

How to Get Your Book Reviewed in Magazines

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How do you get your book noticed, let alone reviewed, when it is just one among stacks of books in an editor's office? Here are a few tips to help you map out a winning strategy...

Content:

In one of my past magazine jobs my office was next to that of the book editor. He would get boxes and boxes of books daily. There was a separate room devoted to storing these books, but that still didn't keep them from piling up in his office. Whenever he returned from vacation he practically had to use a bulldozer to get his door open!

You see the problem, right? How do you get your book noticed, let alone reviewed, when it is just one among stacks of books in an editor's office? Here are a few tips to help you map out a winning strategy.

1. Determine which magazines are the best for reaching your target market.

As you plan to market your book, decide first who your ideal reader is. Is it a 35-year-old urban professional man? Is it a stay-at-home mom who lives in the Midwest? Is it female college graduates who also happen to be sports fanatics? Once you decide who you're targeting, ask yourself: What magazines does my ideal reader read? Those will be the magazines you'll focus on. That way, you won't waste time and money pursuing dozens of magazines which, even if they did review your book, wouldn't give you much in terms of gaining readership. With my novel we focused on magazines with large female audiences. Ideally you should be doing this a few months before your book comes out because the goal here is to either write a story for the magazine or get interviewed in the magazine, and have the article appear before or just as your book is published.

2. Find out what the editors need.

When you have chosen the magazines, buy them and read them. Do they have a certain writing style? What kinds of articles appear in the magazine again and again? If you can, write, email or call the features editor and find out what kinds of stories the magazine is looking for. You'll have more success if you can fill the editorial holes the magazine is already working on.

3. Let an editor know what you have to offer.

Start sending query letters to get article assignments. If you have a particular expertise, you can let an editor know that you're available for interviews if they ever need an expert on a particular subject. Often an editor will assign a story to a writer and give them a few possible interviewees to help them get started. I contacted editors at *Essence* a full year before my book came out to let them know that I was working as a personal and career coach. Within a few weeks I began getting calls from reporters to interview me for working mom stories for *Essence*.

4. Mention your book or get it mentioned.

When your article gets published, make sure you get the little italicized blurb at the end that says that you are "a writer whose next book, *The Best Book in the World*, will be published this month by Big Press, Inc." You get the idea. If you are being interviewed for an article, chances are they won't have room to mention your book but you should still tell the reporter about it anyway. You can even ask them to put it in their notes. As the story gets discussed in meetings, someone might say "Did you know she also wrote a book?" This builds awareness.

5. Check in with your contacts, but don't pester them.

Once your book is sent out for review, you can call or email to make sure that the editor got the book, but leave it at that. You've done all you can. I've never met the book editor at Essence, but when I heard that he was aware of my novel I was totally psyched. I kept my fingers crossed after that. One last note: Some magazines and newspapers don't review self published books. Find out beforehand so you can make your efforts elsewhere if that's necessary.

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