

READY. SET. GET PUBLISHED!

Beating the Odds to Release Your Book



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A Quick Survey

Please check all that apply to you:

- I have a self-published book.
- I don't have a book published at all yet, but want to publish one.
- I have a traditionally published book.
- I have a traditionally published book, or no book published, and would consider self-publishing.
- I have tried to go through the channels of the traditional publishing route but have never signed a contract.
- I would never consider self-publishing.

Let's Look at The Odds

I saw this question posted on a writer's Facebook page, "What are the odds of getting published?"

A literary agent responded. It was basically to do the same old, same old. Write a great book, get it edited well, and write a great proposal—MAYBE you'll increase your odds of getting published. Those are correct answers, but there's more to getting published. This agent's response only took into account one aspect of getting published from their traditional publisher's viewpoint. This agent only gets paid when they have a traditional publisher contract the writer they are representing. This answer leaves out other opportunities for beating the odds of getting published. For most writers, these other opportunities are the most viable for getting their book in print and distributed.

Based on this one agent's answer, it also left the career of the writer in the hands of someone else ... who will only go to bat for the book IF they believe the book will make money for the publisher. With thousands of books being pitched each year, it's unrealistic to think every book pitched will land a contract ... or sale enough copies to recoup the publisher's investment.

Without getting too far ahead of our topic, just because a book gets contracted and published doesn't mean it will have the support most authors need. 100% of the promotional tasks of any book fall upon the author's shoulders regardless of whether it's traditionally published or self-published. If a publisher will contribute anything toward marketing, consider that a blessing. Publishers are only going to put their marketing dollars behind a book they believe will bring them a handsome return on their investment. For most books, that's not going to be the case. Therefore, most books don't get contracted. That means the odds of getting traditionally published are low.

Don't count this book out yet. The writer may have a great message that needs to be delivered to their audience, but that message will never be published if the literary agent doesn't get the vision or have the desire to pitch the book to publishing houses on their behalf. If that's where you've been, don't give up. There are still HUGE opportunities for an author to promote and sell their book.

According to our unscientific poll in The Communicator's Chat Facebook Group, most people either self-published a book or want to publish a book. What has been your experience trying to go the traditional publishing route (if you've tried that)?

It's Time to Stop Waiting!

Every writer needs to be realistic. The industry average sales per book in the CBA market are somewhere around 5,000 copies. Being the average, some authors will sell more and most will sell less. That doesn't mean the message of the book is invalid. It just means it's not commercial enough for the general market.

How important is it for that particular message to reach the writer's audience? In many cases, a writer can waste years dreaming their book will be traditionally published ... and making their audience wait for that message. When instead, they can self-publish, get the message out, and sometimes can even pick up a contract later from a traditional publisher.

I have a speaker on my roster at Christian Speakers Services who self-published two versions of her book just so she could sell it on her product table at her speaking events. She continued to look for a traditional publisher and finally found one. BroadStreet Publishing just released the 3rd version of ***Untangled: The Truth Will Set You Free*** by Michele Pillar.

REALITY CHECK ... IT'S TIME TO STOP WAITING!

It's time for writers to STOP WAITING for anyone else in the industry to get on board with the message that God has given them to deliver. It's time to STOP WAITING, and sometimes even whining, that no one will publish their book. It's time to take responsibility and accountability.

RESPONSIBILITY ... in doing whatever it takes to get their message into the hands of those who need to read and/or hear it. The writer is the person responsible for getting their message printed into books, made into videos, creating other products around the message, and doing the marketing/promotion.

ACCOUNTABILITY ... to God for doing what He has called, chosen, gifted, and ordained that writer to do.

Now that you've read that, you're now 100% accountable and responsible for what happens with your message.

Best selling author, Steven James asked the audience of writers at a Glorieta Writers Conference, if anyone there had a book they wanted to write. Being writers, the entire audience raised their hands. Then he shared the parable of the

talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Until a writer realizes this passage applies to them, they will continue being the man with one talent waiting for someone else to take responsibility for the message God has given them to deliver. Remember, what happened to this man?

