

# Marketing on a Zero-Dollar Budget

## Key Points:

**Marketing is NOT SELLING:** Market yourself BEFORE you start to sell your books.

### FIRST:

**Know Yourself and Your Work:** You can't market yourself without knowing your product. Limit yourself to one or two genres and focus on those target readers FIRST. If you want to branch out after you have a following, that's fine.

**Marketing starts When You BEGIN Your Book; Selling starts when you finish it.**



### WHERE DO I FIND MY READERS?

Find your readers before you finish your book. Contact associations, societies, organizations and clubs that have some connection with your book. Aim for small and mid-sized groups (100-5000 members), rather than large ones. Contact the president or secretary .... they LOVE being asked for expert advice for your book. Build relationships. Once your book is finished, send a free pdf as a thank you, and ask if they'll mention your book in their newsletter. Ask, too, if they ever have guest speakers at their meetings, so you can talk about your book.

### ENHANCE YOUR OWN WEB PRESENCE, NOT AMAZON'S

- Arizona Authors Member Page: Make sure your links are correct, and be sure ALL of your books are listed on both your member page and in your "book store" link. Contact: [arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com) to update your list.
- On your personal website, make sure you have an individual page to feature each of your books. List your books on a main page with links that lead to pages on your site, to show all the features of your books. On the individual pages, list the Amazon or other links. More pages for your site (that list all the info and pic of each of your books) mean more web crawlers, more search engines, and a higher web presence.
- Check your Amazon biography page. Are ALL of your books listed on it, and is your biography well written? Do you have a picture of yourself that enhances your image with your target audience? Old pictures are fine, as long as they are geared toward your audience. If you have multiple Amazon pages due to multiple names, make sure to list

ALL of your books on EVERY biography page, along with the name you used (Mary Smith, Mary E. Smith, Mary Smith-Collins, etc.) Men, check your bio pages too! Have you ever written a book with a different name (Albert Smith, Al Smith, etc.)? Update all bio pages and list all of your books. Let readers find your works!

- Check all other websites, such as Linked-In, Barnes & Noble, Goodreads, Lulu, AuthorsDen, Smashwords, etc. Make sure your pages are up to date and complete.

## **IS EVERY SITE UP TO DATE AND COMPLETE?**

### **Are You Enhancing Someone Else's Status On The Web or YOURS?**



**KEY WORDS ARE KEY!**

Think up key words that are right for the "majority" of your work. Limit yourself to 6-8 keywords. For example, if you are a romance writer, your key words may include: aristocrat romance, historical romance, best friend's girl, rich girl-poor boy romance, forbidden love, college romance, hospital romance, elicit affairs, lost love, breakups, holiday romance, jealous lover, jilted lover, love triangle, and more. Pick the ones that are most closely related to your work, and use one or two on EVERY PAGE .... EVERYWHERE. Use them on your website, in your bios on other websites, on your Amazon page, and more. Check below in the links for more info on keywords.

**USE THEM FREQUENTLY BUT CAREFULLY. MAKE SURE THEY ARE RELEVANT TO THE TOPIC ON THE PAGE.**

**NARROW YOUR FOCUS TO YOUR KEY AUDIENCE,**

**AND GEAR YOUR KEYWORDS TO THEM!**



# SOCIAL MEDIA DOS AND DON'TS

## **NO CAT VIDEOS! (OR LIKES!)**

Promote a Professional Image on Social Media and keep it **TOTALLY** separate from your personal pages.



### **Facebook Dos and Don'ts:**

- Create a professional Facebook page, with the name you will use consistently for your books.
- Use a picture of yourself that is appropriate for your target audience.
- Do not import your friends list from your personal page. Start fresh!
- Check your "Settings" so that others cannot post on your page.
- Build your page with likes and shares of **RELEVANT** content for your target readership.
- Send friend requests to those who frequent relevant FB pages.
- **GO SLOW** ... don't start selling your books too soon.
- Build your list of friends, **THEN** ask for advice, votes on character names, book covers, settings. Make Facebook friends feel invested in your project!
- Offer exclusive free content on **YOUR** website to the readers on your Facebook page (first chapter, side stories about the characters in your book. Drive traffic from Facebook to your site.)
- Ask readers to email you with suggestions for your book, or opinions or comments... **EMAILS FROM INTERESTED PARTIES ARE GOLD!**

### **Other important Social Media sites:**

- **LinkedIn:** Bring your authorship to the professional level and update at least every few months
- **Pinterest:** Put up pictures of your books and have them link to **YOUR** site.
- **Instagram:** Over 2 billion Users. Now has business profiles available.

