



*Novel Publicity Guides to  
Writing and Marketing Fiction*

# **YOUR GUIDE TO CREATING AN AUTHOR PLATFORM**

**A 30-DAY STEP-BY-STEP TUTORIAL**

*Pavarti K. Tyler*

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# INTRODUCTION



Novel Publicity has always been committed to helping writers succeed in their journeys both as authors and as business people, and the Novel Publicity Guides to Writing & Marketing Fiction are dedicated to the education and collaboration of authors everywhere. Whether your publisher is one of the big five, a small indie house, or yourself, we believe that a commitment to quality and community will pave the way for your success. To help facilitate this, we'd like to offer you this multilayered, one-day-at-a-time approach.

The Novel Publicity Guides to Writing & Marketing Fiction are intended to serve as a reference point for all your creative, editing, publishing, and marketing questions. Written in a straightforward, easily digestible manner, these books will give you the information and tools you need, allowing you to spend less time spinning your wheels and more time writing.

Emlyn Chand, Novel Publicity President, has brought together experts in editing, craft, marketing, design, and business to offer you the most comprehensive books in the industry. Our team consists of Emlyn Chand, Pavarti K. Tyler, Falcon Storm, M.J. Kelley, Lane Diamond, Robb Grindstaff, Mallory Rock, and Allie Semperger—if you're interested, you can learn more about each of us at [www.NovelPublicity.com/about](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/about).

This free 30-day guide to building your author platform was written by Novel Publicity Marketing Director, Pavarti K. Tyler. Pavarti has coached countless authors through the process of creating robust and relevant online platforms. While this book is not intended as a replacement for personalized, expert information, she hopes it will provide you with a quick and pain-free way to start your journey.

We know you're excited to jump in and get right to the good stuff. It might be tempting to skip ahead or do a few days at once. We caution restraint though. There's a reason we've structured the process over 30 days! We want to show you just how manageable this can be. Managing your online platform can be overwhelming at times, but if you take a few minutes every day you can accomplish amazing things.

Just as we don't want you to skip ahead, please also try not to fall behind. All it takes is a little

time to check in every day. Get into the habit of making your platform a part of your daily ritual, so you have more time to write! If the day's assignment feels short and you're itching to do more, don't skip ahead. Instead, open your current work in progress and get writing.

Now let's get started and take your career to new heights!

## Day 1

Welcome to the first day of the rest of your life as an author. You've made the decision to put a professional and comprehensive author platform together, and we couldn't be more proud of you!

For those of you who may be wondering, yes, you can construct your platform long before your first book is ever published—so don't worry about jumping the gun. Even if you already have an established platform in place, we still recommend you go forth with this month-long guided set of activities. After all, there could be something important that you've missed. We'll make sure all your ducks are in a row!

Over the next 30 days, you will complete a series of daily assignments that will make setting up your online platform straightforward and painless. We don't want to waste your time with lots of exposition and filler, we just want to give you the best available information. If any of the terms included here confuse you or if you need more in-depth help, please don't hesitate to contact us via [www.NovelPublicity.com/questions](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/questions).

So go ahead and give yourself a big hooray for making the decision to take this important step in your career, relax, and get ready for the work to start tomorrow!

## Day 2

Welcome back. Let's get straight to it. Open up a fresh Excel workbook, and list all the information you have about your current social media accounts and book product pages. If you're missing any of the items outlined below, don't worry. We'll be working on setting up the missing pieces later in this exercise. Right now, I just want you to make a list of the following:

### Your Online Profiles

- Website and blog
- Mailing list sign up
- Facebook profile
- Facebook page
- Twitter
- Google+
- Goodreads
- Pinterest
- Triberr
- Amazon author page
- Tsu

### Your Book Links (Complete for Each Book)

- Amazon link
- Barnes & Noble link
- Kobo link
- Smashwords or Draft2Digital link
- Google Play link
- iTunes link

Here's an example of what my completed spreadsheet looks like:



## Day 3

If you don't have a website, consider hiring someone to set one up for you. Websites are fun to design, but they do take technical know-how. If you've got what it takes to DIY—great—go for it. It makes sense for you to do as much of this as you can on your own, but you also need to know when to pull in a pro.

If you already have a website, please make sure that you have a blog function set up. Even if you are using a free site like Weebly, WordPress, or Blogger, you can add this in easily.

If you're setting up your website for the first time or considering an overhaul of your existing site, purchase a custom URL for your author name. There are many sites that offer domain registration, and prices are standard for the most part. Personally, I purchase domain names through the same company I use to host my website, Dreamhost.com.

Even if you use the free WordPress or Blogger platforms, your web address should be short and memorable—joeauthor.com is much easier for fans to find than is joeauthor.wordpress.com, and it looks better on swag too!

