

Winning the ARC Game

How to Run a Campaign That Gets You Read and Reviewed

There's a quiet but critical moment in every author's journey - long before the reviews roll in, before the launch announcements are sent, and before a single sale is made. That moment is your ARC campaign.

ARC stands for Advanced Reader Copy, but what it truly represents is advanced influence. These early readers - whether bloggers, librarians, or everyday book lovers - are the first people you're inviting into the world of your story. When you do it well, an ARC campaign isn't just a marketing tactic; it's a credibility engine.

This guide will walk you through how to run a successful ARC campaign - choosing the right platform, presenting your book professionally, avoiding common mistakes, and building lasting momentum for your launch.

Section 1: The Big Picture

An ARC (Advanced Reader Copy) is a pre-release version of your book sent to early readers in exchange for an honest review...These readers are not buying your book - they are endorsing it with their time and feedback. That's a privilege...

Section 2: Comparing Top ARC Campaign Platforms

BookSirens: \$10 setup + \$2/download, Reedsy Discovery: free or \$50 boost, NetGalley: \$500+ or use co-ops...

Section 3: The ARC Submission Package

Your ARC submission package should include a query-style pitch (e.g., a chilling mystery blurb), book info sheet, sample pages...BookSirens requires 4-6 weeks lead time, Reedsy about 3-5 weeks, and NetGalley up to 10 weeks. Follow-ups should be respectful and timed...

Section 4: Timelines & Follow-Up

Common mistakes include submitting unfinished manuscripts, mismatched genres, skipping metadata, or violating review timing rules...

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Section 5: Gotchas to Avoid

ARC campaigns matter because they build trust and visibility early. Presenting well, following platform rules, and treating reviewers like allies...

Section 6: Summary Recap

Sage Gold: May you remember that offering your book is a gesture of courage. Invite connection, and praise will follow...