

*7 Proven but Useless Book Sales Strategies* is a sharp, minimalist satire that hits the modern indie-publishing advice industry with a straight face and a wicked sense of timing. Presented as a handbook of “proven” strategies, the book instead dismantles the clichés, platitudes, and circular logic that authors are routinely fed - often with a sincerity that borders on parody. The author embraces that tension, producing a work that is both a lampoon and a strangely comforting companion for writers exhausted by the relentless pressure to “*do everything right.*”

The book opens with a consultant joke about mice seeking impossible transformation, a parable that sets the tone for what follows. The thesis is stated plainly and with disarming honesty: “*Everything is true. Nothing will help.*”

From there, each “strategy” becomes a comedic dissection of real advice authors hear, exaggerated just enough to expose its absurdity.

The book is organised into seven strategies, each one a familiar pillar of author-marketing culture:

- Sell More Books
- Be Famous
- Win a Huge Literary Award
- Become Part of a School Curriculum
- Get a Movie Based on Your Book
- Publish the Book Ten Years Ago
- Just Get Lucky

The humour lies in the earnest delivery of impossible or circular instructions. For example, the first strategy insists: “*The most effective way to increase your sales is to SELL MORE BOOKS.*”

The deadpan repetition mimics the tone of marketing gurus who offer “insights” that collapse under scrutiny. The satire works because it mirrors the cadence of real advice while exposing its emptiness.

The book’s simple illustrations - checkboxes, stick-figure-style drawings, and ironic labels - function as visual punchlines. They break up the text with a rhythm that feels closer to a graphic essay than a traditional nonfiction guide. The humour is understated but effective, especially when paired with Backer’s clipped, declarative sentences.

The visual gag of the “*#1 Bestseller*” badge, for instance, works because it mirrors the industry’s obsession with micro-category wins and algorithmic validation. The truth is

truly out there - I can even recall reading about a real annual award that gets awarded four times a year!

The core argument is that much of the advice given to authors is technically true but practically useless. Strategies like “*become famous*,” “*win a major award*,” or “*get a movie deal*” are presented as if they were simple, linear tasks. The joke, of course, is that these are outcomes, not strategies.

The book’s most incisive chapter may be “*Publish the Book Ten Years Ago*,” which highlights the role of time, luck, and market saturation in a way that is both humorous and painfully accurate. The author writes: “*The best moment to publish your book was ten years ago*.”

It’s a punchline, but also a commentary on how the industry rewards longevity and backlist momentum, factors no new author can control.

Despite its cynicism, the book is not mean-spirited. The author’s dedication “*To all fellow authors who wrote a great book and struggle to sell it - hang in there*” reveals the book’s true purpose: solidarity. The humour is a pressure valve, not a dismissal of authors’ efforts.

The closing pages, which offer blank “*idea-catching*” spreads with encouraging captions (“*This seems possible*,” “*Strong concept*,” “*Hope is doing a lot here*”), reinforce the book’s underlying empathy. This author is laughing with authors, not at them.

This book will feel familiar to many independent authors and self-publishers, and all those overwhelmed by marketing expectations, as well as readers that just enjoy dry humour. It is less useful for readers seeking actionable marketing guidance - though the title makes that clear.

*7 Proven but Useless Book Sales Strategies* is a clever, tightly executed satire that captures the absurdity of modern book marketing with wit, warmth, and a perfectly straight face. It offers no solutions - intentionally - but it provides something arguably more valuable: the reassurance that the struggle is universal, the advice is often ridiculous, and sometimes the only sensible response is to laugh.