Still, I'd much rather you go for the whole shebang and establish your presence via a self-hosted web platform. It only costs a few bucks per month and provides better security as well as a better set of tools and functions. Tomorrow we'll talk about what pages you should have on your site.

Today, if you don't have a website, set one up! Here's what I'd like you to do in order to get started:

Purchase a domain name

Set yourself up with a hosting company (Dreamhost, GoDaddy, iPage, Weebly, HostGator, etc.). As I said, I use Dreamhost and have never had a problem. Emlyn uses iPage. Any of those listed above would be a great choice.

Install a blog on your site. If you are using a site like Dreamhost, you can install WordPress for free under One-Click Installs. Other formats like Weebly have their own system. Make sure you have something set up today, so you can start customizing tomorrow.



If you're feeling overwhelmed just reading this list of requirements, you should strongly consider

hiring a professional to help get your website set up. We do this at Novel Publicity and will be devoting an entire book to walking you through this process called *The DIY Guide to Designing an Envious Author Website*. Look for it in March 2015.

## Day 4

Consider your website the home base for all you do as an author, both online and off. Every author website should have the following items:

- A landing page
- A prominently placed newsletter sign-up
- A book page that lists all your books and purchase links
- A media kit
- An author bio and a professional headshot
- A contact page
- A blog

Some people create blogs that are separate from their main websites. Personally, I prefer to offer a one-stop shop for my readers. It just makes everything easier both for them and for me. Still, should you decide to keep an external blog, you can link to it in your menu or navigation bar so that it will automatically take people to your blog. This will make it easier for readers to find and follow you, which is the whole goal of creating an author platform in the first place. Websites offer great information to readers, but blogs are what will keep them coming back!

At a minimum, you must have a blog and an about page for you and your books. Make sure you have those up today. If you're missing any of the other pages listed above, I urge you to set them up today too. If you don't have all the information required for a specific page, don't worry—we'll get to that in the coming days.

## Day 5

Did you notice anything missing from the list you made on Day 2? If you did, set up a profile for whatever was missed. Don't spend a lot of time customizing themes or playing with the tools (remember, you need time to write!). Today we're working to ensure you have established accounts on the most vital social media networks. We'll work on completing and optimizing these accounts later in the month. I recommend that, at a minimum, you establish an author presence on the following sites:

- Facebook profile
- Facebook author page
- Twitter
- Google+
- Goodreads
- Pinterest
- Triberr
- Tsu

If you're missing a lot of them, don't worry (are you sensing a theme here?)—just do what you can today, and come back to the rest later.

If you have all of these sites set up, go you! That's awesome. Here's an opportunity for some extra credit: Check to make sure each of your profiles have your most up-to-date bio.

## Day 6

Today we're going to set you up with a fancy tool that will create clean and professional links for you to share online. Smarturl is a website that will allow you to create custom links and then direct them to any website you choose. There are many reasons why Smarturl is a valuable tool for authors. The four best ones are:

1. **You can set up a Smarturl using any name you choose.** Have a book series you want to promote? Set up a URL for Smarturl/MyBookSeries. This looks cool. People will notice. I get comments from readers asking about my fancy links all the time.
2. **You can *change* where the Smarturl is directed.** This allows you to set up your promotional links and materials before you ever even have a link to the book! Set it up to go to the book page on your website and change it later. No one will ever know and you get a head start of spreading the word about your book
3. **Smarturl likes Amazon.** If you use this tool it will automatically direct users to the Amazon store of their country, which is awfully nifty and convenient.
4. **You can use your affiliate link.** You can include your affiliate link to the Amazon store (Don't have one? Why not? It's free money!). If you don't include an affiliate link, Smarturl will include their own—but shouldn't you be the one to make money from your own links?

So now that I know you're convinced, go to [www.Smarturl.it](http://www.Smarturl.it) and set up a FREE account. You'll receive a verification email, but it's up to you whether you respond to it. If you do choose to verify your account, you'll receive access to new tools as they are released as well as a host of other options that aren't available to unverified users.

Smarturl is one of many tools in your arsenal now.

Set up a link for each of your books, directing your Smarturls to your Amazon purchase pages (make sure you include your affiliate link!). Add these links to your master document for safe-keeping, and you're done!

You now have fancy links that will make you money, look amazing, *and* impress people by directing them to the store in their country. And it took almost no time at all, yet will serve you well as you build your platform and promote your brand.

Don't have any books out yet? Do some stretches to help get you revved up for tomorrow.

## Day 7

Hey, are you skipping ahead? Stop it! Close this book this instant and go write! If you aren't jumping the gun and this really is the seventh day of your platform-building adventure, I'm sorry for yelling at you. Go right on ahead and keep reading.

