

Market and Sell Books

A My Guide

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Dedication

To all writers who want their books to be read.

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Foreword

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Confucius

Congratulations! In buying this guide you have taken the first steps towards becoming a book marketer. By the very fact that you are accepting responsibility for the success of your book you are already way ahead of many authors. Generally, the number of sales made and the money earned from a book is a reflection of the amount of proactive marketing carried out either by the publisher, the author or both.

- ☺ You don't need to be an experienced sales person or Internet marketer to achieve book sales. In fact, the good news is that a large majority of your marketing can be done by writing and utilising the immense power of the Internet and social media – which we assume you enjoy since you're a writer.

If you cringe at the thought of selling, this book is for you. As authors ourselves, at Richmond Pickering Ltd we are not naturally gifted at marketing and neither of us would ever have chosen a career in sales. However, we believe our books can really help people and therefore, we have realised that by not telling the world about them, we are denying people the opportunity to use the information they contain to live happier lives.

If you have written a novel it might not be life-changing, but if you truly believe it is well written and an enjoyable read, why would you keep it to yourself? We are all generally happy to recommend a great movie or a restaurant we think family or friends will enjoy and recommending

your book to people you engage with via social media and blogs is much the same – except you are the author.

Our methods are simple yet effective. Rebecca's first self-help book – designed to help people manage the symptoms of the debilitating illness of fibromyalgia – was read by people in ten countries within just four days of its release, and this was achieved using methods within this guide.

Marketing your book effectively can help you to:

- achieve fame, as writing a book is often a good way to establish celebrity status
- become recognised and respected as an expert in your field
- earn an income
- increase your credibility and visibility
- gain a competitive edge
- learn new skills
- leave a legacy
- help people change and improve their lives
- share your expertise with a wider audience
- spread an idea
- express yourself as a creative writer
- bring pleasure to people's lives through your stories.

Although very few authors sell enough books each year to make a living solely from writing, once you are a published author it can lead to additional income from various sources, such as new business, commanding higher fees, upselling higher-priced products and services, speaking engagements, interviews and joint ventures. You can also capitalise on your asset by making your book available in additional formats: audio, electronic, etc.

Typing 'The End' is only the beginning. Even if you feel you have written the next bestseller, you will first have to attract readers. This guide has been written specifically to help you market your book, which means leveraging your author platform, and increasing visibility and exposure. These are all words that you will see an increasing amount of as you start to use social media to market your book, in

what is clearly not a passing phase or a fad, with new social media platforms developing all the time.

Sadly, the quality of your book does not guarantee that it will sell thousands of copies. Even if you spend thousands on marketing and invest an equal amount in hours, you cannot force people to buy it and physically part with their hard-earned cash. It is not just a question of uploading your book onto Amazon and then waiting for the sales to come rolling in. So what exactly is marketing?

Marketing is essentially the process of telling people about your book in order to get it noticed, raise its profile and generate sales. In essence, it is about gaining the attention of potential readers. Free publicity is great and if you are able to secure interviews or reviews, you should welcome the opportunity. But be careful to ensure that the interview reflects the image you want to achieve for your book and that it is not exploited. If you pay for your publicity in the form of advertisements in magazines, newspapers and on the radio, etc., you have more control, but it can be expensive and therefore, in this book we are putting most of our focus on free and low-cost advertising.

For a business not to advertise is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you are doing but no one else does.

Stuart H. Britt

Whilst it may be very tempting to start your next book, if you do that you need to be realistic about whether or not you will have time to market the one you have already written.

- ☺ Use every available opportunity to market your work and in fact, 90 per cent of your time should be spent marketing, as time spent marketing equals sales.

Because of our society's obsession with celebrities, books written by people in the public eye have an almost guaranteed market for sales. But, assuming you are not a celebrity, you will need to generate interest in you, your subject and what you have to say.

Some authors are determined to find a publisher or an agent and mistakenly believe they won't need to do any marketing. But even if you have secured a publisher, the company may not have the resources available to undertake sufficient marketing to maximise sales. It should be a two-way partnership between yourself and the publisher because,

generally, promoting your book is about engaging with the general public – the readers – and that is most effectively done by you. After all, you both have one common objective: to make as many sales as possible, thereby earning you both an income.

It is never too early to start marketing. If you begin marketing before your book is finished, you will be able to build up interest in your book launch and hopefully generate immediate sales. Proactively marketing your book before it is finished can also help you obtain a publishing deal, as publishers and agents will almost certainly ascertain whether or not you are able to market or promote your book.

The Internet is now an integral part of our daily lives and it is hard to imagine life without it, with connection speeds increasing all the time. In fact, the Internet is no longer a luxury but a necessity, with the use of smartphones and apps becoming commonplace.

Blogging and writing articles and short stories is the fastest way to share your material with millions of people across the globe, allowing you to become an international author. We still find it amazing when we receive emails from people on the other side of the world praising our books or articles. Without the Internet, it would have been incredibly difficult for us to reach such a wide audience.

With over a million books published every year, these days it is much harder to get a book noticed. How well you market your book can literally mean the difference between success and failure in terms of sales. Our aim is to make the steps you need to take as simple as possible in order for you to begin marketing successfully.

There are so many social media platforms that it would be impossible for us to focus on all of them, not to mention that it would be overwhelming for you. Therefore, we have devoted complete chapters to Facebook, Twitter and blogging, as these are our favourite methods of using social media to market a book. As well as being the most popular, we believe they are the most effective.

At Richmond Pickering Ltd, we take particular interest in nurturing the new talent of writers of fiction and non-fiction, so both are covered in this book. Although the marketing methods are very similar, where there are slight variations required we have made this clear in the text.

One of the best ways to learn is from other people's mistakes – and we have made quite a few. One of the most valuable lessons we have learnt is that successful marketing is not simply a case of working

hard – it is essential to work effectively. Whether you choose you use this guide to brush up your skills in certain areas or diligently work through each chapter, utilising the information we are sharing can help you to formulate a targeted marketing campaign, potentially saving you months of wasted effort, so let's get started ...

The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.

Walt Disney

Chapter One – Marketer’s Mindset

The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is that one comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't.

Henry Ward Beecher

Introduction

A marketer’s mindset is very different to that of a writer’s and it requires different skills. Fortunately, technology these days means you can utilise your writing skills to market your book. Whilst it would be great if you could let others take care of the marketing for you and let the sales come pouring in, in reality it doesn’t happen that way.

Why People Buy a Novel

You might think the obvious answers include the following:

- The book is compelling and/or entertaining.
- Readers believe it will transport them to another world for a while, bringing relief from everyday hassles, dramas, stresses and problems.

While people may want the above from a book, they have no way of knowing if your particular book will meet this criteria until they are actually reading. There are an infinite number of reasons why someone will choose a particular novel, including some of the following:

- The author is a celebrity.
- It has a great opening paragraph or first page (this is usually about as much as they will read in the shop or online before making a purchase).
- They have read and enjoyed other titles by the same author.

