**2020 Vision: Focus on Your Author Career This Year, This Decade**

Goal today is to give you big picture overview, lots of things to think about. I can outline how to go about making a plan, but I can’t outline a specific plan for you, because each of you are running your own unique business.

**A review of publishing trends**

Ebook – Amazon, Apple, BN, Kobo, Google Play

Aggregators – D2D, Smash, StreetLib, PublishDrive, Kobo

Print - Ingram, BN Press, KDP

Audio - Kobo, GP, Apple, Smash, Amazon, BN

Can produce your own via ACX and Findaway Voices

Translations - Babel

Library Distribution – D2D, Kobo, Smash, StreetLib, PublishDrive

Your way of competing with Kindle Unlimited

Stat of OverDrive distribution increasing

**Looking Forward – Predictions (review Written Word Media post, Smash)**

<https://www.writtenwordmedia.com/the-top-ten-2020-publishing-industry-trends-every-author-needs-to-know/>

<https://blog.smashwords.com/2019/12/publishingpredictions.html>

Book Buyers will read more on tablets, smartphones, and more readers may adapt to audio, multifunction devices, not dedicated ereaders

As music has seen a resurgence of vinyl, print books will regain some marketshare

Ebooks will continue to replace the mass market paperback for disposable reading

Pricing – 0.99 doesn’t have the power it used to, too many free books

Ebooks are being priced higher by publishers

Amazon buyers are more bargain hunters than Apple, BN

Metadata is Gold

Preorder periods

Custom samples (Apple, BN)

Series Data

Categories and Keywords

Databases – visibility is about databases and algorithms

Multiple formats of same title a plus on Amazon

Everyone wants to make money off of you.

Facebook Ads, AMS Ads, Google Ads

Amazon sponsorships, buy box bids

Amazon Prime, Kindle Unlimited

Kobo pd promos via dashboard, watch for more of that

Keep an eye on D2D and B2R

Organic visibility will be harder to achieve on social media.

Newsletters and your website – build your own playground

Discuss more during VREA portion

Series encourages your readers to connect more deeply with your characters, settings

During the decade, look for ebooks to incorporate more audio and video within the reading experience.

If your book is library friendly, you may want to consider hard cover and/or large print editions

**Calendar Planning** - tips on getting organized and planning your year

Preorder period

Reviews

Buying Ads

Retail calendar year

Tech upgrades, dashboard closures

Store merchandising

Holidays!

BISAC review

Have retailers changed their URL syntax?

Reminders to download sales figures from dashboards

Review upcoming writer conferences, reader events

Writing and new releases!

**Time vs Money vs Control** - approaching your writing as a business and budgeting time and money and when to hire help

Everyone’s model will be different.

Do you write for a publisher?

Self-published?

Hybrid?

**Questions to consider**

There are some big picture questions you should ask yourself to determine whether it would be more beneficial for you to spend either money or time to complete them.

**1. How much time and money have you set aside for the task or project?**

You may not know, so during this next year, start keeping track.

**2. How much control are you willing to hand over to a freelancer?**

This might be a tough question to answer, but if letting go of control is difficult for you, consider this. When working with freelancers, you hire them with the expectation that they’re experts in their field. Their expertise will save you time.

**3. What parts of the process are you good at? What, if anything, would you like to learn?** All authors have their strengths and limitations. Don’t apologize if you’re unable to do these tasks yourself or you simply aren’t interested. It’s better to know and embrace your limitations and exploit your strengths instead of apologizing or downplaying them.

**4. Do you want an assistant, a partner, a coach, or a manager?**

**Questions**

Weigh the following as you consider how to spend your time and money:

1. Do you work better alone or with people?

2. Are you skilled in graphics and technology?

3. Are you a fast learner?

4. Are you a patient person?

5. Are you organized?

6. Do you manage your time efficiently?

7. Do you have any experience managing people?

8. Are you good at meeting deadlines?

Cover Artists – do you understand graphic design? Copyright and royalty-free image licensing?

Formatters – do you understand functionality of ebooks? HTML coding? How to make your ebook friendly to readers with disabilities? Even with Vellum, do you *really* know what you’re doing?

Website Designers – do you understand GDPR and privacy regulations? Navigation, buttons, links, simplicity of design?

Mailing List Companies – do you understand privacy concerns, rules around managing and protecting subscribers, rules about “bulk” emailing, do you want a “trickle” path for new subscribers?

Social Media – do you need an assistant or a coach?

**A “VREA” or Virtual Real Estate Assessment** - how to organize and review where you are online and how you budget your time

Do a Google search of your author name. How many hits on the first 3 pages are YOU?

Your website

Retailers & Goodreads

Social Media

**SEE** **HANDOUT**

**Bonus:** Download NTRWA Two-Step Workshops Social Media Game Plan and Retailer Opportunities for more tips

<http://www.authorems.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NT-2Step-Workshops-2014.doc>

Where and how do you want to spend time?

Where are your readers?

Do your time and ad sales dollars spent really translate to sales?

**Working with Freelancers** - tips for finding, hiring, communicating with virtual assistants

Why should you consider freelancers/assistants?

Tap into their expertise

Saves you time that you can use on writing

They’re more efficient and stay up to date in their fields

What do you need done?

Website

Social Media

Newsletter

Street Team/FB Group

Editing, Proofreading

Book File Production

Book covers, graphics for site and ads

Marketing, Ads, Reviews

Calendaring, Accounting, Office-y stuff

Where do you find freelancers?

Reedsy

Alliance of Independent Authors

Author EMS Freelancers section

ASK other authors for recommendations

How do you vet Freelancers?

Ask if you may contact clients for testimonials

Give a sample or small project to test someone out

Formatters and cover artists will have portfolios

Agreements

Either review and sign an agreement, check to see if they have a Terms page on their website, and/or use email to document what each party agrees to.

Kill Fees

Deadlines

These are professionals, so hold them accountable for deadlines.

Missed deadlines can have a real cost for you.

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