Images are a huge part of branding. If you write a series, the covers of each book should naturally tie together through the use of consistent fonts, colors, or other design elements. This goes for your author branding as well. Consider hiring a graphic designer to create a professional logo for your author brand. You may use this on your website, on social media, on swag, and in any number of other places. You may also be able to create this logo for yourself. If money is an issue for you, as it is for most of us authors, try creating this on your own now. Take it up a level later when you can afford to hire a top-notch professional.

There are a number of simple, free tools out there, and, with a little sweat and grease, you can learn how to use them. My favorite is Canva. It's a free app, which can be used to design images and text. Canva has a number of styles and pre-formatted options to choose from, or, if you're feeling creative, you can start from scratch. Canva also has an easy-to-use online interface that syncs with the app, which means you can access all your design elements wherever you go.

To get started with Canva, all you need to do is select what kind of image you'd like to create. The options include everything from email headers to Instagram posts, and Facebook cover photos to Kindle covers. A wealth of free elements are available, but some of the fancier layouts and images do cost money—usually a dollar each. Of course, you can always use your own images or ones that you've gotten from Creative Commons sites or purchased through a stock photo site.

The really nice thing about Canva is that you can add layers without having to get into the complexities of programs like Photoshop and Gimp. I love the way you can move and change elements like text and images independently. It's an easy, user-friendly way to make evocative and eye catching images. I highly recommend it for making Facebook ads and other promotional images to customize and share across all your social media platforms!

## Day 8

Your author bio offers readers their first opportunity to get to know you on a personal level, so let your personality shine through. *Do you write humor?* Then add a funny quip to your tagline. Every interaction you have with a reader, whether directly or—in the case of a bio—indirectly, communicates your brand, the unique experience of you.

Consider your bio the chance to make a great first impression. Since different venues call for different requirements, I recommend having two versions readily available.

The first should be written explicitly for social media sites like Goodreads and Facebook. It should only be a couple sentences long, which means it should get straight to the point. Include your name, what you do, something unique, and your website link—that's it.

The second should be tailored for the back of your book. You'll need to include a nice introduction to who you are, what you're interested in, what you write, and what makes you stand out. *Win an award in International Peace Keeping?* Put it in. The more unique your bio, the more likely people are to read—and remember—it. This bio can be two to three paragraphs in length.

If you have trouble composing these, consider hiring a marketing or copywriting expert to help. There's no shame in needing help. Novel-writing and copywriting are two *very* different skills. As we all know, first impressions tend to stick, so you'll want to make it a good one.

After reading about the different kinds of bios, take a little time to read yours and really consider if it stands out. Are you representing yourself well? Are you showing off what you have to offer readers in a concise and attention-grabbing way? If not, it needs a rewrite.

#

## Day 9

Today, do a check in on your profile images. Is your picture a professional image? Is it of you, rather than of your book cover or some abstract image or some Hollywood hottie you like? Have you changed it recently? It's good to change your picture on Facebook now and then just to keep it interesting, but your image should always be of your face unless you are promoting a specific book.

If you don't have a professional headshot, it's a good idea to hire a photographer to take some high-quality, high-resolution pictures for you. You're going to need these for your book, your website, and your media kit anyway, so go ahead and get it done today.

Word to the wise: Please don't use a selfie as your headshot. People can spot these from a mile away, and selfies almost never look good. The resolution is terrible, and duck faces are just not professional. Even as great as smart phones have gotten, they are not a replacement for a professional high-resolution camera.

Now get back to writing! I'll see you tomorrow.

## Day 10

You're on day 10 of your author branding renovation! How are you feeling? Let us know if there's anything that you've found really helped you. It's free and here to help you succeed. We'd love to hear your input so just submit your comment or question via [www.NovelPublicity.com/questions](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/questions). Who knows? We just may dedicate a blog post or an entire book to answering your brilliant question!

Go check all those sites you listed in your master document and make sure you are using the right bio in the right places. Sites that only allow one bio should automatically get the short one. Sites like Facebook that allow both a short and long description for your author page can have both.

While you're there, make sure you have a current, attractive photo applied to your profile too! If you haven't done your professional headshots yet, put up something that meets the criteria discussed on Day 9, and change it when you can.

Here's a quick reminder of the sites that will need your bio and headshot:

- Website and blog
- Mailing list sign up
- Facebook profile
- Facebook page
- Twitter
- Google+
- Goodreads
- Pinterest
- Triberr
- Amazon author page
- Tsu

Okay, see you tomorrow!

## Day 11

Your assignment today is to write a blog post.

Not sure what to write about? Consider talking about any of the things you've done over the past couple weeks to build your author platform. What did you learn while completing these tasks? Did you find a new favorite social media site? Did you learn something important about yourself?

If inspiration still hasn't struck, try discussing one of these topics with your blog readers:

What I've learned while working on my WIP (that's **W**ork **I**n **P**rogress)

Something I bet you never thought I'd do—but I did!

How I work: habits, rituals, and productivity.

