

2020 VISION:
FOCUS ON YOUR AUTHOR CAREER
THIS YEAR, THIS DECADE

PRESENTED BY AMY ATWELL



TODAY'S PLAN

- How Publishing Has Changed Since 2000
- 2020 Forecast of Future Trends
- Calendar Planning: Organizing and Planning Your Year
- Cost of Doing Business: Balancing Time | Money | Control
- Virtual Real Estate Assessment
- Working with Freelancers
- Bonus Time? AMYTHING i.e. Ask Amy Anything

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. I want to give you resources, and a way to identify your next steps. It's a big new decade!

20 years ago, I wanted to be an author. I had no idea that today, that would mean I'm running my own international business where I'm negotiating and contracting with some of the largest global retail and tech companies (Amazon, Google, Apple) to sell my work.

WHAT CAME BEFORE...

- 1986 — OverDrive founded;
2016 acquired by Rakuten Kobo;
2019 sold to KKR
- 2002 — First BlackBerry phone;
iPhone followed in 2007
- 2003 — MySpace founded
- 2004 — Facebook launched;
IPO in 2013
- 2005 — YouTube founded;
purchased by Google in 2006
- 2006 — Twitter is launched;
IPO in 2013
- 2007 — Amazon releases first
Kindle
- 2008 — Smashwords founded
- 2009 — BN releases first Nook
- 2009 — Kobo launches ebook
store; 2010 releases first Kobo
device
- 2010 — Apple releases first iPad;
launches iBooks app and store
- 2011 — Borders Groups
liquidates, closes WaldenBooks
and Borders stores
- 2012 — Google Play launches its
online store
- 2012 — Draft2Digital founded

2002 to 2012 represents HUGE changes in technology. 2020 to 2030 will continue to see rapid changes in technology and how people work, play, read. Think of how audio and video are becoming more prominent in our computer lives. Younger generations are increasingly tech savvy.

THE RISE OF BOOK AVAILABILITY

1990

2020

500,000

15,000,000+

There's no mystery about why authors work so hard to gain visibility for their books. It's HARD in the crowded marketplace.

CURRENT TRENDS

- Popular backlist titles made 50%+ of book sales Q1 2019
- Ebooks continue to be profitable for indies and novelists who find their audiences
- Stats indicate that print books are regaining share — but that may be children's books and non-fiction titles
- Audio Books continue to gain share
- Comics and graphic novels continue to gain share
- OverDrive = 326M library downloads of ebooks and audio books in 2018



- ebooks
- print books
- audio books
- retailers vs distributors
- aggregators - StreetLib, PublishDrive
- Library distribution
- Translations

THE BEST OF THE 2020 PREDICTIONS

- Book buyers will use tablets/smart phones more to read and listen to books
- Your website, mailing list, FB group, street team are gold
- Metadata, SEO, demographics will be vital to visibility
- Major publishers will start using KDP Select
- Organic reach on retailers and social media will decline ***
- More authors will run ad campaigns
- Scam services will multiply
- Authors will seek new ways of monetizing their work

Note that all these predictions (except the first) are based on money. Basically, everyone in the industry is seeking ways to increase their incomes.

We'll discuss how organic reach is declining and why more this afternoon

CALENDAR PLANNING

1. SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound

Everyone's goals will be unique. If you don't have goals, how do you know if you had a successful year?

