

# The Wow Principles

## e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

Volume 9 No. 11 November 2013

www.PublishingSyndicate.com

### Top 5 Tips for Promoting Your Book to Bestseller

By John Schlimm, bestselling author  
of *Stand Up!* and *The Cheesy Vegan*

The ways of successfully promoting a new book have changed in recent years. Because of tight budgets and the sheer number of books being published, long gone are the days when publishers funded lavish PR/marketing campaigns and author tours, except for those scribes at the tippy top of the bestseller charts or celebrities. More than ever, publishers, big and small, are relying on authors to help promote their books however and whenever they can. For an author without a background in PR or marketing, this can be a daunting process, but it doesn't have to be.

No matter what your book is about, you can use the following five tips to help supplement your publisher's PR/marketing efforts and ensure maximum exposure for your new book. To start, while there are some free and inexpensive PR steps you can pursue below, it's also a good idea to create a budget for how much you yourself are able to spend on publicity, and stick to it. Otherwise, the following tips require only your time and enthusiasm.

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*Publishing Syndicate*

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Contact Publishing Syndicate at  
[Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com](mailto:Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com)

## Promoting Your Book to Bestseller

### 1. Get a Head Start: Collect Endorsement Blurbs

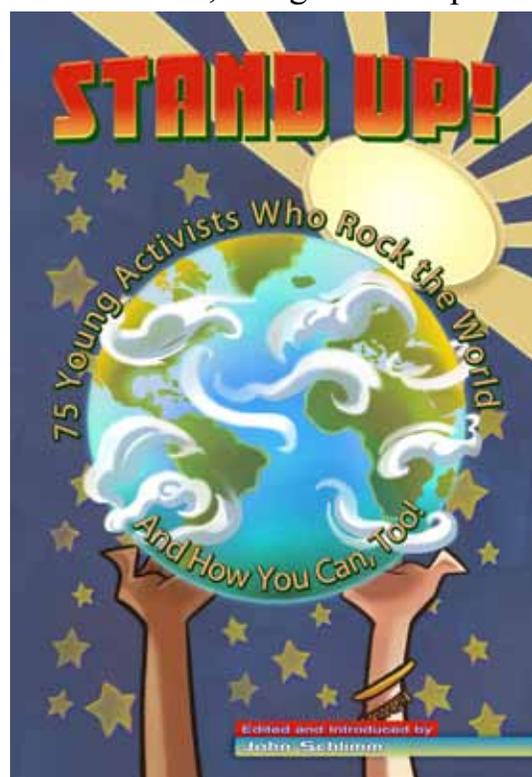
Even before your book is published, there are a few steps you can take and which most publishers will actually expect you to take, to help gain attention for your book. Be sure to meet with the PR and marketing teams at your publishing house so you know exactly what they will be doing to promote your book, both before publication and once released, and get their input on what you can do to help their efforts.

One big thing you can do pre-publication is to secure one- to two-sentence blurbs in praise of your book from notable figures. This will initially involve you crafting an eye-catching request letter and creating a list of individuals to contact (this list should include both realistic choices who will likely agree to write a blurb and a wish list of individuals who may be long shots, but still worth asking). Most notable figures have either personal web sites or web sites associated with their work. These web sites usually have contact email addresses you can use.

When sending a blurb request letter, keep the letter simple, clearly describe your forthcoming book, offer to send sample chapters or the manuscript for review, and provide a deadline for the blurb. Sometimes (almost always), follow-up, reminder emails will have to be sent to these people, so start this process a few months before your book will be released. And don't be shocked if you are asked to ghostwrite a blurb for a few of them.

When collecting blurbs for *Stand Up!*, I sent out around 200 requests via email, in the hope of securing at least a dozen great ones. In the end, I got 36 fantastic blurbs that were printed on both the back cover and several pages in front of the book, as well as used in media mentions of the book. Read the caption under the book cover to the right: any guesses who gave the book a blurb? Click [HERE](#) to read all 36 endorsements, and to all see if you are correct.

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Guess who gave blurbs! Two are part of America's royal family, another a former prime minister; three are reality show winners (*Survivor*, *American Idol*, *Apprentice*); one is a shark on ABC, the other, part of *Glee*; one is a columnist for *TIME*, one is a Nobel Peace Prize recipient; and one spent her childhood in captivity, but is now free and is a best-selling author who launched a foundation to help others.

## Promoting Your Book to Bestseller

### 2. Start Spreading the News: Social Media

One of the most inexpensive ways to promote your new book is via social media, both your own social media outlets and those of other individuals or organizations associated with your book. The two most popular social media outlets every author should be on are Facebook and Twitter. It's vital for you to have a social media presence to spread the word about your book as well as to interact with readers.