To make your post eye-catching, include an image. When shared to social media sites, the image from your blog post will show up with the link. Including an image will significantly increase the number of people who follow that link.



For any images you use, make sure you follow the Creative Commons rules for copyright. You won't want someone using your words without permission, don't use their art without making sure you are allowed.

Once you've written your blog, go ahead and post. If your blog is connected to your social media sites (and it should be) a link will auto post to those sites. If it's not, go ahead and post the link with a little intro to your various social media sites. This is one of the few times it's completely okay to cross post the exact same content on multiple platforms. Go ahead and spread the word. For Twitter, you should post about it again later today and perhaps tomorrow. Because the stream moves so fast in Twitter, reposting will allow you to reach more of your followers.

## Day 12

Today, we're going to start working our way through your social media sites. Up first is Facebook. Go log in and make sure you have a Facebook *page* with your author name. This is different from your usual profile and works strictly as a marketing tool.

The reason to have a page set up is because there is a difference between your public persona and your personal one. You have to decide for yourself whether or not you want to keep the privacy level of your personal profile high so only your approved friends will see your posts or if you'll accept friend requests from readers and other authors. Either way, your page is your professional public presence.

I know Facebook changes what people see and how pages can be used fairly often. However, having your page set up is still important. Many advertising sites require a page for a listing, and pages are also useful for running giveaways (more about this soon). There are plenty of authors who claim pages are useless and don't bother with one, but having it set up doesn't hurt you. There's no negative here. Besides, future opportunities may be opened by taking this simple step.

Once you're there and you have one set up, check the information you've listed. You should have all your books included in the about section as well as any awards you've won. Your page should have your professional headshot as the profile image and an attractive header that highlights who you are and what you do. If you don't have the graphic skills to set up a page cover yourself, consider hiring someone to help you. There are a number of skilled graphic designers out there who can do this for a small fee. If you don't know anyone already, try looking on Fiverr.com to find someone—or you can attempt to DIY using Canva.

Now that your page is set up invite your friends. This isn't spam—they want to know what you're doing, and this page is where you're going to post sales, reviews, tours, awards, and anything else newsworthy. If you already had a page set up, go through the invite process anyway. There are probably some folks out there who didn't like your page the first time around!

## Day 13

Let's talk Twitter! Do you have an account set up? If not, create one and make sure you change your avatar from that egg image that automatically appears. People don't like eggs. They don't follow eggs, and usually take that default avatar as a heads-up that the associated account is spam.

Use your short and fabulous bio here, and list your website too. Take a few minutes to set up your page, so that it becomes something you enjoy using. Colors, backgrounds, images, just make sure you keep it professional and thematically connected to your work. No nude or offensive images. If that's your brand, fine, but it's best to keep it off your profile if you can.

Now, post a tweet about something on course with your brand, but NOT about your book.

## Day 14

Google+ has a very different feel than the other social media sites. It tends to lend itself to more technically minded individuals. The learning curve here is a little longer than other platforms, but I really like Google+. This is a great place to focus on networking with other authors and professionals. Marketing your books here will have little impact; however, it is definitely worth setting up an account.

Google authorship drives more and more of what we see in Google search results. To maximize on this you need to set up your ownership of your blog in the about section of your Google+ profile. Doing this will link every blog post and article from your blog to your profile, boosting your online presence with top-rated analytics. If you use Google+ for nothing else, you should still do this. Google search likes it when people use their platform, and, as such, they'll give your links a good boost when returning search results.

Make sure to add your bio and to put up a beautiful header image. Like Facebook, your avatar should be a professional image.

As long as you're working on social media today, go over to your Facebook page and post a news item about your work or post a link to a blog post you've read and found interesting.

## Day 15

It's Day 15! You're halfway through creating your author platform!

You've checked all your social media sites, made a master list with all the links you might need, updated your bio with a short version and a longer professional version, looked over your website to make sure you have all the necessary pages, and signed up for some great tools like Canva and Smarturl. That's quite a lot!

I'm sure you have a lot of questions, but—remember—we still have much to do in order to round out the second part of the month. Hopefully, at the end of these 30 days, you'll have a well-structured author brand and an online presence that is both far reaching and professional. Of course, since we have so much to cover, we're only brushing the surface in this 30-day primer. To learn more about any of the topics covered within, check out our blog at [www.NovelPublicity.com/blog](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/blog) and take a look at our other in-depth marketing and writing guides via [www.NovelPublicity.com/books](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/books).

In addition to Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ there are many other social media sites out there. Pinterest, ello, Reddit, and Tsu are just a few of the many, many options available to you—and to your readers. If you spend too much time worrying about establishing a presence everywhere, you'll make yourself insane. Instead, focus on the platform where you feel most comfortable. If you love Twitter, have fun and focus on that. It's important to not neglect Twitter or Facebook, because those are the sites where the majority of the buying public will spend their time. Luckily, there are a number of tools that can help make your life easier.

