



Timelines

Planning is critical for your success. Once you decide that you are going to do a Crowdfunding campaign, the clock begins to tick.

Pre-Launch

Your time line can be a few weeks to many months out before your official launch. The few weeks means that you have critical essentials in place, mainly social media and your family/friends know what's coming. Outside of an outright financial gift with no strings attached, winning a mini lottery or happening upon a wad of cash that comes out of the blue, where else are you going to get thousands of dollars that doesn't come from your own pocket that could fund you book? There's work to be done.

Family and Friends are at the core of every funded campaign.

3 months to 1 year *before* Your Crowdfunding Launch

This is the time you start your list building. It's your gold mine. Names and emails are what you are after. If you are young, include the friends of your parents and other over-40 adults in your family. Why—simply this: the average donor is in the 40 to 50 age range with a large amount in the early 40s. What parent and friend of a parent doesn't like to boast what their young adult kids are doing to make their way in the world?

Funded campaigns have a common core—the family and friend factor. You are doing a quick head count to make sure that there will be a financial commitment of support, as in 30 percent of total moneys sought. If you are seeking \$5,000—you want to know that you can count on \$ 1,500 coming from this group from the get-go when you go live; if \$10,000—it's \$3,000. The more, the better.

List building isn't something you do in an hour. You may put together some names quickly—but it's all the add-ons that will build your base. It takes time and you will quickly discover, it's a multiplying factor. *Who do you know who ...?* Who do your friends know who might be interested in your book idea ... or even you?

- ✓ *Social Media, Social Media, Social Media.* Starting following, and building back. Twitter and Facebook will be key. Dig down into your genre area and discover "like"—each of the platforms have companion sites and tools that have been created to assist you in building. Start early.
- ✓ *Friends and Relatives ... start list building.* Yes, you know your family; and yes, you know who your friends are. Let them know what you are up to. Who would support you and guesstimate what amounts you could receive. This group is elementary to your success. It's all you know—those you share greetings with, birthday cards with, send out a birth announcement with, any type of Holiday greeting with, thinking of you with, etc. Then go through it and do some weeding—not all will be a fit.
- ✓ *Colleagues and Co-workers ... the list continues.* The list continues. A Crowdfunding campaign isn't the time to be shy, withdrawn and remote. Gather names and emails potential contacts to alert when the formal launch begins.
- ✓ *Friends of Friends.* Ask your friends if they have friends that might be interested in what you are doing. Ideally, your friends will contact their friends and encourage them to join the party.
- ✓ *Friends Who Have Social Media Tribes.* Who is "wired" in your circle? If they love what you are doing, why not tell all their followers? Why not, indeed. Some will offer to join in when the campaign officially opens and encourage their contacts to support your Crowdfunding campaign. Ask them if they will.
- ✓ *On your "To Do" list will be Create Tweets and Postings for Others.* Yes, indeed—not only will you share the big launch with all, you will create a few Tweets and other postings that you will send out a few days before the BIG launch to all on your list and ask them to tell their friends-followers-fans what's happening. All they need to do is copy and paste and send out. Make it easy to support you.

1 to 3 months before Crowdfunding Launch

- ✓ *eMail Gathering Continues.* Don't be surprised when people will say they are interested and want to be contacted when your launch begins—and vanish. It happens. There will

be a percentage that come through, many won't.

