INDIE AUTHOR MAGAZINE
Volume 2 • Issue 7 • July 2022
DISTRIBUTION
This Issue's Featured Author:
NICK THACKER
Mining for Gold
How to Conquer the Bad Review Blues
11 Ways to Earn More from Your Nonfiction
5 Tips for Adding Diversity to Your Draft
Tales as Old as Time, Retold

+RZ WR 7XUQ D 3UR“ W IURP %
<RXU $XWKRU 6KHOI

28

11 WAYS TO EARN MORE FROM YOUR NONFICTION

16

HOW NICK THACKER IS REWRITING THE RULE-BOOK

7KH 7KULOOHU :ULWHU 6D\V 7UDGLWLRQDO
3XEOLVKLQJ ,V %URNHQ +H V *RW 3ODQV
WR)L[,W

41

TRIGGERED

,QGLH $XWKRUV :HLJK LQ RQ WKH &RQWHQW
:DUQLQJ 'HEDWH

ON THE COVER

+RZ 1LFN 7KDFNHU ,V 5HZUL
5XOH ERRN

:D\V WR (DUQ 0RUH IURP <
1RQ“ FWLRQ
7LSV IRU $GGLQJ 'LYHUVLW
'UDIWKDQG 'RLQJ LW 5LJKW

7DOHV DV 2OG DV 7LPH 5HW

0LQLQJ IRU *ROG

+RZ WR &RQTXHU WKH %DG 5

10 Dear Indie Annie

12 10 Tips for: Patreon

40 Tech Tools

46 Podcasts We Love

64 Books We Love

THE WRITE LIFE

54 Wellness

7KH (\HV +DYH ,W 6WXGLHV 6KRZ
<RX 'RQMW 1HHG)DQF\ (\HZHDU WR
3URWHFW <RXU 6LJKW IURP ([WHQGHG
6FUHHQ 8VH

56 Mindset

+RZ WR &RQTXHU WKH %DG 5HYLHZ
%OXHV

TYPEWRITER TALES

9 Martelle's Motivation:

7DNH <RXU %DFNOLVW WR WKH %RQH

5 From the Publisher

68 In This Issue

34

SCRIBECOUNT WANTS TO BE YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND

7LPH ,V 0RQH\ DQG WKH 6DO
$LPV WR 6DYH <RX

47

THE TRUTH ABOUT TEXAS

:K\ WKH /RQH 6WDU 6WDWH (
3HUIHFW 6HWWLQJ IRU <RX

50

TALES AS OLD AS TIME, RETOLD

58

5 TIPS FOR ADDING DIVERSITY TO YOUR DRAFT—AND DOING IT RIGHT

PUBLISHER
&KHOOH +RQLNHU

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
$ULFH %ULJJV

EDITOR IN CHIEF
1LFROH 6FKURHGHU

COPY EDITOR
/HUD 7KRPSVRQ

WRITERS
$QJHOD $UFKHU
(ODLQH %DWHPDQ
3DWULFLD &DUU
/DXUHO 'HFKHU
)DWLPD)D\H]
*LOO)HUQOH
*UHJ)LVKERQH
5HP\ )ODJJ
&KULVKDXQ .HOOHU
-DF +DUPRQ

WRITERS
0DULRQ +HUPDQQVHQ
DQVLD /DVLQVND
%UH /RFNKDUW
$QQH /RZQ
6®QH 0¢LUL 0DF'RXJDOO
0HUUL 0D\ZHWKHU
/DVDLULRQD 0F0DVWHU
6XVDQ 2GHY
1DFRQH 6FKURHGHU
(PLOLD =HHODQG

PUBLISHER
Athenia Creative
6820 Apus Dr.
Sparks, NV, 89436 USA
775.298.1925

ISSN 2768-7880 (online)–ISSN 2768-7872 (print)

e publication, authors, and contributors reserve their rights in regards to copyright of their work. No part of this work covered by the copyright may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means without the written consent of the publisher. All cop righted work was reproduced with the permission of the owner.

