserves.

Publishing a book is hard, arduous work with no guarantees. While the marketing team does everything in our power to ensure that you feel supported and that your book is represented responsibly, millions of books are published every year, with only a few making their way to the best-sellers list.

In this packet, you will find everything you need to know about marketing your book: what the marketing department at Ooligan does for you, what you can do for yourself, and how we can best support you through this process.

How to Think About Marketing

Think about what readers will gain from your book. In essence, your marketing strategy shouldn't be about you—it should be about the reader.

When framing your book to your audience, try framing its appeal like this: “You should *read* this book because . . .” instead of “You should *buy* this book because . . .” The former suggests something fruitful to be gained and experienced by the reader, while the latter suggests something to be gained by you as the author.

Think about why you wrote this book. Did you write this book to teach your audience about a useful skill? To inspire a call to action? Maybe your book was simply a labor of love inspired by your own years of reading, and you wanted to extend that same safe space to others.

Whatever the motive, consider this your initial marketing goal. Reaching your target audience and initiating the intended impact is a substantial measure of success that you should feel extremely proud of.

It's a Process

Think of marketing as a long-term process. Sure, a book signing at your local bookstore is a great marketing tool, but it's just that: a tool. It's one small blip on a comprehensive timeline of strategy and outreach.

As an author, your task is to develop an audience and then reach that audience and inspire growth. It's likely that your readership is quite small or niche because the vast majority of authors do not create best sellers. With that being said, consider ways that you can build an extensive networking relationship with your audience. It may start small, but with some nurturing, planning, and dedication, it can grow into a more substantial network of invested readers. Not only will these readers gain the intended insight from your book, but they are also great candidates for free publicity. Embrace your audience and extend your outreach.

Meet Your Team

The Ooligan marketing team is on your side. We're here to champion your goals and bring them to life on shelves across the country. Our publicity and marketing departments will help spread the word about your book to booksellers and individual consumers.

The publicity department will support you if you decide to contact the media for interviews and press coverage leading up to the launch, help with submissions for awards, and document the book's coverage post-launch.

The marketing team begins working as soon as the contract is signed. We do this through copywriting, drafting social media strategies, reviewing blurb requests, conducting early review outreach, contributing to sales materials, planning events, and facilitating our relationship with our international distributor.

Throughout the publication process, you will interact primarily with the Project Manager in charge of keeping the project on time and on budget.

Behind the scenes, your publicist and marketing team are working tirelessly to ensure that your book reaches the right readers in the right ways. If you need us, you can find our contact information below.

Marketing Manager: Sarah Bradley
Email: marketing@ooliganpress.pdx.edu

What do I do?

I help project teams develop a target audience and create talking points around our novels. When these talking points are presented to our sales reps, we craft specific strategies to help our books reach the appropriate audience.

Publicity Manager: Tara McCarron
Email: publicity@ooliganpress.pdx.edu

What do I do?

I help generate outward-facing buzz about our books through awards, book launches, and relationships with appropriate outlets that may help promote our novels.

Publisher: Robyn Crummer-Olson

Email: robbyn.crummer-olson@ooliganpress.pdx.edu

How Does Ooligan Promote Your Book?

Ooligan promotes every book using a mixture of standard and customized marketing activities. Every plan is unique because every book is unique, but every book also receives the same sell-in through our distributor. In order to reach the right audience for your title, here's a general breakdown of what we do.

Marketing Plan & Metadata

The marketing plan is drafted by the project team and reviewed by both the Marketing Manager and Publisher. It is an internal document covering everything from ISBN to price and from product dimensions to the book's hook, description, keywords, key selling points, comp titles, [BISAC codes](#), and ideas for promotion. We create ideas for this document based on your author questionnaire and research done by the project team. Once it has been reviewed and copyedited, approximately nine months before publication, it is entered into a tool called CoreSource where it is pushed out to all the online retailers and early reviewers.

Sales Materials

Sales materials include the tipsheet, galley, digital review copy, and other collateral are created based on the marketing copy and metadata. It is used in meetings with our sales reps. These documents help our sales reps better understand how to sell your book to bookstores, gift shops, and other relevant businesses. We also post sales materials to a tool called [Edelweiss](#) that is used by the book trade for early access to forthcoming titles.