For your personal social media outlets, get a jumpstart on PR by crafting a few dozen tweets and posts about your book that can then be sent out over an extended period, before and after the book is released. For example, *Stand Up!* includes 11 chapters of stories written by 75 young activists. I crafted a tweet for every story, a tweet for every chapter topic, and a tweet for each endorsement blurb, for a total of 100-plus tweets. I researched all the related Twitter handles so they could be included—this then encouraged others tagged in my tweets to retweet them to their followers. Likewise, I crafted several Facebook posts. And, where possible, I included the Amazon link for buying the book.

Another component of a social media campaign is to look at what individuals and businesses/organizations are mentioned in your book. Then, ghostwrite posts and tweets that you can ask them to easily copy, paste, and send out from their accounts.

On the release day for *Stand Up!*, this coordinated social media strategy, which I executed myself, put the book in front of around one million people, and drove the book to the #1 spot in its genre on Amazon. And all it cost me was my time.

### 3. Media Blitz: Bloggers & Other Traditional Media

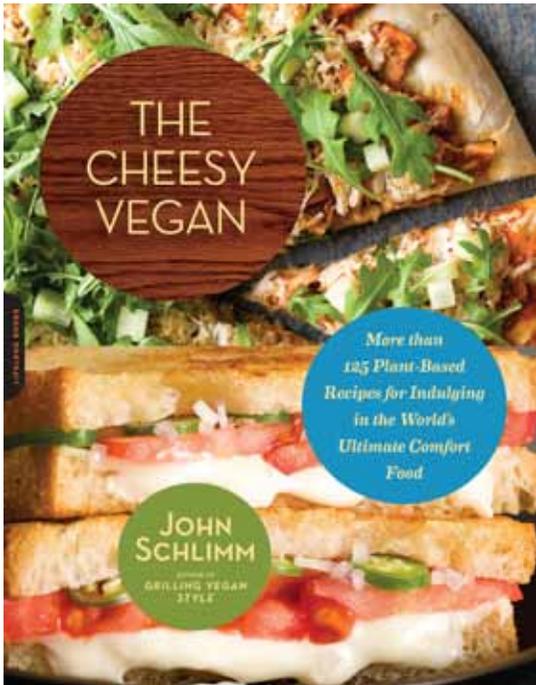
Today's media culture provides you with more outlets for your new book than ever before. Bloggers, especially, are a fantastic way to get word of your book out to the masses. Most publicists at publishing houses will be able to easily compile a list of targeted media to approach, but you should also think about and research bloggers and other media (newspapers, magazines, radio shows, and TV shows) that would be a good fit for your new book, and turn those suggestions over to your publicist.

For example, in the case of *Stand Up!*, it was a natural fit for pitching to mommy, dad, teen, educational, and nonprofit blogs, as well as more traditional media. I also wrote an exclusive blog piece titled "Generation #StandUp!" for Special Olympics to use on their site to promote the book.

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## Promoting Your Book to Bestseller

### 4. Face Time: Book Launch & Other Author Appearances



Regardless of what your book is about, and whether it has a national audience base or a more localized/regional appeal, consider approaching a library, restaurant, or related nonprofit to host a book party. Also, since publishers rarely fund book tours anymore, research conferences, festivals, book fairs, schools/universities, libraries, book clubs, and other venues where you might find an audience for your book, and then pitch them on the idea of an appearance by you, which could take the form of a speech, Q & A (In Conversation with...), and/or book-signing. A portion of your personal PR/marketing budget should be allotted for travel related to these potential events.

For the national launch of my latest cookbook, *The Cheesy Vegan*, I headed to Washington, D.C., where my pal Doron Petersan hosted a book launch party at her popular restaurant, Sticky Fingers; I served as emcee for the 2013 DC VegFest; and I delivered the keynote address at Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary's annual open house and fundraiser, among other activities. These were all events I coordinated myself to supplement my publisher's book launch efforts.



John has lots of friends all over the world, many of which are the four-legged variety! Here is he with his buddy "Goat" at the Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary in Maryland. To learn more about the sanctuary, visit [www.animalsanctuary.org](http://www.animalsanctuary.org). Baaaaaaaaaaaaa!

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## Promoting Your Book to Bestseller

### 5. Team Effort: Hire a Publicist

If your personal PR/marketing budget allows for it, hire an outside publicist to help you and your publisher with your promotional efforts. Ask your publisher, agent, and other authors for references, and then interview those prospective publicists to determine the best publicist for your book. This will likely be the most costly part of the campaign personally for you, as an independent publicist often charges a few thousand dollars a month, and a two to four month campaign is usually warranted for maximum impact.

Once you've hired a publicist, be sure to have her/him give you a written outline and regular updates, detailing every aspect of their strategy for your book, so you know exactly what to expect from them. Just keep in mind, regardless of what media they secure or don't secure for you, publicists still get paid, so choose *very* carefully.

