**The Author’s Presence on the Internet**

An author’s presence on the Internet has grown more important than ever. This presence includes a website, a blog, and social networking. These three sites can work together to develop a full picture of the author.

Readers expect to learn about an author, her work, and involvements. They also want to “know” the author on a personal level.

You can begin developing these sites before you publish a book. In fact, when publishers consider your proposal, they also review your Internet presence and the number of people who visit and interact on these sites.

**Website Contents**

Formal presentation of author, her books, and outreach. But also elements that serve or interacts with the viewers.

1. Home page to welcome visitors.
2. Prominent name and tag line.
3. Identifies your brand.
4. About the Author page.
5. Formal and informal photos of the author.
6. New release(s) with link(s) to purchase.
7. Published works with links to purchases.
8. Speaking schedule.
9. Speaking topics.
10. Blog or link to blog.
11. Video and/or audio.
12. Contact page.
13. Reader engagement: freebies; surveys, giveaways, contests, coupons, etc.
14. Other: mailing list sign-up; book purchases; resources; links to websites; recommended reading; top-ten list; family and friends; slideshow; anything pertinent and interesting

**An Effective Website**

1. Uncluttered, creative design.
2. Welcoming.
3. Easy to navigate.
4. Easy to find information. Few layers per button. Don’t need to click repeatedly to find material.
5. Different and/or more detailed than the blog or social networking information.
6. Fresh and flexible.
7. Interacts with the reader.
8. Easy contact with the author.
9. Keeps people returning to the site.
10. Reflects what’s unique about the author: design, images, copy.
11. Can be found with search engines.

**Tips for New or Potential Authors**

1. Begin simply. A few links.
2. Or begin with an expanded blog.
3. Don’t spend lots of money. With free software, you can create your own.
4. Or use a reasonably priced, experienced, creative designer.
5. Create a design that can be expanded.
6. Develop your variation on the standard website elements.
7. Engage/interact with visitors.
8. Describe what you’re working on.
9. Fake it until you make it. But don’t be dishonest.
10. Study author websites, both experienced and beginners.

**Author Blogs**

See the separate handout.

**Social Networking Tips**

The prominent social networking involvements are Facebook and Twitter. People who follow an author’s social networking expect personal insights and interaction. Publishers consider social networking an essential.

1. Don’t spread yourself too thin. Facebook and Twitter can be enough.
2. Consider this part of your daily, morning routine.
3. Post at least once a day.
4. Balance personal and professional posts.
5. Link your Facebook posts to Twitter.
6. Include images.
7. Include professional and personal posts.
8. Include speaking and other involvements: take them behind the scenes.
9. Use prayer requests, but don’t make them your prayer team.
10. Sprinkle in quotes, humor, inspiration, unusual information.
11. Create posts that initiate reader response.
12. Make the posts meaningful. We don’t care that you just brushed your teeth, unless something funny happened.
13. Respond to people who comment on your posts, even if just to say thanks.
14. Keep a consistent voice.
15. Think twice about ranting or revealing too much.
16. Use the add-ons to expand and create interest.
17. Consistently work on adding friends and followers. Numbers matter to publishers.
18. As your list grows, create a Facebook file for your close friends that you want to follow.
19. Study what other do that’s effective, especially people with lots of followers.
20. People like to join “where the action is.” Larger numbers of followers and interaction look like “this is the place to be.”

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