

Karen Whiting 7 Essential Tools to Getting published www.karenwhiting.com
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Proposal elements

By Karen Whiting www.karenwhiting.com

Each of these elements helps define the book, show its uniqueness, and sets up parts of a marketing plan. It can help you stay on focus as you write and give you a direction for marketing the book.

Title page (provides title/contact info)

Title: subtitle

Author

Agent representing author if there is one with contact info

Or author's contact info

Next page (overview of manuscript/concept)

Date

Title

Author

Hook (25-50 words to grab editor/reader interest)

Brief description (50-100 words)—make sure this is different from the hook and what you write in the overview (next page) These provide more opportunities to share what the book is about and also provide various copy for the back cover, catalogue, etc.. that may actually be used.

Target Audience: who would benefit from book/most need it

This can include statistics

Manuscript (how many words, when will book be completed such as 6 months after signed contract)

Rights offered: generally book rights/agents fill that in

Inclusions: Proposal and number of chapters in the proposal

Next page: Proposal

Title

Overview (describe contents such as real life or personal experience stories/testimonies; biblical lesson or discussion; sidebars; end of chapter questions; practical tips) Should end with benefit to reader (such as will increase joy, help them apply scripture; motivate them to..., give them hope as they...)

TOC or Synopsis

Annotated table of contents (so each section/chapter title plus an explanation of its contents)

It can help to use bullet points. I often have one sentence outlining story and then bulleted list of action plan, sidebars, tips, etc. in that chapter

The market

This is place where you show who needs the book and why. It's also the place to list affinity groups.

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- I often include links to articles and stats related to the topic (look up demographics, Barna Group and other poll studies, facts on topic, etc.
- Describe need for book. I usually summarize what I've gleaned from the links listed.
- Sometimes a very relevant quote from a well known authority on the topic works well—so on stress I might use research from the Mindlab and a quote about relieving stress
- Niche markets/affinity groups. This can be specific groups like Mops, or a segment of the population like unemployed dads

Marketing Plan

This shows your ideas to reach the audience. It is really worth working on whether you self-publish or submit to a traditional publisher. This is what you can go back to as the book releases. I try to implement everything I listed.

I use a bulleted list of ideas followed by a section I title Specific Marketing Plans to Consider. That section expands on a few of the ideas that are either unique, something related to my marketing expertise, or connected to what I'm already doing. So, for my Created for Purpose and Beauty I will list women's retreats and video clips and then expand that to explain I already have a DVD of a retreat I did and will pull segments to create youtube clips.

Make each bullet as unique as possible, so for my stress book proposal I list women's spa retreats instead of just a retreat. For the one on purpose I would list Woman's retreat with accountability groups to promote finding their purpose.

Marketing strategies

This is really a list of my experience and training that relates to marketing ability I start with a general short paragraph like

Whiting already has numerous books on the market and has pitched and set up her own radio interviews across the US as well as television interviews. She speaks to women's groups and has conducted women's retreats. Whiting is a contributing writer for three publications, including Leading Hearts Magazine. The following show her experience and potential to help market the book.

I list the main broad categories of speaking, pitches, networking or sometimes I list the main avenues of marketing: print, social media, media, expertise, and speaking. Each could provide my experience or ideas on how I would reach my audience through that area (so I could mention that I would post or blog stories related to blessings that turned to ministry once a week or that I would provide a 100+ list of radio and TV that have had me as a guest in the past for the publisher to send review copies).

Possible endorsers

I try to avoid a list of authors. Everyone knows they may write great endorsements but they are promoting their own books and not your book. A well-known author who writes on a related topic can add authority to your book. I look for the affinity group leaders and others who might want to promote the book. So, for my upcoming Raising a Young Modern Day Princess, Doreen Hanna (my coauthor) and I did ask Thelma Wills, but two of the big ones we have are the

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president of MOPS, president of American Heritage Girls (they plan to e-blast parents of girls in all their troops about the book and will have us write some blog posts for the girls).

Market Analysis/Comparable titles

Don't avoid this by stating there's nothing like your book-that's a copout and may alert editors that perhaps no one cares about the topic

SearchCBD.com and Amazon for titles by well known traditional publishers that are on your topic or related topics, the same type of book (like a devotional), etc.

List each title and a one-sentence description of the book. Then follow the listing by a short paragraph of the uniqueness of your book that explains how your book differs. This is not a time to put down any title, but a tie to highlight your specific slant or perspective.

So, if I list *The Purpose Driven Life* I would explain that his popular book reveals that we can find purpose in living through faith in God in 5 areas (worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and mission). Then I would explain that my book shares how the act of being a blessing reveals our unique purpose and direction God has for us. I will also list some books on finding God's will and how through the interacting with others in being a blessing helps us discern God's direction for us and reveals the passions in our heart connected to his plans for us.

Author Bio

Provide some background on you, highlighting anything that is relevant to the topic of the book. So on my book on blessings, I might indicate I responded to my church to write little family tips that blessed others and that opened the door to finding my purpose of helping families thrive through my writing ability.

Published Works/sales figures

This shows you have an audience/some experience in marketing

Some people with lots of books summarize, such as my twenty books have sold more than one-quarter million copies and then list a few of the top sellers or ones related to the proposed book.

List books published and sales (if sales are small don't include numbers) or list articles published or if you blog and have a huge following (1000 hits a day/5000 subscribers, etc).

Contracted books

This helps an editor know someone has faith in you and also lets them know you might be busy with your writing and this proposed book has to be a little ways out in publication date

Speaking schedule

If you have a busy speaking schedule but no books, list the schedule and note audience size if some are large groups.

Sample of book (1-3 chapters or several devotions for a devotional book)

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