### About John Schlimm

A former celebrity publicist in Nashville, John Schlimm is now an activist, Harvard-trained educator, and award-winning author of *Stand Up!: 75 Young Activists Who Rock the World, And How You Can, Too!*; *Stand Up! Discussion Guide*; *The Cheesy Vegan*; *Grilling Vegan Style*; *The Tippy Vegan* and several other books. For more information, or to connect with John on social media, please visit [www.JohnSchlimm.com](http://www.JohnSchlimm.com).

*Stand Up!* is the generation-defining call to action and collection of stories by 75 of the world's most dynamic young activists, some of whom started their efforts as early as three years old, and many have founded their own nonprofit organizations. Today, through their grassroots movements and international work, they are bringing their own brand of savvy compassion and unstoppable courage to the crossroads of social entrepreneurship and activism.



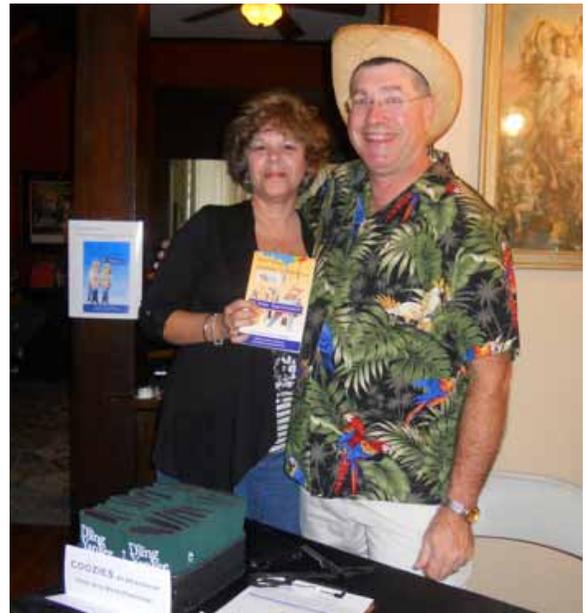
On behalf of the PS staff, co-editors and authors, we wish you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Hanukkah!

~~ Dahlynn and Ken



## Book-signing Fun!

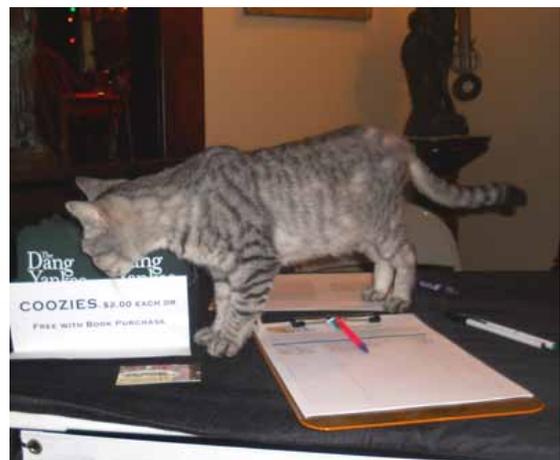
Frequent NYMB contributor Mike McHugh held a launch event for *Not Your Mother's Book... On Home Improvement* on October 18th at the office of his newspaper, *The Louisiana Jam*, in Lake Charles, LA. Personal friends and readers of his "Dang Yankee" column in the JAM stopped by to get a signed copy and to hear him read an excerpt from his story in the upcoming NYMB title, *On Family*. Book purchasers were also treated to a free "Dang Yankee" drink koozie.



Mike with Wanda Dupin, who is an avid reader of his "Dang Yankee" column.



Mike with Charlie Boudreaux, who is dressed for the occasion!



ZiZi picks out his "Dang Yankee" drink koozie.

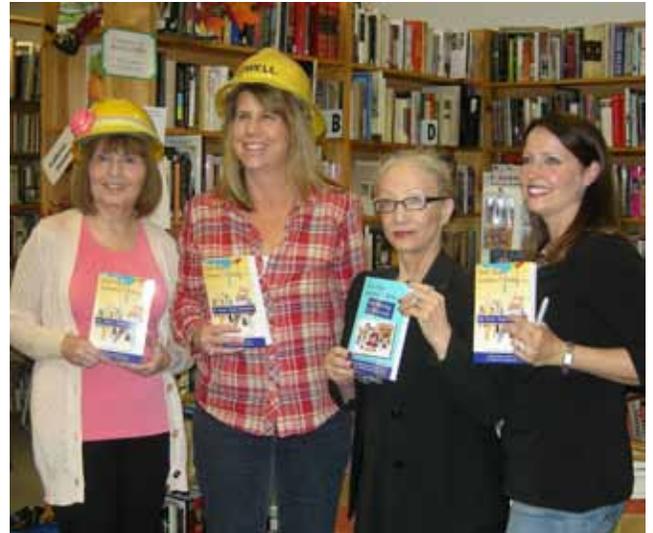
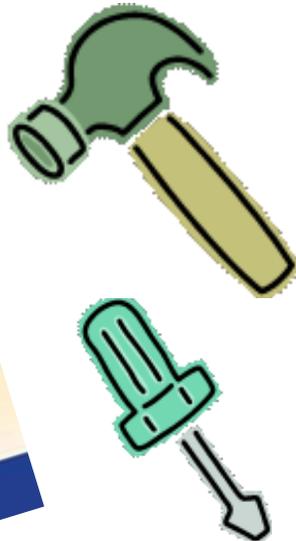