- Word of mouth, in as much as friends and relatives are talking about and recommending a book they have read.
- The cover, title or blurb appealed to them as they were browsing.
- It has been reviewed and recommended by a magazine, newspaper or TV show they enjoy.
- They saw or heard the author being interviewed and it sparked their interest.
- It is appearing on a bestsellers list.
- They watched the film or TV show first.

Why People Buy Non-Fiction, Self-help and How-to Books

There are lots of reasons people may buy a non-fiction title, some of the most common being:

- They believe it will solve a problem they have.
- They hope it will improve their lives or help them achieve a goal, such as earning more money, finding love, losing weight, etc.
- It has a niche market and they are seeking specialist information on a topic in which they have great interest.

The reason they will choose a particular book above all the others covering the same topic include some of the following:

- The author is a celebrity.
- It contains unique information that is current, in demand and cannot be found elsewhere.
- The author is regarded as an authority in their field.
- Something in the blurb or the author's bio leads them to believe that the author knows what they are talking about and perhaps has overcome that particular problem themselves.
- The foreword gives them confidence that they will gain the knowledge they seek.
- It is part of a series, like the *My Guide* series of self-help books, where the reader has enjoyed other books in the series.

- It has great endorsements.
- It is on the bestsellers list.
- The contents page appears to cover the aspects they are interested in.
- Word of mouth, in as much as friends and relatives are talking about and recommending a book they have read.

Think about it – if a hairdresser or shopkeeper recommended a book they had read to several different people they encountered each day, a book title can be promoted very easily.

With the Internet, word of mouth is no longer the only means of promoting a book. Instead of recommendations or a book just being passed between close friends, it can now reach across the world in a very short time. In other words, it can go viral. This is a term used when lots of other people are retweeting, reposting or repinning your material. In other words, forwarding emails, images or videos to their own followers that have amused, informed or intrigued them. The influence of this type of marketing, brand awareness and its influence on sales is enormous. The book *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne achieved great success as people began talking about the changes they had made in their lives after reading it and it has sold millions of copies.

Why Some Books Never Sell

It may be that despite plugging your book and coming up with marketing strategies, your book still doesn't sell more than a handful of copies. This can be for several reasons:

- saturated genre
- inappropriate overall page count (where the book is too long or short)
- perceived as over-priced
- uninteresting book title
- poor layout and formatting
- weak first sentence, paragraph, page or foreword
- uninteresting subject matter
- not user-friendly enough
- inadequate marketing
- badly written/poor content

- bad reviews
- poor or non-existent editing
- market too small
- corners cut on production.

If you have not already completed your book, it would be worth investing time in ensuring your book is marketable and identifying your target audience before you go any further. In other words, stop and ask yourself: Who is the book for? However, if you have already written your book then the same question is equally important in order to enable you to market it effectively.

Think about your book and why someone would want to buy it. This means going deeper than simply saying ‘they would enjoy it’. If it is non-fiction, answering the following questions is a great start:

1. Non-fiction

If you have written a non-fiction book, consider:

- Does it solve a problem for them?
- What will they gain by reading your book?
- Is it user-friendly and easy to read?
- Is your book good value/is the price competitive?
- Is the content unique?
- Will the information help them achieve a goal?
- Does it offer a new take on a topic?
- What books already published are you in competition with?
- Why is your book different to others already on the market?
- What qualifies you to write this book?
- What key message do you wish to communicate?

2. Fiction

- What genre is your book?
- What books already published are you in competition with?

- Why is your book different to other books already on the market?
- Is your book similar to another very successful book?
- What emotions do I expect my novel to evoke in its readers?

If your book is similar to another already on the market, readers of that book might want to read your book as well. For example, when a book has been very successful there are lots of similar books published, hoping to ride on the success of the first book. Good examples of this are the *Harry Potter* series, *Bridget Jones’s Diary* and *Fifty Shades of Grey*. There is nothing wrong with this strategy and it can be highly successful, as long as you don’t plagiarise the content.

Most people find marketing a book a scary prospect and many excuses are given for not actually getting started – arguments for this being:

- I haven’t got the time.
- I don’t know where to start.
- It will probably be too expensive.
- I don’t like technology and it will be too difficult.
- Using social media will result in losing my privacy.

This is a negative attitude and will definitely hinder you in getting your work out there. As Henry Ford famously said: ‘Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, you’re probably right’.

It is common to begin with great gusto and enthusiasm, plunging in, getting caught up in the excitement, then running into problems at some point and backing off or even abandoning book marketing altogether. The important thing to remember is that you are not alone – stumbling blocks are commonplace. However, the difference between you and other people is that you have the benefit of this guide behind you, helping you to avoid the usual pitfalls.

If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn’t lead anywhere.

Frank A. Clark

Coaching Tip:

Don't try to do everything yourself. Try to outsource things. Remove blockages to your success. Analyse what is holding you back and what you are finding you haven't got time to do.

Think of it as an equation:

Time spent direct selling plus time spent indirect selling equals copies sold.

Before you begin marketing your book, you need to develop a publicist's mindset. It is not enough to say you want to make money or sell your book. Everyone wants those things, but not everyone can achieve those goals – it takes a certain mindset.

- ☺ Thankfully, it does not mean you need to be a workaholic, engage in questionable marketing tactics or become a pushy, overbearing salesperson who people run away from to avoid.

The secret behind adopting a successful marketing is to follow the PIP formula: Perseverance, Integrity and Planning:

1. Perseverance

Positive perseverance is crucial. Accept now that you are going to have down times. Something will go wrong at some point and you need to be able to move on from it or find a way around the problem.

Successful people in all walks of life display unshakeable persistence. More than 2,000 years ago Confucius said: 'Our greatest glory is not in never failing but in rising every time we fall.' How much you are prepared to persevere will depend greatly on how much you want the end result. One of the crucial factors in getting the result you want is to focus on your end goal rather than the steps you would have to do to get there. For example, if you focus on having to spend four hours a day on marketing activities, it is not going to motivate you in the same way as focusing on selling 50,000 copies or the royalty payment in your bank account.

Having a goal that is too far away or too big can also be demotivating. So give yourself smaller goals that you can achieve and celebrate along the way, to keep yourself motivated.

2. Integrity

We cannot overstate the importance of believing in your book. The dictionary definition of 'integrity' is 'the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles'. If you do not believe it will provide an entertaining read, adequate information or help people overcome the problems it claims to, how can you possibly sell with confidence? However, if you genuinely believe that your book is a great product – and that it does what it says on the tin, so to speak – why would you have any worries about selling it?

A bend in the road is not the end of the road ... unless you fail to make the turn.

Helen Keller

Many authors are uncomfortable selling. But let me ask you a simple question: if you had a friend who was suffering from a terrible headache or hayfever and you knew of something you truly believed would help them, would you feel bad recommending it? If you believe in your book, then surely telling people who need the information it supplies is being kind and helpful ...

