

PROMOTION AND MARKETING
A Cliff's Notes Course in getting noticed
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Marketing 101 - Websites

Not only do you need a presence on the internet, you should be actively marketing on the internet.

And there is no internet marketing without a website. In building your website, there is a lot more to consider besides just making it esthetically pleasing.

Websites should:

- ♥ Be Easy to find – your domain name should be something people would think of if they were trying to find you.
- ♥ Download quickly – most internet users are not patient people
- ♥ Be inviting – the home pages needs to get your attention
- ♥ Provide comprehensive content – information on the site needs to cover all areas of potential interest
- ♥ Be engaging (Sticky) – update information regularly and possible be interactive (contest, games, surveys)
- ♥ Create buzz (viral) – get your visitors to recommend your site to others
- ♥ Be personal – your visitor should feel like a member of the community\
- ♥ Support the book you are trying to market – the message on your site should be consistent with your overall marketing strategy
- ♥ Have inbound and outbound activities.

Outbound activities:

- Build awareness
- Conveys knowledge of your books
- Increases interest
- Encourages to purchase by promotion

Inbound Activities:

- Gather information
- Gets feedback
- Interacts with readers

Marketing 102 - Blogs

In addition to websites, it is almost as important to have a blog these days.

Blogs are informal communications among you, your readers and anyone else who might stop by and take an interest in your books. They are opportunities to encourage word-of-mouth sales and to develop relationships with readers on a personal level.

Blogs can:

- ♥ Develop a community related to your book or genre
- ♥ Make information more readily available on your books
- ♥ Provide an opportunity for reader interaction
- ♥ Create a buzz about your books

A successful blog is actually one that is not heavily controlled. While this may sound a bit scary, it is the lack of total control that makes the blog have a greater impact on the readers and potential readers

Blogs need to be

- ♥ easy to find – the name should be creative and stimulating
- ♥ engaging – graphics should involve the readers but not be distracting
- ♥ uninhibited to a certain degree – have rules, but not be totally edited for content
- ♥ updated often – post regularly otherwise visitors will not return
- ♥ contain rich content – engage the readers and make their visit worthwhile

Marketing 103 – Internet Marketing

Not only do you need a presence on the net, you should be actively marketing your books there as well. Whether you want to use the internet to simply provide information to your readers or go far beyond that to actually sell your books, you need to have a strategy in place. Direct marketing that works on other media, may not work on the internet. You cannot simply take your brochures and excerpts and stick them on the internet hoping to be effective.

An internet marketing strategy should consist of four major components:

- ♥ Internet objective – the impact you want to make
- ♥ Message – what you want to provide the readers (information, get feedback, buy the book)
- ♥ Method – what you plan to use to achieve your goals – email, ezines, websites, blogs
- ♥ Effort – how much time and money you plan to spend

In an internet marketing strategy there are many routes to consider. But before even taking one, you have to think of all the attributes you can use in marketing. You do this by using Identifiers.

Identifiers stimulate a reader to think of all the attributes of your work. They are anything that can be associated with you, your genre or your book. They include your name or pen name, tag lines, logos, color schemes, symbols or anything that is unique to your work. Identifiers can link one book with another other, if that's what you want to do, or it can link a specific genre with your name, if that's the direction in which you want to go. It all starts with what you hope to accomplish.

You need a strategy for your identifiers to make sure they communicate what you want your target readers to know about you and your work.

There are four main components to an Identifier Strategy:

- **Objective** – the role of your identifier in your marketing campaign. This established awareness and knowledge in the minds of your target readers
- **Message** – the attributes of your book with which your identifiers are associated. This should consistent convey your theme, genre or series. For instance, if you write books with a consistent medieval theme, your message should be medieval, not historical.
- **Media** – made your identifier visible. This consists of advertising, uniqueness, genre, symbols, and hand outs. Everything needs to relate back to your theme. Consistency is important to success.
- **Effort** – amount of time and/or money you will spend on your identifiers

Your identifier helps you in the first stage of communication with your readers. They establish awareness in the mind of the reader. For instance if you book is a historical and you want it to stand out, you must find something unique that identifies you and sets you apart from the pack. Perhaps your book revolves around a specific era in history – medieval, reGENCY, medieval magic, civil war, etc. Choose something that will make the reader remember your book and continue the imagery through your series – a magic sword, a knight's banner, a flag, something that will extend through your stories and tie them together and to you.

Your identifier strategy should be strong and consistent with you're the stories or series you are trying to promote. The communication of your message should be consistent with your goal. That communication is more powerful if all your identifiers are coordinated to give the same message.

You can also use Banner ads. Banner ads need to be sticky and viral.

Sticky means that people will want to read them and check out the links. Whatever you put in your ad needs to be valuable – discounts, special offers, inside information.

Viral means the readers want to send the links or tell other readers about your ad. It must be seen as worthwhile – perhaps announcing a contest or short-term promo offer.

