

Marketing Your Book

Marketing books in 2026 presents a unique challenge, as the publishing industry is often declared “dead” in an era dominated by short-form content, algorithms, and constant digital noise. Readers are overwhelmed with choices, attention spans are fractured, and even powerful stories can struggle to be seen without intentional effort. Yet this reality does not signal the end of books! It demands a different approach. Success now comes from **connection** rather than scale. Authors now must build direct relationships with readers, tell their stories authentically across platforms, engage communities around shared values, and meet audiences where they already gather. When books are positioned not as products but as experiences, conversations, and causes, they cut through the noise. In today’s era, the challenge is visibility, but the opportunity is a deeper, more meaningful reach than ever before.

Children’s Books

- **Interactive Storytime Events**: Host local storytime sessions at libraries or bookstores where children can engage with the story through crafts, games, or acting out scenes.
- **Social Media Challenges**: Create a hashtag for a reading challenge, encouraging kids to share photos or videos of themselves reading your book or dressing up as their favorite character.
- **Illustration Contests**: Invite children to submit their own illustrations for scenes from the book, offering prizes or the chance to have their art featured on your website or social media.
- **Author Visits**: Schedule visits to schools and libraries for readings and Q&A sessions, allowing kids to connect with you as the author and learn about the writing process.
- **Book-themed Merchandise**: Develop fun merchandise related to the book, like stickers, bookmarks, or plush toys, which can be given away or sold alongside the book.
- **Parent and Teacher Guides**: Create downloadable guides that include discussion questions, activities, and lesson plans tied to the book's themes, making them a valuable resource for educators and parents. (Contact Bell Asteri if you would like to have a teaching unit developed around your book’s theme.)
- **Collaborate with Influencers**: Partner with family-oriented influencers or book bloggers to review your book and share it with their audience.
- **Virtual Book Tours**: Organize online events where you can read the book, discuss its themes, and interact with children and parents in real-time.
- **Library Partnerships**: Collaborate with local libraries to host themed reading weeks, book fairs, or literacy programs that feature your book prominently.

- **Community Events:** Participate in local festivals or fairs with a booth featuring activities related to your book, such as crafts or storytelling.
- **Themed Subscription Boxes:** Create a subscription box service that includes your book along with themed crafts, snacks, or activities to engage kids further. Another way to accomplish this is through Amazon Wish List by putting together a list of items that include your book, its coloring/activity book, and toys or art supplies, and have those shipped to a hospital or to yourself for distribution to schools, charities, etc.
- **Engage in Schools:** Develop partnerships with schools for literacy programs or to include your book in their reading lists.
- **Email Newsletters:** Build a mailing list to share updates, book-related content, and exclusive offers or contests.
- **Augmented Reality Experiences:** Incorporate AR features where children can use their devices to see animations or characters come to life while reading.

Memoirs

1. Clarify the Core Message & Audience

Before marketing tactics, everything should center on why this story matters.

Define your core audience(s):

- Cancer survivors (adult survivors of childhood cancer or current patients)
- Parents of children with cancer
- Oncology nurses, doctors, and hospital staff
- Advocacy organizations and nonprofits
- Faith-based or inspirational readers
- Memoir readers who value resilience and hope

Refine your hook (repeat this everywhere):

- Survival against impossible odds
- Childhood cancer before modern treatments
- Turning pain into purpose
- A voice for kids who didn't survive

This message should be consistent across bios, pitches, interviews, and social posts.

2. Author Platform & Personal Branding

Readers connect to you as much as the story.

Author website

- A clean, simple site with:
 - Book synopsis
 - Author story (short and long versions)
 - Speaking/appearance inquiries
 - Media kit (bio, cover image, press photos)
 - Email newsletter sign-up

Email list

- Collect emails via:
 - Website sign-up
 - Book signings
 - Advocacy events
- Send:
 - Launch updates
 - Personal reflections
 - Advocacy-related content
 - Ways to help children with cancer

3. Social Media Strategy

Focus on storytelling, not selling.