Distributor Presales and Sales Calls

Approximately nine months before publication, your project manager and publisher will meet with our Ingram distributor account manager and sales representatives for national accounts (Amazon, Baker & Taylor, Barnes & Noble, and Ingram Library) and field sales (local independent bookstores). The sales reps give feedback on our metadata, marketing copy, and cover design. These people see literally thousands of books each season, and they know the business and their accounts very well, so we take their advice seriously! Approximately six months before publication, the publisher presents at the Ingram sales conference where members of the book trade (librarians, book buyers, bookseller trade organization reps) learn what books publishers have planned for the coming season. Occasionally, we have done a book trailer video instead of the live presentation. This has worked well for us, and we consistently have the highest view and completion rates of any other Ingram account.

Press Kit

The press kit is used for media outreach and is based on the sales materials. It includes a onesheet announcing your title and its pertinent information, an author bio, an excerpt, an author Q&A, and, if available, any advance praise. This will announce your title to the media and help garner publicity leading up to and immediately following the launch.

Early Reviewer Programs

In order to gain advanced reviews, we upload your book to early reviewer programs like LibraryThing and Edelweiss. The Marketing Manager monitors these reviews and sends them to the publicity department so they can be used in promotional materials and on social media. Think of these as unbiased reviews on Amazon or Goodreads that allow you to have reviews on retail platforms in advance of the launch.

Blurbs and Reviews

What's the difference between the two?

- Blurbs are short summaries or promotional pieces that accompany a book. These are usually gathered from relevant contacts (usually colleagues, fellow authors, publishers, or friends involved in a relevant field) who have some sort of vested interest in your book's success. Think of blurbs as a teaser promo or a pithy quote on your book's front cover that convinces readers it's worth picking up. Requests for blurbs are sent out 5–6 months before the pub date.
- Reviews are honest criticisms of a book from relevant professionals, readers, and outlets who have no vested interest in the book's success. Requests for reviews are sent out 3 months before the pub date.

Publicity Events

The book launch is an interactive way to market your book, build your network, increase your credibility, and interact with potential readers, colleagues, and booksellers. The Project Manager for your book will assist with the book launch process.

Though Ooligan does not organize book tours, organizing your own events and book tours will help maintain traction after the pub date. Self-organized events can include readings, book fairs, conventions, podcast appearances, interviews, and more. While it's great to have your own connections to help you sleuth out potential events, we will help you strategize, plan, and prepare if you need any assistance.

Social Media & Publicity

Ooligan Press is all about staying connected on social media. It's more imperative than ever to maintain a prominent and professional social media presence. Think of this as another avenue to connect with potential readers. Ooligan stays up to date on Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest.

A good rule of thumb is to always tag Ooligan so that it is immediately visible to us. Consider bolstering your audience and engagement by using relevant hashtags that generate traffic rather than specific or obscure ones with less engagement. For example, some hashtags that Ooligan uses for general posts are #PNWauthors, #OwnVoices (in relation to the book genre), #writerscommunity, and so forth.

It's always a good idea to use hashtags that relate to your book's subject matter rather than only using hashtags that will reach the book community. Try not to go over ten hashtags. Here's another example. If you've written a book on climate change, consider general hashtags like #climatescience, #climatechange, #savetheearth, and #climateadvocacy, and then consider more literary-centric hashtags.

Community Collaborations

At Ooligan, we are enthusiastic about connecting with our local communities. In some cases, we have partnered with regional businesses, artists, community centers, fellow authors, and clubs that may have a vested interest in your book's subject matter.

Awards

Our publicity team works diligently to research book awards that will highlight your novel and provide extra exposure. Typically, most Ooligan books are entered in the Pacific Northwest Book Awards (PNBA), Foreword Indies Awards (INDIES), Oregon Book Awards (Literary Arts' OBA), and the PubWest award for design.

Ooligan is a small press; though we do not have an overwhelming budget to apply for awards, our team works diligently to apply to awards that are best suited for your book and provide positive exposure.

What Can You Do?

The most successful books are always accompanied by a strong marketing team and a strong author—the two are truly mutually exclusive. With that being said, we need you just as much as you need us!

As the author, you are the expert. You are ultimately the best advocate for your book. You supply the knowledge and expertise. We will work closely alongside you to market your book, both in stores and online, but we count on you to be a collaborator during the process.

Are you ready? Don't wait until your book publishes to get started! Below you will find strategies to employ both before and after publication to promote your book like a pro.

Leading Up to the Pub Date

Social Media & Online Presence

Social media, social media, social media! It's the way of the world these days, and every successful author should maintain a strong presence on the web, whether it's through platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or even a blog. Consider which platforms your readers are most likely to use. Make sure to schedule time to reply and connect with readers and colleagues, and always keep your presence professional.

