COMPASS ROSE WORKS

Book Launch Planning Guide

A practical workbook for coordinating the weeks leading up to publication, organizing promotional activity, preparing events, and keeping important launch commitments from slipping through the cracks.

1. DEFINE THE LAUNCH

- ■ Confirm the official publication / release date and the formats being released.
- ■ Define the primary audience for the book.
- ■ Decide what success will look like for this launch.
- ■ Identify the geographic reach: local, regional, national, online, or a combination.
- ■ Choose the main sales channels readers will use to obtain the book.
- ■ Set a realistic launch budget for advertising, events, printing, travel, and promotional materials.

LAUNCH SNAPSHOT

Book title	_____
Release date	_____
Primary audience	_____
Main launch goal	_____
Approximate launch budget	$_____

My three launch priorities:

2. BUILD THE LAUNCH TIMELINE

Work backward from the release date. Not every book needs the same timeline, but important dependencies should be visible before launch week arrives.

8–12 WEEKS BEFORE

- Confirm book metadata, description, author biography, cover image, pricing, and purchasing information.
- Review retailer/distributor listings when available.
- Prepare or update the author/business website and book page.
- Build a list of bookstores, libraries, media, podcasts, organizations, and event prospects.
- Begin planning launch events, signings, interviews, or presentations.
- Prepare promotional graphics, photographs, bookmarks, cards, or other materials.

4–8 WEEKS BEFORE

- Begin targeted outreach to event hosts, bookstores, libraries, and media.
- Confirm events and record deadlines, contacts, and requirements.
- Prepare social posts, email/newsletter material, and launch announcements.
- Order enough author inventory for planned direct sales and events.
- Test purchasing links, QR codes, forms, and contact methods.

1–4 WEEKS BEFORE

- Reconfirm event details and inventory needs.
- Schedule or prepare launch-week communications.
- Organize books, signage, payment equipment, and promotional supplies.
- Follow up on unanswered high-priority outreach.
- Confirm that readers can easily find accurate information about the book and how to purchase it.

LAUNCH WEEK

- Publish planned announcements and communications.
- Complete scheduled appearances, interviews, and events.
- Track sales, inventory movements, expenses, contacts, and follow-up commitments.
- Respond promptly to reader and professional inquiries.
- Protect time to enjoy the milestone as well as manage the business.

3. PROMOTION & OUTREACH TRACKER

A focused list of good-fit opportunities is more useful than a large list that receives inconsistent follow-through.

Organization / Outlet	Opportunity	Contacted	Follow-Up	Status

PROMOTIONAL ASSET CHECKLIST

- ■ Professional author photo / headshot
- ■ Book-cover image
- ■ Short and long author biography
- ■ Short and long book description
- ■ Website book page
- ■ Purchase links
- ■ Working QR code
- ■ Business cards / bookmarks / handouts
- ■ Media or interview talking points
- ■ Event signage or table display
- ■ Social / email launch graphics

Key message

Write one clear sentence that tells a potential reader what the book offers or why it matters.

4. EVENTS, INVENTORY & SALES READINESS

A successful launch can create several activities at once. Prepare the operating details before the attention arrives.

EVENT READINESS

- Confirm date, time, location, host, format, and arrival time for every launch event.
- Confirm who handles book sales and any commission or consignment terms.
- Know how many books will be taken to each event.
- Prepare a way to accept the payment methods you intend to offer.
- Pack signage, pens, promotional pieces, chargers, and other event supplies.
- Plan how sales and remaining inventory will be reconciled after each event.

LAUNCH INVENTORY PLAN

Event / Location	Date	Books Planned	Books Sold	Remaining

SALES & ADMINISTRATION

- Record direct sales and payment method.
- Record books placed on consignment or at outside locations.
- Record complimentary, review, or promotional copies.
- Keep receipts and record launch-related expenses.
- Save agreements, confirmations, invoices, and important correspondence.
- Back up launch records and digital assets.

5. LAUNCH WEEK COMMAND PAGE

Use this page as a simple daily control sheet during the busiest part of the launch.

Day / Date	Top Priority	Appointment / Event	Follow-Up Due

DO NOT FORGET

- Check messages and event confirmations.
- Review today's inventory and supplies.
- Record sales and expenses before details are forgotten.
- Capture useful contacts and promised follow-ups.
- Send timely thank-you messages.
- Update tomorrow's priorities before ending the day.

Notes / urgent items:

6. AFTER THE LAUNCH

The launch is a beginning, not the end of the book's business life. Review what happened and turn short-term activity into long-term relationships.

- Thank event hosts, media contacts, bookstores, libraries, and others who supported the launch.
- Complete every promised follow-up.
- Reconcile sales, payments, inventory, and expenses.
- Review which promotional activities produced meaningful engagement or sales.
- Save testimonials, photographs, media links, and useful feedback when permission allows.
- Identify organizations or contacts worth approaching again.
- Plan the next 90 days of promotion rather than allowing activity to stop abruptly.

POST-LAUNCH REVIEW

What worked especially well?

What would I change for the next launch?

Which relationships should I continue developing?

What are my three next actions?

A good launch creates attention. Good follow-through turns that attention into lasting momentum.

Compass Rose Works Author Resource Series

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