

THE AUTHOR MARKETING PLAYBOOK

7 Marketing Hacking Strategies for Authors

Attract readers. Build demand. Create a path to purchase.

LYNDON ALEXANDER HALL

Your book needs a path to purchase



REACH → Find your readers

RELEVANCE → Give them a reason

TRUST → Show the work

ACTION → Invite the purchase

Publishing gives your book a place to exist. Marketing gives the right reader a reason to notice it, consider it, and buy it.

A beautiful cover can earn a pause. A powerful quote can earn a share. Neither tells you whether someone understands why your book belongs in their life.

This guide helps you build that connection through seven practical strategies. Here, a marketing hack means finding a useful point of influence: a sharper promise, a better sample, a clearer invitation, or a stronger follow-up. It does not mean manipulating readers or manufacturing popularity.

The working model is simple:

Reach the right person / make the book relevant / demonstrate its value / offer a clear next step / follow up with permission.

Use the strategies in order if you are starting from scratch. If your book is already published, begin wherever readers are dropping out of that sequence. These are experiments to apply and measure, not promises of a particular sales result.

1. Sell the reading experience before you sell the book

Make the reader recognize themselves

“My book is available” is an announcement. It gives an existing supporter information, but gives an unfamiliar reader very little reason to care.

Your first task is to define what the reader is looking for. For nonfiction, that might be an answer, a skill, a new perspective, or language for something they have struggled to explain. For fiction, it might be suspense, emotional escape, a particular relationship dynamic, or a world they want to enter.

Do not promise that a book will cure, fix, or transform everyone. Describe the specific experience or help the book actually offers.

The positioning sentence

Complete this:

For [specific reader] who [recognizable situation], [book title] offers [reading experience or useful insight] through [distinctive approach].

Nonfiction example:

“For ambitious readers who feel their worth depends on achievement, this book explores how identity, faith, and purpose can reshape the way they define success.”

Fiction example:

“For readers who love family secrets and morally complicated characters, this novel follows two sisters forced to choose between protecting their inheritance and exposing the truth.”

Turn positioning into a hook

Begin where the reader already feels something:

- “What happens when reaching the goal still does not feel like enough?”
- “She inherited the house. Her sister inherited the secret.”
- “You know what your business sells. Can a stranger understand it in ten seconds?”

Your assignment

Write three positioning sentences for three possible reader groups. Choose the group most closely served by the actual manuscript. Test two hooks with that audience and compare meaningful responses and link activity.

Deliverable: one reader, one central promise, and two hooks.

2. Let a sample do part of the selling

Replace vague praise with a useful preview

Asking a stranger to buy requires them to judge an experience they have not had. A strong sample gives them evidence: your voice, the depth of your thinking, the pace of your storytelling, or the usefulness of your method.

Choose a sample that delivers a satisfying small experience and naturally raises interest in the rest of the book.

Book type	Possible sample	Natural next step
Personal development	A short excerpt and reflection exercise	Read the full discussion
Business	A diagnostic checklist drawn from the book	Explore the method
Romance	An opening scene with compelling tension	Continue the story
Mystery	An opening chapter that establishes the central question	Discover what happens next
Poetry	Three poems connected by a clear theme	Explore the collection

Keep the promise proportional. A worksheet should solve one narrow problem, rather than claim to replace the book.

Sample invitation

“Before you decide whether this book is for you, read the opening pages. You will get a feel for the voice, the questions, and the journey ahead.”

Two delivery options

Link directly to a public sample when your goal is to remove friction. Offer an optional email signup when your goal includes building an ongoing reader relationship. Explain what subscribers will receive; a download request should not become an unexpected stream of promotional messages.

After the sample, include a brief bridge:

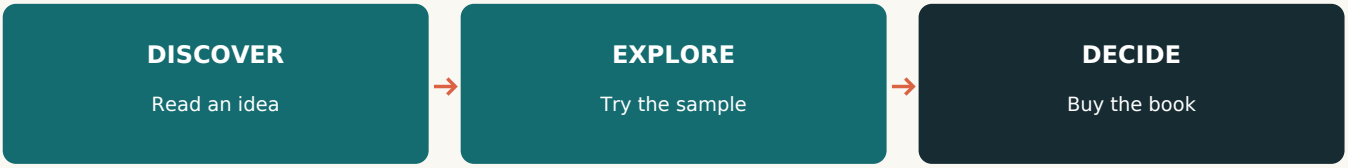
“If this opening resonated with you, continue with [title]. [Buy or preorder link].”

Your assignment

Select one sample, write a benefit-led introduction, and add one purchase invitation. Ask three suitable readers whether the sample accurately represents the book.

Deliverable: a sample readers can access and a clear route to the book.

3. Give every promotion one clear job



Remove competing requests

An author post can ask readers to follow, share, comment, subscribe, visit a website, and buy. That is a lot of decisions for someone who was casually scrolling.

Choose the action that matches the reader's current level of interest.

