



Are You Sparking All the Plugs for Author Success?

One of the website strategists and specialists I bring in to work with many of my authors is Amber Ludwig of NGNG Enterprises. In a special BookCamp hosted by AuthorU.org, Amber addressed six critical must-haves to make it in the authoring world.

As the principal and visionary of InsightfulDevelopment.com, every time she works with authors on websites and branding, she looks at these sparks to get them going:

- Branding and message
- Website dos and don'ts
- Content and blogging
- Building a dedicated and responsive following
- Product development
- Social media

Beginning with **author branding**, it starts with focus – what do you do and what do you offer? Woven throughout were:

- Defining and demonstrating a clear and succinct mission statement
- Creating a personal tag that others immediately connect with who you are and what you do
- Clarity on what you do for your audience
- Probing into uniqueness

Your **website** is critical to review. Anyone who says that websites are minor plays are ignorant in today's online world – the website is now the hub of everything you do online – from capturing leads, to connecting with others, to selling your products and services.

What you put on your website is **content** – make sure it's the right content to match your message and your brand. Amber engaged our campers in an excellent exercise on developing content, where the outcome would deliver blog post ideas, articles, and product development – all taking the author business to another level.

All authors want fans, and **list building** is critical. The concept of creating free, high-value information and replacing it often was explored. Identifying formats, topics, catchy titles, and implementation for rollout strategies were explored. List building requires email collections, and MailChimp was highly recommended over Constant Contact, which has become stagnate in what it offers to users. A key takeaway was that when list building, there must be a clear call to action on what to do next.

Books are products, and **product development** can start before, during, or post-publication. EBooks, multimedia, CDs, DVDs, tele-seminars, webinars, home study courses, coaching, group coaching, inner circle clubs, conferences, seminars, and membership programs were all explored.



Judith Briles

Lastly, **social media** – the top networks of Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, and Instagram were explored. Beginners start with posts for Twitter once or twice a day, then build; blogging must be consistent, ranging from one to three times a week. For Facebook, just do it! Emphasis was made on not commercializing/pitching on the personal welcome page... that goes on the business/fan page. Amber suggests using Facebook ads to direct attention to whatever products you want highlighted on your website.

When posting, keep this in mind: Is your post word-of-mouth worthy? Is your post inspiring? Does your post have a call to action? Is your post interactive? **Calls to action** are critical. You need all six elements – the sparks to keep your author and book plugs in action. Don't use social media in a lame manner. It's an amazing and massive tool that has a variety of options to support you and your book. Start with the main players and dive deep into the one that works well for you. Get a website makeover if necessary. Start thinking "what else" – what other products can you develop using your expertise and book as the foundation? Work on building your crowd – fans are important. And keep building on your content.

Judith Briles, "The Book Shepherd," has shepherded more than 1,000 authors and created 500 best-sellers and award-winning books. She's knowledgeable and entertaining and has personally authored 35 books that have been translated to 16 languages, sold a combined 1,000,000 copies, and generated in excess of \$5,000,000 in revenues from combined book sales and speaking fees. As an advocate for authors, Judith knows publishing inside and out from both the traditional and independent sides. She hosts the podcast *AuthorU - Your Guide to Book Publishing* and is the founder of AuthorU.org. Visit her website at TheBookShepherd.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 12 • 7PM:
YouTube, Facebook Live, and Periscope:
Easy Ways to Market Your Book
Using Video with Bob Baker

SATURDAY, JULY 22: JUDITH BRILES
"Jedi Book Marketing" Workshop

AUGUST 9 • 7PM:
Service Provider Showcase

SEPTEMBER 13 • 7PM:
Literary Journals Panel
with Linda O'Connell, Gianna Jacobson,
Kim Lozano, and Kelli Allen

OCTOBER 14
St. Louis Small Press Expo

The SLPA Service Provider Showcase

No matter how you're publishing, it takes a team of publishing experts to turn a manuscript from a draft into a finely crafted book. An author's team can include publishers, book coaches, editors, graphic designers, printers, web designers, illustrators, marketers, and many more experts.

The annual Service Provider Showcase, hosted by the St. Louis Publishers Association, will feature publishing professionals of all specialties who will be ready to answer questions for inquiring authors.

Don't miss this opportunity to meet a roomful of people who can help you at every stage of your book project. This is a chance to ask questions and get a feel for who they are and how they work.

- If you're at the beginning of your book's journey and trying to develop your concept or story, talk to one of the book coaches, ghostwriters, or developmental editors.
- Undecided on going independent or finding a publisher? Talk with local publishers and find out the variety of options.
- Does your manuscript need organizing or your sentences need polishing, or do you need help with the writing process? Chat with an editor!
- Do you need an eye-catching cover and help laying your book out for print or uploading to Amazon? Get to know graphic designers with the knowledge and talent to turn your manuscript into a book.
- Need illustrations for a children's book or visual aids? Talk with an illustrator and check out their portfolio.
- Curious about printing options? Talk to a local printer!
- Are you almost ready to publish, but you want to make sure your book doesn't have any embarrassing typos? Find a proofreader at the Vendor Showcase!

This is a FREE event and open to the public. Service providers: to apply for a table, please contact SLPA President Warren Martin at president@stlouispublishers.org.

Wednesday, August 9, 2017

The Heights: Richmond Heights Community Center, in The Argus Room
8001 Dale Ave., Richmond Heights, MO, 63117

Doors open at 6:30pm for networking. Showcase begins at 7:00pm and continues until 9:00pm. For more information, visit our website at stlouispublishers.org.



THE BOOK CORNER



Afterlife in Harlem

by Terry Baker Mulligan

In this historical fantasy, the ghosts of Alexander Hamilton and Sarafina, a former slave, are sent from Heaven to get Bill Clinton, First Gentleman to President Hillary, straightened out.

Taking Bill back in time to Indian bordellos, slave auctions, and political chicanery that almost lost the American Revolution, Hamilton helps Clinton perform a minor miracle in twenty-first-century upper Manhattan that brings peace to restless spirits both living and dead. Read more at terrybakermulligan.wordpress.com.

MEMBERSHIP
\$60 in 2017

Meets on the Second Wednesday of the Month

RICHMOND HEIGHTS
COMMUNITY CENTER (THE HEIGHTS)
The Argus Room
8001 Dale Ave.

Richmond Heights, MO, 63117
(Child care available at The Heights)

Doors open for networking at 6:30pm
Program begins at 7pm

The meeting concludes around 8:30pm
Networking until 9pm

Regular meetings are free to members.
Guests: \$10 at the door.



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