

Get Your Book Into Bookshops

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/how-to-get-your-book-into-bookshops/>

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

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- Get Your Book Into Bookshops

Do you wonder about how to get your book into bookshops? Here's what you need to know.

Book seeks Avid Readers. Enjoys thrillers with a great climax and long walks at sunset. Getting your books into the hands of readers is a bit like dating. If you want to find someone, you need to go where people are looking for someone. You won't get anywhere sitting at home on the sofa, crying and wishing someone would discover how amazing you are.

If you have a book, get it out of the house! Get it into bookshops, libraries and all the online shops you possibly can. These are the best places for a book seeking readers.

If you want more people to be aware of your book, you need to make your book available *where people are looking for books to buy.*

So let's talk about how to get your book into bookshops.

Being a best-selling author doesn't even ensure that your name be known to the local libraries and

bookshops as a Local Writer. Only the writer can make sure *that much* is known.

Many people think that if a writer is traditionally published, they must have it made – the whole business of getting a book to the public is over and professional marketers can and will do the rest. Well... not really.

Whether bookshop owners, book buyers and librarians are familiar with a writer *or not* is up to... the writer, primarily. *It starts with the quality of writing* and extends to the writer advertising in book industry magazines and contacting a lot of people.

As a writer, your career is up to you. Only you can really control where it goes. An agent will help *a lot*. An editor will help *a lot*. A publishing company will also help *a lot*. But that isn't the end of the story (of pushing your career to where you want it or where it should be), it's a beginning.

A writer posted a question to our [Great Storybook Facebook Group](#), wondering how she should best approach local bookshops about stocking her self-published book. I was able to give a quick-and-easy response, but after giving it a bit more thought realized that I could provide much more. So here we go.

Here are some important ways you can get your book into bookshops.

1. Contact your local library.

If the librarians don't know about you and your book, the booksellers probably won't either. Librarians are a writer's best friend. They love books so much they decided to be surrounded by them all the time! But that's just the beginning of what they do.

While libraries do use ISBN codes to help keep books straight, their coding systems (there are about four used in the U.S. and others that are used around the world) are different. It's important to inform libraries of your books so that they can incorporate those into their systems.

If you're self-published, you absolutely must do this. If you're traditionally published, you need to make sure it's been done properly. (If your book is an ebook, it probably isn't.)

The most current, online ways you can do this? Through these two library services:

- [SELF-e enables authors](#) to donate any of their ebooks to libraries to be formally catalogued and made available to any library visitors.
- [Biblioboard](#) makes it possible for anyone with any kind of media to make their works available to libraries – that means ebooks, music and film.

Other things you should be sure to do:

- Get to know the librarians at any libraries around you. When your next book is ready to launch,

they will be happy to help you arrange for a book reading and signing event.

- Always donate two copies of your book to the local library and as many other copies as you can to other libraries.
- Be sure to ask the local library if there's a listing or directory of Local Authors. Make sure you are on it.

2. Contact your local indie bookshops.

Start with the small shops, especially if they specialize in what you've written. Contact them via email or phone – depending on the shop owner and what you think they'd prefer. You should be fairly familiar with the place before you contact them. Why? Because if it's a local shop, it's a place you should have been inside!

You'll want to introduce yourself as a local writer (if they don't know you personally), who has a new book - and explain that you'd like to speak with the Owner or Buyer about stocking your book in their shop. Ask if you can arrange a meeting.

When you have that meeting, bring a complimentary copy (or two) of the book with you. Different shops will have different takes on how to handle this situation. It mostly depends on their budget.

If you are a writer with proven sales, they might be willing to purchase your books in bulk. If you don't have proven sales, then chances are good that they will offer you shelf space somewhere, and pay you royalties for the books once they have sold *by a certain date*.

This means that if the books have sold, they'll request more from you. If they haven't sold, they'll ask you to pick up whatever is left, compensating you for the copies that they could sell.

This might sound harsh, but you have to understand this: keeping a shop means overhead. If your book is collecting dust, that's money the shop isn't able to bring in. They have to move you out – one way or the other.

This is why it's a really good idea to do a [book launch party](#) and [book readings/signings](#). This draws attention to you and your book, it makes the shop owner happy because you're drawing attention to the shop itself, and you can potentially sell some of your books!

Great indie bookshops here:

- [Changing Hands Bookshops](#) (two locations in Arizona, USA)
- [Page 1 Books](#) (in Albuquerque, USA)
- [Tome on the Range](#) (Las Vegas, USA)
- [Dudley's Bookshop Cafe](#) (Oregon, USA)
- [Barefoot Cowgirl Books](#) (Arizona, USA)
- [Word Bookstores](#) (New York, USA)
- [Sister's Grimm](#) (Nebraska, USA)
- [Word Bookstores](#) (Brooklyn & New Jersey, USA)

- [Atlantis Books](#) (Oia, Santorini, Greece)
- [Ben McNally Books](#) (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
- [La Maison Anglaise](#) (Quebec, Canada)
- [Kids Republic Childrens Bookstore](#) (from [publisher Poplar](#), China)

There are many, many others. You can also use these great Indie Shop Searchtools!

- [Indie Bound](#). (Only for the USA, but is a very usable tool.)
- [Fearless Books](#). (International, a basic list with subdivisions.)
- Find out who is participating in the US-based [Indie Bookstore Day](#) (April 30, 2016).
- Help celebrate the [International Indie Book Day](#) (March 26, 2016).

Read this article about the [increasing success of indie bookshops](#) by essayist Edward Nawotka.

3. Contact your bookstore chains.

When you contact the larger bookshops, be sure again to introduce yourself as a local author. Ask if their shop provides customers with a Local Authors Directory. Most of the large chains do this. Make sure you are on it.

Ask if you can get a meeting with the store buyer about stocking your book and the possibility of a book-signing event. It's possible that they would only be interested in traditionally published authors, but it doesn't hurt to ask.

4. Branch out to non-bookish places.

After you've thoroughly hit every library and bookshop in your area, you can branch-out beyond that initial parameter. What you feel capable of doing and what makes sense to you is entirely up to you.

Bookshops aren't the only places we can find books. If a toy store in town also carries books, you should probably contact their Store Buyer. Think outside the box and see if you can't find some alternative venues where your story might be well received.

If your story is non-fiction, this task might be easier. A book about bats would be well received at the local zoo. A book about dogs might sell at the veterinarian around the corner. A baking book could sell in a kitchen supply store.

- If a librarian really loves your story, chances are good that they will mention it to other librarians.
- If the right reader really loves your story, chances are good that they will go online and tell others about it.

There is no end to this, just many, many beginnings!

Keep creating, no matter what.

This entry is part of the series

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