

In the book business, timing really is everything. Having plenty of lead time is essential when launching a new book.

The PR wheels start to turn long before a book ever makes it to a bookstore shelf. In fact, many PR campaigns begin before the final edits are complete and before the final touches have been made to a book's cover design.

A great deal of advance planning goes in to the making of a PR campaign for a book. Unedited bound proofs of a book – called galleys or the ARCs, the acronym for “ADVANCE REVIEW COPIES” – are widely distributed before a book is released. These ARCs make their way into reviewers' hands well in advance of when a book will be available in stores.

*Publishers Weekly*, one of the leading publishing industry trades, “forecasts” books by providing advance reviews of noteworthy titles. This particular magazine, and many like it, requests that galley copies be received at least 4-5 months in advance of when a book is in store.

Longer lead glossy monthly magazines such as *Vanity Fair*, *O*, the *Oprah Magazine*, and *Woman's Day* typically operate on a four-to-six month (or longer) lead time. What this means is that in mid-May, magazines are looking for holiday ideas – some Winter holiday ideas, and some are even thinking early Spring of the next year.

When I see the first crocus blooms in my neighborhood, I am thinking about Halloween. By the time the daffodils arrive, I am thinking about the winter holidays. And when the weather turns cooler, it is time to think summer.

Patience – and planning – in publishing are virtues indeed.

“Overnight success” is a misnomer in the book publishing world, as a great deal of advance planning must go in to actually getting the books in stores, as well. Buyers typically order books 6-9 months in advance of when they are actually available. Often, buyers for chain stores and independents place orders based on title, concept, and cover design alone. Sometimes when a title is presented to a retail or wholesale buyer, printed, bound and finished books are not even in existence yet.

Even those back cover endorsements from other authors, luminaries and media are sometimes solicited when a book is still in manuscript form. It is not unusual to receive an endorsement for a book whose title is “to be decided.”