Don't take out a banner ad without first knowing what you want to achieve by using one, Banner ads are normally a short, term investment, so make the most of them by making sure your message is precise and targeted.

Internet marketing can involve advertising, identifiers (name, logo, tags, style, and genre), sales promotions, selling and public relations – all communication approaches.

There are four major components to internet marketing:

- Internet objectives – the impact you want to make on your target readers
 - Your message – what make your book unique,
 - Your method – how you plan on getting your message out
- Your effort – how much time and/or money do you plan to spend

Marketing 104 – Promotion and Public Relations

Promotion

In a world where readers have the choice of thousands of books, promotion tools can effectively prompt the readers to choose yours. The challenge of using promotion is to get new readers and turn them into long-term fans.

As with anything, your Promotion Strategy has many components:

- ♥ Objectives – who are you targeting
- ♥ Message – should be consistent with your positioning – reinforce your book
- ♥ Method
 - Reader Oriented promotions –
 - discounts
 - contests
 - loyalty promotions
 - build the identity – tee shirts, luggage tags, use a color scheme if you can
 - Trade Oriented Promotions
 - co-op advertising of similar books
 - expand into new markets – bundle similar promotions
 - create excitement – use themes or twists in displays and fishing letters
- ♥ Effort - the amount spent depends on the estimated effects over time especially when trying to acquire new readers – Objective and task approach – estimate how many new readers make it worth your while to engage a certain promotion campaign. If your objective is to get your name out, decide how much you want to spend on the promotional campaign.

Promotions can be very effective in acquiring new readers. Once you have built a base, it is important to keep the attention of your readers so that they continue to buy your books. Keep your message consistent but fresh.

Public Relations

While it may be difficult to measure the exact effect of public relations, many professionals consider it a cost-effective means of communication. Having your books featured in a press release or on a local news show is valuable exposure. When information about you or your book appears in the media, it usually appears to have more credibility than if the same information appeared in a paid advertisement.

PR Objectives:

- Build excitement – get readers to talk about your books
- Create News -
- Generate interest – target interesting twists and events in your book to persuade the reader to buy it
- Develop a relationship with readers – e-newsletters maintain contact with readers
- Build your name – your message should be consistent with what you write
- Provide value – your newsletter or blog can list interesting facts or events associated with your book.

Public relations is an important way to communicate not only with your readers and potential readers, but also members of other audiences that can affect your marketing performance. But a PR approach must be integrated into an overall marketing strategy and provide a consistent message to work.

Marketing 105 - Guerrilla Marketing

We all do not have the marketing budgets and resources of Nora Roberts or Sherrilyn Kenyon, but we do have a way to make inroads. Guerrilla marketing is about promoting without a big budget.

But Guerrilla marketing does not work unless you concentrate your efforts on a specific message. Without a clear understanding of the readers you want to attract, you will spread your resources too thin. Instead of focusing on a specific reader base, you will get the occasional purchase instead of building reader loyalty.

Your guerrilla marketing strategy must coordinate all your efforts to support positioning your book to a specific reader base. Without this clear objective, it is difficult to tell the readers why they should buy your book instead of all the others out there. The temptation is to tell the readers everything good about your book instead of picking out something interesting or distinctive and generating a buzz about it.

Your guerrilla marketing strategy should look something like this:

- ♥ What readers do we want? – romance readers (Target Market)
- ♥ Who specifically do we want to target? – fantasy, sci-fi, historical, contemporary, etc.(Target decision making reader)
- ♥ What segment do we want to eclipse? – vampires, , immortals, Camelot knights(Target competition)
- ♥ Why should readers buy my book? – Unique twist, new area – (Benefit Advantage - innovative plots, new themes
- ♥ Why will they? – personal interest in the theme of the book (Competitive Advantage)

Guerrilla promotions

- ♥ Hand out inexpensive items that connect to you book.
- ♥ Use contests
- ♥ Develop reader groups and send out ezines or newsletters to those on your mailing list

Guerrilla PR

- ♥ Develop a relationship with your local paper.
- ♥ Write short content-rich press releases for new books and appearances
- ♥ Be part of the community,. Donate copies of your book for inclusion in give-away baskets. Contribute to auctions for non-profits.
- ♥ Give talks at local organizations – libraries, schools, rec groups,. Senior readers, book clubs
- ♥ Join local organizations, but do not appear to join strictly for sales

Guerrilla Internet

- ♥ Make sure your website communicates your message
 - ♥ Use promotions and/or limited offers
 - ♥ Email a newsletter to your readers
 - ♥ Use blogs
 - ♥ Get listed on links
 - ♥ Manage your search engine placement
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- Marketing does not have to be expensive to be effective, but it does have to be targeted, Know your readers and know the reason they buy your books. Target the uniqueness of your genre, series or storyline.