I have watched a writer friend with an awesome message struggle for 30 years as she tried to get her message traditionally published. She attended writers conferences, learned the craft, wrote and sent out inquiry letters, and sent the proposals as requested. Nothing. Nada.

Then she grasped and implemented the concept of taking responsibility and being accountable for her writing career and the message God had given her to deliver. She now has three self-published books. With the latest one, she's stepped into her manifest destiny. It's selling like hot cakes. She's working on the third book in the series.

The odds of getting a book published under the old regime is slim to none. For the past 10-15 years, the old regime has been changing and dying. The proof is in the pudding. In 2005, there were thousands of brick and mortar Christian books stores. I was just told recently by a CBA publishing expert that in 2017, there are less than 500 brick and mortar Christian bookstores in the United States. Publishers are only going to put their money behind a book that will sell and sell well.

Do I believe in having a book traditionally published? Yes. I have a cousin with his second book on the New York Times Best-Sellers list that was published by a major publishing house. Do I also believe in self-publishing? Yes. I have watched writers, who otherwise would have never received a contract go forward with self-publish and do well with their books. Depending on various business reasons, both methods can be valid.

I have also watched authors who traditionally published their book get the rights back when it went out of print. They then self-published an updated version and sold more copies than the prior version. Why? Because they believed in the message of their book and did the work to promote and sell it.

Most readers, honestly, don't care who published the book. They care about good writing, good formatting, and that the book is available where they are through online bookstores, through the speaker's/writer's website, or at the speaker's events. To verify this, when was the last time you purchased a book because of who the publisher was as opposed to who wrote the book? I've never heard anyone say, "I just read the best book published by XXXX

Publishing.” We’ve all heard someone say, “I just read the best book by XXXX author, you’ve got to read it!”

- Do you believe the message that you are writing about is important enough and needed by someone in your audience/followers for today?
- Are you willing to wait on someone else to do what you should be responsible and accountable for doing?
- Are you willing to wait indefinitely before one of your followers can hear/read your potentially life-changing message?

The Odds Can Be in Your Favor

For writers who understand how to write well, have their book edited well, the cover designed and the interior formatted by professionals, and who are willing to do the work on a long list of promotional tasks, the odds are 100% of getting published.

Writers need to focus on what having a book can do beyond just having a book in print. There are people who attend writers conferences each year who are only desiring to see their name in print on a book cover. Beyond that, they don't have a plan.

A new book can grow their follower base around the world and generate revenue. Writing the manuscript, hiring a great editor, planning for the promotion, and publishing the book are just the BEGINNING of the equation. There are many other products and programs related to the book's content that can drive sales for the book and other ancillary products. From this, the author can develop a loyal base of followers who will promote this message in any of it's formats on their social media and word-of mouth. Essentially becoming the author's promotion or launch team.

There's a misconception that production costs for a book have to be thousands of dollars. Anyone can self-publish a great quality book if they spend their money wisely by investing in a professional editor who is familiar with their book's genre and hiring someone to create the cover and format the interior. Uploading to CreateSpace can be covered in their investment cost or performed themselves. NOTE: I have resources available to help a writer with editing, book cover design, interior formatting, and setting up the book on CreateSpace through to Amazon and Kindle. Contact me through KarenPower.com.

One author I know considers her books a "calling card" to open the door with the buyer and then showing everything else she has available. If the author only has their message in book format, they get one shot at selling to a customer. Offering multiple formats gives the consumer a choice that fits their preferences and creates more buying opportunities.

Communicator's Chat member Rebecca Bruner shared, "With the advent of crowd funding (eg. IndieGogo, YouCaring, GoFundMe), it is possible to underwrite the cost of producing your book through donations from your tribe of supporters. They get perks (usually including copies of your book or e-book) and you get the money upfront to pay for editing, cover design and formatting.

I've done this for two books now, and have been very pleased with the outcome." She also shared an example from one of her campaign pages to give an idea of how to set this up: <https://igg.me/at/wife-of-valor>.

