

The **POEM** Method of Book Marketing

by
**Keith
Ogorek**

A simple framework you can use to create an effective book marketing campaign.

Author 
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For many authors the task of book marketing is confusing something they just don't want to do, even or a necessary evil. However, without marketing, it is virtually impossible for your book to be discovered. So from my own publishing experience and from hundreds and hundreds of conversations with authors, I want to share with you a simple framework I have developed to help you create an effective integrated marketing plan for your book.

Marketing is easier if you memorize this POEM.

The framework is easy to remember because it is the acronym POEM. The **P** stands for publicity. The **O** stands for online. The **E** stands for events, and the **M** stands for multimedia. Every successful, integrated marketing campaign includes these activities, and when deployed together as I suggest, you can be significantly more effective with your book marketing efforts.

Too often authors are overwhelmed or confused when it comes to marketing their books because there are so many opportunities available today to connect with readers. Using this POEM framework can help eliminate much of that confusion and sense of being overwhelmed. Plus, having a plan that is easy to understand and execute can help you have confidence that all the key tasks are covered, which can help you be successful. That's because instead of completing a series of single, random actions, POEM will help you use individual activities across multiple channels to promote your book more broadly and easily.

Know what the letters POEM stand for.

Now even though the words that make up POEM may seem self-explanatory, I want to define each of them, explain the range of work each encompasses, and suggest which activity is foundational for each category.



P Is for Publicity

Let's start with P. Publicity is using traditional and online media to build awareness about your book. This distinction between media is really important because often when people think about publicity, they only think about television, radio, or newspaper. Certainly those are avenues that you can use to raise awareness about you as an author and your book, but in this day and age, you should also think of publicity as promoting yourself online through bloggers or social media.

To get started, I recommend you have a press release announcing the launch of your book. It should include what the book is about, when it is available for sale, where to buy it, and how to contact you. This press release can be the base communication you provide to anyone and can be used as part of your media kit you use to pitch your story.

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Get ready to pitch

Along with your press release, you want to work on your elevator pitch. Your elevator pitch is how you're going to talk to media about your book. A pitch is not an outline of your book or a history on why you wrote it; it is a short, captivating explanation about your book and the key reason why people would want to read it.

It is also important to make your pitch relevant. For example, if you live in a community that has a local paper, your pitch to the paper should include a mention that you're a local author. The key is to have a short, crisp, compelling pitch about your book that you can adapt if necessary based on who you are speaking with.

Using your pitch to get attention

With a press release and an elevator pitch, you can usually be pretty successful at approaching local media and bloggers with an angle that's relevant to them. When you talk to media you don't want to just talk about yourself. You want to talk about what would be interesting to them. It's a subtle difference, but it's very, very important.

Even if you hire a publicist, you will need to develop your pitch. The difference is he or she will work with you to craft the pitch used to approach media, but your input will be critical.



O Is for Online

The next area of book marketing to focus on is online. I define online as anything you discover through digital channels. That means it can be anything you read or see or listen to on your phone or website or in your email.

From my perspective, your blog and/or website should be the foundation of your online efforts. You want to drive people to one place. For example, on my blog I have it hooked up through WordPress to push out to Twitter and Facebook. So if I publish a blog post, the system pushes it out and lets Facebook friends and Twitter followers know there's a new post. With technology, you can reach different channels but still bring people to one place.

In this way, no matter how people find you, you don't need to repeat or update your story on multiple platforms. Instead use different platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Pinterest to drive prospective readers or media to one location—your blog or website.

Once you have your foundation established, you want to make sure you have a plan to do outreach on social media because that is a key to driving traffic to your website or blog.

Consistency and relevancy are keys to social media

One of the most important things to remember when you do social media outreach is consistency and relevancy. Consistency means drip irrigation instead of a thunderstorm. In other words, don't just post messages only when you have big announcements or

intermittently, but try to post content on a regular basis.

Relevancy is something I also mentioned in publicity. Make sure what you post is of interest to your readers even if it is not content that you create. For example, if you have a cookbook that addresses a particular nutrition issue, you can find other content on the topic and share it with your readers. Remember—they are not just interested in you as a writer and your book, but they're also probably interested in the topic you wrote about.

As with publicity, you have the opportunity to do this yourself or you can hire people that can help you. It just comes down to what time and budget you have to invest.

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E Is for Events

So those are the first two letters in the acronym. Now let's look at the E, which stands for events. Events is simply defined as face-to-face interaction with potential readers, and they can really help fuel a word-of-mouth campaign. Living in a digital age certainly allows us to reach people all over the world, but there is still great opportunity to make an impact when we are face-to-face with prospective readers. Readers love meeting authors. They love to know the person behind the words.

Events can happen in a variety of settings

Setting up or attending events can take place in a variety of places. You can hold book signings at local venues. With the appropriate planning, you can also set up events where you travel. In addition, you can attend some of the major national book fairs such as the Los Angeles Times Book Fair, the Miami Book Fair, or Word on the Street in Canada.

Speaking events are another way you can build awareness for your book. You might not think of yourself as a public speaker, but you should consider and explore any opportunities you have to get in front of people in your community, such as service or school groups. Many such organizations are always looking for speakers. I also suggest you contact your local library. In most cases they welcome presenters, especially authors from the community. They often will also let you sell and sign books and you may want to consider donating an amount from each book sale to the library.

