

What does Simon & Schuster look for when acquiring an Archway title?

Simon & Schuster has a clear process for considering Archway self-published titles that they might want to acquire for one of their imprints. Each quarter, they receive a sales report on every Archway title so they can see what has sold through online and brick-and-mortar retailers in the past three months and over its lifetime. That means any book published with Archway **is guaranteed** to have the sales for that title reviewed.

Guaranteed to have Archway books' sales reports reviewed, plus select books on display.

In addition, authors who attend the special event in the spring with Simon & Schuster personnel have their books on display at the event, and their books are shipped back to Simon & Schuster and put on display in a main conference room following the event. An email is also sent out to the company to make sure people are aware that the books are there. But what do they look for when it comes to acquiring the rights to a title?

Here are some things to keep in mind, because while there is no guarantee for acquisition, these are the things they are looking for.

A Well-Written Book

This probably goes without saying, but let's define what we mean by that. First, there needs to be a unique, consistent voice throughout the book. If it is fiction, it should have unique characters and an interesting plot that gets resolved. If it is nonfiction, there needs to be some hook as to what this book is trying to do. Another thing to keep in mind is word count based on the genre you are writing. **Here's a helpful link from the Author Learning Center that provides guidelines for that:** <https://www.authorlearningcenter.com/writing/managing-your-writing-life/w/goal-setting-and-process/7102/word-count-by-genre-how-long-should-a-book-be>

A Clearly Defined Audience

If you write for everyone, you will likely reach no one, so it should be clear at the outset who your primary audience is for your book, because that will help you also determine where and what the best way is to reach potential readers.

A Platform Or Plan To Build One

By platform, we mean a way to connect with potential readers either in person, on social media, or through some other digital channel. A common misperception is that if you are picked up by a traditional publisher, you don't have to do any marketing. That is just not true. Every traditional publisher will expect you to do your part to connect with readers and build your audience.

Sales Velocity

One common question is, "How many books do I need to sell to get picked up?" The answer is that there is no magic number, because what they are looking for is a title that sells at launch but continues to sell over time. That tells them that either the author's marketing, word of mouth, or both help build awareness and sales for the book. That said, your book should be selling thousands through the channel to gain interest.

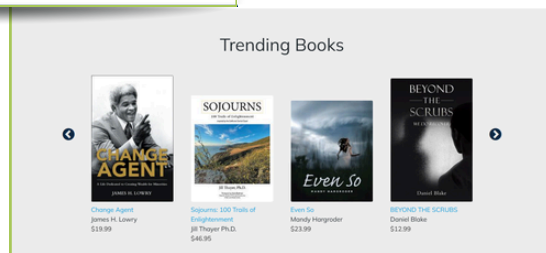
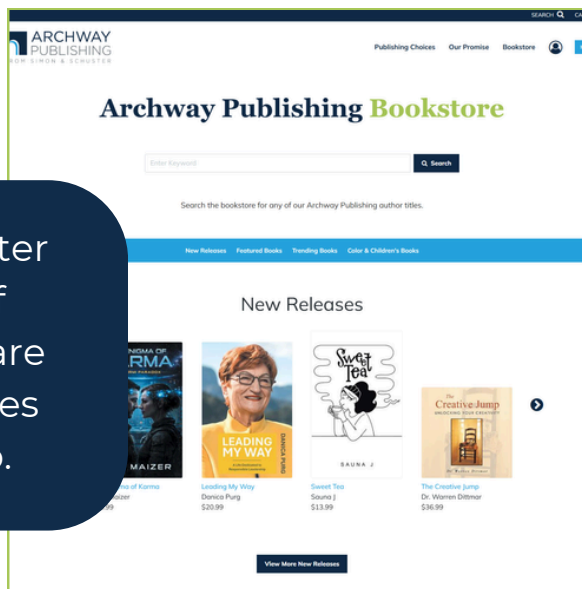
A Book That Is A Genre That They Publish

Another common misperception is that Simon & Schuster is just one publisher, but the reality is they have a wide range of imprints that focus on particular genres, such as science fiction, romance, or children's. If your book does not have a clear genre that fits an imprint that they have, that can also make it difficult to garner interest.

So, here are some questions you should ask yourself if being acquired is a goal.

- ✓ Does your book have a clearly defined genre and an appropriate word count for that genre?
- ✓ Has your book been professionally edited?
- ✓ What type of platform do you have, and what are you doing to build it and connect with your audience?
- ✓ How is your sales velocity? Has your book continued to gain readers and sales over time, and have you sold a few thousand books through the online and brick-and-mortar retailers?

Each quarter, Simon & Schuster reviews the sales reports of Archway books to see if any are selling well and would be ones they might want to pick up.



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