

**HARMONY PUBLISHING  
BEST BOOK MARKETING SECRETS**

Harmony Publishing

# INTRODUCTION

Thank you for getting this guide to help in your book marketing. I believe it will give an edge over others who didn't have the opportunity to read it. Authorship requires great courage and book marketing requires perseverance and up-to-date information. With Harmony Publishing, your publishing and marketing will be smoothly executed to your satisfaction and make your book talk of the town.

Enjoy!

Chukwuma Okeke

Founder

Harmony Publishing

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# CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS & TRUE FANS

We've all heard the maxim, "it's who you know" and it's true that your friends, family, and coworkers are your biggest fans and your most reliable advocates. So the more "friends" you have, the more fans you have to help you promote your book. Unfortunately, a lot of authors start relationships with readers and influencers the day their book is launched. Don't be one of those authors who enter the virtual party shouting, "Buy my book!" Cultivate relationships early. Attend conferences in your area of expertise and attend writing and publishing conferences, too. Find places where you might contribute to a conversation or offer help. Online forums are great places to start, especially if you write to a niche market. Offer assistance, have conversations, read other's stories and become a part of the community. As in any social situation, it may feel awkward at first, but you'll find places to make real connections.

If you haven't read Kevin Kelly's 1000 True Fans blog post, check it out, it's very encouraging. Kelly founded Wired Magazine (along with a number of other successful businesses), and he proved that artists can make a decent living with the support of only 1000 true fans. These are the fans who buy all your books, attend every reading, listen to every podcast, watch every video interview, read every article and who just love what you do. Attend to the care and feeding of these fans, he says, and you've got it made. This means connecting with them via e-mail, social media and in person. Best practices for using these tools are provided later in this booklet.

# **BUILD AND MARKET YOUR BRAND**

Your book title might rock, but your author name is your strongest brand. Grab a domain name that matched your name and built a website. It is not advisable to registered your book title as website because of your next book. Will you be opening and hosting a new website anything you write new book? Other elements of your brand include colors, typography, images, graphics, logos and even tag lines. Get serious about marketing and study branding principles to create your own recognizable look.

If you wait until the book launch to start building an author platform and marketing your book, your marketing will be less effective. The moment you decide to write a book, you should start marketing you, the author. The author is the brand. Like any brand, you want to increase your brand's popularity, and you want to build positive perception of your brand among potential readers (the people who will purchase your book) and partners (the people who can connect you with more readers). You market your brand by building a platform. What's platform, you ask? Your platform, simply put, is your ability to reach readers and partners. Consider platform a measure of your fame, influence and reach. Multiple elements contribute to your platform. If you blog, and thousands of people are reading you each month, your blog is part of your platform. If you participate in social network services such as Facebook or Twitter, these social networks are part of your platform. If you're a frequent speaker at conferences and seminars, that's a platform.

If you maintain a mailing list of fans, that's a platform. If you actively

participate in writers groups, professional associations, or online message boards related to your subject, these are all part of your platform. If you're fortunate enough to be the subject of press coverage – both mainstream media and blogs – that's platform too. Take care how you build your online presence. Don't spam your social media friends and followers with solicitations for your book. Remember that everything you do – including your marketing – becomes a direct reflection of your brand. Project a brand that sends the right message. Just as you wouldn't put a shoddy cover on your masterpiece, don't practice shoddy marketing.

# CONTENT MARKETING & WRITING FOR FREE

Now that you are an author you can afford to write for free. Consider that every piece of content you contribute is publicity that generates book sales. Identify parts of your manuscript that might become articles or stories, photographic layouts or other short pieces. Offer free articles to magazines, newspapers and websites in your area of expertise in exchange for a linked blurb about you and your book.

Content marketing can activate a reciprocity impulse in others. When your book is ready you have a better chance of getting reviewed, mentioned and supported by those you've supported. Building relationships online is just like building relationships in real life. As in any business relationship, be professional and reliable. Other than magazines and websites on your topic, there are many websites that host articles and stories and market their best contributors. Examples are Examiner.com and HowTo.com. Go to nairaland.com and contribute on section relating to your book topic and you might make front page! Always cross-post on your own website and social publishing sites. Guest blogging is also an excellent content marketing strategy. A web search can help identify the important bloggers to cultivate relationships with, and you can even arrange your own blog tour when your book is published.

