



By Kimberly Thomas & Benjamin Norman

© Copyright 2012

50 Shades of Domination

One of the hardest things with marketing Fiction is to establish yourself as an author. When you publish your first book under a new pen name, no one will know who you are. Let's face it, JK Rowling (Harry Potter fame) was an unknown who couldn't get a book published (we have an advantage with Kindle, Nook etc.). However, as her 'brand' became more popular, her books sold through the roof, with each new book guaranteed as being a bestseller.

When you first publish your book, you will need to try and develop a fan base. It doesn't matter how good (or bad) your book maybe, you will have both fans and critics. The key to garnering momentum is to take advantage of your fans. Not in a bad way but to get them excited about your upcoming books to ensure that each new one is downloaded upon publishing and a review is left. Not only can a large rush of sales boost your bank account, it can help get your book in the eyes of people that wouldn't have normally seen your book (Kindle Bestsellers for example). This can open your book up to the possibility of new fans and help snowball your success.

So what is our goal?

To achieve a fan base that will buy and follow our brand of books, without us having to buy traffic or advertising. Not only this, we want to try and assure ourselves of becoming a bestseller, much like JK Rowling, Stephanie Meyer (Twilight) and EL James (50 Shades of Grey) to name but a few.

5 Steps to Success

There are a number of ways to promote your book but there are five steps that are critical. You don't want to overcomplicate things when you first begin with a new pen name.

1. *Setup an Author Blog*
2. *Utilise Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and LinkedIn for Non-Fiction Writers)*
3. *Submit Your Book to Review Sites*
4. *Piggyback of other Authors*
5. *Press Releases*

1. Setup an Author Blog

If you don't want to purchase a domain and hosting, head over to <https://www.blogger.com/home> and set up a free blog

Here are examples of other author blogs;

<http://amandahocking.blogspot.ca/2010/08/epic-tale-of-how-it-all-happened.html>

<http://jakonrath.blogspot.ca/>

<http://www.theresaragan.com/>

Just follow their lead in setup and blog posts. You can see that they are very basic blogs with not a lot going on.

You may also want to look at adding an Optin box. Rather than calling it an optin, just tell your followers that it is a newsletter or something to 'keep in touch' with updates.

One Erotica author that is dominating at the moment utilises this (there are many others and I have found it to work extremely well with Fiction!).

<http://rainemiller.com/>

You will see the "Follow Blog By Email" box on the left hand side.

2. Social Media

With each social media account that you create for an author, make sure that you customise it. You may wish to use your books' covers or a 'picture' of the author. Something that will make it look original and so that your audience can relate it to the author.

Setup your Twitter Account under your author's name (pen name) here: <https://twitter.com/>

Setup your Fanpage Account under your author's name (pen name) here:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>

On your Twitter and Facebook Fanpages you will be adding your blog links so people can find your blog.

Once your Blog, Twitter and Facebook Fanpage are setup you will add these to your authors profile on <https://authorcentral.amazon.com/gp/home>

One additional option that you might like to do is to setup a Youtube account. That way, when you launch a book, you can have a trailer to help promote it. You may also want to have yourself (or you might pay someone) to talk about the book and what it's about.

Having video reviews for your book will definitely increase your sales as well. People love social proof and they are more inclined to watch a video review than to sift through tens to hundreds of written reviews.

3. Review Sites

Because you're selling Fiction instead of Non-Fiction, you have the opportunity to get dozens of reviews and backlinks for free and this creates a ton traffic.

The first thing you want to do is to forget the fake reviews over at Fiverr and tagging tricks. They will eventually catch up to you and you don't want to get your account shut down by this. Feel free to get friends and family to review your book though. This can help build momentum and is legal, although you won't want to tell them what to write in the review. Ask them to give an honest review. I should point out that 4 star reviews will help sell a book because most readers will expect 'fake' reviews, and they expect them to be 5 stars. Nothing is perfect and 4 star reviews are more believable.

Aside from getting friends and family to review your book, you will also want to know a method used by many successful authors, such as John Locke, Amanda Hockings and Selena Kitt to create their best seller statuses.

Before you publish your book on Kindle do the following;

- Go to the resource section of this PDF
- Find your book genre from the list of blogger URLs.
- Shoot off an email to every blogger on the list with information about your book. You will be asking them to give you an honest review prior to it going live.

Here is a sample email you can use:

Hello (bloggers name),

I am a _____ author and would like to know if you would be interested in receiving a review copy of my new book, _____?

(Book Title) is a story about _____.

The genre and word count is _____.

Here is also a link to my bookcover; _____

You can reach me at the following email, _____ if you have any questions.

I would like to thank you in advance for your time.

Hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Your Pen Name

You can upload your book cover to your free blog and include the link within the email. Now it will take the bloggers a few days to get back to you as they get many requests so be patient. And be prepared to get knocked back. Remember, you are asking for their time which is valuable!

Normally (hopefully!) they will send you an email before they publish the review to their blog asking for your Amazon link.

4. Piggybacking

You can piggyback off successful authors in a number of ways.

One of the best mediums for this is Twitter. You will want to start following successful authors in your genre and then start following their followers. In addition to this, you will want to Tweet at the author(s) (@AUTHOR USERNAME). Keep the Tweet entertaining and have a link to your new book or your blog. Whilst you may not get thousands of clicks, even ten new customers can be a good result, particularly if they re-tweet your message or tell their friends about your books.

You will also want to follow authors on your Fanpage as well. You always want your fans / followers to go back to your blog where they can become a fan and submit their email. This will allow you to send them emails about your book releases.

