

Chapter One

Social Media for Marketing and AdvertiZING for Books or Any Business

This book focuses mainly on authors promoting and selling their books. It's geared and applicable to any business, to anyone trying to sell merchandise.

The questions and the need to understand marketing and promotion are the same for anyone who's interested in making that sale.

The burning questions:

How do I to enhance my social media marketing—simply and easily?

How do I increase my readership and clientele?

How do I get more followers?

How do I increase my reach?

How do I get people to buy?

We know we need social media sites. Don't forget about print advertising either. However, the move toward web advertising and promotion is big right now.

Keep your ears and eyes open for anything new. As fast as social media is expanding, you need to understand what's next. Listen to other people in the industry. Pay attention to what other authors are doing for advertising and promotion, and see what's working for them. Don't be afraid to ask questions. It's constantly changing and even the people doing marketing and advertising have to constantly be on the ever increasing changes.

Yes, there will be some people who get snarky. Ignore them. Stick with authors who stay positive and want to be helpful.

Join a writer's group either at home or online, just one or two groups should be enough. Anything more will start tying up your precious time.

Keep your eyes open for ideas that will increase your exposure. Don't get too caught up in the statistics. They'll just get confusing and then you'll be frustrated. Pay closer attention to the bottom line—conversion and exposure. Sales may not happen right away. It takes time to reach your audience.

Newsletters, blogs, and reviews, and etc. are important tools to getting great exposure. Watch your page hits, but don't worry too much about the percentages, responses, and organic reach. If you stay positive and consistent with your promotion, you'll get an increase in readership.

Here are a few ideas and suggestions.

Get people to your page. Easy-peasy right? No, it's not. The competition is fierce. There's so much out there for readers to see, they need to see your book(s) repetitively, or you won't be found. You have to keep plugging away at it—regardless of whether you've been an author for twenty years or have just starting writing. You need to keep at it every day.

How do you get people to your page? Advertise and promote. Whether it's free or paid, it's still advertising and promoting.

If you take promotions that are free, you may not get the reach you want or even be reaching the buyers you want. How much time you put into it determines what you get back.

How much you pay and how careful you are with your money is very important. Where are your hard earned dollars going? If you're only getting a small percentage of readers/buyers, you're on the wrong track.

We'll get deeper into advertising and promotional funding in a later chapter.

Even if you just spend \$10 a month, it's a start. As you sell more books, increase your advertising budget. Start small and work your way up, without hurting your pocket.

Concerning social media:

Are you taking advantage of what's available? Are you sharing information about yourself, your books, other authors' books?

Holidays tend to be great promotion days. Using quotes and attaching your book image or ad will give you an extra burst of exposure. Also, pay attention to those hashtag trends. Play along, get your name out there, and at times, if it is companionable with your books, throw in your book cover with the tweet.

If Australian Footy is trending, don't throw a picture of your fantasy novel in the tweet. It will discourage readers. But, if an elfin movie is coming out, comment on the hashtag trend and include an image of your fantasy book. Keep on the same level as the trend. Don't go off the wall commenting on something that doesn't have anything to do with the hashtag trend.

Did you pin a tweet you want to promote? You can pin a tweet on your profile page. Pick the one you want to focus on and pin it. I believe the icon is on the top right corner with a drop down for options. They may change the location, look around for the command, or hit the help button.

Sharing and retweeting expand your reach and are better than "liking" a page or tweet.

Do not follow an author/reader/marketer, wait for them to follow you back, and then unfollow them. Many people do this just to get their numbers higher, to look good for a publisher. It's not honest and you're not only doing yourself a disservice but you're hurting your publisher as well.

Why and how could you possibly be hurting the publisher? They think you have a good following of legitimate readers. They're counting on those numbers and percentages to promote your book sales. When they aren't legitimate followers, it's just empty numbers.

You want real interaction with readers, other authors, book designers, and publishers. You want interaction with people in all aspects of the industry.

You need to get them to share your information.

How do you get them to share? Pay them for it. That's right. Pay them...sort of. You scratch my back, I'll scratch your back situation.