In that vein, I recommend you set up an account on a social media management site. Personally, I like Hootsuite, because I can post to Facebook profiles as well as pages, multiple Twitter accounts, and a number of other sites as well. The free version allows me to connect to three different social media streams. If you need more than that, an inexpensive pro version is available for subscription. Another thing I like about Hootsuite is that it allows me to schedule posts in the future—this is yet another way I make my life a little easier. Remember, this is all about finding the simplest, most straightforward ways to accomplish your goals and get yourself back to what you're really here to do—write!

While I certainly encourage you to schedule posts and utilize the convenience of a social media management tool, I also want to take a moment to remind you that posting *only* this way doesn't work either. Engaging and participating in conversations to encourage relationships with your readers and other authors is the goal.

Please also consider whether you're cross-posting makes sense, given the context of what you'd like to say and how you'd like to say it. For example, using someone's Twitter handle won't make sense on Facebook and it won't tag that person in the post. Different networks have

different social protocols. Make sure to keep them in mind.

If you don't like Hootsuite, there are a number of other social media management tools out there like Sprout Social, Social Oomph, and more. Do a search, try a few, and pick one that works for you. Make sure you have the option to schedule posts though, because as you get into marketing your book, this one feature will save you loads of time.

Take a minute to sign up for a social media management tool right now. This will give you back time you can use writing. There's a learning curve to using these programs, but they are worth this small investment of your time.

Write a quick post, and use your social management tool to have it post to both your Twitter stream and your Facebook page. Schedule it to post an hour from now.

## Day 16

Have you read a good book lately? Tell your readers about it! You don't need to do an official book review or provide a star rating, but you can write up a quick blog post about a book you've read that touched you and made you think. What about it is special? Did you learn something as a writer by reading it? Write it up, post it on your blog, and post the link to your social media accounts (using a social media management tool, if you can).

If you've never written a book review before, check out this article by Novel Publicity President, Emlyn Chand: [10 ways to write a book review and what to do when the book sucks](#).

Take a second while you're on your blog to set it up to auto-post on your social media sites for you. This is another way to automate your life, so you can reach the most readers and do the least work.

## Day 17

Today, I want you to go check out Goodreads. If you're an author with a book out already, make sure that you are registered with an author account and that all your books are attributed to you. If you don't have an author account, go to one of your books, click on the author name to go to the author page, scroll to the bottom and click on "Is this you?"

It may take a while for you to hear back from them—don't worry, you will eventually. If you want to know more about Goodreads, check out this blog post by John Corwin on the Novel Publicity Free Advice Blog: The complete and unabridged guide to Goodreads for authors: Account set-up, customization, and widgets, lots of widgets

Fill out your profile and list your bio, website, and Twitter account. While you're there, add a few books you've read to your shelf and sync your account with Facebook.

## Day 18

Let's talk newsletters. Don't have one? You need one. Newsletters are your second best marketing tool. Number one is to write high quality books that release quickly!

There are a ton of sites that offer newsletter management completely free or at minimal cost. I like Mailchimp, but a lot of people use Constant Contact or Aweber and I've heard good things about them too. Today, just go sign up for an account. You don't have to set anything up beyond your initial signup. Just make sure whatever system you use is free for at least a trial period of time. I want you to be comfortable with this new tool before you invest in it. This is one of the things I like about Mailchimp. It remains free until you cross the 2,000 subscriber threshold. Hopefully once we get you to this follow limit, you'll be making enough money off your books to cover this expense easily!

When you set up your newsletter tool account, you are going to be asked for an address. This address will be displayed on every email you send. This is required as a part of the anti-SPAM laws. If you are concerned about privacy, consider getting a P.O. Box. This qualifies as a legal address and maintains your privacy.

If you already have a mailing list, make sure the subscription form is listed prominently on your website. Every single page should offer readers an opportunity to sign up. The easiest way to do this is to have a widget in your sidebar. For pages that don't have a sidebar, put it right on the page. If you don't understand what I'm talking about here, consider hiring someone to help you get it done. I can't stress the importance of building your author newsletter enough!

## Day 19

Yesterday you signed up for a newsletter service. Today, I want you to go in and set it up. I'm going to discuss Mailchimp here, but the basics should be the same with other services too. Regardless of what system you use, make sure you are in compliance with current anti-SPAM laws.

Your newsletter offers a direct line to your readers. They have invited you into their home, asked you to sit down and tell them about yourself. Take advantage of this. It's okay. They *want* to know you better, otherwise they wouldn't have signed up! There are a number of best practices regarding newsletter management. Take some time to read up on these, seek out blogs with advice and watch for a full Novel Publicity Guide dedicated to covering this topic in-depth later this year. In the meantime, check out this blog post for some key tips!

