

BUT HOW DO I BLOG?

A blog may be many things, but when you're marketing, its main purpose is to attract search engines. So put it out there and let it go to work for you. Don't spend all your time trying to bring people to it.* A better way to build followers is to engage on social media, where millions of people will see you and may choose to look into your blog. (This is why it's very important to include on your social media profiles the internet address of your website.)

GENERAL BLOGGING TIPS

1. For writers of mainstream fiction, blog posts should be short and close to your topic. Write like you talk, not like a news article. Be human, funny, approachable, kind. As an add-on or stand-alone post, include a short video or a photo with an inspirational or funny quote. The goal is to entice people to share the post on Twitter, Facebook, etc. This is why I also suggest mainstream fiction writers don't do informational essays or author interviews.

HOWEVER, if you're writing about something fairly technical or scientific, informational essays are appropriate. Author interviews are not recommended unless you're writing a non-fiction book and the author is an expert on a related topic, and the readers can get information from the post. **NO MATTER WHAT YOU WRITE, DON'T SIMPLY BLOG ABOUT YOUR BOOK AND BOOK EVENTS. MIX THESE UP WITH GENERAL INTEREST POSTS.**

2. Use good bait to attract search engines: keywords, tags, headlines, pivoting off timely topics in the news. Some call this "newsjacking," as in hijacking the news. For example, when the Schwarzenegger marriage blew up, I used their names in the title of a blog post about the growing trend of later-life divorce. This topic related to my niche of issues relating to middle age and older.

NOTE: whatever tags you use, make sure they are included in the first couple of lines or paragraph of the post. This attracts search engines. Not including them sends a message to the engines that your blog is spammy, and they'll learn to avoid you.

3. Be sure to respond to commenters. If they've gone to the trouble to post a comment, you should acknowledge it.
4. Automate your blog to publish posts automatically to Twitter and Facebook (as well as other networks.) To effect that, check your blog's dashboard for settings, and look for something like "publication" or "sharing." You might also connect with NetworkedBlogs.com. If you do automate publication to Facebook, be sure to go there and respond to comments.

*If you are trying to build an email list, your blog will help that, in which case it might be worth your time to labor to attract people to the blog. However, you have greater reach with already-established social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter than if you simply trolled around the WWW trying to lure readers. Use the power of these gigantic networks to accomplish your goals.