- Twitter (X) or Threads: similar uses, short posts of 280 characters

There are MANY other social media sites, but the above are just a few of my favorites. Research them to find the ones right for you. If you do teen/YA fiction, you will want an account on Snapchat, TikTok, and various other sites. If you do gaming, you'll want an account on Discord (Discord has expanded to business and education, but gaming is its core business.)



**Remember: Giving Away Exclusive Content Makes You More Money, Not Less, And It Builds Your Email List!**

## **YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

- Create a reader-targeted name for your newsletter
- Consistency is key: Publish an issue once a month
- If you don't have any good news, praise other writers' news
- Fill your newsletter with regular features: Events Calendar (your own or general news appealing to your target reader) appropriate jokes, Trivia Section about YOUR books. If you speak of one of your books in April, devote your May Trivia Section to that book. See how much your readers remember! Do Q/A Features about your books. If no one asks a question, MAKE THEM UP!
- Add your short, targeted biography to EVERY newsletter, so new readers can get to know you.
- OFFER EXCLUSIVE CONTENT in your newsletter. Have a surprise story, even if it's only five pages, as a bonus for your readers. (Don't put the whole

story in your newsletter ... that will devalue it. Offer it as an exclusive link for readers to click on ... your gift to them!)

- Add reviews to your newsletter ... even bad ones! Turn bad reviews into humorous positives and ask for responses.
- ALWAYS ASK READERS TO EMAIL YOU WITH SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS, etc. KEEP BUILDING YOUR EMAIL LIST.



**Sell your old books with your new ones! The pages after "The End" are your precious advertising space, to interest readers in your old books!**

## **EVENTS: ONLINE AND IN-PERSON**

### **Big Events = Big Costs!**

- Instead of buying an expensive table to showcase your books at a big event, volunteer to help the Arizona Authors Association at their booth. Pass out their flyers and freebies while showcasing your own books, too! The Arizona Authors Association purchases tables at many events. If you live in the Tucson, Phoenix, Payson areas and more, please let us know you'll be available to serve, and ask for the schedule.
- Children's author? Participate in Read Across America and similar reading programs. Contact the Arizona Authors Association for more information.
- Create your own events! Do a local event with a few other authors, such as a "Reading in the Park" or "Mike Night" at a local venue. It's free or cheap, and you can draw a lot of people to your event with some low-cost or no-cost advertising. Tell us about your event and the Arizona Authors Association will advertise it to their members!
- Find area associations, especially if they deal in subjects that you write about. Ask if you may speak at their meetings.
- Create 2-minute trailers of your books and post them on YouTube. Draw interest in your YouTube page by creating videos that compare your work to other more famous works. For example, if you write a romance novel about

the Deep South in Civil War times titled, "Deep South Majesty", create a YouTube video titled, "Deep South Majesty vs. Gone With The Wind: A Comparison." The more famous title will draw readers to your video without any deception, since the video is honestly comparing the two works.

- See if you can get a spot on The Authors Show:  
<https://wnbnetworkwest.com/>

**BE GOOD TO YOURSELF. YOU CAN'T DO EVERYTHING, SO DO THE THINGS YOU LIKE TO DO AND FORGET THE REST!**

If you can't get around much, then do more online events. If you hate technology, volunteer to meet and greet and get out of the house. If you hate social media, just do the bare minimum to keep you in the game. Whatever your level and enthusiasm, you can still get ahead, step by step, if you do the things that you know you can keep doing CONSISTENTLY. Don't do so many that you can't keep up or lose interest. Do less and do them steadily and well. In the end, you will succeed!

## LINK LIST

### **Tutorials:**

**[YouTube Beginner's Tutorial](#) (Create your own YouTube channel!)**

**[Best Website Builders for Beginners](#) (Choosing an easy website.)**

**[Best Free Writing Software for Writers](#)**

**Reedsy** has free publishing and marketing courses on their website. (Scroll down to see the free courses) : **[REEDSY](#)**

Some Authors Websites:

**[Authors Den](#)**

**[Smash Words \(Draft2Digital\)](#)**

**[The Authors Show](#)**

**[Smart Author Podcast](#)**

**[Book Keyword Basics for Authors](#)**