I've watched another author use a tool called publishizer.com. It can be used whether you choose to self-publish or find a traditional publisher. This author is extremely business savvy. Even if she chooses to self-publish, at the very least, she'll pre-sale a few hundred copies and generate a revenue base to have her book edited, distributed, and a great promotion campaign developed. The cool thing about this tool is that the more pre-sales made, the more publisher interest is generated. In the end, it's up to the author to choose the best fit for their business plan and goals.

- Did you know with some of the choices available today that you can actually have your book publishing costs paid for before you even start writing it? Of course, this means you're committed to completing the book and releasing it. Might be a good motivator for some!
- If you have a book that you want published, are you thinking beyond just the book to other delivery methods, that your audience might actually prefer over a book?

It's Time to Start Planning

I've often been asked, "When do I start promoting my book?"

Your reason for writing the book, the promotion campaign before and after it is published, and the goals of the overall your marketing/promotional plan, all fit together in the choosing how or who will publish the book. There should be a plan in place UPFRONT, even before the writing the manuscript begins. That's one of the reasons traditional publishers require a proposal. It's simply becomes the writer's business plan, or blueprint, for what they'll do with the book. What you want to accomplish determines if a traditional publisher's offer will need these goals, or if you can better meet them with self-publishing.

Some authors do both. They may use traditional publishing for a variety of reasons for one book and then self-publish the next. I even know authors who have traditionally published a book and when it went out of print and they got the rights to it back and self-published an updated version of the book that did better than the prior version. Knowing the *why's* upfront will help you put your plan of action to release the book into place and help you reach your goals.

Here's some questions to answer upfront:

- Who is your audience? Who will buy the book?
- How will it be marketed (paid) and promoted (free)?
- Do you need help in the process of marketing and promoting?
- What costs will be involved?
- What activities will you do? A blog tour, book signings, webinars, etc.?
- Will you be creating other products from this book?
- The list continues.

Regardless of if you're going to go the traditional or self-published route with your book(s), consider doing a proposal. This becomes your blueprint for success. Remember, there is a marketing section in a proposal. It tells what activities you'll do to promote your new book.

Publishers don't just hire the writer when they offer a contract. They want to see what that person is able to do with interviews, marketing/promotion, and if they have a proven track record in all aspects beyond the book. So anything that you're doing from number of visitors to your website, the radio/TV/podcast

interviews you've done, or other products that you've created, if they are doing well, let the publisher know in your proposal. This is your opportunity to show all the activities of your marketing and promotional plan for launching the book. For traditional publishing, you're showing a publisher that you're worth their investing their money into you, your book, and your plan. For self-publishing, it's your blueprint of what to do. If your book is in print, you should always be promoting it, and developing other products around it. Show that in your proposal too! Do you have boiler plate (template) for a book proposal that has actually yielded a contract? Some writers conferences offer them, or if you have an author friend who has completed the process and been published, ask them if they'll share theirs with you. You'll learn a lot!

I managed almost 100 book release blog tours for 8 years for New York Times bestselling and other well known authors, such as: Francine Rivers, Cecil Murphey, Carol Kent, Thelma Wells and a mix of other authors ... even first-time self-published authors. The well-known and successful authors ALWAYS had a plan to promote their book from the very beginning. Some started sending out teaser emails and social media posts before the book was finished to get their audience involved, excited, and ready to buy when the book was ready for pre-sales or released.

It has been amazing to see how many other authors who came to me for my services had no plan, no funds, or no idea of why they were really even writing their book. One author contacted me and upfront told me he'd spent all his money before the promotion phase began after it's release. He then asked if I'd promote his book for free ... um, I'm thinking ... no!

Many writers don't think ahead to the business part of the book launch. They are focused on writing the book and getting someone to publish it for them. Again, IT'S TIME to take responsibility. It's a great time to also think about what is involved in promoting the book because they go hand-in-hand.

After managing on the average of 1 book release per month for 8 years, I developed a program for authors to help them think through and plan for their book release. I created step-by-step modules and real-life case studies to guide them through the process.