Author Website

If you don't already have an author website when you sign your contract, now is the time to build one! Use this as a platform to enhance your credibility, promote your work, and connect with readers.

Here are some examples of successful Ooligan author websites:

[Jason Tanamor](#)

[Robin Cody](#)

Author Questionnaire

You will be asked to complete an author questionnaire that will help us market your book and customize it to your interests, personal experiences, and expertise. The answers you provide help us connect you to your readership, so please be as detailed as possible.

Communication

Your primary contact will be the Project Manager in charge of leading your book through the publication process, but we encourage you to connect with the Marketing and Publicity Managers as well. We love to chat and bounce ideas off each other! To help you become familiar with the basics of marketing and publicity terminology, [here is a list of books you might find helpful](#). Please ask questions because it will help us in your book's production and promotion.

Contacts

An author with a pocket of contacts is always helpful when marketing a book, especially in the early stages of publication. Start a spreadsheet of relevant contacts; think of people you know, people they know, and people you wish you could know.

Pre-ordering & Bulk Orders

Want to know more about pre-orders and bulk ordering your book before it hits the shelves? We can help! Email your project manager with quantities, shipping/pick-up information, and deadlines.

Events & Appearances

Don't shy away from media appearances! This is your chance to reach a broad audience while also targeting your primary readership, especially if your expertise is niche. We can help generate a list of possible community appearances and collaborations such as podcasts, interviews, social media collaborations, community readings, and more. Get creative and think outside the book community when strategizing potential events and collaborations. The more exposure, the better.

After the Pub Date

Your work as a marketing-extraordinaire has only just begun once your book pubs. Promoting your book after its launch is much like marketing during the publication process and can even offer more opportunities to expand your network and credibility as an expert. This is where the real magic happens. Here's how you can maintain momentum after publication.

Be Your Book's Strongest Advocate

Don't slow down after your book pubs. Continue reaching out to outlets and contacts to promote your book. The bulk of the marketing that Ooligan does occurs before and during publication; once your book becomes a backlist title, we switch gears from marketing your book to *promoting* your book, with promotion occurring once your book becomes a backlist title. Keep in mind that you are your book's strongest advocate, so never stop promoting yourself.

Don't Stop Posting

Enthusiastically promote yourself and continue to advocate for your book online. Alert your followers to special promotions, organize giveaways, post positive reviews,

celebrate important dates, and post about any relevant information that may spark conversation or reignite recognition.

Make Appearances

Consider significant anniversaries for your book and any applicable dates, holidays, ceremonies, or activities that may correlate with notable moments of cultural significance in your book. Utilize existing activities and community events to expand your outreach.

Expand Your Knowledge

Read all the reviews and be aware of what readers are saying. Post any especially positive reviews and encourage dialogue about your book and expertise. Continue learning, writing, and sharing with your readers.

Keep in mind that not all reviews will be glowing. Negative reviews can be understandably disheartening, but gaining insight into varying reader perspectives can ultimately improve your work in the future and increase your understanding of the market as a whole. Try to turn these less positive reviews into positive areas of improvement. We are here for any support should you need it.

Ask Questions

We're always here for you—before, during, and after your book hits the shelves. If you need any help at all, we are ready to assist and collaborate.

Pre-ordering & Bulk Orders

Pre-ordering and bulk ordering is an easy and effective way to hit the ground running with hard copies to promote both before and after publication. Pre-orders can be placed once retail links are live through sellers like Barnes and Noble, Amazon, and Bookshop, and you are always welcome to order copies of your book from us in bulk.

The price you will be charged is outlined in your author contract. If you have questions about this contract or need clarification, please don't hesitate to reach out to Robyn Crummer-Olson at robyn.crummer-olson@ooliganpress.pdx.edu or your designated Project Manager for assistance.

We're Here for You

Publishing a book is an emotional, thrilling, and very intense experience. Keep perspective and treat yourself kindly throughout this process. We understand the newness of such a process and will be thoughtful in ensuring that you feel supported from start to finish.

We are here for you. We want you to succeed. We want your readers to gain insight from the perspectives you have so bravely and artfully chosen to share. We, as a press, will offer guidance and do our due diligence to promote your book purposefully and with enthusiasm. You should also consider your own outreach strategies and seek our mentorship and professional guidance if you need it.

You are your book's strongest advocate. As an author, your book's success relies heavily on your persistence and dedication. Engage with your audience and collaborate with us to ensure the most successful launch possible.