TIPS ON PLANNING YOUR YEAR

- Find the calendar format that works for you
- Identify Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Tasks
- Stay informed of changes and how they can impact or provide opportunity for you
- Incorporate creation, production, marketing, record-keeping, infrastructure, vacations
- Understand the nature of the retail year
- Set aside quiet time to plan, to think, to review, to reassess your goals

2. Let's identify some of these tasks—

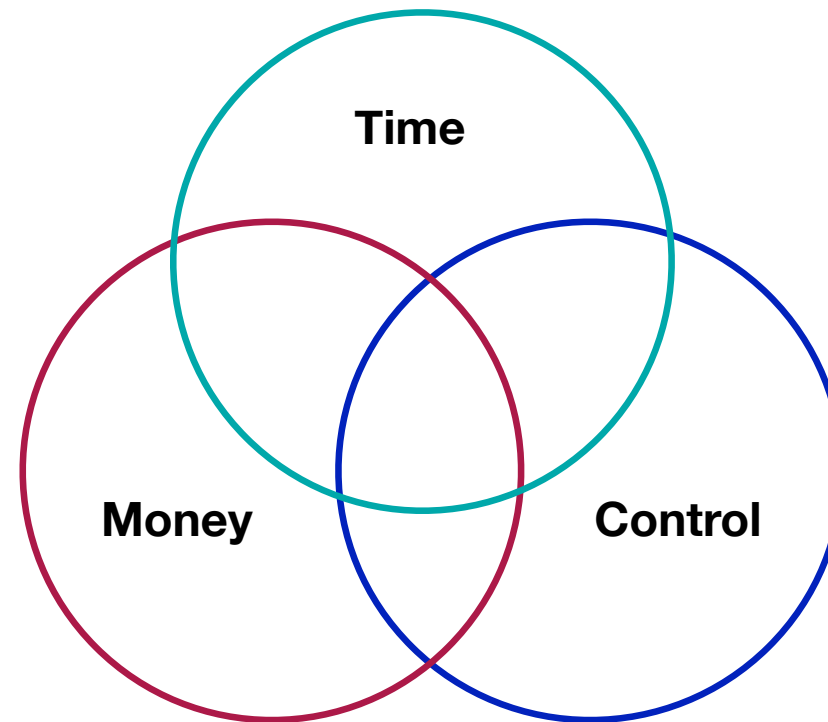
3. Changes that can impact: changes to preorder timelines, assetless, BN's new custom sample, BISAC code updates, Amazon algorithm changes, GDPR/privacy regulations, updating retail site URL syntax (Apple)

4. Identify tasks by category—

5. Retail Year may drive your release schedule, promotions, merchandising opportunities, when are readers online, when do dashboards slow down or close for upgrades, when does it take longer to order print copies, post-Christmas, readers have new devices, possibly gift cards, etc.

Take a BREAK here?

COSTS OF GROWING YOUR BUSINESS

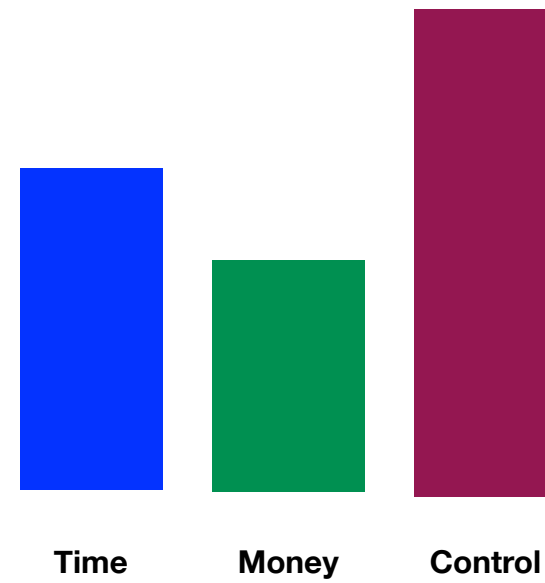


Everything you do for your business will cost you either time or money.

There will be certain things you will want to control.

The magic comes with finding the right mix that works for you.

DECISION MATRIX INCLUDES:



Do you publish commercially or indie?

Social Media - post everywhere individually or use a media dashboard?

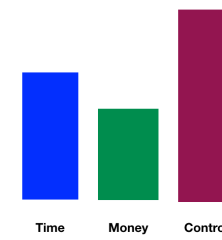
Retail distribution - everywhere individually or use an aggregator?

Freelancers — hire individually or hire a publishing service?

