

Your First 1,000 Copies

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Intro

Platform: Whatever plan and method you use to connect with your readers and sell books.

The authors selling the most books today are those that are focusing first on planning and building their platforms.

Goal: Establish a connection with readers that will last a lifetime and support your long-term writing career.

Connection system:

1. Permission
2. Content
3. Outreach
4. Sell

(and track it all)

Marketing

Definition: The act of building long-lasting connections with people by being relentlessly helpful.

Create systems and checklists. They free you up to be creative.

Permission

Permission fosters lasting connections.

Best tool? An email list.

Example: Pam Slim, author of "Escape from Cubicle Nation." For every 1 sale via social media, she got 50 via email.

Your No. 1 goal should be to grow your list.

How?

1. Make a specific offer.
2. Expose people to the offer multiple times (website, blog, etc.)

Focus on what's in it for them.

Ideas:

- Send a newsletter with lots of tips.
- Things you're learning.
- Giveaways.
- Stories.
- Books you're reading.
- Videos.
- Sneek peeks.
- Interviews or profiles of collaborators.
- Requests for topics (what animal do you want me to write a poem about).
- Be helpful.

Recommendation: 2x/month. First and 3rd Tuesday at 3 p.m. local time.

Content

Give away valuable content. Share freely, widely, deeply, and too much.

1. Gives people a chance to interact.
2. Gives bloggers, journalists, and influencers something to link to.
3. Helps with search indexing.

Create bonus resources, "DVD extras" -- podcasts, workbooks, outtakes, PDF, etc.

Treat your writing like an adventure, an adventure worth sharing. "Even if you never leave your house or town, you're creating new worlds in your head and expressing them with your hands. All you have to do is tap into that journey and share the experience."

Re-imagine content. (See my "repurposing" doc.)

Repurpose Q&A's.

Fans want more.

Create flagship content / white paper / ebook, etc.

Another great form of flagship content is the manifesto.

It sets expectations.

Manifesto > blog series. Then link to the series on your about page.

When in doubt, create assets.

Outreach

Where do you start an outreach plan? You start with empathy.

Questions to ask about your readers:

What does she want out of life?

What stresses her out?

What can I do to make her life easier?

What is her daily job? Could I make that easier in some way?

How can I help her get what she wants out of life?

"You can get everything you want in life if you just help enough other people get what they want in life." -- Zig Ziglar

The most effective way to build your platform? Introduce yourself to existing platforms.

Steps:

1. Profile readers. Create a rough persona.
2. Identify where they spend their time.
3. Create an introduction to this platform. Speak at a conference? Give a discount to a book club? Participate in online discussions? Write a guest post for a blog? Interview the platform's creator? etc. Partner with other authors.

Social media: It's a connection system booster and not a driver.

Bestselling authors use social media to support and complement their core assets: email, blog, guest posts, outreach.

Don't think "social strategy," think "platform strategy."

The best outreach an author can do is offline in the real world.

Idea: Put your travel schedule on your website.

Sell

Be enthusiastic. (Think of what it's like when a band comes out with a new album or tour. You want to know!)

Ask people to buy. They should not be on your email list long before you invite them to buy something.

Tell stories. "To turn your Connection System into a true book-selling machine, you must learn to tell stories as a way to invite your readers into the selling process."

Share fan mail. And "be sure to tell stories about how peoples' lives are better after reading your words."

(Brand as mentor!)

Invite readers in. Include their art, or ideas. Partner with them.

Use auto-responders to bring people up to speed.