# DEVELOP A WEBSITE AND BLOG

Your author website is “you-central” and the cornerstone of your marketing and promotion efforts. All of your social media profiles need to link back to your site and your blog. This is done by using consistent metadata, or keywords. The title of your book is an example of metadata. Your book description is metadata. Your price is metadata. Your book’s category or genre is metadata. Virtually any piece of information that helps describe or identify your book is metadata. Retailers integrate your metadata into their online stores so customers can find your book by genre, price range, language, sales rank (how your title is selling compared to other titles in the store), or other factors.

Ideally, your blog and your website are one and the same. Many authors test the waters with a free Blogger, Typepad or Wordpress blog, but here’s the problem—you don’t own or control your content. What you need is a “self-hosted” blog and website, and WordPress is the most popular platform. You can use Whogohost.com to register and host your blog or website as low as 3500 to 5000 per year. With managed WordPress hosting you get automatic backups so you never lose your data. Once you sign up, you’ll choose from a selection of simple themes. Just click and start building or hire someone to help you for surprisingly little money. You only need a few pages to start with; for example, a home page, about page, books page and

a contact page. Your home page is important, but research has shown that the about page is the most popular page on most sites. Readers want to see your face and learn what makes you tick. Write it in the first person and talk with the reader. Do a little web research to find out more about what makes a great author about page. It's also important to include an e-mail newsletter sign-up form in your sidebar and inks to all the social media sites you're actively using. On your books page, consider embedding a widget that allows your readers to preview your book. Also, make it easy for readers to follow you with one click by embedding social media "like" and "follow" buttons on your pages.

## Ways to blog effectively

### 1. Write a blog

One secret to good marketing is to engage your prospective readers in conversation. Share your thoughts, your insights, your opinions and of course your writing talent. Expose yourself and you'll attract a following of people who respect how you think, or who enjoy debating and discussing ideas with you. With hard work and time, you'll eventually build a following of people who are more inclined to read your books, or help you spread the message about your books. Starting a blog is easy.

### 2. Write Guest Columns for Blogs

Most literary blogs are run by people who love books and authors. Most bloggers do their blogs entirely as a volunteer effort. It's a lot of pressure for a blogger to constantly "feed the beast," which is how many bloggers feel when they can't find the time to write new posts on a frequent basis.

### 3. Invite other Authors to Post to your Blog

If you operate your own blog, invite your favorite authors to write guest posts for your blog. This is a great way to offer your fans interesting new content that increases the value of your blog. It also helps fans of the other author learn more about you.

#### 4. Do Q&A Interviews of other Authors on your Blog

Every author appreciates free media coverage. Do Q&A interviews of your favorite authors in your genre. Simply contact the authors and offer to interview them for your blog. Send them five or six questions via email, and invite them to include both their head shot and book cover images.

#### 5. Join the conversation on blogs

When you comment on another blog, you're often asked for your web address. You could give your own web site or blog. Whatever you do, don't spam other blogs with messages to buy your book. That's rude. Instead, participate in relevant discussion. If readers think your posts are intelligent, they'll be curious to learn more about you and will click on your name to access your link.

#### 5.5 Organize a blog tour

Many authors go on tour to promote a book by organizing book signings at bookstores. But nationwide too expensive for most authors and publishers. With the Internet, consider a virtual blog tour instead.

# **SOCIAL MEDIA: CHOOSE IT AND USE IT**

Today's readers use social media to recommend books and connect with other readers. Today's authors cultivate relationships with bloggers, especially curators whose voices rise above the noise. Ideally, you'll start marketing and promoting yourself via your website and social media long before your book is available. Twitter and Facebook social sites are popular with many authors because they're easy to use, enjoy large audiences, and provide one-click connectivity to and from many other social media sites. LinkedIn, another popular social site, can help you to reach large groups of professionals in particular industries. Pinterest and Instagram sites are great social visual tools. Google owns Google+ and YouTube and so when you post there you enjoy better visibility in the Google search engine. Also create an online calling and bio at [About.me](http://About.me)

Authors often worry about which social media platform to use. We recommend registering for all of them, and deciding later: Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube, Gmail addresses and other sites that you discover. Create keyword-rich profiles that point to your website at the very least, and experiment with each one over time to see which you prefer. Twitter is an excellent news commentary and sharing platform providing up-to-the-second information on everything from a concert to a conference, from a war to a sports event. There are a

lot of journalists on Twitter, so you have an opportunity to stand out as an expert or a person of interest and get in the news. Connect with and follow other Twitter users as well as sort your tweets by topic or interest using a tool like TweetDeck or HootSuite.