First, go in and noodle around, get comfortable with how the site works. Once you feel like you're ready, set up a "List". This will be your main newsletter list. Once you've set it up, you want to place it on your website in multiple places and in multiple ways in order to encourage readers to sign up.

Post the link for the signup on your social media sites and blog about your new awesome newsletter. Announce a schedule, then keep to it. This is also one of the only places I think an auto-response thank you is worth doing. Usually, that kind of thing feels impersonal, but sending a quick greeting to your voluntary subscribers is actually *more* personable in this case. Consider writing an introduction or offering a free goodie to show them just how great it's going to be to get mail from you!



Do not add anyone to your newsletter who hasn't given you explicit permission. You cannot go through your email and automatically add people who you think will want to be on the list. You can send them an invite, but you cannot add them without permission. This is a part of the anti-SPAM laws, so make sure you comply.

Your newsletter is about you in content, but it's all about your reader in value. Make sure your newsletter offers readers information they can't find anywhere else and opportunities to experience your work in a more intimate and direct way. This will encourage readers to actually open your email when it comes in!

I recommend sending your newsletter no more than once every two weeks and no less than once a quarter. You don't want to hit your subscribers' inboxes so often you become spam, and you don't want to reach out so infrequently that you're soon forgotten.

## **Day 20**

It's Day 20! You're at the two-thirds mark! To celebrate, let's take things easy today.

Your assignment is to follow five new people on Twitter and send out a lighthearted tweet. If you're feeling saucy, engage in a conversation with some of your followers and don't forget to use hashtags!

## Day 21

Take a few minutes today to peruse Facebook and Google+ and find some groups with likeminded authors.

I know this to-do item has nothing to do with promotion or even author branding really, but this kind of community building will help you in many ways. Having a network of reliable, hungry authors with similar goals will push you to work harder and reach further. They will also provide a much needed support for times when you feel low—and we all do at different times in our career. Knowing others understand can go a long way to buoying your spirits and getting you back on track so you can write more and sell more.

By making author friends, you will expand your opportunities and learn new things both from people who have been at this longer than you and from newer authors who are discovering exciting, innovative opportunities.

And remember, don't skip ahead! If today's item doesn't take long, spend the extra time you have to work on your writing! Tomorrow's assignment can wait.

## Day 22

Today, we're going to talk about getting your books on Goodreads. Books are automatically added to the site's massive catalog when their listings appear on Amazon. However, having your book up before its official launch can help you drive interest in your work for weeks, if not months, in advance. In order to accomplish this, you will need to manually enter your book.

To get yours added, go do Goodreads and search for the title of your book. If it's not already there, look on the right hand side of the page and click on the link labeled "**Manually add a book**". Once there, you'll know what to do. Enter all your info, save, and—*voilà!*—your book will begin to appear in the search results. Getting it up there early will also allow you to set up pre-launch giveaways!

Take a few minutes today to make sure all your books are set up the way you'd like for them to be listed. You can edit the book details and information once you are listed as the author, and we made sure you'd be ready by setting up your author account on Day 17.

For more information on how to best use Goodreads as an author, keep an eye out for Emlyn Chand's upcoming guide, *Goodreads for Authors*.



Make sure you upload the final cover image when adding your book to the Goodreads catalog. The site will not allow you to change your cover unless you later release a new edition, which will also require a new ISBN. Save yourself the trouble!

## Day 23

Quick! Go to your website and check your contact page.

Is there a form people can fill out to get in touch with you? If not, add it today. Your contact form can be simple and straightforward—no need to be fancy. The standard contact form pre-installed on your website will generally be fine. This next part is important: Make sure your settings have any submissions auto emailed to an address you actually check. You don't want to wind up with a bunch of unanswered messages! Readers hate that.

It's also a good idea to list your email address and P.O. Box.

Having your P.O. Box listed instantly makes you more accessible to those looking for your information. Because it's at a post office, your privacy and safety are guaranteed, plus you never know what kind of goodies might appear in your mail!

Once your contact form is in place, you'll be set. Don't worry about your inbox suddenly getting swamped with spam either. As long as you use a reputable mail service like Gmail, you'll be fine. I've had mine listed for years and have never had a problem.

## Day 24

Triberr is a great site for increasing the reach of your blog posts. This is a completely optional tool, and it's not for everyone. This site has more rigid rules than other social networks, and an implied contract exists between users as well. Before moving forward with Triberr, make sure you really understand what's expected of you. If it sounds like something you can do, then by all means get started!

Triberr allows users to band together in groups called "tribes" and tribe-mates help promote each other's blog posts on Twitter. When you join a tribe, there's an expectation that you're going to be sharing people's work on your Twitter stream, which means you'll need to decide if this is something you're willing to do. If not, don't sign up for Triberr. It's not fair to have people tweet your posts unless you reciprocate.