[Ready. Set. Promote!](http://karenpower.com/readyssetpromote.html) is available at karenpower.com/readyssetpromote.html. This program leads authors through the maze of opportunities, helps them to avoid some of the pitfalls and missteps, grows their readers and followers into a loyal tribe, and prepares the author to generate multiple revenue streams from their books for their business. No matter where you are in the process, from

having already released a book to considering what to write ... [Ready. Set. Promote!](#) will help you make the most out of your book launch and beyond.

- Are you ready to take responsibility and accountability for your writing career?
- Are you ready to, not just increase the odds, but beat them and actually get your book published and into the hands of those who need to hear your message?

If so, your opportunity for success lies in your commitment to reach the goals you've listed in your book proposal. Keep that handy and refer to it often. ***It's time to get started!***

10 Minute Novelists Interview

Host: Katharine Grubbs, [10 Minute Novelists](#)

Q1. Who is Karen Power and how do you change the world?

Great question. Briefly, I'm a Speaker Booking Agent, Promotional Strategist, Speaker Business Trainer/Coach, and Website Developer. I also offer support services to speakers and writers. I got started in the Christian communication industry at age 11 years old as a drummer for a local gospel music band. That morphed through the years.

Applicable highlights for today:

- I started in marketing back in the days of having to use typesetters and professional graphic designers (mid-80's) when desktop computers were just getting started to be used in businesses.
- I begin representing Christian Speakers in 2004 and established my own speaker bureau, Christian Speakers Services in 2007. A few of familiar names on the roster are major league baseball player, Darryl Strawberry, 3 time GRAMMY nominee, Michele Pillar, and GRAMMY award winning singer/songwriters, Dony McGuire and Reba Rambo-McGuire.
- I started offering virtual book launch/blog tours in 2007. From there I did an average of 1 blog tour per month for 8 years. I've worked New York Times best-selling authors such as Francine Rivers and Cecil Murphey, and for other top authors in the CBA market such as Carol Kent, Thelma Wells, Kathi Macias. and Florence Littauer.

So, I change the world by helping others share their messages of hope and healing using any delivery method available and applicable for their audience.

I was dubbed by one of my clients as "The Anointed Wand Waver" and my super power is harnessing the power of the Internet to share my client's (speakers/authors) messages of hope and healing.

Q2. With publishing what it is, is this a good time to be an author?

Absolutely, yes! Certainly the industry has changed a lot in the past 10-15 years. For those who have a solution to present in a fresh manner and who know who their audience is and how to reach them, it's probably the most impactful time because we have so many solutions right at our finger tips. We can literally reach around the world with the power of the Internet and social media. It's

faster, less expensive in some cases, and we can be better connected with each other. The challenge is where to start and how to do all that needs to be done.

Q3. For the any author, recently published or seasoned veteran, what should be their biggest focus? Content? Craft? Platform? Publicity?

Before an author (or speaker) focuses on any of those, the first questions to be clearly answered, in my opinion, are:

- Who is their audience?
- Where are they located?
- What is their main problem? How can you solve that? Then focus on how they wish to receive it.

For example, a mother with pre-schoolers never gets 5 minutes alone, even in the bathroom. Right? So, writing a book, might not be the best fit for her. But taking that content from the book and delivering it in small bite-size pieces via her smart phone, might work for well her.

In sales, it's called "right fitting the solution". That means not going in with a pre-determined solution before asking some very important questions. It's the same with our readers, followers, or audience. As authors, we force our audiences to read our book because that's the only way we are willing to give them the information. As speakers they much come see us at live events. Right fitting the solution for authors and speakers means talking to our audience and determine how they want to consume our message, and then developing those delivery methods.

Once there is a clear focus on the audience, then they can address content, craft, platform, and publicity. Otherwise, they are shooting in the dark. Laser focus is much more effective than using the buck shot approach of trying to reach everyone while essentially not reaching anyone effectively.

Q4. What strategies could a new author implement to keep up with everything?