5. Press Releases

One advantage that established authors with a publishing contract have is that the publishers have people dedicated to press releases and drumming up interest in their books. Publishing companies spend hundreds of thousands, if not millions to get this right as it can make or break a book.

When you launch your book, you will need to get it on as many websites as possible. Often, websites with 'autoblogging software' will pick these up and republish based on keywords and the like. In addition to this, people will often follow feeds related to their favourite writing genre on press releases and this can help you get your book visible, regardless of whether you are a new or established author.

The easiest way to get numerous press releases out is to use Fiverr. You can even get them to write your press release for you, although don't expect the 'highest quality'. You do get what you pay for, but it is a great place if you want to get it posted to numerous websites!

When writing a press release, always write in the third person. Ensure that the press release is 'exciting' as this will help drive traffic to your book. The idea of the first line of the press release is to deliver the who, what when, where and how of the story. If the reader was to read this line, they would know exactly what the book is about. This will also help hook the reader.

The final line of the press release is usually giving information about the author. This isn't as important as the book itself (we are selling a book, not an author here). Ensure that you include a link to your book too!

Further Promotion

By using a website/blog site and social media, you can create competitions to help grow your fanbase and reach. How is this possible?

One competition that you can run is to offer one lucky customer the opportunity to win every book that the author has written/writes.

The competition can be run by offering the following:

10 points: invite 5 ppl to the fanpage

5 points: share fanpage

1 points: make tweet on twitter to promote a book/the author

First prize receives the entire back catalogue (if they didn't have the books already) along with all future books (you can gift them and still get 70% back if selling on Kindle!).

Second prize receives all published books and the next book by the author.

Third prize receives their choice of all published books by the author or the next book to be released (this would depend on what they already had). I have run variations to this with great success, garnering some new fans and selling items in the back catalogue.

Don't forget to run free promotions on Kindle as well! This can be a great way to get new customers, particularly if your book is an enjoyable one!

RESOURCES / Bloggers / Review Sites:

I strongly suggest the following website due to its comprehensive list:

<http://katrinaparkerwilliams.wordpress.com/2012/07/30/kdp-select-free-days-promo-sites/>

Signup at goodreads.com and apply for an author's program, also join several groups within your genre.

<http://confessionsofacommonreader.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.acozyreaderscorner.com/>

<http://www.readingreality.net>

<http://erinreads.com>

<http://fabulosityreads.blogspot.ca/>

[Becky's Book Reviews](#). Becky reviews all sorts of fiction ranging from classics to science fiction to young adult fiction.

[books i done read](#). Get plenty of witty humor with the book reviews on this blog.

[bookshelves of doom](#). This prolific reader reviews books of all kinds and includes the source of her books as well.

[Bookdwarf](#). A frontlist buyer at the Harvard Book Store, this book lover writes reviews on literature, book covers, and much more on her blog.

[Hey Lady! Whatcha Readin'?](#). Check out the literary fiction reviews here that come with ratings from 1-100.

[Birdbrain\(ed\) Book Blog](#). Anastasia blogs mostly about fiction in young adult, fantasy, sci-fi, and adventure.

[It's all about me \(time\)](#). These books cross genres ranging from chick lit to classics to world literature.

[Lynda's Book Blog](#). This Welsh blogger reviews all types of books including thrillers, world literature, mysteries, classics, and even some non-fiction.

[Peachybooks](#). Blogging from Britain, many of the books Jo writes about here are from or about the UK.

[Stephanie's Confessions of a Book-a-holic](#). Stephanie participates in many book challenges and posts about them all on her blog.

[The Book Nest](#). The books here tend to more young adult and fantasy, but a wide range of other genres are also covered due to the many challenges and book tours in which Corinne participates.

[The Boston Bibliophile](#). Literary fiction, Jewish fiction and non-fiction, and graphic novels are all reviewed here.

[Caribousmom](#). The books reviewed here are generally literary fiction, mystery, and historical novels.

[Rhapsodyinbooks's Weblog](#). Written by a husband and wife team, this blog covers all sorts of fiction.

[Whimpulsive](#). Mystery, young adult, memoirs, and historical fiction are just a few of the genres represented among these reviews.

[Rose City Reader](#). This prolific reviewer also includes links to other reviews—providing you with lots of information about books.

[Worducopia](#). Books and writing both get billing on this blog that features lots of fiction with some non-fiction also included.

[We Be Reading](#). K and Z are a mom and son team (with mom doing most of the actual writing) that cover both adult and children's literature.

[A Work in Progress](#). Biographies, historical fiction, mysteries, and more show up on this blog.

things mean a lot. The books reviewed here include historical fiction, general fiction, YA, graphic novels, and more.

[Books on the Nightstand](#). This blog features not only a variety of genres from graphic novels to "bathroom reading" to classics, it also offers options for how to get the book reviews with both written reviews and podcasts.

[The Book Smugglers](#). Romance and fantasy books are both featured on this blog—and bonus points for romance fantasy books.

[Book Binge](#). These three women blog about their passion for romance novels.

[RipMyBodice.com](#). The three women here write reviews of romance novels and don't take themselves too seriously.

[Babbling About Books, and More](#). Not only does KB babble about romance novels, she also has fun with words and silly photos.

[Gossamer Obsessions](#). This blogger offers an enjoyable breakdown of the cast of characters and the traditional romance novel devices used in the reviews here.

[ReadingAdventures](#). Romance and historical fiction are found on this blog.

[Smart Bitches, Trashy Books](#). These two smart women review romance novels and give them a grade from A+ to F.