Best platforms:

- Instagram – quotes, photos, reels, advocacy
- Facebook – survivor communities, long-form posts
- TikTok – short emotional storytelling (very powerful for memoir)
- LinkedIn – for professional, advocacy, hospital, and speaking connections

Content ideas:

- Short excerpts from the memoir
- “Then vs now” reflections
- Childhood photos
- Behind-the-scenes writing stories
- Honoring children who didn’t survive
- Awareness posts (Childhood Cancer Awareness Month)
- “Why I wrote this book” posts

4. **Media & Press Outreach**

Cancer memoirs are highly appealing to local and niche media.

Targets:

- Local newspapers and TV stations
- Cancer-focused blogs and podcasts
- Survivor podcasts and YouTube channels
- Parenting and faith-based publications
- Hospital newsletters and foundations

Pitch angles:

- “Local author survived childhood cancer”
- “A memoir giving voice to childhood cancer survivors”
- “What treatment looked like before survival was expected”
- “Turning survival into advocacy”

Prepare:

- A 1-page press release (contact Bell Asteri for updated releases)
- Short bio
- Book cover image
- 2–3 powerful excerpts
- Talking points for interviews

5. **Speaking Engagements** (One of the Most Powerful Tools)

Your story is meant to be heard aloud.

Where to speak:

- Hospitals and oncology units
- Cancer conferences and symposiums
- Schools and universities
- Churches and faith groups
- Fundraisers and galas
- Survivor retreats

Offer:

- Book signings after talks
- Discounted bulk purchases
- Custom talks (survivor-focused, caregiver-focused)

6. Partnerships with Cancer Organizations

This adds credibility and reach.

Examples:

- Childhood cancer nonprofits
- Hospital foundations

Collaboration ideas:

- Donation-based book sales
- Awareness campaigns
- Social media takeovers
- Guest blog posts
- Joint events during awareness months

7. Strategic Timing & Awareness Months

Leverage moments when attention is already there.

Key times:

- September (Childhood Cancer Awareness Month)
- June (Cancer Survivors Month)
- World Cancer Day (Feb 4)

Plan:

- Blog posts
- Social media campaigns
- Media pitches
- Speaking events
- Giveaways

8. Reviews, & Endorsements

Who to ask:

- Doctors or nurses involved in care (if appropriate)
- Cancer advocates & Nonprofit leaders
- Survivors or parents (those in similar spaces)

Where to use them:

- Amazon/Goodreads
- Website
- Media pitches
- Social graphics

9. Book Clubs, Reading Groups & Community Reads

Memoirs thrive in discussion spaces.

Outreach to:

- Survivor support groups
- Community book clubs
- Church reading groups
- College classes (psychology, social work, medical humanities)

Offer:

- Discussion questions
- Virtual or in-person author Q&A
- Signed copies

10. Paid & Low-Cost Promotion

Keep it ethical and targeted. Please note that this has to be tested, and you might discover that there is no real ROI, but some authors have found success.

Effective options:

- Facebook/Instagram ads for awareness months
- Goodreads giveaways
- Podcast sponsorship swaps

Focus on visibility, not hard selling.

11. Advocacy-Based Marketing (Your Greatest Strength)

This is where a cancer memoir stands apart.

Ideas:

- Dedicate proceeds to a cause
- Share resources for families
- Highlight current childhood cancer statistics
- Honor lost children in posts
- Encourage readers to take action

Marketing becomes mission, not promotion.

12. Long-Term Strategy

Memoirs have a long life.

Sustain momentum by:

- Sharing anniversary reflections
- Updating readers on advocacy work
- Creating companion materials (journals, guides)
- Speaking annually at awareness events
- Keeping the story alive through service

The most effective marketing for a cancer memoir doesn't feel like marketing at all, but instead, it feels like a testimony, honor, and hope. When readers sense that your purpose is bigger than a book, they don't just buy it. They carry it forward.

