

KIRKUS

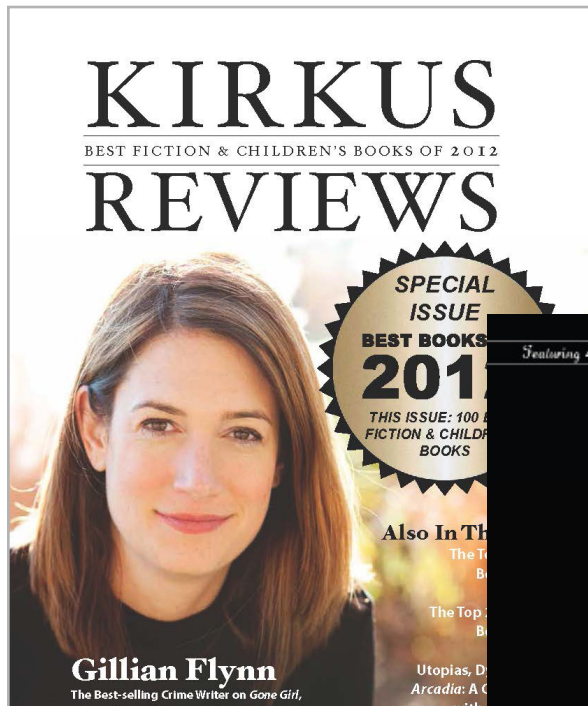
Book Marketing Guide for Independent Authors

REVIEWS



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

CELEBRATING
80 YEARS
1933
2013



Kirkus Reviews is uniquely positioned with one foot firmly set in the world of traditional publishing and the other in self-publishing. For more than 80 years, *Kirkus* has been a premiere marketing vehicle for the top publishing houses in America, reviewing their books and building early buzz for new releases. Its robust audience of both consumers and industry professionals, spanning from librarians and booksellers to publishers and film executives, has been instrumental in drawing attention to debut authors as it has been in launching major bestsellers.

It is with this perspective that *Kirkus* offers you a five-step guide to marketing your self-published book. Our goal is to expose you to the tricks of the trade that large publishing houses have deployed for decades as well as lesser-known strategies that have proven particularly successful for self-publishers.



- * Without the backing of a publisher, it is particularly important for independent authors to secure endorsements from respected sources and establish credibility within the industry and with consumers.
- * To establish credibility for a new book, major houses send advance review copies to “the trades,” pre-publication review journals known for their discerning taste, including *Kirkus Reviews*. Early praise builds buzz in the industry, helps publishers get other media outlets to cover the book and encourages readers to buy.
- * *Kirkus Reviews* is one of the only established media outlets that features honest, professional reviews of self-published work alongside traditionally published books.

#1
ESTABLISH
CREDIBILITY



#2 LEVERAGE ENDORSEMENTS

- * The most traditional way to leverage a powerful endorsement is to print it on a book's back cover, but as online and ebook purchases continue to make gains, it's increasingly important to promote reviews online.
- * The book's product page on retail sites, such as Amazon.com and BN.com, are the most important places for endorsements online, but self- and traditional publishers alike often have success leveraging positive reviews in online advertisements as well. Outlets that have proven particularly successful for many self-publishers are sites that are dedicated to eBook discovery.
- * Indie authors have the choice of keeping their Kirkus reviews private or publishing them on Kirkus.com, which gets more than 1 million page views per month. If published, the review is also distributed to licensees, such as BN.com and Google, and considered for publication in *Kirkus Reviews* magazine.



- * Self-publishers have two things for sale: their books and the rights to their books, but often, they only focus on selling the former. With three potential audiences—U.S. publishers, foreign publishers and film executives—rights sales can be the most lucrative result of independent publishing.
- * Some rights buyers solicit self-published work directly, while others only work with agents. If selling rights is a priority, independent authors should market to both agents and the ultimate buyers.
- * Kirkus is the most powerful platform in America for self-publishers who aspire to generate interest from both consumers and industry professionals (publishers, agents and film executives). *Kirkus Reviews* magazine is distributed exclusively to industry professionals, while Kirkus.com and Kirkus' email newsletter has a mixed audience of industry professionals and consumers.