Mike is also the winner of our "Show Me Your NYMB!" video contest! Watch his YouTube video by clicking on the star icon. He has two stories in the *NYMB... On Home Improvement* book—"Fan-dango" and "Awl in the Family." Congrats, Mike!

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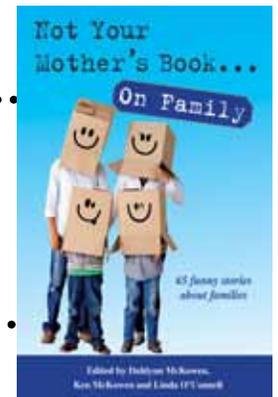
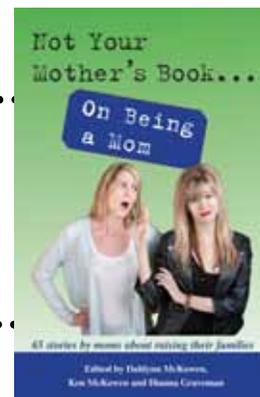
## More Book-signing Fun!

On November 14th, *NYMB...On Home Improvement* and *NYMB...Being a Parent* contributors (L to R) Camille DeFer Thompson, Stacey Gustafson, Julie Royce and Tracy Winslow participated in a book signing at Bay Books in San Ramon, CA. The signing was a rousing success with attendance of over 30 guests!



## Book Updates...

Due to slow sales, Publishing Syndicate has yet to finalize its late summer/fall 2014 release schedule—it could be one new NYMB title, it could be three new NYMB titles. Again, it depends on sales of the existing NYMB books. We still need quality stories for all the NYMB titles, so please continue to submit. Thank you.



*NYMB...On Being a Mom*: The manuscript is still going through copyediting. Galley's were expected to go out by now, but we have pushed until December. Release: March 2014

*NYMB...On Family*: The book is done! Release: March 2014

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## SEND IN YOUR STORIES!

Updated 11/29/13

### *Not Your Mother's Book . . .*

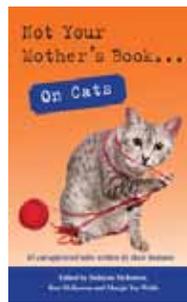
## A new anthology for a new century!

Stories needed for 30+ new books. Must be written by people age 18 and up. Details and submission guidelines on the PS website.

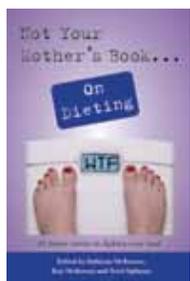
**HURRY! DEADLINES! HURRY!**



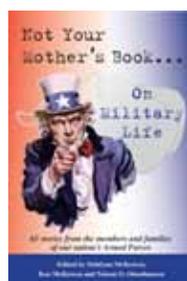
**On Pets:**  
Dec. 1, 2013



**On Cats:**  
Dec. 1, 2013



**On Dieting:**  
Mar. 1, 2014



**On Military Life:**  
June 1, 2014

**Submission guidelines at**  
[www.PublishingSyndicate.com](http://www.PublishingSyndicate.com)

### *OMG! My Reality! Youth Series*

## Time to get published!

We are accepting stories for three *OMG! My Reality!* titles: *Kids*; *Preteens*; and *Teens*. Stories must be written by those age 25 and younger. Please share this information with everyone. Thanks!



Do you know a teenager who loves to write? Tell him/her to submit stories to the upcoming *OMG! My Reality! For Teens*. **Being a published author is great for college and job applications.** With the fall 2013 release of *Stand Up!*, an anthology with stories from 75 of the nation's and world's most amazing young activists, we'll be swamped with even more submissions. So don't delay! Send now!

[www.PublishingSyndicate.com](http://www.PublishingSyndicate.com)

**Help young people  
become published  
authors!**



## *My Story is Out: High School Years*

Created by Lyndsey D'Arcangelo

***The nation's newest anthology for LGBT teens!***

We are looking for humorous, heart-warming, wistful and inspiring stories written by straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals **of all ages** about high school life. More info at [www.MyStoryIsOut.com](http://www.MyStoryIsOut.com).

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