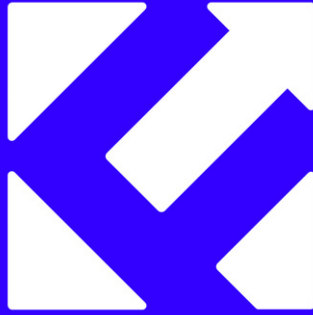


FARROW
COMMUNICATIONS



ULTIMATE BOOK LAUNCH CHECKLIST

*A Cheat Sheet of
Memorable Marketing Tips
for Your Upcoming Release*



WHO WE ARE

Farrow Communications is a full-service public relations and digital marketing agency located in Buffalo, NY. Founded in 2013 by Dave Farrow (the **2x Guinness Record Holder for Greatest Memory**), Farrow Communications has a reputation for creating "**memorable**" marketing and publicity campaigns. Representing a diverse range of clients across industry sectors and global markets, Farrow Communications makes authors and their books "**unforgettable.**"

THIS E-BOOK SHOWS YOU HOW TO:

- **Create a Comprehensive Timeline:** *This e-book will help you organize your to-do list and prioritize the critical actions leading up to your launch.*
- **Develop the Best Practices for Successful Launches:** *With our checklist, you can ensure your book launch is a success and reaches your target demographic.*
- **Master the Amazon Algorithm:** *Know how to sell your book from your initial listing to getting your first 100 reviews!*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<input type="checkbox"/>	LAUNCH PLAN	04
<input type="checkbox"/>	WEBSITE / LANDING PAGE	04
<input type="checkbox"/>	SOCIAL MEDIA	05
<input type="checkbox"/>	GRAPHICS	06
<input type="checkbox"/>	ENDORSEMENTS	06
<input type="checkbox"/>	BOOK TRAILER / SIZZLE REEL	06
<input type="checkbox"/>	BOOK REVIEWS	07
<input type="checkbox"/>	AUTHOR PROFILES	08
<input type="checkbox"/>	PRE-ORDERS	08
<input type="checkbox"/>	MEDIA CAMPAIGN	09
<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	ARCs & GALLEYS	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	PROMO MATERIAL	11
<input type="checkbox"/>	VIRTUAL LAUNCH	12
<input type="checkbox"/>	LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES / BOOK STORES	13
<input type="checkbox"/>	BOOK AWARDS	13
<input type="checkbox"/>	LAUNCH TEAM	14
<input type="checkbox"/>	NEED HELP?	14



LAUNCH PLAN

- Read through this entire document and do **MARKET RESEARCH** into what other people with similar books have done.
- DECIDE** which elements of the launch plan you need and which you don't need / what you have already done and what you haven't / which tasks you want to do (*and realistically have time to do*) yourself and which you want to outsource.
- Mark your **CALENDAR** with dates and deadlines (*using this checklist, along with items from your publisher, etc. as a guide*) for what needs to be done and when. Even if the deadlines are flexible, mark them down to still keep you on track.
- CONSULT** with experts, start vetting vendors, and start thinking about who will be on your launch team.
- Plan your **BUDGET** - Unless you are Stephen King, you likely don't have an unlimited book launch budget. No worries - that's okay! Most authors find success with a launch that is part DIY and part professional.



WEBSITE / LANDING PAGE

A good website or landing page is crucial for book sales. Your website should include a compelling description of the book, photos, reviews, and information about you as the author. Above all, it should contain all purchasing information and links with a clear “call-to-action” to buy (or pre-order).



SOCIAL MEDIA

A social media presence is crucial for your book launch. Facebook is an absolute MUST to have, followed closely by Instagram. (Of course, having a presence on platforms like Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and YouTube, is helpful too.)

- CREATE or UPDATE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS** with information about your latest book.

You likely already have a personal profile on Facebook, but creating a public author page is also important. This tip might sound obvious, but because we see so many authors make this mistake, the case for public profiles had to be included in this list.

NOTE: Make an “Author Page” **NOT** a page for the book alone. *(This is important especially if you plan to release future books. You do not want to start building followers from scratch each time. Many authors make this mistake.)*

- BUILD FOLLOWERS** by sharing teasers and special announcements.
- Create more **ENGAGEMENT** (likes and comments) by asking your followers for their input. Ask their opinion on every stage of the book process. Getting them involved is the best way to build brand awareness and a strong audience.
- Use **VIDEO** to compel followers to share your material. Simple 60-second videos are perfect for Instagram and Twitter and they also work well on Facebook and YouTube.
- Post about every major milestone from the **COVER REVEAL** to launch day.



