

Social Media and Author Branding Workshop

- facilitated by Natasha Lester -

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Comments from participants:

Your book is tangible and has a shelf-life. Your author brand, on the other hand, is intangible and grows and develops over time. Branding is about the impression readers have when they hear a particular author's name. An author's brand is fluid, and writers can cultivate their author brand by incorporating the elements they are comfortable with. You may include -

- Facts about your life – where you live, what you write, things about your home life that readers may relate to or find interesting.
- Choose parts of yourself to project
- Consider adjectives that describe you
- What you want people to think about you – try to influence your brand
- Educational elements e.g., writer's tips, information about your writer's journey
- Feel-good elements make people want to connect again with you
- Think of what kind of activities / promotions / messages fit with your style of writing and your audience.
- Write books pitched to the same audience
- Publish books that are recognisable e.g., cover art style

Consider that people follow others due to feeling a connection – this can be through humour, inspiration and /or relatability. An author brand is about making genuine connections with people. To make a genuine connection, people need to feel like they know you. They think of some attributes when they hear your name. It makes them feel good.

Steps to develop your author brand

Step 1

1 Do your research – investigate other authors' websites, social media, podcasts as well as articles on online media. Look at colours, tone, language, pictures, the style, and the content on the websites. Look at both what they say and how they say it. Doing your research helps you to see how others define their brand. You don't want to copy others, but it is interesting to look at them. Some are much more strategic than others, and you can learn from both. Sometimes you learn more from those that don't do it well.

Step 2

2 Define your audience and your brand. Start defining your audience (broadly). Your brand must fit with your audience. This audience isn't meant to be a perfect description but gives some parameters. Think about age, gender, authors they may like etc. Define your brand. Who are you? What would you like people to think of you? What makes you likable and unique? What fits with the books you write? Why would people want to connect with you?

Step 3

3 Develop your voice. A brand has a voice like a book has a voice. You need to align all your social media posts, newsletters etc. so they are congruent. Utilise your voice but narrow it down to what interests your audience.



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Step 4

Develop your website. When developing a website, you define your brand. Consider how you are going to put that into words. Develop and improve your website on an ongoing basis

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Step 6

Take your brand offline. The number one most important element for taking your brand offline is Writer Events. People have turned up to see you and they want to buy your book and they can remain very loyal to you. Contact libraries for Events

Make sure your About You Page makes it clear how to contact you.

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Step 5

Choose other online vehicles

- a. Newsletter
- b. Social Media – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Linked In – Linked In works for non-fiction.
- c. Podcasts
- d. You Tube
- e. Good Reads/ Book Bub

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Step 7

Manage Your time. Don't set up your brand at the same time as trying to launch a book. Do your brand work before. Create a schedule and try to stick to it.

Important final notes:

- Start out as you mean to continue – the focus should be on what is sustainable, not what feels perfect.
- Consistency is key – around once a month is workable.
- Whatever website you build make sure it is easily updateable
- Maintain it regularly – new content is vital for search engines



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