#3
MARKET
YOUR
RIGHTS



#4
INVEST
IN YOUR
BUSINESS

- * Just as traditional publishing is a business, so too is self-publishing, but since writing a book can be such a personal experience, it's often a challenge for independent authors to make this mind-shift.
- * While authors published by traditional publishers can lean on their publishers for promotional and financial support, self-publishers are operating start-ups. It's vital to treat your venture like a business, and invest in the enterprise.
- * There's no magic number to invest in a book project, but here's a suggestion: Consider the maximum amount of money you're willing to lose, and use that as the foundation of your budget. There are no guarantees in the book industry, so although you may guarantee failure by not investing in your career, you cannot guarantee success by overspending.



- * Make no mistake: publishing is a tough business. The vast majority of books (both traditionally published and self-published) do not sell enough copies to cover the cost of publication. In fact, in 2009, the *New York Times* reported that more than 70 percent of books published by traditional houses didn't even earn back the author's advance.
- * The road to success in self-publishing may not be smooth, but it can be life-changing, and the ones who thrive are the ones who take rejection with a grain of salt, manage their budgets wisely and commit to their goals.
- * Inspirational stories abound—novice self-publishers who reach bestseller status and get picked up by a major house; authors who self-publish after years of searching for an agent and get signed after establishing independent success; and self-publishers who do it all on their own and sell hundreds of thousands of copies. To read specific success stories and strategies, visit kirkusreviews.com/success.

#5
BE TOUGH

WHAT'S NEXT?

1) REQUEST A REVIEW.

Go to www.kirkusreviews.com/indie, and request a review by simply clicking the “Get Started” link. You’ll provide as much information as possible about your book, choose whether you want to send us a printed (mailed) or digital (uploaded) submission, select either standard service (7-9 weeks) or express service (4-6 weeks) and pay for your review (standard service \$425, express service \$575). When you submit your order, you’ll get a response from the Kirkus Indie team confirming receipt of your request.

2) SUBMIT YOUR BOOK OR COMPLETED MANUSCRIPT.

If you selected the printed submission type on the order form, you’ll send two copies of your published book or completed manuscript to the Kirkus Indie office in New York. (The address is provided on the order form.) If you selected the digital submission option on the order form, you will upload a PDF or Microsoft Word document of your completed manuscript. (You will be directed to a page with detailed instructions for this upload after placing your order. The uploading instructions will also be emailed to you.)

www.kirkusreviews.com/indie



DARCIE CHAN

“Kirkus’ review of The Mill River Recluse played an important role in encouraging readers to take a chance on a first novel by an unknown author.”

- * Sold more than 750,000 copies of her self-published debut novel
- * Stayed on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 28 weeks
- * Signed a three-book deal with Ballantine (Random House)
- * Sold rights to nine foreign markets

3) STAND BY WHILE WE REVIEW YOUR BOOK.

Upon receipt of your book or manuscript, our editor will assign your project to a qualified reviewer who will read the complete book and write a full review (approximately 250-350 words). Our reviewers include librarians, business executives, journalists from national publications, PhDs in religion and literature, creative executives in entertainment and publishing industries as well as other professional reviewers.

4) DOWNLOAD YOUR REVIEW.

Kirkus Indie will notify you via email that your review is ready, and you will click the link in the email to go to your author dashboard, where you can download the review. At that point you may choose to keep it private or publish it on our website (at no extra charge). If you choose to keep it private, it will never see the light of day. If you decide to publish the review on our site, you may use it any way you choose—on the back cover of your book, in marketing collateral, on your website or in a letter to an agent or publisher.

5) DISTRIBUTE YOUR REVIEW.

If you choose to publish your review on our website, we will distribute it to our licensees, including Google, BN.com, wholesalers such as Ingram and Baker & Taylor and more. On top of that, our editors will consider it for publication in *Kirkus Reviews* magazine, which is read by librarians, booksellers, publishers, agents, journalists and entertainment executives. Your review may also be selected to be featured in our email newsletter, which is distributed to more than 50,000 industry professionals and consumers.

www.kirkusreviews.com/indie



MICHAL ANN MCARTHUR

“I can’t say enough about the impact that Kirkus had on my career.”

- * Reached #1 on three separate Kindle bestseller lists
- * Sold more than 23,000 copies in three days alone when promoting her Kirkus review
- * Signed by literary agent with Trident Media

GET REVIEWED. GET DISCOVERED.

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