GRAPHICS

- Finalize your **BOOK COVER DESIGN**.
- Take **PROMO PICS** of the book to use later for social media.
- Get **HEADSHOTS & PHOTOS** taken (*they don't have to be taken by professional photographer- as long as the photo looks professional, is high res, well lit, etc.*)



ENDORSEMENTS

*If you are working with a publisher, they will encourage you to solicit **ENDORSEMENTS** from personal contacts, colleagues and friends. This is a job in and of itself.*

- Make a spreadsheet and list all the potential people who could give endorsements and contact them several times. Be persistent. Most people need to be reminded as many as five times before giving an endorsement.
- Email your **MAILING LIST** announcing your book release (**OR** *if you don't already have a mailing list, organize your personal contact list and reach out to them*).



BOOK TRAILER / SIZZLE REEL

A book trailer is a simple, short video to highlight the benefits of your book. This can be created by a number of people today. *Fiverr* is the most popular place to find vendors creating book trailers for a low price.



BOOK REVIEWS

Reviews aren't just important, they are vital. The Amazon algorithm uses reviews to rank books and decide if you get visibility or not. They provide social proof that your book is worth buying. Your reviews will go in your media kit, on Amazon, on your website, and more. (*See our guide on how to get your first 100 Reviews on Amazon!*) You've probably received ringing endorsements from your friends and family (*and if you haven't, or if you haven't gotten them in writing, what are you waiting for?!*)

REQUEST ARCs (aka Advanced Reader Copies): ARCs are a great way to get more reviews. Remember, the more people that read your book, the more reviews you will get. Send advanced copies of the book to everyone in your close network and ask them to review on Amazon, Facebook, or other social platforms. Even positive feedback sent via email is great for your arsenal of endorsements. You should contact your publisher to inquire as to how to get ARCs of your book (*See ARCs & GALLEYS below for more info*).

ASK FOR MEDIA REVIEWS: Not all reviews are the same. Amazon and Facebook reviews are great but reviews from media and news sites, literary journals, bloggers, and social media influencers, will help determine the future of your book. A review and website backlink on just one high-ranking website not only provides social proof, but it can also raise your SEO ranking considerably.

Ask the team at **Farrow Communications** about how to get your book featured by established media outlets. If you want to try doing it yourself, send advance copies of your book and media kit to book critics, bloggers, and review sites.

TIP: Be sure to include a personalized note explaining who you are and why you think they would be interested in your book.



AUTHOR PROFILES

- Update (or create) your **AUTHOR PROFILES** on **AMAZON, BOOKBUB, GOOD READS**, or any online profiles listing your book and include information about your upcoming release.



PRE-ORDERS

- Get your **PRE-ORDER PAGES** (and/or any other pre-order pages) up and running. Pre-order pages are a good tool to advance your book's success. On Amazon, pre-orders are counted on the day of the book release and can shoot your Amazon rank to the top of visibility. *(It's important to note that pre-orders that are made closer to the book's release date are more valuable than those made several months in advance.)*

A preorder page can be created on Amazon and other book retailers, but a dedicated landing page can be a good investment. A simple landing page can be set up that sells pre-orders of your book for you 24 hours a day. It's a great way to get momentum with less work on your shoulders.



MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Media attention is by far the best way to get the word out about your book. Doing author interviews (radio, podcast, TV), writing a newspaper opinion piece, or getting quoted in a magazine will give you more credibility and social proof than anything else.

- Create a compelling **MEDIA PITCH**. It's the key to landing media placements. Your pitch should outline why your story would be a great fit for their show (*or magazine, news site, etc.*) and what their audience would gain from what you have to say. Remember, unless you are reaching out to the media with an explicit request for them to review the book, your pitch can't sell the book too hard. (*Pitches that are too promotional get sent to the sales department to buy ad space.*) Instead, your pitch should sell you and your message and they should be customized to fit the outlet/contact that you're pitching.

- Once you have a killer pitch, make a **MEDIA LIST** of who to send it to (*include outlets on both the local and national level.*) Ask yourself, who are my readers and what media do they read or watch? Then, curate a **MEDIA LIST** containing all of the media contacts/outlets you want to get into and should reach out to for reviews. (*newspapers, book reviewers, bloggers, outlets*) Unless you have access to a media database like Cision, you will have to do some Google research to find the right person to speak with (usually a journalist, editor, or producer).

- MEDIA PITCHING:** Reach out and pitch your story by phone, email, social media, and every channel of communication possible.

- MEDIA FOLLOW UP:** If media contacts don't respond, continue to follow up. Unless the contact/outlet explicitly declined or told you when to check in, follow up with them by email every 1-2 weeks.



ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT (EPK)

When a journalist or reviewer asks about your book, you need to be prepared! An **ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT** (or an EPK for short) is an online site that acts like a profile of you and your book. It saves you the hassle of attaching jpegs and PDFs to emails and makes you look professional.

