

How to Plan a Successful Amazon Book Launch



Anytime you've written a book, you gain credibility. But when you can add the word "bestseller" to your book, now it's boosting both credibility and trust. This is where planning a successful Amazon book launch can help you gain powerful bestseller status. But where to start? Is there a secret formula? You can't just post a book on Amazon and hope that it does well. After years of helping our clients with Amazon book launches, we've learned how to expertly navigate the process in order to ensure a successful online debut, and we're happy to share our knowledge here with you as you plan your own Amazon book launch.

Preparation is key: In order to organize an effective book launch on Amazon, it is absolutely essential that you plan ahead, creating an organized timeline of 6-8 weeks of preparation that builds in enough time for every step of the process in order to get the results you are looking for. The following guidelines for preparation we suggest are based upon years of experience supporting our clients through their own successful launches.

- **Set your launch date:** Choose a date for your launch that coordinates best with your goals and does not land on a weekend, holiday or day before a holiday. Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays are usually the best.
- **8 weeks prior to launch:** Submit your book for listing on Amazon Advantage (you can do this from your Vervante author account page). Be sure to let us know what category you wish to be listed under on Amazon. (see Expert tip below) Once we receive your request, we will submit the listing to Amazon. It can then take up to 2 weeks for Amazon to acknowledge the listing. After acceptance, we will then receive a purchase order for two (2) books only. This is standard procedure for Amazon.

Expert Tip: *Choosing a niche category for your book is essential to becoming a best seller on Amazon. You can see a list of industry-standard categories at www.bisg.org. For example, instead of designating "Gardening" as your*

category, go deeper into your niche and choose "herb gardens" or "tomatoes." This greatly increases your potential to achieve coveted "bestseller" status. With a niche category, you do not need to sell thousands of books to become an Amazon bestseller. You may only need to sell 100 to reach your goal.

- **6 weeks prior to launch:** In preparation for a strategic book launch, we will then send a stock-up request to Amazon, asking to send more books (depending on your projected sales estimates) in anticipation of a book launch day. Please provide us with highlights for the marketing of your book launch – radio, TV, emails, affiliates, etc. We will then submit this information to Amazon along with a stock up request for at least 50-100 books. (This number can change depending on the projected amount of books you predict will sell during your launch.) Submitting your marketing plan greatly improves the likelihood that Amazon approves the request. When/if approved, they will send a revised purchase order to us here at Vervante for the larger shipment of books to have in stock. This can also take up to 2 weeks.

NOTE: It is the author's responsibility to pay Vervante for the books shipped to Amazon in preparation for the book launch. They will be reimbursed at the Amazon Advantage 45% rate when Amazon sells the books. If all books are not sold during the launch, royalty payments to the authors for the books are not paid until all books in stock at Amazon are sold.

- **4 weeks prior to launch:** Once Amazon sends a revised purchase order for more books to us,, books will be printed and shipped to Amazon. This process usually takes 2-3 weeks for the purchase order to be sent to publisher, printed, then received and added to the Amazon inventory.
- **1-2 weeks prior to launch:** Once the books are received and added to Amazon inventory, it can often take up to 1 week for Amazon to confirm that your books are in stock and ready to go. Keep an eye on this to make sure that your books are in place and ready for the big launch.

- **1-2 weeks prior to launch:** Support your success within the Amazon community by setting up an “About the Author” page ahead of the launch so that it’s easy for potential readers to learn more about you directly on the site.
- **1-2 weeks prior to launch:** Post reviews ahead of time. Once your book is listed online, but before the official launch day, send copies of the book to a select group of readers and ask them to post their reviews directly on the page. This way, on the day of the launch, potential buyers who may be on the fence will see them right away.
- **Launch!** We are a go – your marketing plan is in action, books are selling like hotcakes and you are enjoying the fruits of your careful preparations. Congratulations!

Expert Tip: During your launch, be sure to monitor your Amazon activity: In order to track results on Amazon, be sure to create an “Author Central” page where you can log in to watch sales statistics and more.

- **7-10 days after launch:** We suggest closing the Amazon Advantage listing and then list the book in Amazon Marketplace in order to enjoy higher commissions. Advantage takes 55% commission, Amazon Marketplace takes 15%.



Expert Tip: Why do we list your book in Amazon Advantage first, then switch to Amazon Marketplace post-launch? In order for a book to qualify for “best seller status” on Amazon, the books must be in stock at Amazon and ship from Amazon, which is how the Advantage program works. After your launch is complete, however, we feel it is in your best interest to move your book to the Marketplace program, where the book will never go out of stock since Vervante prints and ships with each order, you have control of the sale price and your commission is higher.

Now you can see why we recommend 6-8 weeks to prepare for your Amazon book launch. Beyond the timing factor, there is another reason to take note of for why this preparation is so important. Without careful planning, you risk not having enough books in stock at Amazon for your book launch. If the launch is done without stock to support orders, your readers and affiliates can go through the process to order the book, and then receive a notice from Amazon a few hours later cancelling their order.

Beyond the Timeline

Here are a few more tips for creating a successful Amazon book launch that we have gathered from our personal insight and the experiences of our customers.

Create win-win relationships: Many authors leverage joint-venture or affiliate relationships to support marketing and sales before and during their Amazon book launch. You can do this on your own, or consult with a professional who already knows the ropes and can assist you in this part of your launch.

Provide extra value for your readers: The way that Amazon is set up, there is no way for you to know who is purchasing your book unless they tell you themselves. Here’s a great way to provide even more of value to your audience, while also giving you the ability to capture their contact information: On the day of your big launch, instead of sending potential readers directly to Amazon, direct them to a landing website page you have set up where they will opt in to receive a free offer or bonus product and then be directed to the Amazon page to complete their purchase. This is a win-win-win situation. Your readers get a free bonus – you have now captured their contact information AND you’ve boosted your sales to reach your goal.

Great sales and a bestseller accomplishment to brag about are great, but overall it is happy readers and positive reviews that will elevate your book – and your launch – to something spectacular. Tip the odds in your favor by establishing an author account with Vervante to create and publish your book, then take advantage of this expert guide for a successful Amazon book launch.

Feeling a little more confident about self-publishing? With this expert guide, you now possess the big-picture knowledge to help you address important decisions and issues that are the foundation of self-publishing success.