

# TV and Radio: Your Stepping Stones to Credibility

An Excerpt from *The Frugal Book Promoter: How to Do What Your Publisher Won't*  
By Carolyn Howard-Johnson

*Building your on-air repertoire is like building a cinder block wall. You're the mason; you use your first appearance as a foundation to mortar another hefty block on top of it and then another.*

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So, you've landed a radio interview or a spot on a TV show. It's so exciting that you're tempted to sit on your laurels. Nope. This coup is only a first step. You're going to propel it into more.

You used your first celebrity endorsement to garner more accolades. Now you use your first radio or TV experience as a recommendation for others. You are now experienced. Here's how to do it:

- Add this appearance to the query letters you send out to garner more appearances. As the prestige of your resume grows, continue to upgrade the paragraph that outlines your qualifications and the radio shows that featured you. Highlight the ones that asked you back.
- Ask the producer if she will record your appearance and send you a tape. Now you can mention that a tape is available in your query. If you should get a request for it, have it copied and send it by priority mail along with a copy of your book and another letter thanking those who requested the tape for their interest; use this note as a second opportunity to sell your ideas and your qualifications.
- When you do an interview, offer to donate some of your books. Suggest that they might then use as them gifts for their call-in guests if they would care to run the segment on you or your book at a later date. Or if they run segments on similar subject matter.
- Tactfully remind your new contacts that you are an expert. Don't assume because you write fiction that you are not. My first novel is set in Utah and my situation there made me a unique observer of that culture. You can find an angle. Bobby Ruble spent a lifetime in law enforcement including a stint as Chief of Police in Kennesaw, GA. before he wrote his mystery, HAVE NO MERCY. A lifetime of related experience qualifies him as an expert and allows him to plug his book as he goes.
- Publisher Pam Schwagerl ([www.TsabaHouse.com](http://www.TsabaHouse.com)) asks her authors to offer a link exchange—the author's webpage to the TV station's page and back again.
- Authors should also suggest that the station feature their interviews on the station's website by streaming them. Or at least to include a pitch for the interview and a link to your site. This is a win-win offer that usually results in a slam-dunk!.

- Show that you understand the broadcast business by offering sound bites during the interview. Project what an interviewer might ask then come up with these small golden coins of wisdom; that's easy for you to do because you're a writer, right?

**Hint: Radio hosts appreciate your tying something you say to a local angle. It's simple. Just mention their broadcast area when you thank your interviewer.**

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Carolyn Howard-Johnson's first novel, *This is the Place*, and *Harkening: A Collection of Stories Remembered* are both award-winners. She is an instructor for UCLA Extension's Writers' Program and has shared her expertise at venues like San Diego State's world renowned Writers' Conference and Call to Arts! EXPO. She was recently awarded Woman of the Year in Arts and Entertainment by the California Legislature and her city's Ethics award for her work on promoting tolerance. Her nitty-gritty how-to book, *THE FRUGAL BOOK PROMOTER* won USA Book News' Best Professional Book 2004 and her chapbook of poetry, *TRACINGS*, was awarded Military Writers Society of America's Award of Excellence. Carolyn is the founder of Authors' Coalition (<http://authorscoalitionandredenginepress.com>) and editor of the newsletter for that organization. She blogs at [www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com](http://www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com). [www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com](http://www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com) (http://www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com) that helps authors turn a dull book fair booth into a sizzling success. Her website is: <http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com> .