There is so much to do and most of it needs to be done simultaneously. There are some very talented and skilled authors, but most authors aren't the master of everything needed including technology, promotion, etc. I recommend for authors to focus on only what they can do well. For example, only they can write their message, or sit in front of a camera or microphone for an interview. That's a

lot to do right there. They can, however, hire someone or find volunteers/interns to help them do the other tasks.

In my course, [Ready. Set. Promote!](#), I recommend for the learner to look through the entire course and make a list (maybe an Excel spreadsheet) with seven columns as related to the course modules.

Column 1 - Task to be done

Column 2 - Can they do it? Is it the best use of their time?

Column 3 - Should they hire or find a volunteer to do it?

Column 4 - Resources, names, etc. of those to do the tasks in Column 3

Column 5 - Cost to implement

Column 6 - Target start date

Column 7 - Target completion date

Then they go back through the course and work through this list.

Q5. What is one of the things you've noticed most often that authors forget about when writing their book?

PLANNING ... for promoting their book ... how to promote their book ... and how to pay for the promotion of the book.

When I was doing book launch/blog tours, I can't even begin to count the number of authors who had not planned financially or time-wise for promoting their book. Or, they would do a little things, maybe a book signing or a few interviews and that was it. It takes a lot of coordinated, synchronized activities to create synergy to create the critical mass effect needed to make any kind of impact and get the bang for their investment. They also need to be committed to promoting their book for the life of the book while it's in print. There are so many opportunities, even years down the road, to continue creating other products from the book's content that keep the book it alive.

Q6. How does an author move from writer to author/speaker?

Honestly, I don't think of it being a linear transition. What I've shared for many years with writers and speakers is to use the most effective method to reach their audience. Speaking and writing are the foundation activities. But if someone only wants to speak on a stage or write a book, they'll miss 90% of the opportunities to reach their audience.

Why? Most of their audience can't physically come to their live speaking events. Statistically, it's been proven that most people don't read books. That doesn't

invalidate either. Speaking takes many forms: on stage, on camera, on teleseminars or webinars, small groups, etc. Writing also takes many forms: books, blogs, social media posts, training materials, bible studies, etc.

I try to not separate speaker and writer/author, instead I like to use the term **communicator**. It encompasses the whole person and a holistic approach to delivering one's message.

Q7. If I were on a budget, what would be the best place to spend my money when it comes to improving or promoting myself?

Haha! This answer is going to be a little self-promoting (*smile*).

There are plenty of writer and speaker conferences out there. Yet, I've found most don't have any or much focus on the business side of the craft. I'm trying to fill that void with my programs, [Speak & Get Paid](#) and [Ready. Set. Promote!](#).

[Speak & Get Paid](#) helps prepare the materials needed - writing bios, topics, how to get the best headshots, demos, and more before the promotional efforts begin.

[Ready. Set. Promotes!](#) leads the person through step-by-step with activities, how to's and case studies for connecting with their audience and promoting their book, product, program, or event.

Q8. When is the best time for an author to being promoting their book?

As the song goes, "Let's start at the very beginning. It's a very good place to start."

The book should be born out of a problem they are solving for their audience (even if it's fiction because it will revolve around a concept of an issue). Drawing their readers/audience in from the beginning helps to grow interest and followers. By the time the book is released they have a group of buyers who are chomping at the bits to get it.

If they wait until the book is completed to do these things, the author has missed many opportunities to strengthen their connection with their audience.

Q9. What is one of the biggest mistakes writers make online?

That's an easy one. Not creating a strong Internet presence and using the power of the Internet and social media with consistency.

Here's a real-life example: I had a communicator contact me to catch me up with all that she was doing with her speaking and writing. After sharing for about 15 minutes, her next statement was, "I don't know what to share on social media." Honestly, my jaw just about hit my desk.

So, I asked her to simply share with her followers some of what she just share with me. I asked her if she thought she could do that. "YES!" And off she went!

Q10. What would you say to a new writer who is intimidated by the learning curve?