- ✓ *Book Cover and Support Branding.* Having your book cover (even if it changes during the evolution post funding) delivers a visual of what's to come.
- ✓ *Create Content for Crowdfunding Platform.* Video, text for pages, gather images to include.
- ✓ *Crowdfunding Platform Site.* You are building a landing page for your project that has a variety of elements to it. The good news is that you don't have to "think up" what you need—you will get a step-by-step guide with the platform you choose to build your campaign on. What you need is to supply the content that goes in each. Think snap, crackle and pop in presentation. You want this completed several weeks before launch day.
- ✓ *Build Rewards.* Study what other successful campaigns have presented for Rewards—what types appeared to be the most successful (you will tell this by the greatest number taken)? Create descriptions. Add a few that are "back-ups" to be used as a substitute for one that is posted and not being subscribed to or as a Bonus at the end of the campaign to lure already committed supporters into contributed a second round of funding.
- ✓ *Make your Video.* When your campaign starts, consider adding an additional video—updating your supporters of any news. You can have a professional do it or DIY. What it needs is the heartfelt outreach, the why you are doing it, what the benefit will be to the reader, what you are doing with the moneys, and a call to action.
- ✓ *Refine your Marketing Strategy.* Many authors automatically go to Kickstarter because it's huge and they think because of size, the sheer volume of traffic it gets will automatically bring donors to them. Wrong thinking. Because of its size, you can be lost easily.

Will you get looky-loos wherever you launch from? Sure. But the real success will come from your own push, your friends and relatives and the list building you did prior to launch.

Stay focused ...

you will need to say "NO" to a lot of things you normally do during your campaign. *Don't do well what you have no business doing.*

Launch Day to 1 month *before* Crowdfunding Launch

- ✓ *Crowdfunding Platform Site* – if you haven't loaded your content, get this completed pronto. It's time to review with a sharp eye:
 - 1 - Does it look good?
 - 2 - Do images and videos load quickly?
 - 3 - Is your video engaging, share why you are seeking moneys, what they will be used for and have a call to action to the viewer?
 - 4 - Are your Rewards enticing and "feel" right for the amount levels you are seeking?
 - 5 - Video updates. Watch what you have created. Ask those who are supporters to do the same.
 - 6 - After viewing all, would you support your campaign if you were a stranger?
 - 7 - Share your site link with those you trust and ask the above 6 questions.
- ✓ *eMail updates*. Send out an email to all that your Crowdfunding Launch is a week away—you are excited. Think of it is a "short" update, you aren't asking for moneys directly ...yet.
- ✓ *Social Media*. Update all your postings samples and send to your "inner circle" –all those on your list who have agreed to share with their friends and followers a week before you push out.
- ✓ *Create Press Release*. Yes—create an official shout out about what you are doing and release this within two weeks of your debut. Send to local media as well as free posting sites like *PressReleasePing.com*.

During the Campaign

Focus. Focus. Focus. My personal Keepers here are: *If you never say NO, your YESSES become worthless* and *Don't do well what you have no business doing*. Being myopic is a good thing. For this month, you will live and breathe your campaign. That's it. You aren't going on a vacation, traveling, deciding to write a new book or start a new hobby/project ... no, your primary work is managing and completing your campaign.

- ✓ Keep growing your network – the more, the merrier.
- ✓ Launch email campaign and social media – the clock is running.
- ✓ Push your press release out – share with the media what you are doing ... and if your campaigns hits funding early, that's a valid TaDah ... *Local Author Overfunds Crowdfunding for Next Book!*
- ✓ Post updates – on your personal social media of what's happening.

- ✓ Make a new video – use it to highlight the status of what’s happening and/or something that is newsy about the book or you and post on campaign page and all your social media.
- ✓ Thank supporters – as they come in.
- ✓ Tweak Rewards – if one doesn’t have takers, pull it and sub in another.
- ✓ Tweak emails – plan on sending a one weekly update during the month outside of the emails used to promo the campaign.
- ✓ Send updates to supporters – at least on a weekly basis.

Post Campaign Completion

- ✓ Announce your results to all supporters.
- ✓ Thank everyone. Send directly to your contributors and publicly announce successful completion and thank your supporters as a group (you won’t be naming them individually).
- ✓ Do a press release announcing your success and seed what’s the book about and when available (don’t use a firm date—i.e., Spring 2016 gives you a three month window from the third week in March to the third week in June).
- ✓ Get your Rewards out as promised.

Celebrate your success – you get to choose your Reward!