If you are interested in this kind of cross-promotion, search for tribes that focus on topics you would like to tweet about and which would appeal to your audience. Once you've found a few, follow for a while to make sure you like the content and then submit an application to join.

## Day 25

Your Amazon author page is another opportunity to let readers know who you are. The page is not automatically set up by Amazon when you publish your first book though. Once you set the page up, you will need to manually add each book as you publish—Amazon doesn't do that part automatically either. It's worth the extra work though, because nothing beats a one-stop shopping page right on Amazon.

Here, readers will find all the information they need to decide whether they'd like to purchase your books. If you haven't already, sign up for Amazon's author program at [www.authorcentral.amazon.com](http://www.authorcentral.amazon.com).

Once you've signed up, you have to manually add your books by searching for them and claiming them as your works. Amazon will review your claim before listing the selected books publicly, but they are quick to do so.

Add your short bio or use a tagline at the top and your long bio. Either works, but it's important to have something short and catchy at the top of the page in order to grab customers who are just skimming. Now, connect your blog and Twitter so new posts and tweets automatically populate, and consider adding a video like a book trailer or author interview.

An added bonus? This page requires minimal attention aside from updating your information occasionally as you release new books.

## Day 26

If you have a book out, post about a new review you've received or post an excerpt along with the book cover image. If you don't, post about your WIP today.

The people following you on social media are there because they want to know what you're doing. However, they don't want to be spammed with ads or pleas for purchases. Give them something to transform them from idle browsers into motivated purchasers!

## Day 27

Do you have a sell sheet you can send to bloggers or bookstores interested in your book?

This is an important tool, because it allows you to disseminate all the information anyone could ever need to promote your work or make a purchase, all within a single easy-to-use document.

A clean, uncluttered presentation with the information clearly and legibly spelled out will go a long way toward helping others buy and promote your book. If people get annoyed reading your sell sheet or can't find the information they need, they will give up and move on to the next item on their to-do list.

Sell sheets should be individualized per book. You can also create a catalog of your work, but that is an entirely different creature. Right now, let's focus on getting one master document made for each book. This should be a one page document that includes:

- Print length
- Publisher (If you are self-published, list your imprint name—do not write “self”)
- ASIN/ISBN
- Book trailer link
- Buy links
- Tagline and description
- Praise
- Author bio
- Author website link

If you have multiple books, do one today and come back to the others later. If you try to do them all at once, you'll burn yourself out or get frustrated. Put reminders on your calendar to help you remember to do one of these every few days until you've worked your way through your entire catalog.

## Day 28

Have you said “thank you” recently? People tend to focus on what they need and what they want, but that mentality is definitely not the best way to achieve your goals. Having a gracious and thankful attitude is an important part of being open to new opportunities and ideas, and that’s crucial for success in any endeavor.

Today would be a good day to thank your readers by doing something just for them. How about offering an advance copy of your upcoming book to your newsletter readers? Or running a little \$5 gift card giveaway on your blog? This doesn’t have to be planned in advance nor does it need to be stressful. You only need to take some time out and say “thank you” to the people who are invested in your success.

One great way to do this is through Rafflecopter. It’s a free site that allows you to run randomized giveaways with specified tasks for entry. You can upgrade for more features, but the free option works extremely well. The thing I like about Rafflecopter is that it allows you to post your giveaway directly on your Facebook page or to embed it in a blog post. They are also very good about keeping current with the terms of service for various social media sites.

Rewarding your readers is a big part of social media marketing, and it doesn’t take much to have a big impact on how people think of you.

## Day 29

We're almost to the end of your 30-day platform-building adventure! Look back to your master spreadsheet, check your website, and make sure you have all the pieces you need to move forward toward success!

Yesterday, you thanked your readers for what they have done for you. Today, I want you to think about what you have done for others. Marketing is not just about selling books, it's about creating long-term connections and building relationships with your readers and your peers. I know time is tight, but the small amount you spend on giving back to your community will pay itself back many times over. Like karma, what you put out into the world will come back to you exponentially magnified.

So take a moment and think about what you could do for someone in your community. Is there an author who needs a beta reader that you could assist? A friend who has a new release that you could share on your social media streams? Today, reach out and give back.

## Day 30

Congratulations! Today is the last day of our time together, and you've done a ton of work to get your online author platform whipped into shape! Now you have the tools in place to start spending less time marketing and more time thriving as an author.

Today, log back into Mailchimp, or whatever newsletter service you opted to use, and set up your first campaign. Send out a note to readers with an update about your work, a buy link for one project you'd like support on, and a quick note to thank them for following you. Sometimes I offer subscribers a freebie of my own work or of other authors', if they're willing to donate a few eBooks. Sometimes I just list some of the great free finds I've found on Amazon. And, always, I remember to use that affiliate code!

