How to Get Media Attention for Your Book

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There’s a lie going around, which is that you can’t get media attention for your book unless you publish it traditionally.

Here’s how I know it’s a lie: I tried to get featured on *Good Morning America* for all six of my traditionally published books. No go. Then I independently published *Make Your Mess Your Memoir* and landed a five-minute segment on *GMA* that ended up bringing my company hundreds of thousands of dollars in new clients.

But I didn’t just call up *GMA* and let them know I had a book. See, I’m well aware of the fact that launching a book— unless you’re, say, JK Rowling — isn’t news to anyone.

So how do you make it news?

1. Figure out how your book relates to what’s happening

I released *Make Your Mess* two months into the pandemic and, as an outspoken mental-health and addiction-recovery advocate who has long used writing as a way to heal internal battles, I wrote a press release about how addiction and mental-health statistics had grown more alarming as result of the pandemic — and how writing could be a way to address them.

I know media outlets well, and, thinking it was good morning show material, I asked a publicist friend to forward the press release to a contact he had at *GMA*. The booker, on the lookout

for pandemic-related news that was less about what was happening and more about how to deal with what was happening, loved it. She asked me for five talking points on the topic. I wrote those out, emailed her, and I was booked.

Every day, something is happening in the news, and, if you think creatively, you can surely determine how your book fits into that. Remember, TV bookers and journalists are probably overworked and exhausted: You're doing them a favor if you come to them with a ready-built news story – and a source to speak about it.

Related: 10 Steps to Self-Publish Your Book Like a Bestseller

2. Sign up to be an expert

Speaking of journalists being overworked and exhausted, many of them don't have the time to seek out sources the way they once did – hence the proliferation of websites designed to connect them to sources for their stories.

While Help a Reporter Out (HARO) is the most popular one, there are plenty of others out there that offer similar services – including Source Bottle, JournoRequest and QWOTED. With HARO, once you sign up, you begin receiving several emails a day that list the stories journalists are working on. Regularly scan the emails so you can be on the lookout for writers looking for experts on your book topic.

It's on you to reach out to the journalist – sometimes answering questions that he or she poses, which will serve as your quotes in the piece, and always explaining why you are an expert on the topic.

Personally, I've found HARO to be very hit-or-miss; the first time I used it, I ended up the lead of a *Fortune* magazine story; other times, I've failed to even get a response when pitching myself to publications I'd never even heard of. But

I've had students and clients end up being featured everywhere from *Salon* to the *Huffington Post* by just responding to a few queries.

Always ask, when you're being quoted or profiled, if you can be identified as an author; ask them to include your book title and request a link to the book on your website.

Related: 5 Ways to Get a Journalist to Respond to Your Pitch

3. Pitch yourself with care to podcasts

As a podcaster, I can't tell you how many pitches I receive from people who have clearly never listened to my show. Those pitches are, of course, automatically deleted. That's why, when attempting to get on podcasts, you should never just reach out to a bunch of shows that focus on your topic.

Instead, look for podcasts that seem like realistic possibilities (probably not Joe Rogan or Rachel Maddow) and listen to a few episodes. If the booker or host contact information isn't readily available, try getting the appropriate email address from hunter.io or LinkedIn Premium. Then review the podcast on Apple and, in your pitch, explain that you're a fan of the show and attach a screenshot of your review.

Because you've listened to the show, you can also offer up in your pitch a few examples of episodes you liked and how you feel you could offer something new on the topic. Also let them know how thrilled you'd be to promote your episode; if you have an audience that podcaster would be interested in capturing, be sure to add that. There are a plethora of other tips for getting booked on podcasts, and every show is different, so try to follow as many recommendations as you can.

Related: How Podcast Interviews Can Help You Make More Money

When you're on the show, be a pro: Log in or show up on time, be in a quiet place with strong wifi, wear headphones and always bring your best self. Once your episode is released, share it widely and tag the host. You can also send a thank you email or even a small gift. Then you might even be invited back a second time!

And that's really the point. Pitch yourself well, deliver, be grateful — and your media presence will only grow from there.

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