Educational Materials

- Partner with trusted organizations. Collaborate with hospitals, pediatric oncology units, nonprofits, and foundations to distribute resources through channels families already trust.
- Leverage awareness moments. Share resources during Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, Cancer Survivors Month, and relevant advocacy days when educators and families are actively seeking information.
- Offer free, shareable tools. Create downloadable fact sheets, classroom guides, infographics, and parent toolkits that can be easily shared by schools and support groups.
- Host webinars and workshops. Provide short virtual sessions for parents, educators, healthcare workers, or community groups focused on understanding childhood cancer and supporting affected families.
- Use storytelling alongside data. Pair educational content with survivor stories, caregiver perspectives, or day-in-the-life examples to humanize complex information.
- Engage schools and libraries. Offer your materials along with lesson plans and/or reading guides for teachers, school counselors, and librarians.
- Build credibility through experts. Include endorsements, co-authorship, or quotes from medical professionals, social workers, child life specialists, and teachers.
- Empower advocates to share. Equip survivors, parents, and supporters with ready-made social graphics, captions, and talking points to extend reach organically.

Coloring/Activity Books

- Partner directly with hospitals and child life departments. Provide sample copies (choose one or two pages, such as the scavenger hunt and a coloring page) to pediatric oncology units, inpatient floors, and child life specialists who already distribute activities to kids.
- Work with nonprofits and family housing programs. Collaborate with organizations like hospital foundations, Ronald McDonald House–type programs, and childhood cancer nonprofits to place books where families stay.
- Offer donation and sponsorship programs. Allow individuals, businesses, or organizations to sponsor books that are donated to hospitalized children or siblings at home.
- Market to parents and caregivers through support groups. Share gently in online caregiver communities, survivor groups, and social media spaces where parents seek quiet, screen-free activities.
- Highlight emotional benefits, not just entertainment. Emphasize calm, distraction, creativity, normalcy, and sibling inclusion rather than “fun” alone.
- Leverage awareness months and giving seasons. Position books as meaningful gifts during Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, holidays, and hospital donation drives.

Ideas for All Book Types

Targeted Social Media Campaigns

- Instagram and Facebook: Share snippets of poignant or humorous passages, accompanied by engaging visuals. Use relevant hashtags (#MemoirMonday, #BookLovers #GoldStrong).
- TikTok: Create short videos discussing themes from the book, or share personal anecdotes that tie into the content.

Author Engagement

- Virtual Book Tours: Host live readings or Q&A sessions on platforms like Zoom or Instagram Live.
- Podcast Appearances: Reach out to podcasts focused on personal stories, writing, or your memoir's themes to share your journey and insights.

Influencer Collaborations

- Partner with influencers in the literary space or those who resonate with your memoir's themes. They can review the book or create content around it.

Thematic Blog Series

- Write a series of blog posts that delve deeper into your book's themes or stories, offering a behind-the-scenes look at the writing process.

Book Clubs and Reading Groups

- Reach out to book clubs to offer discussion questions or host virtual meetings. Consider creating a downloadable discussion guide.

Email Newsletter

- Build an email list and send out regular newsletters with personal stories, updates on events, or reflections related to your book's content.

Local Events and Workshops

- Organize readings or workshops at local libraries, bookstores, or community centers. Engage with the audience through storytelling exercises.

Visual Storytelling

- Create a video similar to the book trailer in which you introduce yourself (good for memoirs) and share updates or have a character from the book (great for children's books) send out a message to kids fighting cancer. Share it across all platforms.

Collaborative Projects

- Team up with other authors or creatives to co-host events or anthologies that resonate with your book's themes.

Giveaways and Contests

- Run contests on social media for signed copies or related merchandise to generate buzz and encourage sharing.

Personalized Swag

- Create bookmarks, stickers, or other merchandise that tie into your book and offer them during events or as giveaways.

Engage with Readers

- Create a dedicated space on your website or social media for readers to share their thoughts or experiences related to your memoir.

Reviews

- Never stop asking your readers to review your book. Amazon and Goodreads are especially significant and can boost sales.