

What to Put in Your Digital Press Kit: A Checklist

by Steve O'Keefe

○ **A single document about the book** that combines information included in the news release, "About the Author," and "About the Book" with the author's picture, a picture of the cover, and ordering information. Offer this as a PDF, a Word document, and a Web page.

○ **A news release in long and short versions** and a version suitable for Twitter. Your job is to sell a story idea by tying your book into today's news. The print version of the news release can be two pages long (usually a front and a back); a version sent via email should be one page or less.

○ **"About the Author" and a resume/CV.** The "About the Author" version should be short enough to embed in other documents. The full resume or CV can also be used for creating a presence on social networks, where names of employers, job titles, schools attended, and so forth, may all be useful. A full sample interview is an additional option.

○ **"About the Book" in brief.** A short document about the book should be suitable for embedding in other documents. Use back-cover copy or catalog copy.

○ **An author photo and a book cover photo**, each in high-res and low-res. Provide these in full color unless there is some compelling reason to use black and white. Color is free online. Use low-res JPG images for the Web

(72 dpi), and high-res JPGs or TIFs for print or broadcast reproduction (300 dpi). Label high-res art properly. Video stills are okay.

○ **Ordering information.** This should include instructions for ordering online plus a list of sites that carry the book and information about retailers, wholesalers, distributor, special markets, and rights inquiries.



○ **Keywords.** Good tagging is important for discovery of a book on the Internet, so supply top keywords, keyphrases, keynames, and keyplaces. For nonfiction, the index of the book is a good place to start.

○ **Endorsements and awards.** Include quotes from reviews and keep adding to the endorsements and awards page as good comments arrive. Mentions of these are also useful in social networking profiles.

○ **Story ideas.** A cheat sheet of story ideas for journalists is very important. It should show a journalist exactly what pages in the book or galleys to turn to for certain stories, slants, or target audiences.

○ **An excerpt or op-ed article.** For nonfiction, try to come up with a Tip Sheet, 10 Tips, Help Resources, and the like. For fiction, highlight a cliff-hanging moment. Provide this material in Word, text, HTML (Web page), and PDF.

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○ *A lesson plan/book-club agenda.* For use in schools and colleges, select a section and create discussion questions, a quiz, and an assignment for a 45-minute class. For use by book clubs, create questions and a quiz and offer access to the author by Skype, by phone, or otherwise, if possible.

○ *Multimedia.* Provide videos, podcasts, photo spreads, and/or slideshows. If you find it difficult to add these to your own site, you can do what most people do and provide links to them on other sites, such as a trailer on YouTube or a slideshow on Flickr. ●

Steve O'Keefe teaches Internet public relations at Tulane University and has taught online publicity at Publishing University since 1998. The author of Complete Guide to Internet Publicity (Wiley) and the co-founder of the International Association of Online Communicators (IAOCblog.com), he writes frequently for the Independent and other publishing trade periodicals.

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