Reasonable care is taken to ensure that Indie Author Magazine articles and other information on the website are up to date and as accurate as possible, at the time of publication, but no responsibility can be taken by Indie Author Magazine for any errors or omissions contained herein. Furthermore, Indie Author Magazine takes no responsibility for any losses, damages, or distress resulting from adherence to any information made available through this publication. e opinions expressed are those of th authors and do not necessarily re ect the views of Indie Author Magazine

F rom e Publisher

That dog won't hunt.
When I moved to Texas from California what feels like a million years ago, it sometimes felt as if I'd moved to a far more exotic locale than just a new state in the same country.

The food was different.
 e BBQ meat looked burnt and inedible but tasted delicious, and everything was always covered in a thick american cheese sauce they called "queso" or in a gloppy white sausage gravy. I learned you could deep fry anything if you tried hard enough, including a twenty-four-pound turkey.

North, South, East, and West are meaningless.
I now needed to parse "thisaway" and "thataway" and discern how long "a spell" was when I asked for directions. I was once told, "Y'all go thisaway for a spell, and then turn thataway when you see the tree with the yellow ribbon tied to it." Not only did I never nd that tree, I abandoned my trip entirely when I encountered a hissing armadillo in the middle of the road that refused to move.

And then there are the colloquialisms.
 e rst time I met my new in-laws, Uncle Joe-Boy said to my then husband, "She's got some snap in her garters." I wasn't sure if I should be o ended, but I rightly took it to mean I was a sassy one. Over the years I had to dig out my Texas-English dictionary when he said about his sister, "She's two sandwiches short of a picnic basket," commented about any politician, "He's slicker than boiled snot," or when he angered a waitress and said, "She's in a horn-tossing mood."

As authors, we're able to imbibe our characters with a little color. We can let their personalities shine through descriptions and colloquialisms. As a reader, I love these little analogies. But much like my early Texas life, don't assume your reader will know what in the "Holy Sam Hill" you're talking about. Be sure the phrase stands on its own for readers from all countries so you don't pull them out of the story or send them running to Google something.

Otherwise, that dog won't hunt.

To Your Success,
Chelle
Publisher
Indie Author Magazine

PLANNING TRAVEL TO A CONFERENCE?

Use miles.

Explore ways to make the most of your award miles.

Writelink.to/unitedair

PLAN YOUR BOOKS THE WAY YOU THINK

Outline faster, plot smarter, and turbocharge your productivity today with the #1 visual book planning software for writers.

USE CODE "IAM" FOR 10% OFF

https://writelink.to/plottr

Take

Every single one of your old books is new to someone.

We struggle and ght endlessly to add readers to our newsletter lists. Beyond current and future titles, there is substantial opportunity in delivering your old titles to new fans. Introduce them to your backlist incrementally. I use sales and promotions of the rst in series. Maybe even make the rst book free if there are enough books in the series to earn your money back from the cost of the free promotion. It's okay to pay for someone to see your work. Fans have value that is worth your paying to nd them.

A great book put into the right readers' hands. ose are the two concepts that every professional author must execute.

A great book? at may not be your rst book, or your fth, but it might be your sixth. It might be your twentieth too. How do you get better if you don't practice with intentionality? I write short stories to sharpen my craft. I've written a lot of short stories. And then I o er them for

free to get new readers onto my list. If they like those stories, they look for other stories.

Backlist riches.

Simple as that. You can always sell a good book. Even if it's not great, readers are forgiving (not those one-star, bitter people, but they don't matter as much as you think). And the readers understand that this was a book written in the before time.

ey expect you to get better as an author, but they also expect you might not have always written as well as you do now. If your rst story is that bad, x it. It's oftentimes easier to x a story than write new words. When you're more experienced, dive in, and you'll nd that with a few days' work, you'll be able to sharpen an old story, take it from good to great.

And you'll probably nd that it wasn't as bad as you might have thought. Find the gems within your prose. Your readers have. And introduce those words to your new readership.

Because your words have value, and your backlist is a bank that you can always draw from. ■

Craig Martelle

for me. en came retirement.

Department of Homeland Security was a phenomenally miserable gi enough and went to law school. A second summa cum laude later and I w consulting rm performing business diagnostics, business law, and leaders ments. For the money they paid me, I was good with that. Just until I wasn You'll nd Easter eggs from my career hidden within all my books. Enjoy th

I'm working on a series of non ction books that I hope will help people with issues they may struggle with. I'm not a professional in my eld; I've just learned a lot through life experience. Can I write from my own experience? Or do I need a degree or certi cation to help people?