**I'd like to leave you with a final thought: Whatever you do from this point on, stay authentic, stay grateful, and remember that relationships are the key to your success.**

Thank you for taking this journey with me. I hope you've enjoyed this 30-day crash course in setting up your online author presence. Consider checking out Novel Publicity's other books for more in-depth information or sign up to receive notifications when there are new posts on our blog at [www.NovelPublicity.com/subscribe](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/subscribe).

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR & HER TEAM

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Every single person who helped with the production of this book provides author services via Novel Publicity. You can learn more about all of us, even those who didn't directly contribute to the making of this book, at [www.NovelPublicity.com/about](http://www.NovelPublicity.com/about). Want to know more about the services we offer? Well, that's there too. Now on to the official book-end credits.



Award-winning author of multicultural and transgressive literature, **Pavarti K. Tyler**'s work career has been as varied as her writing. She graduated Smith College in 1999 with a degree in Theatre then moved to New York, where she worked both on and off Broadway. Later, Pavarti went to work in the finance industry for several international law firms and even prepared taxes for a stint. Now she works as the Director of Marketing at Novel Publicity and has published a number of fiction works across genres. Learn more or connect with her at [www.novelpublicity.com/about/pavarti](http://www.novelpublicity.com/about/pavarti).



Of course, this book wouldn't have been possible without editing or formatting. Both were done by **Emlyn Chand**, who serves as Novel Publicity president and the publisher of this series. She was born with a fountain pen grasped firmly in her left hand (true story). Novel Publicity's mascot is a sun conure, thanks to her obsession with birds—and she gets to decide anyway since she is the company's founder and president. Her first novel, *Farsighted*, won the prestigious Writer's Digest Self-Published Novel of the Year award in 2012 for the YA category. She now writes most of her fiction under her real name, Melissa Storm. Learn more or connect with her at [www.novelpublicity.com/about/emlyn](http://www.novelpublicity.com/about/emlyn).



What first drew you to this book? Was it the gorgeous cover by **Mallory Rock**? She's an avid reader who enjoys books across many genres, although her most fervent love is for dystopian and fantasy novels. She often reads a book per day, whether or not her schedule allows for it—she'll make time one way or another. Her greatest pleasure, though, is in combining her love of literary works with her artistic skills to help authors bring their works to life. Her specialties are cover design, interior graphics, print formatting, cinematic book trailers, custom world maps, web graphics, and promotional materials, but she's never one to back away from a new challenge. In fact, bring it on! Learn more or connect with her at [www.novelpublicity.com/about/mallory](http://www.novelpublicity.com/about/mallory).



Our proofreader, **Falcon Storm**, helped make this shining jewel even sparklier. He was born in the frozen wastelands of Alaska. All that time spent in the dank, dark cold was quite enough, so he moved far, far away to the slightly-less-cold state of Michigan and now continues to seek out warmth by making others laugh. From role-playing games to spinning tall tales, he's always been a storyteller. These days he writes about funny and fantastical worlds set just beneath the surface of our own and works from home assisting in the day-to-day operations of Novel Publicity and raising his and Emlyn's sassafra daughter, Phoenix. Learn more or connect with him at [www.novelpublicity.com/about/falcon](http://www.novelpublicity.com/about/falcon).

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And be on the lookout for more awesome advice-packed guides from us on March 1, 2015. Topics include:

**The DIY Guide to Designing an Envable Author Website.\*** Tired of your one-size-fits-all blog that looks like every other newbie author's out there? Of course, you are! Never fear, Novel Publicity president, Emlyn Chand, will walk you through how to create and design your website and will teach you how to make it attractive and helpful for all types of people who might visit you online—like readers, reviewers, librarians, booksellers, and more. You won't want to miss the downloadable extras for this one!

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**A Fiction Writer's Survival Guide to Criticism.\*** Novel Publicity editor M. J. Kelley knows a thing or two about offering authors constructive criticism. He also knows when navigating advice from editors, critique partners, beta readers, reviewers, and even friends and family, it's challenging to know what advice to apply and when to reject it. Some writers reject all criticism only to discover years later that this attitude stunted their artistic growth. Others take every bit of advice they get, ruining their original vision. There is a balance between both these approaches and a method for extracting those valuable kernels of wisdom, and he shares it with you in this upcoming guide for writers.

*\*Titles subject to change prior to launch.*

# MORE FROM THIS AUTHOR

A decorative flourish consisting of two horizontal lines that meet at a central point, with curved, scroll-like ends extending outwards.

To find out more about Pavarti's genre-bending work, check out the book page on her website at [www.pavartiktyler.com/writing](http://www.pavartiktyler.com/writing).

Here you'll find short stories, novels, freebies, and a chance to sign up for Pav's newsletter, which will keep you up-to-date on all her publishing endeavors!