

# You're Published! Now How Do You Tell The Readers?

By Michael LaRocca

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Books Online Directory <http://freereads.topcities.com>

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The first thing you must do is quit thinking like a writer and start thinking like a reader. That shouldn't be a problem, because you are one. If you don't enjoy reading, you can't write something that someone else enjoys reading. So, when you read, how do you choose what to read?

My wife can walk into a bookstore, look at the cover blurb of a book, conclude "I'll like this," and buy it. Then she'll read it and be correct. Every time.

I almost never do this. For me, it's word of mouth. It's book reviews. A good reviewer tells me enough to decide if I want to buy the book. I've rarely been led astray by a reviewer.

So there are your goals. Number one, write well enough to keep those readers coming back. Number two, get those reviewers to say "Hey, this author writes very well." Meaning, contact those reviewers.

You want to be reviewed as much as possible. Walk into any bookstore, log onto any e-publisher site, or visit Amazon or Barnes & Noble. Guess what you'll see? A whole lot of books. If one of them happens to be yours, how will people notice it?

Your publisher will market your book, of course, but they market all their titles equally. What you want is for a potential reader to walk into that shop or log onto that site with your name and title already in his or her head.

Your publisher will submit your book to reviewers. Work with your publisher to ensure everyone is covered. Also make sure you don't both send the same book to the same place because that's just plain embarrassing.

If you'll swing by <http://freereads.topcities.com/bookreview.html> you'll find a list of book review and author interview sites. Mostly electronic but a good print selection as well. At this writing there are 111 of them. When your book hits the shelves, if not sooner, visit every one of them. Write to everybody and see what happens. It'll take you about ten hours.

Also, I keep a small but growing list of book contests at <http://freereads.topcities.com/writingcontests.html>

Anyone selling anything should have, at the very least, a free website. As I started with ebooks, I consider it mandatory. As an author, of course I also write a newsletter.

To receive my free course on setting up your website, send a blank email to [picasso@sendfree.com](mailto:picasso@sendfree.com)

The Internet will not replace traditional promotional efforts, but it can enhance them. Here are the old-fashioned marketing methods, which are still your best source of readers.

Send press releases to every newspaper in your state and the state where your book is set. Also look for local radio stations who will interview you.

Kidon Media (<http://www.kidon.com/media-link/index.shtml>) will help you find them. Stick to places who would be genuinely interested in you, as opposed to spamming everybody.

Map out all bookstores within 20, 50, even 100 miles of where you live. Call and see who has local or regional authors sections. Most do. See if they'll buy a few copies.

Also, see if they'll schedule a book signing. If they do, you have to advertise it, but some newspapers and radio stations do these as free public service announcements.

[http://www.bookweb.org/bd-bin/browse\\_bd?Country=usa&State\\_Name=YOURSTATE](http://www.bookweb.org/bd-bin/browse_bd?Country=usa&State_Name=YOURSTATE) will help you find the bookstores in your state. So will the Yellow Pages in your home, and the online version at <http://www.yellowpages.com/>.

Alternately, you can find the bookstores by doing a web search for Bookstores+YourState. This will take longer, but it can work. You can narrow down your search by using key words like Independent, Christian, wholesale... whatever you are trying to

find.

To find a list of libraries in your state, you can use a search engine, or you can call your local library and ask how to get a listing of all the libraries in your state. They will usually give you the link.

Many libraries have a budget to buy books and will gladly purchase from local authors. Or, you can donate a book and see if a newspaper will pick up the story.

Libraries won't let you sell your book inside the building, but they will let you talk about it. Talk with the "Friends of the Library" chapter.

You can also donate an autographed copy of your book to the library where it is set. If possible, do this in person. Many times the library will set up a book signing for you at one (or more) of the book stores in the area. Again, contact the "Friends of the Library" group.

Michael LaRocca is the author of four published novels and an EPPIE 2002 Award finalist. He's been working as a full-time author and editor since December 1999. For a complete list of his articles, all available via autoresponder, send a blank email to <mailto:michaellarocca@sendfree.com>

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