

The Proof Angel Summary of

Book Marketing: March 2014

When you have finished writing your book

Here is a to do list for that heady moment when you have finished your book. It covers some of the key the things to do before you can actually publish:

<http://ow.ly/vFQr6>

I think it is a little harsh to insist you put the champagne away just because you haven't published yet. I think you get more fun from life if you celebrate each stage as you get there.

So celebrate finishing your book. Then come back down to earth & tackle the administration. Then celebrate again when you've published.

How can an author make the most of social media?

Social media provides an unprecedented opportunity to communicate with your readership.

We all know that it isn't possible to be everywhere & still get on with your life as well. So how do you choose where to be? And possibly more importantly, what should you do when you are there?

This post gives some general background to the main tools, then lists the best features for authors to exploit.

<http://ow.ly/vFQxv>

A collection of book marketing links

- The focus of this post is book marketing techniques, but the relevance of the information is much wider than that:

<http://ow.ly/vGnUG>



The Proof Angel is the trading name of Sarah Perkins, freelance editor and proofreader.

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- Anyone with a blog should look at the promotion techniques at:
<http://ow.ly/vGo26>
- This post explains how self publishers can reach readers:
<http://ow.ly/vFTkN>
- Avoid wasting your marketing time by avoiding these strategies that don't produce good results:
<http://ow.ly/vGoiA>
- Are free books a good idea? Find out one author's view here:
<http://ow.ly/vGosl>

How to write your bio

Am I the only one to dread writing those "about me" sections? I know some people like to talk themselves, but my mind tends to go blank. Even if someone else will write a bio for you, it still needs reviewing, which means you need to have an idea of what you are expecting to see.

For many people like authors and speakers, bios are an important marketing tool to help you stand out from the crowd, particularly if your bio is one of several displayed in an anthology or a conference brochure.

Look around & see what other people are doing

There are 2 aspects to think about:

- In your line of business or genre there will be certain similarities between the bios people present. It is good to comply with expectations, particularly by covering ground that everyone expects. If you miss something that is standard, people may wonder why there is a gap in your experience.
- Look out for things you could say that make you a little different.

As you look around, see what is usual, what is dull, & what catches your eye. Learn from the mistakes of others.

It is useful to make a list of what you need to cover at this stage, so you don't overlook anything.

Decide where to draw the line

Remember that whatever you choose to share about yourself, people will ask questions about it. If you are very candid, they may expect that from you all the time. Think about the longer term & decide what's right for you not only for now, but for the future as well.

Make local connections

Link yourself to places. People identify more easily with real people who come from, live in, or holiday regularly in places they know & love.

It isn't very rational to try a Scottish author because you've had lovely holidays there, or perhaps because the author was born in the same town as your Grandma, but people do react that way. We have probably all done it at some point. Make sure you mention any connection you have with anywhere large or glamorous. Get the benefit of those networks.

Keep it relevant

In your standard bio, don't mention irrelevant points to sound cool. Try to mention things that enhance your professional reputation.

Sometimes people try so hard to sound interesting that they look as though they are distracting attention from the boring subject matter they are trying to put over. Ask yourself if anyone is going to care about your favourite food or whatever.

Once you have marshalled the relevant points, ask yourself:

- Does this point add anything, or does it repeat something that has already been covered? There is no need to mention everything - just the best things to give people the impression they need.
- Does it justify the amount of space it takes up?
 - A statement that you have published x books & a link to them is better than listing all the titles.
 - Saying you speak regularly at major conferences, perhaps with one example, is better than listing everything for the last few years.

Remember that being relevant does not mean stating the obvious. If you write about collecting stamps, don't put in your bio that you are a keen collector. If your picture shows you with your cat, don't mention it in your bio.

Each time you use your bio, try to personalise it just a little with something relevant for the article, conference etc.

Strike a happy medium

Don't sound like a used car salesman. Boasting & gloating turn people off, which is another reason not to list everything you ever did.

On the other hand not having anything to say can be as bad as saying too much. If you aren't interested enough to write a few lines, why should people take an interest in you? Your work may be so great that it sells itself, but people will only know that if they give it a chance. They won't give it a chance if you put them off.

Should you use a picture?

In most cases, the answer to this is yes, because:

- People like to deal with other people.
- Any sort of pictures liven up the text, whether it is in a brochure, on a website, or in a book.

If you use a picture, give it some thought. Decide:

- How do you want to sell yourself?
- What is suitable for your purpose?
- What fits the context?

Have a look to see what other people do. Think about a suitable background, what to wear, & what you should be doing in the picture. Then find a good, reliable photographer, and make sure you explain what you need to achieve

Reviewing your bio

Once you have finished your draft bio, put it aside for a while. When you come back to it again you will be fresh, and you will see things in a more objective way:

- Make sure you have covered everything you need to say.
- Have you given enough priority to the important points?
- Have you over emphasised anything?
- Is everything relevant?

Find out about one author's experience here:

<http://ow.ly/vQH78>