- ☺ Simply think about it as recommending a great restaurant.

Marketing is not about pushing your book to everyone you meet – it is about seeking out people who may benefit from or enjoy the information it provides and simply telling them how they can obtain it.

- ☺ I am not a natural salesperson, but I was once told by the CEO of one of the world's leading sports brands that I should have been in sales. This was because I passionately believed that what I was saying was correct.

When I started to sell my own books, my natural shyness and lack of confidence kicked in – that is, until I accepted that I was acting with integrity. I was not stating that my books would change the world, but simply that my belief was that the information contained in my books would help people with a similar problem or goal if they used it correctly.

So what are you choosing to accept as your core belief to help you develop the marketer's mindset? To get you thinking in the right way,

start by finishing this sentence: I believe the information in my book will ...

- ☺ Note: it is a belief and therefore personal to you and no one can dispute it.

Remember, there is nothing more off-putting than someone who appears desperate to sell *any* product, including a book. By seeking out people who may be interested in your content or genre, you can tell them it is available without accosting everyone you meet. While you may miss the occasional opportunity to sell a copy, in the long run the more reserved approach will pay off.

3. Planning

A clear vision, backed by definite plans, gives you a tremendous feeling of confidence and personal power.

Brian Tracy

Fail to plan – plan to fail! The more meticulous you are with your plans, the greater control you will have, thereby increasing your confidence and success. To become an authority on your topic or to become recognised as an author of a particular genre, you need to portray your confidence in your book and other products you may wish to upsell.

As we explain the marketing processes, you can develop your plan and test which methods best suit your personality and lifestyle. You can then monitor results so you can make an informed choice as to which marketing strategies work best for you.

It is pointless planning to be on ten different social media platforms for four hours a day, if you are working full time, managing a family or have other commitments. Making sensible plans focused on your end goal, measuring success along the way, will help ensure you stay on the right track; this will be covered in more detail later.

- ☺ Be realistic about the timescales within which you expect to achieve your goals. If you only attain 90 per cent of them, instead of beating yourself up about the missed 10 per cent, celebrate your successes and look at what you did right. See how it can be improved and repeat the process to achieve the remainder of your goal.

Reasons for Not Getting Started

There are many reasons people give for not getting started, especially if it is something they don't want to do, if it is something new or if they are unsure what they are doing. Some of the most common excuses include:

1. Overwhelm

When you try to do too many things at once it is easy to become overwhelmed. It is also difficult to give each area sufficient focus. This is why we have focused our attention on the ones we believe will give you the best start when marketing your book.

2. Fear of the Unknown

The chances are that this is new experience for you and it is natural to feel apprehensive. Perhaps you are a technophobe who quakes at thought of engaging with people over the Internet. Or maybe the idea of public speaking is terrifying for you. But if you:

- plan and measure results
- choose the techniques that best suit your personality and lifestyle
- take things at your own pace
- learn each platform fully before introducing another,

then with time and each success, your confidence will grow.

3. People Won't Like Me

We are sorry but you are right, some people won't like you and will probably be critical or even nasty about you, your book and your work. It is said that approximately 30 per cent of people you meet won't like you and that the more successful you become, the more polarised opinion will be. It may be the way you speak, look, hold yourself, behave or simply the colour of your hair.

The first thing to do is accept that you cannot please everyone. Don't dilute your opinions so they become bland and wishy-washy. Some very successful people have become so by deliberately having very strong views or by writing fiction in an unusual style. What they have done is create a 'Marmite' effect, whereby people either love them or hate them – the upside of this being that the people who love them avidly read everything they write.

People have their own issues and beliefs that affect their judgement of you. By sticking to your beliefs and maintaining your integrity, you will find it much easier to rise above any nasty comments. Remember – it is only one person’s opinion, whose opinion you may not even value, anyway. You could always choose to view it as useful, constructive feedback or criticism, thereby turning it into a positive.

☺ Remember – no publicity is bad publicity.

4. Fear of Failure

If you are concerned about putting 100 per cent into your marketing and still achieving only limited sales, this could put you off before you even get started. There are two main reasons many people fear failure:

- looking foolish in front of others
- feeling bad about themselves.

Of course we understand these concerns, but if you have written a book and don’t make any sales because you haven’t bothered to market it, that can also be seen as failure. So it is better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all – or is that love? ☺

Acknowledge the fact that you are a publicist, marketer, PR consultant, salesperson or whatever title it is that you want to give yourself. For many people, the fear of failure is greatly reduced if no one knows about it, so they avoid telling people that they are self-promoting their work.

Coaching Tip:

Be brave – put yourself on the line. If you haven’t told anybody yet that you are studying this guide and intend to actively promote your book, get out there and start telling people. Ideally, share goals you set around marketing your book with at least one person. If possible, choose three people – a friend, colleague or family member – and tell them what you are doing.

Why would we put you through this? Well, it is quite simple, really. As we all know, it is easy to procrastinate and tell yourself you will get round to promoting your book next week or month. But when we tell someone we are

going to do something, we automatically feel committed and are more likely to take action.

But don’t pick people who you know will be critical and put you under pressure, or ones who are going to let you off the hook too easily. Choose positive people, who will encourage you and be supportive of your goals.

Know Your Market

If you haven’t already done so, you need to consider what type of person your target reader is. Far too often authors believe their book will appeal to everyone. Because this is highly unlikely, in this chapter we will be helping you to identify your target audience and use your marketer’s mindset to locate them.

Even more than the quality of a book, its potential for success relies on there being sufficient people with an interest in the subject. But with your ability to identify, locate and engage with your target market, any book has the potential to be successful.

A self-help book such as *My Guide: Manage Fibromyalgia/CFS* cannot be classified as general market. However, it relates to a distressing condition affecting approximately 3 per cent of the population, for which there is currently little help available. When you consider that the world’s population is nearly 7 billion, that equates to a possible 210 million people suffering from this condition, thereby making it a marketable commodity with potentially huge sales.

First, get yourself a large piece of paper and a pen and brainstorm the following:

1. Who is your book written for/who is your ideal customer?

- females/males
- young adults/children
- married/single
- parents
- employed/unemployed
- housewives/husbands
- students
- senior citizens

2. What is their pain, problem, concern, opportunity?
3. Are they overweight?
4. Are they looking to change career?
5. Do they want to be better parents?
6. Are they trying to get pregnant?
7. Are they looking for certain types of information? For example, if you have identified that your target readers are overweight housewives, are they:
 - Looking to lose weight?
 - Wanting to find out how to dress to flatter their fuller figure?
 - Wanting to increase their confidence and self-esteem?
 - Looking for career opportunities in modelling for plus-size models?
8. Next, look at where to locate them and how to talk so they will listen.
9. Where do they live?
10. Do they have children?
11. What is their income bracket?
12. What programmes do they watch or listen to?
13. What do they read?
14. Are they using any forums or support groups on the Internet?
15. Do they have any hobbies or interests?
16. If they read newspapers or magazines, what type do they buy?
17. Where and how do they spend their spare time?
18. What language do they speak?
19. Where do they shop?
20. Are there any words or terms of speech that will resonate with them?