- There will ALWAYS be a learning curve. When there isn't, you're dead. Embrace learning. It means you're growing your career, and keeping up with your audience.
- JUMP into the deep end ... the water is fine! I'm a jumper and love to learn new things. That's what keeps me interested in what I've done for 40+ years.
- Find a mentor, coach, writing group, a friend who is a writer to brainstorm with.

When I lived in Dallas, TX, I gathered a group of people who lived on the west side of town. We met monthly from 11 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at a restaurant. We'd discuss hot topics relevant to us, ask questions, brainstorm, and just enjoy having other people around who got what we did. I left Dallas in 2012. I was there recently, and two of the must-do activities on my list were (1) get new head shots, and (2) meet up with my speaker/writer peeps from that group.

What's Next?



Now that you know what a killer professional quality speaking demo is and what it can do for you, it's time to make it happen. Your killer video is only one piece of your professional speaker's promotional toolkit.

The **Speak & Get Paid** program helps you get all of your promotional materials ready to share with event planners from your head shot, bio, speaking presentation topic descriptions, and other promotional items, to where to find those elusive speaking opportunities.

You've been promoting your book, speaking presentations, program, or other product but you're not getting the results you expected. What should you do?

Ready. Set. PROMOTE! leads anyone with something to promote step-by-step through the maze of opportunities; grows their audience into a loyal tribe through relationship marketing; shares real-world case studies and examples that work; and develops strategies to generate multiple income streams from their books, products, programs, or events by harnessing the power of the Internet and social media.



With the information and activities in this program, you can promote anything ... products, programs, speaking presentations, business/ministry, or events.

Visit **STORE** at karenpower.com

About the Author

“Karen Power is a gifted coach and speaker advocate. Her services have led to a significant increase in the number of speaking engagements I secure yearly. Her speaker training has covered everything from platform building to building better talks, audience engagement, and how to make meeting planners love you. I highly recommend her services to anyone serious about expanding their ministry reach.” ~ Dr. Sandra Dalton-Smith, Physician, Speaker, and Author

Speaker Business Training. Support Services. Promotional Strategist. Speaker Booking Agent.

Karen's passion and purpose are to help Christ-centered communicators and business owners share their messages and products of hope and healing to change the world by creating innovative solutions. She has helped them connect with their audience, grow their platform base, find new speaking opportunities, raise the bar, and increase their customers, paid enrollees, products and book sales by using various delivery methods and strategies.



Karen started booking speakers for Classservices, Inc., Albuquerque, NM, in November 2004. Then started her own agency, Christian Speakers Services, in January 2007.

Karen has 40+ years experience in the Christian communication industry. She started at the age of 11 as a drummer and later served as a bass guitar player for Christian music bands and church praise teams. She has been on virtually every side of events and the stage as a musician, songwriter, speaker, author, event planner, concert promoter, coach, book tour manager, speaker bureau owner, and booking agent. Her marketing, technology, and curriculum development experience has helped her develop and launch a national support group, develop and produce hundreds on live webinars, develop websites, and design promotional and other support materials for internationally-known Christian speakers, authors, and teachers.

While Karen has been focused on helping speakers and authors take their messages to the world, she has also written several stories that appear in the

following books: ***Your Spiritual Personality*** by Marita Littauer, ***Making the Blue Plate Special*** by Florence Littauer, Marita Littauer, and Lauren Littauer Briggs, and ***The Authentic You*** by Anita C. Lee. She has also managed virtual book promotion tours for New York Times best-selling authors such as Francine Rivers and Cecil Murphey and for other top authors in the CBA market such as Carol Kent, Thelma Wells, Kathi Macias and more.

Training Programs

- Speak & Get Paid
- Ready. Set. Promote!
- Ready. Set. Speak!
- and more

Professional Services Available

- Graphic Design: Banners or headers for websites and social media, Event Posters, Social Media Graphics, Infographics, Book Covers, Lead Magnets
- Website Development & Maintenance
- Speaker/Writer Conference Speaker
- Speaker Business Coach/Consultant
- Speaker Representation

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