AMAZON TOP 100

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**What does it take to get into the top 100? Dedication and attention! There are small things that go a long way, such as:**

SEO

Good SEO is important – this involves making sure when people look for something on your topic, they find your book,

Are your keywords sufficient?

* Type some keywords you would expect to call up your book in Google. Do they? If not, send us your “missing” list, and we will check to see if they are listed for your book. (Keywords may be attached to your book and still not show up because there are a zillion books in the same category with the same keywords and a million are selling better – but best to test.)
* While we have a limited number of keywords for Amazon, the number is larger than you think, and, although we are limited on our website, we have workarounds by putting the keywords in the book description. We do have some ability to add additional keywords as well as to check out the viability of the keywords proposed or in use.
* Note also that if you include your keywords in your book description and your bio, they should show up on a Google search.

Book Description

Take the time to look at your book description on Amazon and on your MSI book page:

Is it wimpy? Send a replacement; if it is too long, we can still use it on your book page on our website as well as pull out things to beef up your Amazon page.

Does it include all your awards? If not, let us know.

Does your MSI page include all pertinent information, properly linked (if not, let us know):

* Are all the links for purchase listed and linked: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Powell’s, Abe Books, Books-a-Million, Alibris, Walmart, Staples, Target? They may not all carry your book, but if they do carry it (google it) and the link is not on your page, we need to add it—let us know.
* Are the links to all your reviews there; if more than 10, do we have your 10 strongest?
* Are the links to all your interviews there; if more than 10, do we have your 10 strongest?
* How about links to articles you have published; no? send title(s) and link(s).

Niche

Some niches are easier to dominate than others. So, for example, the parenting category, into which a number of MSI Press books fall, is very difficult to poke through into the top 100, given 60,000+ books in that category, but for a book on Siberian pits, you have a pretty good chance of staying in the top 100, regardless of how many books actually sell since there may only be 40-50 books on the topic. The bottom line is that your book has to outsell only the 100th book (99 others can outsell yours, and you will still be there.) If 99 books are selling only one copy and yours sells two copies, you will be #1. Hence, the more narrow the niche, the easier it is to attain top 100.

* Whenever your book is in a big niche, it is good to have your third category (each book is allowed three category placements) be the smallest, applicable niche. Sometimes, Amazon arbitrarily and unilaterally (and sometimes incorrectly) assigns a category. We need to know about the incorrect ones; it may take weeks, but it will ultimately get corrected.
* Note that it does not take thousands of book sales every day to reach the top of these lists. You just have to have more book sales than everyone else, except the others in the top 100. In small niches, that can be just a few sales, and in medium niches, it could be luck of timing (if in one hour you sell two books when no one else sells any, up you go—then, the next hour 200 people sell three books, and down you go). Large categories are truly tough; there you do have to sell a lot of books daily.
* Do not overlook the power of small. Keywords should also come from small, related niches.

Author Promotion

Getting the word out is very important—even more important for authors than for publishers because readers look to authors, not publishers, for book information. You do not have to work on getting the word out every day, but you should work on getting it out every week; skipping weeks can have a turn-off or move-onto-someone-else effect for fickle followers (who tend to be the majority); hence, the admonition for “every week.” There are some obvious mechanisms/ strategies that you can use regularly or alternate and that we can amplify. The more you do, the more we can help you. There does not have to be a lot of money involved, just an adequate amount of time. You know the saying: most of life is a choice between money and time. So, in the list below, what tickles your fancy?

* On your platform: blog, twitter, instagram, facebook – send us your posts; we can re-post on multiple platforms.
* Write a post for our blog and offer guest posts to bloggers in your content area (for the latter, send links to any posts that are published).
* Write an article for a magazine or journal – send us the link.
* Produce a video something (youtube, podcast, whatever floats your boat) and send the link; if you work through others (e.g., Literary Titan’s trailer service), then others will also be posting it as well.
* Enter a book awards competition; if you win, let us know.
* Get your book reviewed (as many times as possible); send us links to any professional reviews that are posted online (e.g., Readers’ Favorites, US Review of Books, Foreword Reviews).

**What about the Top 100 Hot New Releases?**

This is probably your best chance to get into the top 100. Your book will not be competing with 15 million other books or with the hundreds of thousands of other books in your category. It will only be competing with other books released during the past month. That may be only a few hundred. A well-planned and well-executed launch, with intensive pre-launch promotional activity, can realistically take your book into the hot new release club and is well worth the extra effort during this time frame.

The new release period extends for 30 days after the release date of the book. (So, the ARC period does not count.) This means potentially a free advertisement every day for 30 days, if you can keep your book on and, especially, near the top of the list.

Getting into the top 100 hot new releases is important and worth the effort to prepare for in advance. A “hot new release” status brings excellent promotion and book recognition that can carry the book to better sales after the new release period and sustain book sales for at least a few months. Instead of just a listed number under the book title, as in the general bestseller rankings by categories, the hot new releases are a sales category of their own and include a cover of the book and link to the book’s Amazon page.

This is great, free advertising!

**What does it mean to be in the Amazon Top 100?**

Sales

Being in the top 100 does not necessarily mean dozens of sales though it usually means *some* sales. There are at least two reasons that sales of the top 100 might not be spectacular:

* Amazon could be selling books that were acquired earlier—so new sales (those that show up on book sales reports from the distributor) are few to nil; there is no need to despair, however. Like the salesperson who rejoices at each “no” because he realizes that, based on the law of averages, s/he is one step closer to “yes,” with each inventory sale, your book gets closer to being sold out and on the seller’s reorder list, which then does become a new sale.
* The niche is quite narrow and nobody in the niche is selling much of anything so even a couple of books make for a bestseller.

Promotion

Being in the top 100 is super promotion for a couple of reasons:

* It lends credibility to you and your work; if it is in the top 100, it must be good, right? And therefore worth buying! You can add this “status” to your press releases, websites, and all future posts.
* It gives you a reason to write more posts in order to announce the book’s new status. You are limited only by imagination as to how many posts (podcasts, tweets, etc.) you produce; keep 22 in mind, the magic number for how many times someone has to see something before making a purchase; many of the posts can simply be repurposed if they are a simple announcement of the status.