Continue listing even small details until you have amassed as much information as you can. Obviously, there will always be exceptions to every rule.

- ☺ However, if you have written a book on how to lose weight for your wedding, it is unlikely that your readers will be 78-year-old retired male builders from the Outer Hebrides – but you never know.

By having a clear picture of who is most likely to buy your book, you can target your market. This process is particularly important if you are hoping to sell them further products or services on the back of your book, known as upselling.

We understand that not all subjects will be as easy to break down. For example if you have written a book on how to overcome insomnia, this is a problem that can apply to both male and female audiences, of all age groups. However, it generally affects more women than men and often the problem increases between the ages of 30 and 40. Whilst I would not want to exclude 30-year-old males from my marketing campaign, I would keep in mind that their concerns around lack of sleep differ somewhat from those of ladies suffering from the same problem.

Likewise, fantasy or romance novels won't appeal to everyone. However, stereotypes don't always apply, as there is nothing to say that women can't be interested in thrillers and men in historical romance, and vice versa.

Secondly, you will need to study your competition and see if you can learn from them. For example:

- How do they go about marketing their book/s?
- What do they do that seems to work well?
- Can you learn anything from them?
- What tips can you take away?

You should analyse your followers regularly and ensure that the content is relevant to them. In other words, you wouldn't post something about having a baby on a pensioners' site and likewise, young adults wouldn't necessarily be interested in bridge or bowls contests. Make your posts relevant to your audience and perhaps target them via email.

- ☺ According to Gary Vaynerchuk's book *Crush It!*, the best question you can ever ask on social media is, 'What can I do for you?'

Setting a Price for Your Book – Non-Fiction Book

If you are working with a publisher, they may well want to dictate the price of your book. When determining a recommended retail price it is not a decision to be taken lightly, as it is an important marketing tool. If you are able to influence the price, don't be fooled into thinking that the cheaper it is, the more you can sell, as in certain markets a low price would indicate inferior quality. For example, if you were offered a diamond ring for £10 or fillet steak at 10p/kg, you could be forgiven for thinking there was something not quite right.

Think – PRICE:

P – Problem, Pain or Passion

Is the content of your book going to help the reader deal with a problem that is causing them a lot of pain? Is it a subject that invokes a great deal of passion in a niche market? The greater the pain and the passion, the more likely it is that people will be willing to pay for the information in your book.

R – Relevance

How relevant is your content? Be honest with yourself. Overpricing your book could limit sales and it is better to sell a million books at £1, than sell 100 at £30.

I – Intention

If you intend to use the book as a way to market your services to potential customers, you may wish to consider selling it at a much lower price in order to introduce them to your skills, experience and knowledge.

C – Competition

Look at how much competition there is in your chosen subject or genre. If the market is saturated with books by well-known authors that are already selling well, you may need to discount your book in order to break into the market.

E – Exclusivity

Is the information in your book available elsewhere? Is it easy to obtain from other sources? My book, *My Guide: Manage Fibromyalgia/CFS*, detailed the techniques I used to recover from the condition. As I am one of only a handful of people who has developed their own recovery programme and there is no recognised cure, I was confident that the information was not readily available elsewhere. There may be 1,000 books on a subject, meaning that there is lots of competition, but you may have unique information.

Setting a Price for Your Novel

Novels generally command a lower price than non-fiction books. This is because the readers are looking for enjoyment as opposed to potentially life-changing information. Therefore, it is important to market your book at a competitive price.

If you are an unknown author, people will be unwilling to pay significantly more for your book than they would for a similar novel. Only the most popular authors can command a premium for their much-awaited books.

The next thing to consider is printing and publishing costs, as unless you have sufficient financial means to cover any losses, you need to ensure your costs are covered.

Publishing your book as an eBook gives you the chance to test the market before investing in the more costly business of publishing a printed version. Obviously there is less profit to be made from an eBook sold at 99 pence, but it could also allow you to sell some books, obtain reviews and then later increase your price once you have established your book in the marketplace. And from a reader's perspective, what have you got to lose if you have paid such a small amount for a book?

Choosing Your Title

We are assuming you are at the stage where you have already chosen a great title for your book, but just in case you are getting ahead of the game and starting your marketing before your book goes to print, we thought we would share with you some valuable information on choosing the right title.

In just a few words, your title needs to capture your reader's imagination and give them a strong indication as to the topic. A good title is essential for two reasons: it will catch the potential buyer's eye on the shelf in a

bookshop and it will appear on the searches of online bookstores like Amazon. Coming up with a title that does both these important jobs can be challenging, but it is well worth investing the time to get it right.

In the first place, it needs to be catchy and to hook people. Consider whether or not it is something that can be serialised, such as the *Chicken Soup* series by Mark Victor Hansen and Jack Canfield. The *Chicken Soup* books have over 100 titles, one of these being *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. An example of a serialised novel would be *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling or *The Green Mile* by Stephen King, which was originally published in six-monthly instalments in 1996 and was later released as a single volume in May 1997. A famous example would be Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*, which became a household name.

Another widely recognised and well-researched title is *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne. Consider having more than one-word titles, which can limit search results. Yes, we know this example is just one word (excluding the word 'the') and it does not describe what the book is about, but it was excellently marketed and was brought out after a DVD of the same name. The title of this book is very clever in that you automatically want to know what the secret is.

The problem with one-word titles is that it can limit search results. For instance, if your book was called *Eden* and someone searched for this on the Internet, they would more than likely come up with The Eden Project, thereby missing out on valuable sales. Whereas a title such as *The Mists of Eden*, which is more specific, would bring up results for just this book title and so aids potential sales.

When researching your title, check whether or not other authors have used the same title, so that you don't become associated by default with their work. This can work in both the positive and the negative, in that a book with the same title as you that receives a good or a bad review can be connected mistakenly with your manuscript. Have a look at what other titles you are competing with.

Grab a pen and some paper and jot down words that spring to mind as you review the following list. If possible, it should:

- tell them what it is about at a glance
- have a hook and create an intrigue, so they want to know more
- deliver what it says on the tin

- be something that can be serialised
- raise curiosity and spark interest
- contain the words your would-be buyers will type into Google or Amazon, or other such sites, to assist with marketing.