Facebook separates personal pages from groups, business and author pages, virtual events, book pages and other kinds of pages. If you're starting from scratch, you'll need a personal page first, then an author page. These pages are linked so that Facebook knows who owns what pages. You can use your Facebook author page to post updates on your writing, alert followers to sales, freebies, interviews and articles, solicit beta readers and run contests. Facebook also makes it easy to embed a button to place on your website so that your readers can "like" your page and see your posts in their Facebook newsfeed. You can also manage

Facebook posts using a tool like HootSuite. Google+ has emerged as a very popular place for writers because it displays long posts so nicely. Because of that, G+ can be used as a blogging platform. (Still, I wouldn't recommend replacing your blog with a series of G+ posts. Instead, create a short post with a teaser to your new blog post.) Once you add someone to a circle, you can target your posts to show up on the newsfeeds of that circle. Pinterest is a virtual bulletin board that lets you share links by "pinning" an image on one of your boards. (Make sure you place an image on every page of your website and each blog post, so readers can share via Pinterest.)

Tumblr is a hosted blog tool for visual content. If you're an author of visual books, note that a significant number of authors have been discovered on this site.

Instagram is a mobile app that lets you post and respond to photos. LinkedIn is an important platform to use to reach influencers used for making business connections so your profile should be as well written as a resume. Groups in LinkedIn can be

very profitable places for you to spend your time. Every group has a discussions tab where you can start or contribute to a conversation. Use the promotions tab to post information about your seminars, book press releases, awards and information about articles you have written. Many people use YouTube to search for video content much as they use retail sites to search for products. Videos, especially a short, concise, entertaining, and well-made video, is an excellent marketing tool.

Visual content gets great results with readers. Studies show that you'll get 80% more

engagement on an image posted in Facebook than a text post, and over 50% more clicks on Twitter. So use images to create interest in your posts and also consider incorporating visual elements like infographics or even just inspirational quotes. The online Canva design tool makes creating images very easy. Your mobile device with a built-in camera is your best bet for keeping in real-time contact with your friends, family, and readers. Make sure to add images and infographics on your web pages so that people can share them easily using one of the Pinterest browser buttons.

## Ways to use social media effectively

1. Tell your friends and associates that you just published your book at the available outlet to purchase and to your website. Encourage your fans to purchase and review your book
2. Share useful information.
3. Be yourself online and offline. It is difficult managing many faces identities. It will not pay any good to be different person online and different person offline. Participation in online forums like narialand can be helpful as new anuthor. It is fast way to reach fans and get traffic to your site

# **SOCIAL PUBLISHING & BETA PUBLISHING**

Social publishing allows you to start early, sharing your stories and drafts with a community of other readers and writers. This helps to attract beta readers, improve your writing, and discover your markets. When you pre-publish stories or even entire books you can get valuable feedback on your writing before you publish.

Two popular social publishing sites are Wattpad and Scribd, but there are many fan fiction, romance, and niche publishing sites, too. You can also beta publish “socially” and even get paid for it using online stores like Gumroad, Selz, and Leanpub, which also have incorporated social media features so you and your fans can easily share. These sites let you sell or give your book away to beta readers, notify them of updates and test your book before you set up formal distribution to online retailers. The benefits are many, not the least of which is that you get readers’ e-mail addresses. (Direct e-mail marketing with a service like MailChimp is the best use of your marketing time and budget.)

# FOLLOW THE SOCIAL MEDIA RULE OF THIRDS

The social media rule of thirds is simply this: One-third of the time you promote your book or business; another third goes to supporting similar authors or businesses; and another third of the time you want just to be yourself, posting things unrelated to your business, but related to you as an individual.

For example, because if an expert in banking or career advancement—give lots of advice and encouragement to people in those fields. But you can also share other of your interests.