Book marketing and publicity are a lot of work with no guarantees. There are millions of books published every year and comparatively few best sellers. Our ultimate goal is to share your ideas with the people who need them.

Think about why you've written this book. You may often find yourself returning to this reason to find strength and focus. Remember that your words have a well-deserved place on your reader's shelf.

A Letter From Suzy Vitello to the Newly Published Author

BOOK PROMOTIONS: A MARATHON

By Suzy Vitello

Okay, I have a confession. This whole book launch, promote-your-book part of being a writer? Not my favorite part. What is my favorite part? Getting lost in the dream of it. The book, I mean. The writing of the book.

So it's a conundrum, then, to take this dream, this made-up story, and present it as an item for sale. It's a scary thing to shove the story from your head out onto the stage and not only share it with the world, but let the world take it from you to its next incarnation—one that has

nothing at all to do with you, its creator. Writing a story that may or may not resonate with others is one leap, but arguing for people to purchase, read, review, and possibly embrace the story is a whole other weird space. I mean, these characters, they're imaginary, right? The world they live in is a combination of your terrors, fantasies, and projections.

To be honest, in my cringier times I think: why would anyone want to live in my head?

If you're like me, dear author, being a huckster when it comes to your book feels icky. Asking for blurbs, posting on your social media channels, even retweeting favorable reviews conjures images of P.T. Barnum and his "Step right up!" spiel.

I'm offering this little cheat sheet in the hope that some of these ideas might resonate with you and mitigate some of the pain in promoting your work—and as a bonus, it might even help sell some books!

1. Building visibility and a "platform" should begin while you're still writing, but if you've already signed the contract, it's not too late! The "find your tribe" advice has never been more important in this time of a super-saturated market. Even if you loathe Twitter, spend a bit of time there poking around. Search out the hashtag #MSWL and combine it with words that resonate with your work. For instance, if you are writing a YA title with LGBTQ+ themes, pop that in the search bar along with #MSWL and follow the rabbit warrens down to the gold. You'll likely find some new releases. Buy them. Read them. When a book reaches that five-star spot in your heart, start a conversation about it (if you blog, write a post; if you're an IG user, take a photo of the book along with your glowing thoughts). Spread the word! Maybe you will get the author's attention or at the very least the attention of like-minded fans. This is a community, folks, and you can be a part of it.
2. The dreaded blurb. Yes friends, blurb-hunting is the worst! But it's much easier if you have relationships in place before you ask. They should be genuine, which means you should be supporting authors along the way. Buy their books, send fan letters, boost their publicity campaigns on social media. Rinse. Repeat.
3. Get your podcast IQ in gear. I have my favorites. Locally, I love two KBOO podcasts: [Mr. Jones Neighborhood](#) (full disclosure, I was featured on the program) and [Between the Covers](#). Nationally, I'm a fan of [write-minded](#) and [Manuscript Academy](#). If you subscribe to a handful, become an active part of the communities (I saw the call for participants on a recent Manuscript Academy email and pitched myself into the gig, and they ended up giving away copies of my book when the episode aired—see the earlier link).
4. Make friends with local booksellers. I'm super lucky to live in Portland—a most vibrant literary city. I'm sure we'll soon be back to in-person literary events, and once we are,

attend them! Support the indies. Meet the booksellers. Historically, there have been annual Independent Bookstore days where authors take shifts in indie stores and help customers find their favorite reads. Get involved! Offer to take a shift! Meet the owners or managers. Then, when it's your turn and you approach them to sponsor a reading or a panel, such as [this](#) one, they will welcome you (and your book).

5. Think outside the traditional path for promotion. In 2014, when my debut title, *[The Moment Before](#)*, came out, I launched it at Voodoo Doughnuts because the iconic bakery was mentioned several times in the novel. A month later, I had a second book release party in Seattle at the [Elliott Bay Book Company](#) where my way-more-famous-than-me friends dressed in pj's for a bedtime story show—an evening I'll never forget.
6. Think about tie-ins. For my *[Faultland](#)* virtual launch in Spring 2021, I wanted to raise awareness about disaster preparedness, so I purchased an [emergency kit from Ready, Set Judy](#) and had my launch culminate in a drawing for the kit.

The publication side of authoring is somewhat divorced from the creation side, it's true. But there are things you can do to bridge that gap. Creativity, perseverance, and community are the hallmarks. Start early. Keep pace. Keep going. Good luck.

Resources

[Organizing Author Events](#)

[Marketing for indie authors](#)

[Social media strategies for authors](#)