Reader situation	Useful next action
They have just discovered you	Read or watch something that demonstrates the book's appeal
They recognize the topic and want more	Read a sample or join your reader list
They understand the book and want it	Buy or preorder
They have finished reading	Leave an honest review or recommend it to a suitable friend

“Learn more” can work when the destination requires exploration. When the next action is specific, name it: “Read the first chapter” or “Preorder the Kindle edition.”

The four-part promotional post

1. Recognition: name a feeling, question, or situation.
2. Relevance: connect it to the book.
3. Evidence: include a sample, precise description, or genuine reader response.
4. Action: give one clear next step.

Example

“What happens when reaching the goal still does not feel like enough?

The Pursuit of Success explores the relationship between achievement, identity, healing, and purpose.

Read the opening pages to see whether its questions speak to your season of life.

Read the sample: [link].”

Your assignment

Review your profile, featured post, and latest promotional caption. Make sure the action you ask for is easy to find and that its destination fulfills the promise. Test every link on a phone.

Deliverable: one promotion with one primary action and one working destination.

4. Turn one book idea into a week of connected content

Build a sequence instead of inventing seven unrelated posts

Your manuscript is a source of campaign material. Choose one strong idea, then give readers several ways to enter it.

For a nonfiction chapter about achievement and identity:

Day	Content angle	Example
1	Recognition	“Do you struggle to rest unless you have earned it?”
2	Teaching	Explain one distinction between achievement and personal worth
3	Reflection	Ask readers what success meant to them five years ago
4	Demonstration	Share an approved excerpt from the chapter
5	Conversation	Answer a real reader question
6	Context	Explain why this question belongs in the book
7	Invitation	Connect the week's discussion to the sample or purchase page

For fiction, use a character's dilemma, a setting detail, a short scene, a theme discussion, a reader question, an author insight, and an invitation to continue the story. Avoid revealing the payoff that makes the book worth reading.

Make the bridge explicit

Do not assume someone who enjoyed a post knows you wrote a book about its subject.

“This question sits at the heart of [title]. If you want to explore it further, start with [sample link].”

Your assignment

Choose one chapter or story element. Create three strong pieces first: recognition, demonstration, and invitation. Expand only when you can maintain quality.

Deliverable: a connected content sequence with a visible connection to the book.

5. Borrow relevance through thoughtful partnerships

Find people who already serve your readers

A partnership is useful when your book adds something worthwhile to an existing conversation. Audience size alone does not tell you whether the fit is strong.

A small book club discussing your genre may be a better match than a large general entertainment page. A specialist newsletter may reach readers who already care about your topic.

Build a list of ten potential partners: book clubs, podcasts, newsletters, community organizations, creators, or relevant professional groups.

Score each from one to five on reader fit, evidence of active conversation, and your ability to contribute something specific. Use the score to prioritize research, not as proof that a partnership will sell books.

Pitch a useful contribution

“Hello [name],

I enjoyed your discussion about [specific topic]. My book, [title], explores [relevant connection].

I would love to contribute a [short interview, reading, workshop, or discussion] on [specific angle]. Your audience would leave with [clear benefit or experience].

Would that fit your upcoming programme? I can send a short outline and sample.”

Make it easy to say yes

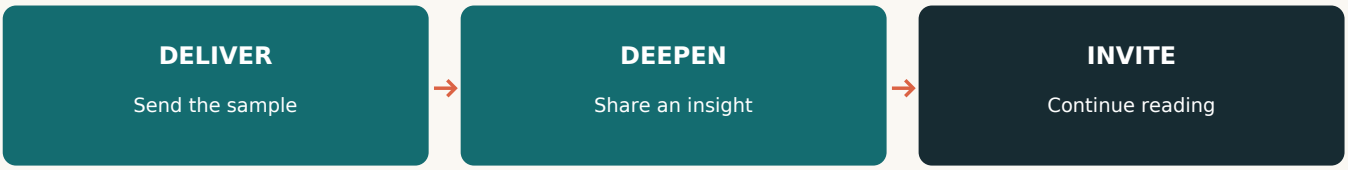
Prepare a short biography, cover image, sample, three discussion topics, and one reader destination. Agree on the contribution and promotion before preparing a full event.

Your assignment

Research ten partners and send three tailored pitches. If a pitch gets no response, send one courteous follow-up after a reasonable interval, then move on.

Deliverable: three relevant pitches and a compact author information pack.

6. Build follow-up that earns the next invitation



Continue the conversation with permission

A reader may enjoy an excerpt and still be busy, undecided, or waiting for the release. Email gives interested readers a way to hear from you again without needing to encounter another social post.

Start with a short welcome sequence. The schedule below is a starting point to test, not a universal rule.

Immediately: deliver the promised sample.

Subject: “Your reading sample is here”

“Thank you for joining me. Here is [sample link]. Start with [specific passage or exercise]. I would love to know which idea stays with you.”

Two days later: deepen the experience.

