

Getting Your Book to Your Readers

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Publishing your own books has become an amazing option for lots of authors, both for your new books and for books you might have published in the past and for which you now own the publishing rights. But publishing your books is only half the equation for success.

What's the other half?

Getting those books to the readers who – whether they realize it or not – are avidly waiting to buy and read them.

Let's look at three ways you can get started learning about:

- * who these readers are
- * what they like,
- * what they're willing to pay for your books
- * where they hang out
- * how they like to communicate.

Wow, that was a pretty big statement. I'm not saying you can learn all that stuff at once, but I am saying that there are easy and free ways to get started acquiring this information, and that's what we're going to look at here.

3 Ways to Get Started

1. You're probably not going to be surprised, but the first place you should head is your nearest Google search bar.

Yep, good old Google knows more than anyone about what's going on online. It's up to us to learn how to use this incredible resource to find our readers.

Let's say you write about parenting. Use Google to search for "parenting forums" and "parenting discussion boards." If you write about football, use "football forums" and "football discussion boards."

You're going to get a lot of hits to research, and I'm betting you'll find some very active communities with engaged people talking about your specific topic. Some of these forums are quite large, and you might need to drill down a bit to find the sections that apply to your specific niche, but this will put you in immediate contact with people interested in your topic.

2. Another great way to find your readers is through blogs in your niche.

Blogs that have been online for over a year will have a readership of some size. You'll need to do a little research to find the blogs that have the most readers interested in your topic.

For instance, if you found a discussion forum in step 1, check the links that belong to frequent contributors there, and you'll start to connect to the blogs in your niche.

Once there, look at the comments on popular posts and start exploring the links (usually the link is embedded in the name of the person who left the comment) for even more places readers hang out.

3. Finally, use the search capabilities on some of the big social networking sites.

These sites are useful not because they have hundreds of millions of users, but because they each have the ability to locate specific groups of people.

For instance, on Twitter you can use <http://search.twitter.com> to find trending topics or hashtags (words with # in front of them) related to your subject. You can search on #cycling to find thousands of people interested in bicycling and then narrow your search further from there.

You can use this same strategy on Google+ to find articles and people commenting on them with the same #cycling search. Following the strands of the networks you'll discover this way will lead to communities of readers you can start interacting with.