You share. They share. You retweet. They retweet.

Offer them something in exchange for sharing your page and make sure they show you that they did it. For example, on Facebook have them tag you, or on Twitter, have them @ you and you can see what they've done.

Don't forget to say please, thank you, and you're welcome.

A free short story, a free pdf copy of your book, a free photo, a chance to win an Amazon gift card, or Kindle Fire are a few examples of gifts you can offer as gratitude for giving you greater exposure.

There are many good websites and programs that you can use to help build relationships on Twitter. Many have free options. Some allow scheduling options and that is the cat's meow! It saves you so much valuable time. Do a search using the keywords social media platforms, social media collaboration, or cross-promotion. You'll find an abundance of information and possible websites to use to your advantage.

Have you heard of Slide-Share? It's relatively new with LinkedIn. It's a program similar to Pinterest except it's utilizing a slideshow that you've created, or had someone create for you.

Don't forget to take advantage of book videos and trailers. People are very visual. They want pictures.

Use a colorful eye-catching image for print and compliment the ad with creative graphics, covers, trailers, or slides for websites.

Create or join a small group of authors who are in the same genre as you. Don't worry about sharing a post from another author thinking that you'll lose a sale. There are plenty of readers to go around. That author may have a reader interested in your book.

A small group is very important. It's exclusive and a schedule can be easily arranged. Let's say you have five western romance authors in your group. Each author is assigned a day and she/he will share on their networking sites a post about your book/business on their day only. (Unless, they want to do more.) Once a week, that's all you're asking from each other. All you have to do is keep each other updated on new releases, discounts, etc.

Be active on the social media sites. Pick two to concentrate on and start working on your exposure from there. It can be time consuming to be constantly on all these sites. A minimum of ten minutes a day on each site and you've doubled your exposure. Multiply that by five to seven days a week and you're getting your name and face out there.

There are many programs on the Internet that will schedule your tweets and posts, creating a consistent and constant presence. Just make sure you answer comments when you can. It's all about being interactive. People want to feel like it's a conversation—not just one-way, all about you, all the time.

It's extremely important in keeping your presence in the mind of readers. Follow back! Yes, follow back. You're not more important than they are. Actually, as an author, your readers (and authors are also readers) should be more important, so, follow them back.

You want them to like and share your information or post? You have to do it too. Not all of them. But, go on your Twitter feed for ten minutes a day. Even five minutes if that's all you have.

Share a couple of tweets. Comment on a couple of tweets. Like a couple of tweets if you don't want to comment or share. However, to continuing that needed collaboration, sharing a tweet or post is much better than liking a tweet or post.

Be interactive with your followers, ask questions, answer questions, and throw out random comments about interesting things. They'll be more inclined to be interactive with you.

Now, I'm not saying follow back sketchy people or accounts. If you don't like the look of their page, do not follow them back. Common sense and your safety must always prevail.

Don't annoy your followers. And the most irritating of all, when not used properly, pop-ups. Pop-ups are irritating to all of us, mostly when they're being used the moment you hit someone's page. Goodness, give the person a chance to read it first.

Pop-ups must be used properly in order for them to work to your advantage.

When they leave the website then utilize the pop-up. Please don't do it to all the pages. Pick one or two and take advantage of the pop-up. Anything more and you'll turn off the reader and possibly lose them completely.

Now, just to run things by you again, joining a bunch of social media groups does you absolutely no good if you're not active on the sites. If you don't take the time, you need to find someone to do it for you at a reasonable cost to you. Even with the scheduled tweets and posts, it can still be time-consuming.

You have to make sure your posts and tweets are fresh. You can't use the same posts over and over again for weeks and months at a time. The readers will block you out and skip over you.

Don't give up. Keep plugging away at it.

Re-cap:

Advertise and promote. They're not going to find you if you don't put your name out there.

Join social networks and be interactive. Follow back.

Take advantage of programs out there to make your life easier.

Use your social media to get your readers involved by holding contests, asking questions, and holding interviews.

Don't dismiss utilizing print newspapers, newsletters, or magazines.

Most of all—advertise.