

SNAPSHOT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR BOOK DISCOVERABILITY BY JENNIFER A. MAGUIRE

[Recent Campaigns: *What's Never Said* (Heliotrope) By Susan Shapiro, *Snow Pearly White Twirly* By Monika Vix & Claudia Raschke, *From The Danube To The Hudson* By Katherine Griesz, *The Spinsterlicious Life* by Eleanore Wells]

INTRO: DEFINE PUBLIC RELATIONS (PLEASE!)

- P-Repeated: Paying a Publicist to Promote and Protect your Product and Persona
- Ad space in magazines, and time on TV, is paid for directly. PR visibility is managed by a PR practitioner who is paid on retainer or hourly, much like an attorney or accountant
- Lives and breathes the When, Where, Who, What, Why (5 Ws) for determining newsworthiness and story-telling opportunities
- Works closely with news cycles which are the window of opportunity for a story according to long-lead (monthly magazines) and short-lead (newspapers, TV, social media) deadlines

WHAT DOES A PUBLICIST DO FOR AN AUTHOR? (TOPLINED)

- Provides access to media with news of your book as a result of experience and expertise as a professional publicist with media relations credibility and knowledge of the media machine
- Prepares the press materials – release, bio, galleys, photos- in accordance with newsroom and blogger guideline
- Pitches media contacts and sends out galleys/PDF for reviews and press materials for features; and follows up on the pitches.
- Handles incoming requests from media for review product, press kit materials and interviews
- **PR monitors the news climate and trending stories for tie-ins [DANUBE]**
- **PR brings your story to editorial contacts at the outlets important to your demographic [SPINSTERLICIOUS]**
- PR stays on top of everything to maintain the author's vision and branding

WHEN DO I START PR? (IDEALLY, FOR BEST RESULTS)

- Publicity materials for reviews should be serviced 4-6 months in advance. Therefore, ideally, the publicist should be hired at least 9-12 months in advance of your planned release to audit, strategize and prepare materials
- Monthly print media work on 4-month lead times. So a June issue "Summer Reads" feature roundup should be pitched in February
- Elite weekly roundup "gets" such as *Time Out*, *New York*, *People* should be pitched 12-8 weeks out
- Calendar of event listings should be pitched/placed 6 weeks out

WHAT IS THE COST INVESTMENT FOR A PR CONSULTANT OR FIRM?

- In the NYC area PR for authors will cost from \$3-10K/monthly retainer; \$100-175/hour
- Standard items billed separately would be printing press materials, graphic design and photography
- Other third party costs may come up that the publicist might recommend for you but discusses with you first

HOLY CRAP THERE IS NO WAY I CAN AFFORD A PUBLICIST WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

- **Call one anyway. We're flexible and can still do more under less than ideal circumstances than you can DIY [SNOW PEARLY]**
- **Take advantage of the social media opportunities as suggested by Rich Kelley [SPINSTERLIIOUS]**
- Spend time with, and emulate, the press materials at the top book publisher sites
- Spy on the social media platforms of authors you admire for their marketing and follow the reporters, bloggers (as opposed to the outlets), and bookstore staff that they are following. Those people get a notification when someone follows them
- **Purchase PW's P4P Book Life product [DANUBE]**
- **Write guest blogs and opinion pieces; book panel seminars and trade show appearances timed to the pub date (but negotiate these well in advance of your pub date) [WNS]**
- Brainstorm with friends with businesses and event coordinators for cross-promotional opportunities.
- Research new movies dropping around the time of your book and find a tie-in to blog about or offer an opinion piece
- **Localize – Beginning far in advance of release date, even as you are writing your book, leverage your ecosystem. Become a regular at your local library and bookstore. Join trade organizations, particularly localized ones. Offer to speak at local events and collect emails while there. Building your presence is most effective when you approach community media, alumni news, businesses patronized, organizations, house of worship to support a native son [WNS]**

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

- PR cannot guarantee coverage, reviews, bookings, or interviews.
- Except in extremely rare instances, mainstream media (traditional and online) will not review or feature self-published books. They are overwhelmed with books from traditional publishers and know those books have been vetted by professional editors and lawyers, if necessary.
- Typically, it is the author, not the publisher, tasked with paying for the publicist
- Sophomore efforts get more eyeballs, so invest in your first