



## Midwest Connections Overview and Instructions



Midwest Connections helps publishers sell books with ties to the Midwest. Whether the book is a novel set in the Midwest, nonfiction that will resonate within the Midwest, or is written by an author who lives in the Midwest, we can help you find your ideal audience.

You create the promotional materials. We distribute them to our booksellers and give stores \$50 rebates for promoting these titles during a two-month period. Booksellers regularly say they order Midwest Connections titles in higher numbers when they otherwise may have passed on stocking the book. The cost of the program is only \$250/title.

- **Selection process.** Working with publishers, MIBA selects a group of 4 to 5 titles every month to promote as Midwest Connections picks—fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children’s picture books, and children’s literature. We’re actively seeking a higher percentage of fiction paperback originals. Publisher recommendations are highly encouraged. Factor us into your marketing plans and recommend a group of titles per season. A limited number of slots across genres is available each month, so the sooner you recommend your books, the better.
- **Promotional material.** The publisher creates a shelf-talker and flyer and supplies promo material for MIBA to circulate and distribute to stores. (See next page.)
- **Galley mailing.** The publisher receives a customized spreadsheet of regional stores best suited for promoting the title, hosting an author event, etc. Publisher sends ARCs to booksellers at these stores along with a customized Midwest Connections letter. A minimum of at least 50 ARCs is recommended, up to 200 for larger publishers.
- **Get the word out.** MIBA creates a page on our website for each month’s picks that includes all the promotional materials. We also circulate newsworthy info to our members via e-blasts (author events, etc.) and post reviews, events, etc. to our social networking sites. For the full two-month promotional period, you can forward material you’d like us to share.
- **Selling and promoting.** Stores use the materials provided to create Midwest Connections displays (tables, endcaps, etc.), promote the titles in their newsletter, include them in reading groups, etc.
- **Rebates.** MIBA actively funds the two-month promotional period. We provide \$50 cash rebates to stores for promoting the book in their newsletter or on their website, placing an ad in a local website or newspaper, or selecting the title for a book club or reading group.

“Midwest Connections helps me highlight books about the area that don’t receive the recognition of bestsellers or big name authors. *Little Heathens* and *Truck* are the best examples. Small books with strong sales. Programs like this help me stand out from the crowded world of bookselling.”

—Jerry Bilek, Monkey See Monkey Read, Northfield, MN

“We love Midwest Connections! We discover new books we might not have known about, plus it’s a tool we can use to make our bookstore unique and keep it local. We have a special area in the store and include the featured titles in our monthly newsletter. The information provided by MIBA gives us a lot to talk about and makes hand-selling easy and fun.”

—Alice Meyer, Beavertdale Books, Des Moines, IA

### Midwest Independent Booksellers Association

2355 Louisiana Avenue N, Suite A, Golden Valley, MN 55427-3646 | Phone (763) 544-2993 Fax (763) 544-2266

Executive Director: Carrie Obry, [carrie@midwestbooksellers.org](mailto:carrie@midwestbooksellers.org)

Assistant Director: Kati Gallagher, [kati@midwestbooksellers.org](mailto:kati@midwestbooksellers.org)



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## From Carrie Obry, MIBA's executive director

We're delighted to promote your books through Midwest Connections, our popular regional marketing program. Your title(s) will be promoted strategically within our 9-state region with a membership of 200 independent bookstores. Program participation fee is \$250 per title. Here's what you need to do.

**1.) Provide a flyer and a shelf-talker for the book as high-res PDF files.** We'll post these on our website for our members to download, print, and use in their stores. Plan to email your materials to me at least three weeks in advance of the book's pub date.

### Flyer guidelines ([view sample](#)):

- Use an 8.5 x 11 one-sheet format so stores can print it on a color printer and post it easily.
- Include "A Midwest Connections Pick" and the program's logo. (Copy/paste from below. A new logo is forthcoming.)
- Don't use a dark, saturated background. It's hard on color printers and doesn't always look good. Also, include a defined border, as most printers don't like a full bleed.

### Shelf-talker guidelines ([view sample](#)):

- Set up the file to print at 8.5 x 11 with two up on the page to create a dual-purpose shelf-talker. The top half sticks out of the top of a book in a table display. The bottom half is the shelf-talker that sits on the shelf under the book when folded down.
- Be sure to use the program's logo (copy/paste from below) and/or the text "A Midwest Connections Pick."

**2.) Email me promotional materials, which I'll put on our website and push to our stores.**

- Brief, catchy hook for easy pitching
- Full descriptive copy of the book
- Price, ISBN, format, ordering info, etc.
- Book jacket photo (high-res JPG)
- Author photo (high-res JPG) and bio
- Author tour schedule
- Reading group guide
- Your press release
- Video trailer
- Anything else our stores may use

**3.) Mail ARCs (or in some cases finished copies) to MIBA booksellers.** I supply an Excel file of member stores where you can send as many ARCs as you'd like. *PLEASE* include a letter with the Midwest Connections logo (copy/paste from below), marketing and author events information, basic facts about the book, contact info for publicity/events, how to order, and so forth. We find it most effective to begin the letter with a positive blurb from an independent bookseller. Store owners highly recommend publishers mark the outside of the package with the Midwest Connections indicator so it rises to the top of their inbox. Also send one copy of the galley and final book to our office.

**4.) Let me know who to invoice for the program.** Email contact name, title, and email address to [carrie@midwestbooksellers.org](mailto:carrie@midwestbooksellers.org).



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