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# MARKETING TO LIBRARIES

## A GUIDE FOR AUSTRALIAN SMALL AND SELF PUBLISHERS

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### ***How many libraries are there in Australia?***

14,000 — they purchase about 12% of all books sold. New Zealand has about 2,500 libraries. They acquire both pbooks (printed books) and ebooks (electronic books)

### ***What types of Australian libraries are there?***

- *Local public libraries* 530 services with a total of 1560 branches serving the general public 'cradle to grave'. They are used regularly by 60% of Australians and are accessible to about 99% of them
- *Primary school libraries* 7,000, many of which have only a part time teacher librarian. In very small schools there will be no librarian
- *High school libraries* 2,300, most of which have one or more qualified teacher librarians Note: private schools and country public schools may combine primary and secondary on one campus
- *Joint use libraries* 120, mostly in country areas. These are mostly public libraries combined with school, technical and further education (TAFE) or university libraries
- *University libraries* 40 often very large library systems, many of which have several campus or departmental libraries
- *Technical and Further Education (TAFE) libraries* 200 libraries
- *Special libraries* 1,200 company, government department and agency, health, law, association, parliamentary libraries
- *State/Territory Reference Libraries and the National Library of Australia* 8 large libraries

### ***Who is responsible for selecting books and other resources in libraries?***

In smaller libraries such as primary school, high school and special libraries it will be the librarian in charge. Larger, multibranch, libraries will often have a centralised selection and acquisition department because it is more cost efficient

For local public libraries, some states have centralised purchasing for all of those libraries, although the larger libraries in those states may have additional funds for local acquisition. The states/territories with centralised public library purchasing are the ACT, Northern Territory, Queensland (in part), South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia. New South Wales and Victoria have no centralised system — every library service selects and purchases its own resources, although there may be local cooperation in buying specialised resources such as books in languages other than English. There is a tendency towards use of a small number of large library vendors by state and other library consortia. These vendors will often supply books and other items to libraries fully processed and shelf ready (labels, barcodes, catalogued etc).

### ***What is the financial year for libraries?***

This is an important issue which may affect the timing of your marketing. The financial year for public libraries and special libraries is generally the financial year 1 July - 30 June. For other libraries it is generally the calendar year 1 January - 31 December. Libraries will tend to have most funds available for purchases at the beginning of their financial year, and less at the end — however in some cases they may have funds remaining at the end of their year which have to be committed and spent quickly.

***Is the book I'm selling available from a library vendor ie a supply company or wholesaler?***

Many libraries, and their centralised purchasing agencies, purchase largely through library vendors. They may favour books and other items available through them and have their subject information profiles with them. Some of these vendors advise their regular library and other customers of new books — so it may be worth sending information about your book to the new titles section of vendors such as

**James Bennett Pty Ltd**

3 Narabang Way Belrose NSW 2085  
tel 1800 226 784 fax 1800 808 292 email [info@bennett.com.au](mailto:info@bennett.com.au) [www.bennett.com.au](http://www.bennett.com.au)

**Peter Pal Library Supplier**

48-50 Commercial Drive Shailer Park Qld 4128  
tel (07) 3806 1155 fax (07) 3806 1455 email [enquiries@peterpal.com.au](mailto:enquiries@peterpal.com.au) [www.peterpal.com.au](http://www.peterpal.com.au)

**ALS Library Services**

12-14 Tooronga Avenue Edwardstown SA 5039  
Tel 1300 136 490 fax (08) 8276 5111 email [simon.woodley@alslib.com.au](mailto:simon.woodley@alslib.com.au) [www.alslib.com.au](http://www.alslib.com.au)

There is a longer list of vendors available at <http://www.nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/services/cataloguing/library-vendors/>.

For local library vendors check your yellow pages under *Library Equipment and Supplies*. Bear in mind that some of the vendors will supply equipment to libraries, not books.

Library vendors will expect a discount of at least 25% from you to enable them to sell to libraries at a discount or at your recommended retail price. *You don't have to provide a discount, however*. If you do not provide one, the vendor will charge the library more for your book. This is unlikely to affect your sales.

***Should I include postage, packaging and handling (p&h) in the cost of the book?***

We suggest not — show it as a separate amount that realistically covers those costs related to one sale. Then, if you receive an order for, say, 40 copies from a vendor, or a larger library, you can show a total reduction in p&h.

***Do libraries recognise the value of small publishers?***

Many recognise that a small publisher may have more flexibility than major publishers and be the first with a book on an important topic. They appreciate that small press titles and self publishers may contribute to the breadth and quality of their collections.

***Do libraries buy paperbacks?***

Yes, but they like quality books bound well enough to withstand multiple loans. This is particularly true in public libraries.

Libraries *do not* like wire spiral, coil or plastic comb bound books with no title on the spine and nowhere to place a spine label carrying the Dewey or other classification number of the book. They (and their users!) also do not like titles on book spines which read from bottom to top.