Book Reviews - canvas and schedule individually or hire a book promo service?

Understand what you're paying for and be sure you get value.

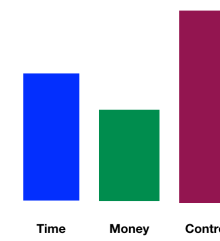
FINDING THE BALANCE



- How much time and money have you set aside for the task or project?
- How much control are you willing to hand over to a freelancer?
- What parts of the process are you good at?
- What, if anything, would you like to learn?
- Do you want an assistant, a partner, a coach, or a manager?

Handout has a partial laundry list of tasks. Use it as a starting point to help you identify how to spend your time, spend your money.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



- Do you work better alone or with people?
- Are you skilled in the necessary technology?
- Are you a fast learner?
- Are you a patient person?
- Are you organized?
- Do you manage your time efficiently?
- Do you have any experience managing people?
- Are you good at meeting deadlines?

Your business will change over time. More books, more streams of income, sales build, as you make more profit, how can you reinvest in your business?

VIRTUAL REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT

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- What is it?
A systematic review of your online presence
- How often should I do it?
At least annually, better more often, definitely prior to a new book release or booking a big promotion
- Where do I start it?
Start with a Google search for your author name
- How long does it take?
Allot 2-3 hours to review your author name results, more if you include reviewing some or all of your book titles

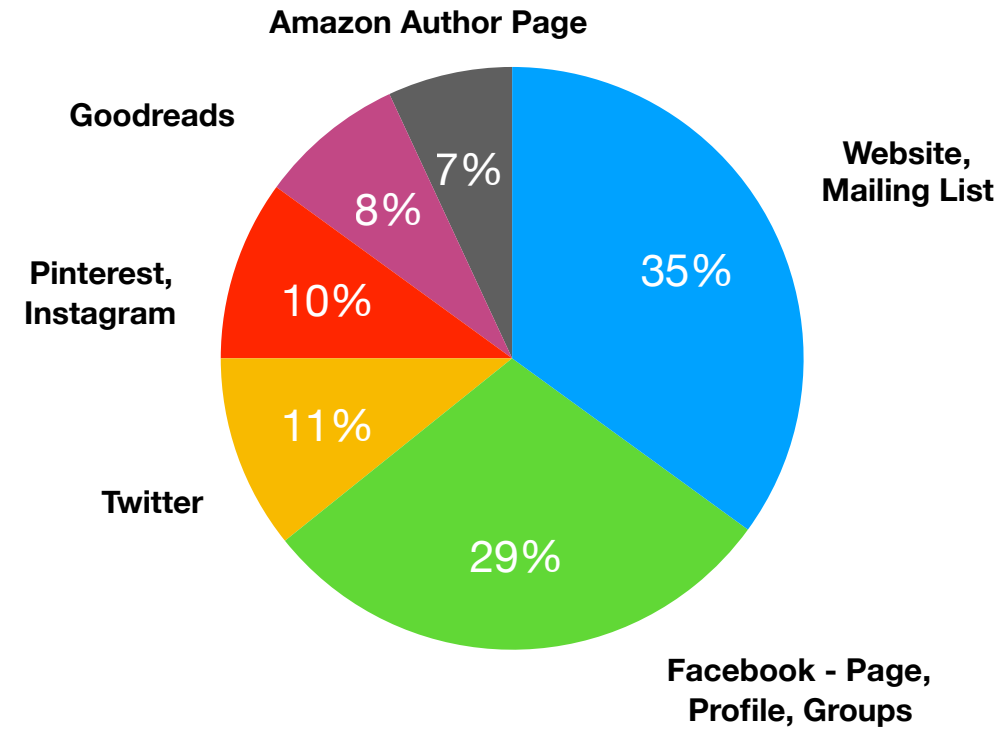
VIRTUAL REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT

- Set your goals — WHY are you online?
- Get organized to save time
 - Build a browser menu of your social media links
 - Build a browser menu of your book retail links
 - If you have a lot of books, may need a spreadsheet
- Sign up for Google Alerts
- Review your website from different computer browsers and from your mobile phone
- Challenge: for one week, track time spent online

1. Gain readers? Sell books? Connect with authors? Socialize?
4. Make sure your site is mobile friendly

<https://www.google.com/alerts>

SAMPLE OF TIME SPENT



VREA PUNCH LIST

- Images good quality, current?
- Bio current? (short, medium, long bios)
- Most important info pinned at top or quickly found?
- Do you have a good mix of content? (not all promo)
- Do you interact with others?
- For books, are your categories/keywords current? Series information linking properly?

2-page handout gives a starting point for working through your own VREA. I will have a downloadable version in .docx and .pdf available at AuthorEMS.com/downloads (EOD Monday?)

VREA FOR BOOKS

- Make sure series info is connecting
- Review latest BISAC categories
- Is your book Fiction or YA Fiction
- Keywords on Amazon and BN are pretty different...
- You can apply for up to 10 categories on Amazon
- Long-tail search terms are the new normal

BISG.org - manages BISAC categories. Adult fiction was updated in 2019, YA Fiction is planned for update fall of 2020.
Not all retailers use BISAC codes.

How many of you buy your own ebooks from ALL retailers possible? Do you own e-reader devices?

Afternoon BREAK?

FREELANCERS

AUTHOR ASSISTANTS

PUBLISHING SERVICES

COACHES CONSULTANTS

MARKETING & PROMOTION SVCS

You may be able to tap into family members to assist with certain things.

Review the TMC Handout and the VREA Handout —there's a laundry list of tasks you may want to farm out.

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

WHO DO YOU WANT ?

- Assistant - someone who does tasks as directed
- Partner - someone who handles projects and brings you the finished work
- Coach - someone who helps you learn how to do it yourself
- Manager - someone who oversees projects, keeping you informed throughout

Assistant: family members who assist bookkeeping, uploading, price management

Partner: someone you entrust with a project, cover artists, editors, formatters, web designers, newsletter pros

Coach: anyone who helps you learn. Could be an editor, formatter, marketing professional, beta reader

Manager: Often these are paid virtual assistants, they may supervise your book production team, they may manage your new book launch planning and deadlines; could be your agent. To an extent, they manage YOU.

WHERE DO YOU FIND THEM?

- Get recommendations from other authors, ask on loops or FB groups
- Alliance for Independent Authors
- Reedsy (\$\$)
- LinkedIn
- Check the retailer dashboards for publishing partners
- Fiverr is not where the serious freelancers are hanging out

If you're seeking translators, Babelcube has a royalty match, Language+ Literary Translations is reputable.

If you're seeking audio book narrators, ACX and Findaway Voices are the big companies that can provide that.

HIRING HELP

- Identify what task/project you want done
- Know your budget and your deadline
- Communicate your expectations
- Ask for references, examples of previous work
- Start small, perhaps a trial project or sample

BE BUSINESSLIKE

- Ask if there's an agreement, if not, use emails to track what was promised on each side
- Understand the payment schedule, ask if there's a kill fee, use credit card or PayPal
- If your deadline is approaching and you haven't received the project, reiterate the importance
- If working with friends or family members, establish that this project is business
- If you found the freelancer through a service, give the service feedback

Should have a work-for-hire agreement with translators to protect your sole ownership of copyright of even the translated edition.

Credit card/PayPal offers some chance you may be able to recoup money if the freelancer fails to deliver.

Cover artists will usually retain copyright of their images, may require their name to appear on copyright page.

QUESTIONS ???



Email me any time: amy.atwell@authorems.com

Join my Author Newsloop on groups.io. You can sign up at www.authorems.com in the lower right hand corner on the footer. I post latest things I've discovered about retailers, changes in industry, links to interesting other resources. Announcement only, not a discussion loop.