The purpose of a press kit is to grab the attention of journalists and producers and make them want to write a review, article, or do an interview with you. The press kit should be a one-stop shop with all the information needed to get this done.

EPKs started in the entertainment industry but now authors are embracing this trend.

Take a look [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) for examples of Electronic Press Kits.



ARCS & GALLEYS

ARC stands for Advanced Reader Copy and a Gally is similar. These are ways to get your book into the hands of important people before it's available to the general population.

- Get your **ARCS & GALLEYS** printed as soon as possible because you'll need them to get the word out about the book.

(continued on next page)

Some reviewers and media outlets prefer to read the book in a digital format, so it is important to ask your publisher for **DIGITAL ARCs**, as well. Ideally, you can get the digital book in a variety of formats (*PDF, epub, and .mobi are the most popular*), **TIP:** Don't just send the barebones PDF manuscript to reviewers - make it look professional with the cover art in the front and back.

- SEND ARCs:** Your ARCs do no good sitting on your desktop. Send your book and your pitch to major publications and/or reviews and media who require advanced notice.



PROMO MATERIAL

Promotional Material is key to your success. If possible, have a professional create it. Here are some of the promotional materials you will need:

- A **BOOK PROMO FLYER:** This is a flyer that includes information about your book and its release. It should contain an image of the cover art, a brief synopsis, book facts (*website, release date, retail price, purchasing information*), one or two short endorsements.
- An **AUTHOR MEDIA ONE PAGE:** This is a simple flyer that will entice media contacts to interview you. It should include your photo, a short bio, and (*most importantly*) a list of story hooks and suggested talking points for media interviews. **TIP:** When creating your talking points, think about what will be most appealing to the media NOT just what you want to discuss.
- A **LETTER-TO-REVIEWERS:** This is a short note that can be easily customized and sent to any and all media contacts and reviewers that receive the book. (**TIP:** *Do not include the Letter-to-Reviewers in your EPK, because it should be personalized to each person.*)

Your **Author Media One Page**, **Book Promo Flyer**, and **Letter-to-Reviewers** should all be included in your book packages that you send out to reviewers.



VIRTUAL LAUNCH

A fun and exciting way to reward your followers and build your brand is with a virtual book launch. Virtual Launches are becoming increasingly more popular in the age of zoom and for good reason. They are incredibly user-friendly and effective because attendance is not bound by geography or time (*as they can be recorded and replayed*).

A virtual launch can be handled with a professional team and separate moderator, or you can run the show by yourself. Don't underestimate the work involved. There is a lot of planning involved. Here is a small checklist for the virtual book launch:

- Choose your Platform: Use platforms and technology with which you are familiar. Popular platforms for virtual book launches include: Streamyard, Zoom, and Google Meet.
- Script your launch.
- Decide if you would like to include guest speakers and limit their time and interaction to a small segment.
- Create a slideshow presentation (*or have professional help*).
- Include the feelings behind why you wrote the book.
- Include the benefits for readers who read your book.
- Break up the presentation with games, quizzes, and entertaining anecdotes.
- The virtual book launch needs to be entertaining, so consider having a co-host run it with you.
- Do rehearsals before the launch to work out the bugs.



LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES/ BOOK STORES

Appearances at local bookstores and other venues are a great way to generate interest in your book, as communities often like to support local authors. You'll want to approach bookstores and venues early, as bookstores generally set their in-store event calendar a few months in advance.

You can spread the word about the appearance through social media or local community event calendars.

It's crucial to coordinate the event with your publisher to make sure that the venue has enough books for the appearance.

Traditionally, an appearance will include a reading of an excerpt of the book, a Q&A, and a meet and greet/autograph session. Be sure to come prepared with any additional promotional materials, such as the Author One Sheet.



BOOK AWARDS

Book awards are a great way to generate buzz about your book. Most awards charge a fee to enter BUT, to become an award-winning author, you gotta be in it to win it. Research some of the contents and awards and enter a few.



LAUNCH TEAM

- Recruit your **LAUNCH TEAM:** When launching a book there is so much that needs to be done. The above list includes only the most important items and even this list is overwhelming! That's why you need a launch team. Whether they are hired help or volunteers, your launch team will help you pull everything together (*from soliciting reviews, booking interviews or media appearances, scheduling bookstore events, organizing the launch party, and promoting on social media...even just hearing you vent*).
- Recruit a few close friends and/or hire a professional to ensure things run smoothly and you make the most out of your big day. Remember, behind every successful author is a great support team.

NEED HELP?

Want to talk this out? The team at Farrow Communications can assist you with any of the checklist items above.

Click [HERE](#) to book a free strategy session today!

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