**Nowhere to Sell Books? Know Where to Sell Books.**

**By Brian Jud**

Bookstores are currently closed due to the coronavirus. Authors and publishers are waiting it out, hoping to sell their books through those that eventually reopen. But if you look around there are many places through which you can sell books now – think supermarkets and pharmacies

There are tens of thousands of supermarkets and pharmacies of all sizes around the country. Many of these stores sell books. In the past, most book sales through these outlets were mass market paperbacks, but today’s superstores carry a wide variety of books, cards, and magazines.

#### Book Selection Criteria

Certain types of books sell better than others in supermarkets and pharmacies. Since these outlets cater to a specific customer base made up primarily of women, books directed toward them tend to sell best. However, it is possible to sell content that is relevant to all family members—especially children. Your content on family activities while quarantined will be welcomed.

Furthermore, this is one area in which fiction outsells non-fiction. Other titles that sell well in supermarkets and pharmacies are those written by local and regional authors, as well as those about local and regional topics. And softcover books almost always outsell hardcover titles—particularly in supermarkets.

#### Pricing Your Books

Independent publishers have a good shot at sales in this market segment, but know your costs. Supermarkets discount the list price up to 25 percent, so your pricing must allow for that to occur as well as allowing for your distributor’s fees. The list price on most books sold in pharmacies is less than twenty dollars, and the list price on most books sold in supermarkets is less than ten dollars. However, the price can go up to twenty dollars or more for hardcover books sold in supermarkets.

#### Submitting Your Book for Distribution

Your existing distribution partners may already be selling to supermarkets and pharmacies. Check with them first. If not, here is the contact information for the major distribution partners involved in these markets. When you submit your book to these middlemen, include a high-quality, one-page piece of sales literature that describes how and why your book will sell well through these retailers. Your submission package should also contain a summary of your marketing plan listing your proposed promotional activity, as well as the top ten reasons why people who shop at these stores will buy your book. Furthermore, be sure to include the price, author, case quantities, and a photo of any floor displays you could provide.

* Symak Sales Co Inc. (<https://symaksales.com/Home/>) “is a leading importer and distributor of general merchandise throughout North America. Symak products can be found in a wide range of retailers and wholesalers, including discount stores, variety stores, supermarkets, pharmacies, distributors, department stores, and dollar stores.”
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If you are a publisher and would like Choice Books to distribute your titles, please mail a catalog of your titles to Choice Books, 963 Reservoir Street, Suite 200, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. Your catalog should include retail prices and the purchasing discount available to Choice Books. They purchase books on a non-returnable basis in case quantities, paying all freight costs. Website: [www.choicebooks.org](http://www.choicebooks.org)

These are examples of just two places through which you can sell books today. Look around for other opportunities. Depending on your content, these could be hospitals, travel centers, liquor stores, pet stores and many others. These times require a little creativity, but those who seize the opportunities will be more likely to remain profitable through these uncertain times.

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