There's a possibilities that a lot of people who share those interests also will help you sell books, connect with more fans when they share your write up. You may secure highly-paid speaking engagements at conferences if you are good

## JOIN FORUMS & GROUPS

Forums and groups are great places to get attention because they're focused and interactive. You can become a star by sharing what you know, especially if you're an expert, as long as you don't step on the group leader's authority. In groups, you can test ideas for blog entries, articles, publicity and invite people to connect with you on social media. LinkedIn is a great place for professional groups. Yahoo and Google both host groups and communities. Meetup is one of the hottest networking communities going today perhaps because it's focused on real-world meetings.

You might even create your own group. Forums are especially fun because they're so focused on a single topic or activity. I'm a member of two different motorcycle adventure travel forums, a women in motorcycling forum, and a couple of forums related to single makes and models of motorcycle. We ask and answer questions about gear and destinations, troubleshoot problems for each other, share ideas and experiences, jokes, accomplishments, and failures. Visiting these groups and forums doesn't seem like work to me. They're natural extensions of the activities I love and the people I meet there often become friends. I hope that you'll find the same rewards in your endeavors to connect.

# **JOIN PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITIES & ORGANIZATIONS**

Many writers work in isolation and getting out into the larger community can provide you with an energizing boost. You'll meet peers, editors, reviewers and publishers, all while keeping up with changes in the industry, new technologies, services, and sales and distribution channels. Meetup.com has a lot of writing, reading and social groups for authors and groups in business and social niches

# USE E-MAIL MARKETING SERVICES & RSS FEEDS

Your mailing list is the foundation of all marketing and promotion efforts. You can even begin building this in advance of setting up a formal website or blog. There are many e-mail marketing service providers. MailChimp is free for up to 2000 e-mail addresses. Like AWeber, Constant Contact, Vertical Response and many others, MailChimp will manage your e-mail contacts, provide customizable templates for e-mail newsletters, track open and click rates, automatically handle subscribes and unsubscribes, and provide analytics. They make it very easy to create and embed a signup widget (an HTML snippet) on your website and blog posts too. To encourage visitors to sign-up for your e-mail news, entice them with an ethical bribe: free information, booklets, and stories. An automation or auto-responder feature can handle this for you, sending your prepared e-mail (or series of e-mails) when they enroll. Providing complimentary information and stories asserts your professionalism, demonstrates your creativity, builds relationships and inspires reciprocity. Visitors to your website will expect to find a sign-up form in the upper right-hand side of your web page. Some authors shrug off e-mail newsletters because they offer an RSS feed on their site. Go ahead and use an RSS feed (Feedburner is a good one). The important distinction I want to make is that RSS is not an e-mail address collection tool, it's a notification system that some of your site visitors will use to stay up-to-date with your blog posts via e-mail or an RSS reader.

The people who have subscribed to your e-mail newsletter want to get to know you so reward them with more personal content than you publish in your other social sites. As a writer, you are uniquely equipped with the talent and skill to write great e-mail newsletters.



# TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PASSIVE MARKETING

Remember that old yellow pages jingle, “Let your fingers do the walking?” Today your readers’ fingers are walking the internet to find books. What you need to do as an independent author is to create a list of metadata (titles, descriptions, keywords, alt tags, and such), “seeding” your website and social media sites with words and terms that will be gathered by search engines and display your book in readers’ search results. Metadata is a great passive marketing technique. Find out more about how to use it in the booklet on discoverability.

# ABOUT HARMONY PUBLISHING

Harmony Publishing plays a pivotal role in publishing in Nigeria, being a provider of self-publishing services aimed at helping authors realise their dreams whilst minimising the encumbrances associated with getting published. Getting published has never been more convenient and better professionally handled than you get at Harmony Publishing, as we offer high-quality writing, editorial and production services at affordable rates. Our publishing services cover professional editing, illustrations, graphic designs and generation, as well as and print production. Each service is delivered to give you more value for your money.

For more enquiries, kindly call 07032212481 or send mail to [publish@harmonypublishing.com.ng](mailto:publish@harmonypublishing.com.ng). Visit our site to get started and click on get published to submit your manuscript and begin your publishing dream.

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