

# *Authors, Be Strategic!\**

*Some advice for an author*

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# MY GOAL

If I achieve nothing else with this advice, I'd like it to help even a few writers to start thinking strategically about how, why and where they are engaging online.

# SOME CONTEXT

The web and digitisation have made possible the rapid publication of anything by anyone with access to the internet. As a side effect it has also created a vast swathe of content that creates much more noise than signal.

# WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR YOU?

That presents a problem. If you accept that the basic goal of your online activities is to engage people with your writing, then you have to accept that you are seeking their attention.

Any creative that attempts to engage an audience online is doing so amidst a multitude of voices offering similar wares (of lesser or perhaps better quality) intent on the same thing that they wish for, attention. Online, competition is fierce, furious and reactive. Going in without a plan, without a basis for your actions is wasteful and pointless.

# SO, WHAT CAN AN AUTHOR DO?

- The best recommendation is to adopt a strategy one based on three questions:
  - 1) Who do you want to connect with?
  - 2) What do you want to connect with them for?
  - 3) Where is the best place to connect with them?

# WHO DO YOU WANT TO CONNECT WITH?

When you think about what type of people your audience is comprised of, who is it you see? Is it young people or older people or children. Is it military history buffs, those into modern design or perhaps women's literature readers? Are they readers or fan of illustration and art? Are they your peers in the community of writers? Thinking about this should inform the third question.

# WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CONNECT WITH THEM FOR?

This is a fairly important question. Are you looking to connect with peers to discuss writing, with prospective editors and publishers to convince them that you have a product worth publishing?

Are you hoping to attract an audience of young reader to start a word of mouth campaign about your soon to be published children's fiction book? If you know who you want to connect with and can then establish why you want their attention, you'll be in a good place to answer the third critical question.

# WHERE IS THE BEST PLACE TO CONNECT WITH THEM?

Although you now know that you want to connect with a certain group for a certain purpose, knowing where to connect best with that group is the key to having a focused strategy.

Simply trying to reach a group of people by using every single social media platform is a useless enterprise and will only result in you spreading yourself too thin and wasting a precious commodity, time.

Before you commit any time to a social network in an effort to connect with an audience, first make sure the people you want to reach are there, then that the purpose for reaching out is possible on that network.

For instance if you want to share lengthy text with an older group people, Twitter may not be well suited, it's skewed younger and the format allows only for short messages. If however your desire is to share links to a web-hosted portfolio of images, then maybe Twitter is the right place for you.

# AND THAT, IS IT!

“When you're prepared, you're more confident. When you have a strategy, you're more comfortable.”

- Fred Couples



- \* This presentation is a revised and updated form of my guest post on the Writers & Illustrators Handbook blog (<http://bit.ly/QjOXq>).
- \* If you'd like to read more of my material, I write a blog [www.eoinpurcellsblog.com](http://www.eoinpurcellsblog.com).
- \* If you are interested in working with me, contact me at my company e-mail: [admin@greenlampmedia.com](mailto:admin@greenlampmedia.com)