

How To Plan a Great Book Launch Party

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<http://greatstorybook.com/how-to-plan-a-great-book-launch-party/>

This entry is part 6 of 8 in the series [Book Promotion](#)

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How to plan a great book launch party is one of those things you'll develop with practice. It doesn't matter what kind of book you've written. You have a book on the market: it's time to celebrate!

Most book launch parties are for novels, but the best parties are those for kids books - because then everyone can come for the fun.

A Book Launch Party fulfills three important functions:

- It provides an official place and time where you can thank those who helped you get your book published.
- It creates an event that stirs word-of-mouth for your book.
- It means you get to have a party! When you throw this kind of party, it really clarifies the idea in your mind that *you have truly finished your book*. You get closure.

As with any kind of event you want to remember fondly, there are a lot of things to keep in mind. Here's my list.

1. Make sure your book is printed and ready.

It isn't enough that the book be available on the market. You will need to have printed copies on hand

and ready to sell. Because this is a party, people will want to purchase copies of your book. Make sure that's possible, [and be sure to sign them](#).

The quantity you'll need will depend greatly on the scope of your party (it could be 100s). If your party is being hosted at a bookshop, they might agree to purchase your books on consignment.

NOTE: If your book is traditionally published, your publisher may (or may not) insist on sending a local bookseller to the launch specifically to keep track of book sales for you and to handle those transactions. If you're planning a book launch party, involve the publisher by keeping them in the loop. Too, they can help with networking and promoting the event.

2. Choose a venue.

Traditional locations for book launch parties are:

- The author's home
- A bookshop
- A school or university
- A hotel venue with rented space
- A museum or other unusual space (details below)***

You can throw a book launch anywhere, but the place you choose will influence the feel and scope of your party. If you want space in a hotel for a catered event, you'll most likely need to budget for that. Most hotels will not host something like this for free.

[Author Helmut Barz](#) contacted me with some important tips related to the problem of GETTING THERE when it comes to choosing a book launch venue:

- make sure the location is relatively easy to find,
- that there's enough parking available and that
- it is reachable with public transportation.

***Barz also suggests looking for an unusual venue, one that could be tied into the theme or genre of your book. For example, Helmut has had two mystery book launches at a Crime Museum!

3. Plan fun activities.

Most book launch parties include a draw or lottery of some sort where people can win free copies of the book or other story-related giveaways. Find vendors who are willing to donate to your launch party. It's publicity for them as well, and it keeps people excited and engaged.

Include other types of fun activities, especially if the crowd involves kids. Face painting, crafting and other fun party games for kids (like pin the something on the something-related-to-your-story) can really keep your readers happy.

4. Plan to read more than once.

Most launch parties run for several hours, so you should probably plan to read from your book at least once and perhaps a second time.

If the venue is very large or outside, you might consider a microphone.

5. Provide food and drink.

This will depend on the venue and on your audience, but you should plan to have food and drink at the party. If you don't have the funds to hire a caterer, ask for help from a group or charity. If you can find a group who is interested in your book, they may well be invested enough to supply you with homemade goodies and drinks.

Doing this can really make a book launch party feel special, **more like a community event.**

If asking for support from an organization makes you feel uncomfortable, gather a bunch of your closest friends. Make it a potluck, where everyone brings a dish or drink. Just be sure you organize who is bringing what, otherwise you can end-up with five lasagnas and no plates.

6. Contact the news outlets.

Definitely send out a Press Release to everyone, but don't stop there. Follow up with a personal invitation to those you'd really like to see covering your book launch. It's a party, so invitations are expected here.

7. Contact everybody!

The more people who know about the launch party the better. Invite absolutely all of your friends and family. Don't be shy about contacting local schools, libraries and other organizations that might be interested in your book.

When you notice that a local company funds certain programs for kids, that is a company to contact about your book launch. Don't send a press release though. Really contact them, personally.

8. Have handouts.

As with a [book signing](#), you should come with bookmarks that promote your book or book series. Be sure your website is noted on there.

If the event is largely for kids, get promotional helium-filled balloons. This can be costly unless you find a vendor who will fund this for you. Kids love balloons and so do parents.

9. Get Contacts.

Invite people to give you their contact information. You should have a sign-in book and a large bowl for business cards. Make it as easy as possible for people to let you know they were at your event.

10. Plan for Decorations.

Don't forget: this is a Party! Even if it's for adults, there should be decorations: balloons, streamers, the works. If the book is more serious, then decorate with something suitable. Flowers and ribbons, perhaps – but come on! Balloons and streamers are always suitable!

11. Take tons of pictures.

Have a few people walk around the party, taking pictures. Invite people to take their picture with you. The more the better, because this is another way news of your book spreads: word of mouth. [Social media](#) makes this a reality, because people no longer just take pictures of experiences. They take pictures and post online. Sometimes, they even blog about it.

12. Ask for Help.

This is an important party, so don't forget to ask for help. Think of those closest to you and in what way they would be best suited to help with the event. Imagine yourself going to the book launch. What would your experience be? If your virtual self starts to get lost, confused or overwhelmed, that's a place where you might need a friend to step in and help.

All of this is good for you and your book. It's all about word of mouth! And celebrating!

Keep creating, no matter what.

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