When we were choosing the title for our book, *My Guide: How to Write a Novel*, we first researched our market and looked at what people were searching for. Having determined that the words 'write' and 'novel' needed to be in the title, we had a base from which to start. Initially, we came up with an extensive list before settling on one:

Writing a Novel Made Simple

Write a Novel: Unlock/Unleash the Author Within

How to Write a Novel: The Course That's Not a Course

How to Write a Novel – Step-by-Step Guide

How to Write a Novel People Will Want to Read

Teach Yourself How to Write a Great Novel

When I Grow Up, I Want to be a Writer (limited search results)

When I Grow Up, I Want to Write a Book (limited search results)

The Novelty of Writing (play on word 'novel')

Anyone Can Write a Book

You Can Write Your Own Book

Write Your Own Story

Secrets of Writing a Novel (though not really a secret)

Your Chance to Write a Novel

A Book, By You

Become an Author

Write a Book with Our Helpful Guide

Tell a Story

Write a Novel in Your Own Time

The Novelist's Bible (decided against this as it has religious associations, maybe restricting readership)

Your Own Little Blueprint

Novelist's Blueprint

Share Your Story

Your Chance to Share Your Story
The Myth of Writing a Novel (decided against this as not really a myth)
The Key to Being a Novelist
What Makes a Good Novelist
Unleash the Author Within
Novels, Writing and You
Your Story, Your Keyboard, From Home/Wherever
Homemade Novel
Grow a Novel (this is a title that can be serialised)
Everyone's Got it in Them
Cultivating a Novelist (limited search results)
Teach Yourself ...
Home-grown Novelist (limited search results)
Practical Guide to Writing a Novel
Writing a Novel Demystified
The Mystery of Writing a Novel Unravalled
Mythbusters: How to Write a Novel
Easyish Guides ...
Simplish/Simplistic Guides ...
Chapter and Verse (again has religious connotations)
Writing a Novel in 12 Easy Steps (referring to the number of chapters)
Ingredients to Writing a Novel
Idiot's Guide to Writing a Novel (too similar to existing title)
Write a Novel Made Easy
Writing a Novel Made Easy
Write a Novel: Steps 1, 2, 3
Insider's Guide to Writing a Novel
A-Z of Writing a Novel
Recipe for Successful Novel Writing (not a recipe; limited search results unless know exact title)

As you can see from this list, smaller words such as prepositions and conjunctions do not take a capital letter. We had great fun compiling this list and a lot of laughs playing around with words as one title led to another idea before finally settling on one – *My Guide: How to Write a Novel* – the idea being that we could have a *My Guide* series.

Choosing Your Cover

To coin a well-oiled phrase, like it or not, people do judge a book by its cover and in addition to the title, this is the first thing people will see. It therefore needs to be something that will attract attention and thereby potential readers.

Covers, otherwise known as jackets, were originally designed to protect the pages within and to stop them from falling out. They have now become an essential part of promoting a book. Years ago, leather-bound books were more statements about the owner than the contents of the book. All sorts of selling tools have been used over the years when designing book covers, including stamped and embossed scenes, which were introduced in the 1870s and 80s.

A well-designed cover can encourage a reader to pick up a book in the first place, so it is important to consider many aspects when designing one. Cover designers of successful books have experimented with them over the years, often taking the opportunity to rebrand when it came to new print runs. George Orwell's *1984* sold in its millions and has been assigned over fifteen different cover designs in its sixty years in print. In short, with each new print run the cover was modernised and adapted to reflect fashion trends and changes in society, in order to appeal to alternative markets.

Penguin is recognised for introducing well-known authors to the mass market. Part of their strategy was to denote each genre by adopting a particular typography and colour. The brilliance of this idea was that it made all the books in a particular genre instantly recognisable, thereby appealing to the human desire to collect a full set.

Book covers can offer an interpretation of its contents. Even if you are producing your book as an eBook, the cover still has to look like something worth buying, and perhaps worth keeping. Online, the only distinguishing feature is the cover and with the increase in demand for eBooks, cover design has become even more important.

When choosing or designing a book cover there are all sorts of things that need to be taken into consideration:

- White backgrounds cannot be seen very well in the format of a thumbnail on Internet sites like Amazon. A thumbnail is where your cover image is reduced in size equivalent to that of a small button, similar in dimension to the nail on your thumb.
- If you don't want to employ the services of a designer, there are sites out there such as <http://www.iStockphoto.com> that enable you to download images. Sites like these enable you to create a design of your own by putting several images together, or you can use one of theirs. These images are inexpensive and some are even free; however, sales exceeding a certain limit may incur an additional fee. The downside of using online images is that they are not unique. It is still worth considering though, as the services of graphic artists, illustrators and designers can be costly.
- Consider whether or not you want to serialise your books. For instance, you may want the covers to have a similar layout so that they are easily identifiable on the shelves, making them specific to you as an author or company. In other words, standardising your layout. In our case, for the *My Guide* series we have done this with colours, our 'morph' figure and layout.
- If you have one, do you want your logo to appear both on the spine and on the back cover in a particular position? Also consider positioning if serialising.
- Does your cover represent the contents of the book?
- Does your cover design sell the book, encouraging people to pick it up, rather than repelling them?
- Will your cover design appeal to your target audience?
- Is there a talking point?

When looking at various designs for our own books, it proved to be a big learning curve and we held many brainstorming sessions as we considered many aspects, including:

- If the design could be standardised for the series.

- Whether the design would translate well into other formats – Web headers, posters, banners, etc.
- If the photograph or picture was dark, how would it look on a black background?
- If we chose a red background, how would it look if we had a pink picture, as the two colours might clash?
- If the photograph was pale, it might be lost on a white background – how could we get over this?
- For eBooks, the cover has to work even in reduced format (thumbnail size). To do this it requires a lot less detail, with more effective colours and very clear fonts of a good size for the title and author name, so they remain legible when reduced.
- Because a book is rectangular in shape, by their very nature their covers don't translate well to a square thumbnail, thereby potentially losing important details from the image.
- Did we want our front cover image duplicated or mirrored on the back cover?
- If we used a photograph and were serialising our books, we needed to consider having some sort of common border to them.
- Was the border shape we had chosen suitable to take most images?

Don't be tempted to take short cuts when designing your book cover, as it can mean the difference between gaining sales and your book remaining undiscovered.

Endorsements on the Back Cover

An endorsement is where a well-respected or well-known individual who has read your book provides a short quote or testimonial about it; in other words, validating it. Often, there is a place on the back of the jacket for this, in addition to the blurb. They can also be placed in the interior preliminary pages of the book. As with reviews, a glowing endorsement from an expert can convince someone to purchase a book.

If you already have endorsements for your book, you should definitely consider displaying the best one or the one from the most reputable

source on the back cover of your book. This will add credibility and help increase sales.

Because not many of us know someone famous, endorsements for non-fiction should come from experts in the field in which you have written – those who hold senior roles for organisations known to your target audience, such as CEOs, entrepreneurs, speakers, local personalities, well-known names. You can usually fit two or three endorsements on the back cover. If you have more than this, they can be placed in the preliminary pages of your book. Go for quality rather than quantity; if you secure too many endorsements, you can always save them for a second edition or use them on your website or other promotional material.

For fiction, approaching published authors who write in the same genre as you can be useful. You could also approach magazines, papers, radio shows or Internet sites that review books. If you happen to know someone in the public eye who would be willing to read your book and provide an endorsement, this can be very effective.

