



"Practical Problem-Solving Advice for Publishers"

Publisher's Website Checklist: Six Essentials

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Your own dedicated website has become a vital element of any successful book marketing program. To help you cover all the bases, we've developed the handy checklist below.

Once you have cover images and descriptive copy posted, our list outlines what else you need to get in place. The first three items you should take care of right away. The second three can be developed over time:

1. Create and post a clear-cut mission statement—or, more simply, a program description that outlines what types of books you publish and what kinds of content readers can expect to find in your titles.
2. Provide an immediate and easy opportunity to buy—ideally, an online store of your own, where you capture not only all the revenue but also gather email addresses and other valuable customer data. If you're just starting out and an online store feels way too ambitious at this point, at least offer a direct link to the Amazon product-detail page devoted to each of your titles.
3. Develop and post submission guidelines that fully inform potential authors about what you're looking for and—equally important—the formats and kinds of content that won't work for you. The submission guidelines need also to include instructions about required elements of any proposal—and likely response/turnaround times from you.
4. Provide at least one option for outside distribution of your books. This can be as simple as allowing display and (discounted) sale of a single title—at events hosted by groups dedicated to the book's topic.
5. Consider facilitating author appearances before those same high-interest audiences.
6. Create and post interviews with each of your authors. These can be "selfies," author-composed Q&As—just get your writers talking about their work.

A strong website for your book publishing program can provide the critical margin for success in the marketplace.

Get advice from the experts: McHugh and Beacom can save you time and money—and help build your sales—by performing a website audit for both nonprofit associations and commercial publishers. For information, call Jack McHugh at 414-351-3056.

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