

Out of the shell

Don't let being an introvert stop success.

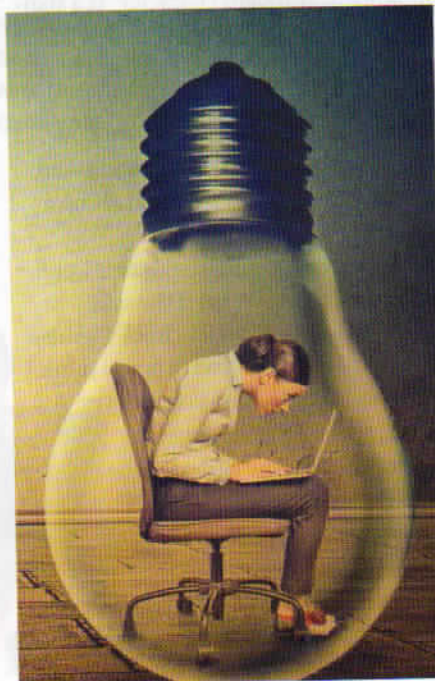
Many authors are introverts. When they hear the words “book promotion,” they want to hide in the nearest closet. But we all know books don't sell themselves, so authors need to connect with readers. But it's important to be true to yourself, too.

“Don't try to force yourself into a persona that isn't you,” says book publicist Lorna Garona. “People will likely see through it, and you will exhaust yourself.”

Garona also notes the importance of setting reasonable goals. “Don't cram your schedule with marketing tasks that feel like chores,” she advises. “Pick one or two that you are comfortable with and work them smartly.”

Authors should take control of marketing and promoting their books, says public relations specialist Susan Schwartzman. “If you are an introvert and don't relish the idea of going on TV and doing a book and media tour, then you should consider doing a virtual tour,” she says. “Blog about your book on various websites. Use social media such as Twitter. Think of Twitter as a virtual cocktail party.”

Jocelyn Kelley, of Kelley and Hall Book Publicity and Promotion, agrees that using online platforms and social media are great tools for authors who may not want to be out in the public eye. “For introverts, social media is especially beneficial, because it provides them with outlets where they can reach a large audience from their computers,” Kelley says. “If you prefer writing to speaking, these channels work best and provide amazing opportunities.”



Here are 15 tools and ideas that make marketing easier for introverts.

1 Bookarma: Allows you to leverage the social networks of other authors on the platform. Upload your books and create a campaign. The books will appear in the Book Queue for other authors to see and share with their social networks. The more you share and talk about other books, the higher your Karma points become, making your book more visible. bookarma.net

2 Fussy Librarian: Authors pay a small fee to have their book featured in a daily email sent to subscribers, featuring book deals geared specifically toward their preferences. thefussylibrarian.com

3 Guest blogging: Research blogs that your ideal reader visits and contact the hosts to ask about being a guest blogger. Have some story ideas ready.

4 Launch team: Round up a team of people with pre-existing connections to a variety of circles that can support you and your book. Give them a free copy and ask them to help spread the word.

5 Facebook author party: Set a date and time for this free, real-time event on Facebook. Send out invitations, and then during the party, interact with your readers through chats, giveaways and fun discussions.

6 Speak to small groups and organizations: Linda Osmundson, author of the *How the West Was Drawn* picture book series, says she is an introvert when it comes to book signings and events, but she enjoys speaking to small groups. “I have a love for my subject and I'm told it shows,” says Osmundson. “These speaking engagements can lead to more opportunities.” Find local organizations such as the Rotary Club, a writing group at the library or a mom's group, and offer to be a guest speaker.

7 Goodreads discussions: Create a discussion question about your book's theme, characters or any other interesting aspect that will prompt reader interaction. Post it on the discussion tab found on the Goodreads home page and stand by to participate in the dialogue.

Get 10 more marketing ideas for introverts by downloading the digital edition now.

8 Book clubs: Contact local book clubs to arrange an author visit or Skype chat.

9 Shared book event: Remember the phrase “strength in numbers”? Join forces with other authors to host an event to connect with current and potential readers. Include activities, prizes, contests, music, local performers, crafts, food, drinks and, of course, your books.

10 Magazine articles: Pitch article ideas to magazines targeted to your ideal reader. If possible, include a bio with your book title at the end of the article.

11 Monthly email newsletter: Build an email list through a post on your Facebook page or a form on your website. The newsletter should include useful articles, inspiration, resources,

information and fun tidbits, along with news about your book.

12 Celebrate your readers: On your author website or Facebook page, highlight one of your readers with a short profile and photo, and maybe even give them a small gift to show your appreciation.

13 Charity fundraiser: Run a special deal either online or at an event, pledging a portion of your book’s sales to charity. Ask the organization to share the event details with their supporters.

14 Radio shows: Contact radio shows and offer to do a phone interview about your book or a related topic on which your book makes you an expert. Because it is over the phone, you can forget about all of the ears tuning in

and focus on having a simple phone call with one person. Prepare talking points for easy reference.

15 Books on the Subway: This program gets books into the hands of readers riding the New York City subways. You send copies to the organizer, she puts an official sticker on them and displays them as free to be enjoyed and returned for others to read. booksonthesubway.com

Marketing your book doesn’t have to be intimidating or scary. By finding a few avenues you are comfortable with and devoting your time and energy to those, even the most introverted authors will find success. **W**

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