Compiling a Blurb

There is a definite art to compiling a compelling blurb, and it is by no means as simple as it looks. Ernest Hemingway said: 'There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed', whereas marketing and writing a blurb is probably one of the hardest things you will have to do, albeit crucial.

You will have spent many months, perhaps even years, compiling your manuscript and now you are being asked to cut everything out and summarise it in a few words. As a guide, you are looking for around just 250 words. It is your chance to further engage the potential purchaser, grabbing their attention from the outset, unleashing a sense of intrigue. You are the ideal person to do this, in that it is you who knows the book best and its relevant strengths. Failing that, your editor or your publisher can produce one. Have a go using the following guidelines:

- use attention-grabbing words and phrases
- utilise ellipses and question marks, to keep the reader asking questions
- give a hint as to what's inside the cover.
- reviews, quotations, etc., should remain unchanged
- consider words and phrases used by your target audience.

This is the one place where you can use the punctuation marks you are generally told to avoid – such as exclamation marks, en rules, parentheses and ellipses – so have fun using them to great effect, to create intrigue and leave the reader wanting more.

Compiling Your Author Bio

Your author bio will appear either on the back cover of your book or within its interior pages. Wherever it is to appear, your readers will want to know about you, so it is important to decide how much you want to share with them. If your book is non-fiction, your bio should definitely tell them what qualifies you to have written the book. It should therefore include information about your background experience or successes in the field in which you have written. You should also include a couple of sentences of a more personal nature. For example, you might want to tell them you live in Dorset where, when you are not writing, the scenery inspires you to paint.

If your book is a novel, you can share details of how your writing career started. Again, it is helpful to tell them roughly where you live and what you enjoy doing apart from writing – you might be surprised what connects with them.

I always read author bios in the books I read but rarely remember them. However, one that struck a chord with me was Jill Mansell, who shared how she writes 'only when she's completely run out of displacement activities,' and that she enjoys eating fruit gums – like me. ☺

Summary

If you are feeling slightly overwhelmed that there is so much to think about before you even get started, take a deep breath and relax ... Although in an ideal world we would hope to get everything right from the outset, marketing, as with any other skill you may wish to acquire, is something that develops over time. Most things can be adapted as you go along. Indeed, constantly revising and improving your plans and strategies is recommended.

Coaching Tip:

When you are feeling stuck, bored, frustrated or overwhelmed by a particular problem – hopefully not with this complete chapter ☺ – instead of asking yourself questions such as:

- Why am I feeling like this?

- Why can't I do this?
- What's wrong with me?
- Why is everything so difficult?

Ask yourself these questions instead:

- What do I want?
- How can I overcome this problem?
- What do I want to be feeling and thinking?
- How can I achieve my result in an easier way?
- How can I change the way I feel right now?

This is because 'why' questions will just tell you where you are now. The second set of questions, however, will tell you how to move forward from this point. So if, for example, you have had a lifelong struggle with getting to grips with the Internet and social media platforms and usually think things like:

- Why does this have to be so hard?
- Why didn't I take a course or get someone else to do it?

try substituting them for these questions:

- What skills am I lacking?
- How can I improve my skills?
- Do I know anyone or is there a book that can help me improve my Internet and surfing skills?

Key Points

- Remain self-disciplined and persevere.
- Structure your day and set aside time to market and move your business forward on a daily basis.
- Address your negative views concerning marketing.
- Understand why some books sell and some don't.
- Develop a publicist's mindset.
- Believe in your book in order to sell with confidence.

- Marketing is not about pushing your book at everyone you meet.
- Plan and test the different marketing methods to see what suits you and your book.

Next Steps

- Develop your marketer's mindset using the PIP formula.
- Understand your market.
- Choose a great title.
- Ensure your cover reflects the content and will attract sales.
- Price your book competitively.
- Compile a compelling blurb.
- Write an author biography of yourself in 150 words or less, if you haven't already done so.
- Seek out people who will benefit from the information your book provides.
- Try to secure some endorsements.

Chapter Two – Using Social Media to Market Your Book

Words, when well chosen, have so great a force in them, that a description often gives us more lively ideas than the sight of things themselves.

Joseph Addison

Introduction

The options in social media are vast and trying to become competent in all areas would be more than a full-time job. It is far better to pick one or two things and do them well, than to divide yourself too thinly. So forget any ideas of being a social media expert and instead focus on finding the platforms that you enjoy and which meet your needs in terms of reaching your target market. Endeavour to learn a little each day and allow your confidence to grow gradually.

Social media is about engagement, interaction and conversation sharing. It is made for people, not robots, so show that you are someone personable, rather than plugging your book like a broken record. A consistent and well-portrayed brand can greatly help your advertising. A brand is relevant whether you are a novelist, a non-fiction writer or businessperson. And as the author, you are the brand and your book is the product.

Some novelists who write in very different genres will write under two names. This is so that their readers can associate a particular name with a certain type of novel and it avoids possible confusion. For example, imagine ordering what you thought was the next thriller from your favourite author titled *The Heart Collector*, only to discover it was a historical romance ... In addition to this, it also avoids alienating

readers who would be put off by the fact that a thriller writer also writes romance.

For the non-fiction writer, professional or entrepreneur, your brand represents your values, services, ideas and personality. It can generate loyalty from your readers and make you the envy of your competitors. When people understand your brand, they believe they know what to expect from your writing, which can be a problem if you are not consistent in style or content.

Social networking, although possible in person, is most popular online. It is where groups of individuals using Internet platforms like Facebook come together in order to communicate, make connections and share interests, ideas and information. Social media is a form of interaction between people in which they create, share and exchange ideas, and comment among themselves, in both virtual communities and networks, using mobile and Web-based technologies. To become part of this, you need to have a presence on the Internet, so you can build followers and a community of people interested in what you have to say. The key to this is listening to what others are saying and paying particular attention to the information they are asking for. You can then participate and provide answers to their questions and requests for information. In other words, you can become recognised as an authority on a particular area.

Marketing is an ongoing process and there is no need to wait to start your marketing until after you have written your book. It takes time to build a platform and to build trust.

Marketing takes a day to learn. Unfortunately, it takes a lifetime to master.

Phil Kolter

If you are having problems motivating yourself to market your book and frequently sit at your desk feeling frustrated and negative about marketing, this will actually act as an unconscious anchor, which may be triggered every time you sit down to work in the future. So if you are feeling any of these symptoms, get up and walk away from your desk. The place where you work should be somewhere that your unconscious mind associates with you feeling happy, relaxed and inspired so that you can really enjoy what you are doing.

Coaching Tip:

Russian physiologist and physician Pavlov is widely known for first describing the phenomenon of classical conditioning (anchoring). In the 1890s, Pavlov was investigating the gastric function of dogs. He noticed that the dogs tended to salivate before anything was actually delivered to their mouths and so he set out to investigate further. As a result of carrying out a long series of experiments, he discovered what he called ‘conditional reflexes’ – i.e., reflex responses, such as salivation – that only occurred conditionally upon specific previous experiences of the animal.

