



## Book Reviews: Step One on the Road to a Successful Book Launch (and Ultimately Sales)

by [David Wogahn](#)

How do new authors get book reviews? We can cut to the chase: there is no magic answer. Reviews for any book—either for a new author or for one who has published many titles—whether traditionally published or self-published, come from three sources: contacts, money, and sales. Let’s take each one of these and look at the options for a new author.

### Contacts

I always have my eye out for advice to authors about getting book reviews, which invariably includes things like “Ask your fans!” or “You need to have a strong team behind you.” Other authors talk about their beta readers or street team. But what if this is your first book, and maybe your only book? Chances are you don’t have any teams or previous readers to rely on. Even if you are willing to give your book away, who do you give it to and how do you form a team? Start early—before its release—by telling everyone you know about your book, connect with readers in your genre, and create a mailing list.

7:00 pm, August 12  
via Zoom

Authors with mailing lists, and to a lesser extent, a social media following, get more reviews (and sell more books). I call this an Addressable Audience—people you can contact directly. Your ability to accumulate reviews quickly, in the first thirty days of release, is linked



David Wogahn

to the size of your contact list. This pays off for you in two ways: your network is more likely to leave the first reviews and those reviews will most likely be positive. Why? People who know you and don’t like your book will be less inclined to leave any review, especially a negative one.

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Join us during the St. Louis Publishers Association meeting on August 12, at 7:00pm on Zoom and learn how to gain valuable reviews for your book.

[David Wogahn](#) is the author of five books, including “The Book Review Companion” (featured in our [December 2019 Newsletter](#)), and is president of AuthorImprints, a publishing services company based in Carlsbad, California. He is a frequent speaker and trainer for organizations like the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) and the Alliance of Independent Authors (ALLi).

Visit him at [davidwogahn.com](http://davidwogahn.com).

### ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS:

Sign-up is free. You can join from your smartphone, computer or tablet. If you’ve used Zoom before, it should connect right away. If it’s your first time, simply sign up, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Click on this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>. Meeting ID is 867 8214 4399. Password is 668448.

## A Speaker Who Writes Shares with Writers Who Want to Speak...and Sell More Books!

by [Carol Weisman](#)

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on September 9 at our next monthly Zoom meeting for *A Speaker Who Writes Shares with Writers Who Want to Speak...and Sell More Books!*, featuring Carol Weisman.

As a writer—regardless of the genre—there is an audience looking to meet you, hear from you, and decide if they want to purchase your book. After that, if you knock it out of the park, they might become a dedicated fan or even upgrade to groupie status. Why not get paid to sell your books? Learn how to get speaking engagements, even in the time of COVID-19, and how to sell copies of your books in bulk before you speak.



Carol Weisman

Carol Weisman is a CSP\*\*. She is the author of eleven books on fundraising, governance, and philanthropy. In the past 26 years, she has travelled multiple times for work from Marshalltown, Iowa, and Tyler, Texas, to as far away as the United Kingdom, Australia, and East Africa. In total, she has sold well over 100,000 books. Visit her at [carolweisman.com](http://carolweisman.com).

\*\*A CSP is a Certified Speaking Professional, the highest earned award from the National Speaker’s Association. To earn a CSP, a speaker must complete a minimum of 250 paid speaking engagements in five years, for at least 100 clients and at a minimum of \$250,000.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

**August 12, 7:00 – 8:30pm**  
**Book Reviews: Step One on the Road to a Successful Book Launch (and Ultimately Sales)**

with [David Wogahn](#)  
<https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>

**September 9, 7:00 – 8:30pm**  
**A Speaker Who Writes Shares with Writers Who Want to Speak...and Sell**

with [Carol Weisman](#)  
(meeting ID link will be posted on website in September)

## Money

I consider reviews part of book marketing and as such they are something to budget for. In fact, for those with financial resources this can be a good investment. Here are a few ways to spend your budget:

- Buy copies of your book for reviewers
- Give prospective reviewers gift certificates
- Hire someone to research and contact potential reviewers
- Pay a service like [Hidden Gems](#), [NetGalley](#), [Booksprout](#), or [Goodreads](#) to offer your book to their mailing list
- Hire a blog tour service to conduct a review tour. (I profile forty blog tour organizers in my directory: [The Book Reviewer Yellow Pages](#).)
- Pay a service to advertise your book (more on this below).

## Sales

It's axiomatic; if no one is reading your book, how can you get any reviews? The obvious solution is to get your book into the hands of readers. If you have few contacts and aren't willing or able to invest in marketing, the next best thing is to give your book away, sell it at a low price, or run a period sale.

Keep in mind using free or cheap ebooks to get reviews is not as effective as it was a few years ago. But if you have few contacts and no or little money, it's your best option; otherwise you are relying on prayer and luck.



## LAST MONTH'S RECAP: How to Write a Sizzling Synopsis

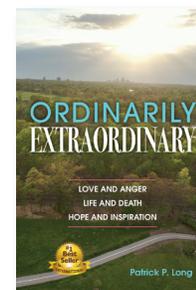


Special thanks to **Bryan Cohen**, founder of **Best Page Forward**, a copywriting agency for authors, and his excellent session during our Zoom meeting on July 8. Visit him at [bryancohen.com](http://bryancohen.com). The synopsis is more than a general summary of your book. It's a targeted description with enticing information that should convince readers to click the "Buy Now" button. Here's a breakdown of the description framework used to create your sizzling synopsis:

	Nonfiction	Fiction
<b>Headline/Hook</b> (1-line teaser)	Introduce the purpose of the book. <i>"Do you have a problem with X? This book can help you!"</i>	Introduce the story, mention the triggering event and its impact. <i>"AJ is running for her life; she must find the missing clue before sunrise to claim the treasure...and her freedom."</i>
<b>Expertise</b>	Why should readers trust you as an author? (professional, followers, members, experience, etc.)	N/A
<b>Synopsis</b>	Describe how the book will help. <i>"Features an easy-to-follow, 5-step plan to overcome X."</i>	Hint at the conflict/cliffhanger and how it affects the main character(s). <i>"AJ is dodging bounty hunters and trying to outsmart a thief, all while in a race against the clock."</i>
<b>Transforming Benefit</b>	How will this book benefit them in the short term and/or long run?	N/A
<b>Selling Paragraph</b>	What is it and why will they like it? <i>"If you're looking for proven solutions to help with X, this book is for you."</i>	What is it and why will they like it? <i>"If you love fast-paced mystery thrillers you'll love this book."</i>
<b>Call to Action!</b>	What should they do now? <i>"Visit myXbook.com to purchase now!"</i>	What should they do now? <i>"Buy your copy at Amazon.com today!"</i>

## KUDOS CORNER

SLPA Member:  
*Patrick P. Long*



Patrick P. Long shares the candid and inspiring experiences within the pain, love, and resilience of his family in *Ordinarily Extraordinary: Love and Anger, Life and Death, Hope and Inspiration*. Written after his wife, Melanie, passed from breast cancer in 2019, the newly released memoir has received rave reviews and ranked as an International #1 Best Seller on Amazon.

The widower and father of four has been featured in interviews with [Fox 2 News](#), [St. Louis Public Radio](#), the [Webster-Kirkwood Times](#), and [RHG Magazine](#). A percentage of all proceeds is pledged to the American Cancer Society and Camp Kesem for children.

[Visit him at patrickplong.com.](http://patrickplong.com)



Meetings on the  
second Wednesday  
of the month

*In-person gatherings for monthly meetings are suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions. All meetings will be held online until further notice.*

### Monthly Meetings Admission

- FREE for Members
- Annual Membership – \$60 per year

### SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

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