For shelving, handling and display reasons they also do not greatly like very large books (above A4 size) or very small books (below A5 size).

### **Do libraries acquire ebooks?**

Increasingly they are usually – for public libraries in particular – through state consortia of libraries or through specialist suppliers such as Overdrive. However the publishing industry worldwide, for unjustified fear of losing sales, has not yet arrived at standard approaches to supplying ebooks to lending libraries.

### **Anything else to make my book more saleable to libraries?**

An attractive front cover (modern public libraries try to display 15% of their books face out because this increases how often they are borrowed), a description of the book's content on the back cover, *and a well constructed index at the end of the book*. If your nonfiction book has been worth doing it's worth investing in a good index. Authors and publishers rarely make good indexers — a professionally constructed index is a good investment. Contact the Australian Society of Indexers PO Box R598 Royal Exchange NSW 1225 tel 0500 525 005 [secretary@aussi.org](mailto:secretary@aussi.org) [www.aussi.org](http://www.aussi.org)

### **What can I do to sell my book to libraries?**

Have it reviewed in as many sources as possible

- send it to the Book Reviews Editor of capital city newspapers and *The Australian* 20 Holt Street Surry Hills NSW 2010
- send information about the book to the *Australian Bookseller and Publisher* (D W Thorpe) Locked Bag 20 Port Melbourne Vic 3207
- if it is a book for children or young adults send a review copy to

### **Magpies Magazine**

PO Box 7128 Leura NSW 2780

Tel (02) 4784 1453 Fax (02)2 4784 1806 email [james@magpies.net.au](mailto:james@magpies.net.au)

<http://www.magpies.net.au/>

### **Scan**

School Libraries & Information Literacy

NSW Department of Education and Training Ryde State Office

Block A 3a Smalls Road Ryde NSW 2112

Tel (02) 9886 7501 email [editor.scan@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:editor.scan@det.nsw.edu.au)

<http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/schoollibraries/scan/index.htm>

If you think there is an international market for your book, send a review copy to the following (but bear in mind that you will be disadvantaged if you do not have a US distributor and your book may not be accepted for review unless you have one. *Amazon.com*, the online book supplier, will *not* record your book on its database unless it is available from a North American supplier, or is available as an ebook.

### **Booklist**

American Library Association

50 E Huron Street Chicago IL 60611

<http://www.ala.org/offices/publishing/booklist>

### **The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books**

Children's Research Center

50 E Armory Avenue Champaign IL 67820-6601

<http://bccb.lis.uiuc.edu>

### **Kirkus Reviews**

Nielsen Business Media

770 Broadway, 7th Floor New York NY 10003

<http://www.kirkusreviews.com>

**Library Journal**

360 Park Avenue South New York, NY 10010  
<http://www.libraryjournal.com>

**Publishers Weekly**

360 Park Avenue South New York, NY 10010  
<http://www.publishersweekly.com>

**School Library Journal**

360 Park Avenue South New York New York 10010  
<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com>

**VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)**

A reviewing source for young adult titles  
Voice of Youth Advocates  
4501 Forbes Blvd Suite 200 Lanham, MD 20706  
<http://www.voya.com/>

***Does email or fax work with libraries?***

Generally no — librarians get lots of both and may automatically delete commercial emails

***Does direct mail work with libraries?***

It can do but the title has to really get their attention. However avoid glossy, extravagant and complicated flyers — they can be counter-productive. Librarians tend to be sceptical about hard sell hype and costly promotions,

Your flyer should be no more than three colours, easy to read (use a generous simple font) and no larger than A4. If you are marketing and distributing the book yourself provide clear pricing and order information AND space for credit card details — many libraries are now able to purchase items on a corporate credit card. Providing for credit card payment and an email address and fax number for orders may increase orders for your book.

If you have never drafted a flyer before, take your draft to your local public library and ask the librarian what they think about it. *If you send direct mail don't expect an immediate response or even a direct response.* A response will depend on the library's budget, the time in its financial year, and whether it prefers to consolidate its book orders through a library vendor, or through a central purchasing agency.

You can purchase address labels (printed or electronic) and about 80% of email addresses (for public and academic libraries) for Australian and New Zealand libraries from Auslib Press (PO Box 622 Blackwood SA 5051 tel (08) 8278 4363 fax (08) 8278 4000 email [info@auslib.com.au](mailto:info@auslib.com.au)). For details check our website [www.auslib.com.au](http://www.auslib.com.au). Please note that we cannot mail out your flyer for you – you will need to arrange this yourself.

For New Zealand libraries, a useful directory is *New Zealand contacts in libraries and information services* website [www.contacts.co.nz](http://www.contacts.co.nz)

***Need more information?***

Ring us (Alan or Judith) anytime during the week or weekend (08) 8278 4363.

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