Unconscious anchors are stimuli that call forth states of mind, which are thoughts or emotions, and then corresponding actions. We are constantly affected by and respond to automatic unconscious anchors, but we may not know what they are. This is because the anchors have built up accidentally, over time. In fact, we often think that our mood has nothing to do with us and that it occurs by chance, because these anchors work automatically and we may not be aware of the triggers.

Unconscious anchors can come in many forms. For example, if you are in the habit of squeezing your little finger when stressed and you then repeat this action when you are relaxed, it will stimulate your stress response. In addition to affecting your mood, it can also produce an automatic involuntary reaction. So a certain smell such as candyfloss or bacon may take you back to your childhood. A specific song may remind you of a certain person or holiday.

- ☺ This proves true in all areas of life. When I sit in the sun in my English country garden with my laptop, where I relax, enjoying the moment, my creative mind becomes inspired. Sometimes it is not always about stopping what I am working on, it is about changing where I am working for a short while. Not always easy in rainy old England!

Always try to leave your marketing on a high point or when you have successfully completed a task. If you stop in the middle of doing something that is causing you frustration, you will be more reluctant to go back to it.

Coaching Tip:

If you are taking a break, enjoy it! But when you are not working, are you really relaxing? Or are you berating yourself for procrastinating? Think about it: if you are watching TV but feeling guilty, telling yourself you should be working, you are procrastinating. But if you are watching TV and don't feel as if you should be doing anything else then you are just relaxing.

Social Media Marketing

Words can change lives. Never before has it been so easy for the general public to share their views and influence others. Social media marketing is the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Otherwise known as digital marketing, it enables users to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks, thereby potentially reaching more people.

Social media has become a 'platform' that is easily accessible to anyone with Internet access and it is a wonderful tool for building an author/writer platform and leveraging yourself as an expert.

Some social networking sites invite reviews or you might post small samples of your work and ask people what they think. Not only will this provide you with feedback, but it will also get your name recognised. Another benefit of getting people you don't know to write a review is that they will be honest.

Social media is the perfect place from which to build your business, find potential customers and form partnerships, enabling you to exchange ideas, information and opportunities. The key to using social media successfully is in understanding your target audience and building a relationship with them. Visibility is fundamental and you need to exploit all avenues available to you, thereby maximising potential sales opportunities.

It may be tempting to focus solely on promotion, but as with conversations in real life, it should be a two-way interaction. If you talk about yourself and your book all the time, people will eventually become irritated and ignore you. The best way to accelerate your results is to take a balanced approach, showing an interest in others and promoting your work.

In addition to following people who share similar interests and ideas to you, you should also follow the marketing activity of successful authors. This way, you will find that you can learn from them by seeing how they voice their opinions and employ various strategies to market their work.

As there are so many different social media sites it can seem overwhelming at first. Not all of them will be right for you or best for your book – or any other products and services you have to offer. New sites start up all the time. Currently, the five most popular are:

- Facebook: a social networking site intended to connect friends, family and business associates. Best for interacting on a more personal level with contacts, it is the largest of the networking sites and began as a college networking website that expanded to include anyone and everyone.
- Twitter: a very popular instant-messaging system that enables people to send brief text messages of up to 140 characters in length (including spaces and punctuation) to a list of followers.
- YouTube: a video-sharing website on which users can upload and share videos for private or public viewing.
- Pinterest: a virtual pinboard where you can create and share collections of things you like or enjoy. You can also 'follow' and share collections created by other people.
- LinkedIn: a business-oriented rather than personal social networking site. Designed for business professionals, it enables them to share work-related information with other users and keep an online list of professional contacts; which of course they can take offline if the need arises, in the form of emails.

For most people, just focusing on the five sites mentioned here is too time-consuming and overwhelming, so try each of them to see which one or two you prefer, or which works best for your book. Then you can put your efforts into using those often and effectively. The chances are that at first you won't know which will work best, so as a general rule of thumb, we would recommend focusing on the ones you enjoy most.

As explained in Chapter One, when you first start to market your work, you need to have confidence in your product or book. After all,

if you don't believe in your book, how can you expect your audience to? To overcome this, we suggest that you take the subject matter of your book and explain concisely or sum up the ten most important things about your topic in about 150 words or less. Even though you may already have been living and dreaming the contents of your book for a considerable period of time, doing this exercise will increase your confidence in both your book and your ability to sell it.

Our book, *My Guide: How to Write a Novel*, could be summed up as follows:

Told with humour, this comprehensive, step-by-step user guide is for aspiring authors so they can learn to write a novel and for established authors to perfect their work, bring it up to a publishable standard and keep their book in the marketplace.

For the book *My Guide: Manage Fibromyalgia/CFS*, it could be something like this:

Although there is no cure for fibromyalgia, Rebecca Richmond did just this. In this comprehensive guide, she shares details of the programme and techniques she developed to manage and overcome the symptoms of this debilitating condition.

If we were writing one for *A Song of Fire and Ice* by George R. R. Martin we might say:

A series of epic fantasy novels set in fictional lands with 1,000 years of history. Chronicling a dynastic war between several families for control of the seven kingdoms against the rising threat of supernatural others who dwell beyond the immense ice wall, this is a story of war, betrayal, political intrigue, sexuality and honour.

For *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini we might consider saying:

A powerful and humbling story of corruption, guilt and redemption. *The Kite Runner* tells the story of Amir. Set against a backdrop of tumultuous events, from the fall of Afghanistan monarchy, the Soviet invasion and the

exodus of refugees to Pakistan and the USA to the rise of the Taliban regime.

There is no way you can possibly cover every aspect of a novel in the summary and to do so might spoil it for the reader, so simply give a flavour of what it is about, to tempt the reader. If you are writing a self-help or other non-fiction book, you need to convince your readers the book will contain the information that they need or that will help them. Once you have your summary, you can then use this as a 'strapline', to sum up and sell your book. A strapline is a succinct, catchy sentence or phrase encapsulating or representing your book, company or product, used for marketing and advertising, by drawing one's attention to a distinctive aspect or feature. Its purpose is to emphasise a phrase that you wish the reader to remember your book by. For example:

- *Necessary Lies* – The best intentions expose the darkest secrets (by Diane Chamberlain)
- *Mindfulness* – A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world (by Prof Mark Williams and Dr Danny Penman)

Famous examples would include the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series, featuring a collection of short, inspirational stories and motivational essays solving the problems of the human race. A strapline for this book could be:

A book filled with positive and uplifting tales that will warm your heart and improve your day.

If you have written a non-fiction self-help book, compile a Q & A of concerns or worries your readers may have on your chosen topic and give reasons why you are the best person to answer them. In other words, clarify why they should buy your book on a certain topic rather than someone else's. Also, consider what makes yours different from what is already on the market. You could even format a list of words readers would use to describe you: friendly, professional, informative, casual, approachable, etc., telling your audience what they can expect from you.