Subject: “[A question connected to the book]”

Share one useful insight or a short piece of story context. Ask a reply-worthy question. Keep the message complete enough to reward opening it.

Two days after that: make the invitation.

Subject: “Would you like to keep reading?”

“If the sample connected with you, [title] continues the conversation through [accurate description of the book]. You can [buy or preorder] your copy here: [link].”

State the format, release date where relevant, and what the reader is purchasing. Do not call a paid preorder free simply because payment may occur later.

If someone buys, thank them where your systems let you identify that purchase with permission. Do not assume an email click proves a sale. Keep an easy way to unsubscribe.

Your assignment

Write the three emails and subscribe with a test address. Check delivery, links, formatting, and the promised download before promoting the signup.

Deliverable: a tested welcome sequence that delivers value before repeating the purchase invitation.

7. Measure the step that is failing

Use numbers to choose the next improvement

Likes show one kind of response. They do not establish purchase intent or revenue. Track the steps closest to your campaign goal and avoid claiming a connection you cannot verify.

Signal	What it can help you investigate
Relevant reach or impressions	Whether your material is being seen
Link clicks	Whether the invitation creates enough interest to act
Landing-page visits and signups	Whether the sample offer earns a signup
Sample engagement or reader replies	Whether the book's material connects
Attributable orders, where available	Whether a measurable source leads to purchases
Revenue and campaign costs	Whether the campaign makes economic sense

Useful calculations:

- Click-through rate: link clicks / impressions x 100. Use the same definition across comparisons.
- Signup rate: new signups / landing-page visits x 100.
- Cost per signup: campaign spend / new signups attributed to that campaign.
- Cost per attributable order: campaign spend / orders attributed to that campaign.

A hypothetical diagnosis

Suppose a campaign produces 1,000 impressions, 40 landing-page visits, and eight signups. That gives a 4% visit-to-impression ratio and a 20% signup rate. If the platform reports actual link clicks, use those for click-through rate instead of substituting page visits.

These numbers describe activity; they do not prove the campaign is profitable. If retailer sales rise during the same period but you cannot connect individual orders to the campaign, report the rise separately.

Change one major variable at a time: the hook, audience, sample offer, or destination. Small samples can fluctuate, so avoid declaring a winner from one or two responses.

Before buying ads, decide what you can afford to spend on a learning test and what result would justify continuing. Compare acquisition cost with your actual net earnings per order, allowing for fees, production, shipping, and refunds where relevant.

Your assignment

Create a weekly record with date, campaign, audience, message, destination, spend, visits, signups, and attributable orders. Mark unavailable data as unknown rather than zero.

Deliverable: a simple record that tells you what to improve next.

Your seven-day implementation plan

Day	Main task	Finished result
1	Define the reader and promise	One positioning sentence and two hooks
2	Choose the sample	One useful preview with a purchase bridge
3	Simplify the destination	One working page or retailer route
4	Prepare connected content	Recognition, demonstration, and invitation posts
5	Set up follow-up	Three tested welcome emails
6	Approach suitable partners	Three tailored pitches
7	Publish and record a baseline	A live campaign and a measurement sheet

This is a setup sprint. Keep observing after day seven; a week is not a sales guarantee or enough time to evaluate every partnership.

Your campaign worksheet

Build one campaign. Make every decision visible.

BOOK TITLE

CAMPAIGN GOAL

READER I AM TRYING TO REACH

SITUATION, DESIRE, OR READING PREFERENCE THAT MAKES THE BOOK RELEVANT

WHAT THE BOOK ACTUALLY DELIVERS

MY POSITIONING SENTENCE

HOOK A

HOOK B

SAMPLE I WILL OFFER

PRIMARY CALL TO ACTION

DESTINATION LINK

THREE POTENTIAL PARTNERS

FOLLOW-UP SEQUENCE

WHAT I WILL MEASURE

MY TEST BUDGET, IF ANY

DATE I WILL REVIEW THE RESULTS

ONE VARIABLE I WILL CHANGE NEXT

Your next move



Choose the strategy that addresses your biggest gap and finish its deliverable today. Give readers a clear reason to care, let them experience the work, and make the next step easy to take.

If you want help applying this guide to your own book, send AUTHOR to @iamcaribbeanexcellence. Include your title, genre, release stage, and the part of marketing you are finding hardest. Ask about author marketing support and whether it fits your project.

Implementation references

The strategy frameworks, exercises, sample copy, and hypothetical calculations in this guide are editorial recommendations rather than claimed research findings. The following official resources support the email implementation details:

• Mailchimp, Calls to Action: https://templates.mailchimp.com/design/calls-to-action/ - descriptive action wording and explaining the benefit of taking the next step.

• Mailchimp, Send a File to New Subscribers: https://mailchimp.com/help/send-a-file-to-new-subscribers/ - delivering a linked file through a welcome email.

• Mailchimp, Single Opt-in vs. Double Opt-in: https://mailchimp.com/help/single-opt-in-vs-double-opt-in/ - permission-based signup methods.

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