You never know who might be in the audience

Now there is a tendency to think you have to have a big audience to make it worth your time, but when it comes to promoting a book, that may not always be true. Some time ago I received an order for fifty books, but I did not recognize the name of the person who purchased them. So I found out a way to contact her and asked how she heard about the book. She let me know she was in the audience when I did a presentation on my book in St. Louis. I doubt there were more than twenty people in that room, but she thought enough of the book and presentation to order copies for everyone in her organization. A few years later I had a similar experience where someone ordered a hundred books to use in his organization after sitting in a presentation to about twenty people.

My point is if you have an opportunity to present, you should take it because you never know who will be in the audience. Plus, it gives you practice as a presenter, which will only make you better.

Perhaps, most important by using this POEM framework, you can use a speaking event to create messaging to use in your other channels. Before, during, and after the event, you can post things online, use it in your pitch when relevant, include it in publicity, and definitely add to your website. In fact, this is a perfect example of how you can take what may seem like a small opportunity and turn it into an integrated campaign to help you increase awareness and build your platform. As a result, people are left with the impression that there is a lot of activity and interest around that book.



M Is for Multimedia

The last letter in our acronym is M, which stands for multimedia. In this case, I define multimedia as using images, motion, and sounds to promote your book and you as an author. We are an image- and video-driven culture. So using elements such as video interviews, book trailers, or podcasts can create a compelling way to engage potential readers.

Multimedia is also another way for potential readers to get to know you beyond the words of your book. Perhaps they can't meet you in person, but as they listen to you on a podcast or watch an interview, you create a personal connection between you and the reader, which in most cases makes the case for buying the book more compelling.

Multimedia has multiple uses

With good multimedia you also have another tool when pitching for interviews. You can send links to your videos or podcasts. Those can be extremely helpful because most people want to do research before agreeing to an interview or a blog post. Good multimedia will give readers a sense of how you communicate and often can be the key to securing opportunities.

Finally, multimedia gives you content for your online channels. That is why remembering the POEM method to book marketing is so helpful. You do one video interview, and you end up using it in multiple ways to help create awareness and build your platform.

Here's how to use this POEM

Now that you understand the POEM method of book marketing, here are some key questions you should ask about your goals, budget, time, and talent you can bring to the campaign.

How much money are you able to invest in your book marketing?

Be realistic. Book publishing is not a lottery ticket and usually the returns, if and when they come, take time. So be wise about the money you put to work.

How much time can you invest each week?

Think of book marketing like irrigation rather than a thunderstorm. In other words, if you want your book marketing campaign to bear fruit, you are better off being consistent and steady instead of just popping up with big announcements when you have them. So set a realistic goal for the time you can invest each week and stick to it.

What talent can you bring to your campaign and who do you need to hire to help you?

One of the scariest comments I hear from authors is "my daughter's an artist" because that almost always means their book cover is doomed. Be realistic about what talent you have, and if you do hire someone, make sure they have experience with the task you need done. Just because you can design a logo, doesn't mean you know how to design a book cover. Or just because you wrote a book, doesn't mean you know how to write a press release.

This simple grid can help

One thing you can also do to assure you are creating the most effective marketing campaign is build a simple grid like the one below as both a reminder of how you can use one activity across multiple channels and as a way to keep yourself accountable.

I have populated it with an example of how you could use POEM if you were going to do a book signing at a book store. However, this is just one illustration of how having this framework can help you make sure you maximize every opportunity you have.

POEM	Publicity	Online	Event	Multimedia
before	Send out press release. Notify local media.	Post on website and social media.	Send out invites. Post posters in location.	Do video to invite people to attend and post online.
during	Be prepared in case any media show up. Have your press release and pitch ready to go.	Post from the event and ask people to stop by.	Take photos with people who buy the book, and ask them to post on their social media. Gather names for email list.	Take photos you can use for your postcampaign.
after	If a story runs, post it on your website and social media.	Post photos from event. Tag people, if possible.	Send thank you to venue. Ask to do another event if it was successful.	Create a photo archive so you have a handy reference point for your images.

Some key advantages of using this POEM

At the outset, I suggested that book marketing can be confusing for many authors, but hopefully, this POEM framework will help eliminate much of the confusion and frustration and give you four key advantages.

1. Give you a blueprint and foundation for creating an effective integrated book marketing plan.
2. Multiply your efforts for maximum impact from your book marketing tactics.
3. Help you know how to make wise investments of time and money for your book marketing.
4. Give you confidence you are doing the right things to market your book.



The Author Learning Center is a GPS for your publishing journey

As you continue on your journey as an author, be sure to check out all the other resources available to you on the Author Learning Center (ALC). No matter where you are in your process, chances are, you will find the help and answers you need on the ALC.

About the author:

Keith Ogorek

President

Author Learning Center

As an industry thought leader, Ogorek has helped drive a number of significant innovations in the self-publishing industry and is featured in the book, *Innovation—How Innovators Think, Act and Change Our World*. He also has authored three books, *A Clear View*, *Eli the Stable Boy*, and *7 Secrets of Successful Self-Published Authors*, and has written a number of helpful white papers including the popular *4 Paths to Publishing* and *Three Phases of an Effective Book Marketing Campaign*.

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