You will then need to come up with some sort of author biography, which is a written piece about yourself. Examples of the type of thing you should write about can be seen as follows:

Author of My Guide: Manage Fibromyalgia/CFS, Rebecca Richmond has enjoyed a highly successful career within global organisations, later going on to become a coach. Having triumphed over adversity and cancer, as a qualified coach and master practitioner of NLP, hypnosis and Time Line Therapy™, she is ideally equipped to help you achieve the success you deserve.

A qualified proofreader and editor, Claire Pickering knows her subject and has an amazing attention to detail. Having worked in the publishing industry for many years, *My Guide: How to Write a Novel* is her first published work – unless you can count the hundreds of manuscripts she has worked on over the course of ten years, which are now in the general market ...

Think about what you know and your background in terms of how it qualifies you to write the book. To give you more ideas on how to connect with your audience, consider some of the following questions:

- What makes you an expert on this topic?
- What are you good at?
- Where did you go to school?
- What do you like or dislike doing?
- What clubs and associations are you a member of?
- When did you first start writing?
- Who are your current and previous employers?

By interacting with people, you can create a loyal connection between yourself, your product and the individual.

Note of Caution – Staying Safe on the Internet

Be aware that you need to protect your privacy and physical safety. It is impossible to be certain who is behind the name and face, and with whom you are engaging. Even if there is a photo, it might not be

genuine. Never reveal your home address, telephone number, place of employment or daily routine to strangers online.

Coaching Tip:

Writing a book can be very isolating, but once you start engaging in the various social media platforms you will suddenly find a whole world at your fingertips, so commit to having a conversation with a real person, other than your inner voice, at least once a day!

Each social site has rules. Read them and ensure you follow, apply and understand them if you don't want your page, group, etc. being withdrawn, penalised, suspended or even banned.

As with all things online, read all the terms of service, privacy policies and cookie use prior to signing up for anything.

Choosing a Moniker

When using social media, your posts are generally identified by your username or moniker. For each platform, you will be asked to choose a name to be displayed to your audience publicly. However, as with pseudonyms for author names, with sites like Twitter there is little point hiding behind moniker such as @ibookjunkie47, @annie998 or @scifiguy as people won't be able to identify with you, which defeats the point of your marketing efforts.

If you are using your book to promote your company or business, remember that people will need to engage with you as a writer before they will become interested in what your company has to offer.

Engaging with Your Audience

It is very tempting to become focused on the number of followers you achieve and many people in social media will tell you that that is the key to success. But adopting this philosophy might mean you end up with a very large list of people with absolutely no interest in your writing. The key is in locating people and building a list of people who are genuinely interested in your topic. It is far better to have 500 people who are eagerly awaiting the release of your book and intending to buy it than it is to have 10,000 people who have no interest in it whatsoever.

This means that the emphasis should be on quality, targeted followers who you then engage with on a regular basis. When they have actually

read and liked the book, hopefully they will help to spread the message through their own networks, giving you what is called 'organic growth'.

If you do decide to focus on the number of followers rather than targeted followers, of the several thousand you achieve, you will probably find that very few actually get to 'know' you – which is why we encourage you to leverage your fan engagement and network with your followers.

Another thing to bear in mind is that you have no control over how many other people your followers are watching and if they are watching too many people, then the chances are that your posts will be missed. Only by keeping your posts interesting and relevant can you hope to get noticed.

Whilst it might be tempting to comment if someone has just had a baby or posts something about their weekend, it may come across as being false, especially if you frequently give insincere compliments. Instead, be sincere and honest from the outset that you are marketing your work and give help, information and advice on the subject you have written about. Don't just comment for the sake of it, as many hours can be lost answering questions but not really adding value. Perhaps ask yourself the following questions:

- How will this get me where I need to be?
- Will this make a difference to what I am trying to achieve and move me forwards in some way?

How Much Marketing is Enough?

There is no definitive answer to this question. However, you should constantly aim to look for opportunities and new ways to market your book in order to achieve the goals you have set for yourself. Also, be prepared to change and evolve your goals over the course of your career.

Coaching Tip:

When setting goals for yourself, follow these guidelines:

1. Set goals that:
 - Inspire you
 - You feel are achievable

2. Set milestones along the way and reward yourself when you have achieved them.

Setting and achieving goals should be an enjoyable process. If you are not enjoying or achieving your goals, revisit them and ensure you still have a strong enough motivation to achieve them.

The amount of marketing required to achieve sales varies for everyone and will depend on your niche. If you are writing about something specific, like fibromyalgia, then your audience will be smaller. However, if you are writing about something which may affect a wider demographic, like slimming, then you will need to market to a much broader audience. Our book, *My Guide: How to Write a Novel*, has a niche market in that it will only appeal to a certain sector of readers who want to write a novel. For novels, this could include genres such as westerns, sci fi, romance, etc., which may also have a more limited readership.

You also need to take into consideration what goals you want from becoming a published author. For example, you might want to:

- have a book published in your name so you can say you are a published author
- become a thought leader
- make a specific amount of money
- establish yourself as an authority figure and an expert in your field
- appear on Amazon or *The Times* bestseller lists
- share your knowledge with a wider audience
- create a book that can open doors to new opportunities, increased business, speaking engagements and higher fees
- create a legacy to your life's work
- gain the recognition your knowledge, skills and experience deserve
- receive recognition for your creative writing and storytelling abilities
- teach children through storytelling.

Book sales are just for starters. A successful author can make a great deal of money from speaking engagements and of course it opens up other income streams. But perhaps the greatest riches come from knowing that your non-fiction book and the knowledge you have shared in it has helped someone else to improve their life, or that your novel has given many hours of pleasurable reading.

Summary

Whilst we understand the temptation to rush on and begin marketing immediately – after all, that is why you bought this guide – please don't underestimate the importance of planning. It will save you a great deal of time, heartache and frustration later on.

Key Points

- Stay safe on the Internet.
- Read the rules and regulations for each site you decide to build your platform on.
- Engage with your audience.
- Pick one or two platforms rather than focusing on being active on all of them.
- Find the platforms you enjoy and which meet best your needs in terms of reaching your target market.
- Allow people to identify with you as a person.
- Avoid over-promoting your book.
- It takes time to build a platform and to build trust.
- Always leave your marketing on a high point.

Next Steps

- Choose a suitable moniker that people can identify you and your book with and use it consistently on all platforms.
- Decide how much time you can devote each day/week to social networking.
- Consider what platforms you want to appear on and where your potential readers might come from.
- Write a summary of your book and memorise it so that it becomes a rehearsed mission statement.

- Compile a strapline for your book.
- Write down what you would say to convince someone to buy your book in 150 words or 30 seconds.
- Write an author biography in 150 words or less.

