

BEFORE AND AFTER

Building a platform that works

WHAT IT IS NOT...

- Self-promotion
- Hard sell
- A one-time thing
- About begging for attention

WHAT IS A PLATFORM?

- A tool to help you reach readers
- Proves to the publisher you can promote and sell your book at a higher level
- It answers the questions...
 - o What is your reach – How many people do you have access to?
 - o What is your visibility – How many people know about you?
 - o What is your authority – What is your credibility?

WHEN TO BEGIN?

BEFORE YOU START...

- Define that target audience - Where are they? (So you can find them.)
- Define your niche – What makes you different? (So they know why they should follow you)
- Branding (To help you stand out from the crowd)
 - o Name
 - o Colors, logos, themes... stay away from the ones lock you in. Need to be flexible.
 - o Addresses
 - o Photo
 - o Find your voice

ONLINE MEDIA

- Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest...
 - o Pick 2 or 3 and commit – make sure you follow terms of service
 - FB – Personal / page / group
 - o Be consistent – post regularly
 - o Engage
 - o Create colorful & interactive content for your online presence
 - o Go live
- Website

- Include a blog? Yes.
- Have a press kit – photos (72 dpi and 300 dpi), bios, book covers, media clips, 10 Q&As, etc.
- Lead generator
 - Something you offer of value to a reader, that positions you as the authority in that space... and in return you get an email.
- Be the guide (StoryBrand, Donald Miller)
 - The harder readers have to think about something, the more likely you are to lose them. Make the website all about your reader. It isn't about you. It has to be about the benefits to the reader... how it helps them.
 - Nonfiction... easy
 - Fiction... not so easy. Help them escape the everyday. Experience a new culture. Travel back in time.
 - When you create a clear and compelling message on your website you aren't selling them anything. You're inviting them into a story where they are the hero.
- SEO
- Alternatives
 - Podcasts/Video
 - Webinars
 - Guest-blogging
- Email List
 - Purist reach. No middleman.
 - Gather email addresses everywhere you go – make sure you get permission. Have them write it down themselves.
 - Use landing pages and popups to gather email addresses.
 - Lead generators – ask for email in exchange for download
 - Provide quality content... not just your musings. Make it so your readers look forward to getting it.
 - Send them regularly.
 - Keep the list healthy

TRADITIONAL

- Speaking
 - Church organizations
 - Speaker's Bureau – AWSA, Christian Meetings & Conventions
 - Denomination headquarters
 - Conferences – Remember most conferences book their speakers eight months to a year in advance.
 - Book clubs
 - Libraries

- In person and online
- Writing
 - Write a column
 - Write articles to submit to magazines, newspapers, newsletters
 - Compilation projects
- Interviewing
 - Establish yourself as an expert. Especially useful for nonfiction writers.
 - Contact the media and offer yourself for an interview.
 - When a story breaks in the area of your expertise, send out press releases and make contact with the media.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Just having social media accounts does not give you a platform
- It takes time
- You are not building a platform to sell a single book... your building it to support your writing career.
- One size does not fit all... market to your strength
- Don't dismiss ideas because they seem daunting
- Everyone starts at the same place... zero.

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