School of Hard Knocks in Sussex

D

What do you think I'm going to tell you?

Many could challenge me on what quali cations I have to provide the carefully crafted, loving advice I give in this column every month. And if they even had the cajones to question this to my face, what would my answer be?

I am Indie Annie, the guru of indie writing. I bring enlightenment. I bring wisdom. Who grants me the authority to make such claims?

I do.

I look back over my life in indie publishing and pronounce (eloquently, of course) that I have knowledge and experience that can help you in your career.

Do I know everything? No, I don't.

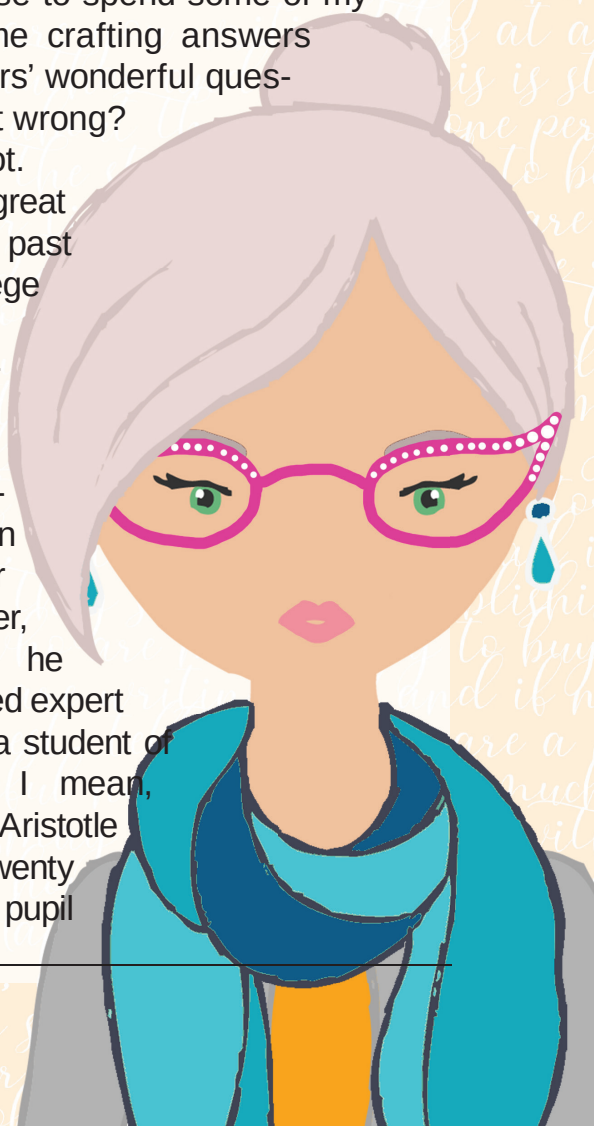
Do I have a PhD in indie publishing? No, because no one does. ere's no such thing.

I might have a degree in creative writing, graphic design, or rocket science. Equally, I might not have a certi cate in anything other than the one-hundred-yard breaststroke I got when I was seven.

But I have lived my life and learned many valuable things along the way. And now, I choose to spend some of my valuable time crafting answers to my readers' wonderful questions. Is that wrong?

I think not.

Did the great sages of the past have college certi cates? What qual- i ed Aristotle to write about philosophy or even writing, for that matter, except that he was a revered expert in one and a student of the other? I mean, arguably, Aristotle spent twenty years as a pupil



1HHG KHOS IURP \RXU IDYRULWH [illegible] $XQW"
$VN 'HDU ,QGLH $QQLH D TXHV[illegible]W
,QGLH$QQLH#LQGLHDXWKRUPDJD[illegible]P

and colleague at the Academy of Plato (c. 428–c.348 BCE), but did he have framed copies of his quali cations nailed to the wall of his o ce in the Lyceum?

ough I can't prove it, I am pretty sure the answer to this is no.

My point is, who de nes what you have to say as being of value? Your audience.

Do you think there is an audience for your non ction books? Do you think you have su cient insight into a subject that, once published, would bene t another? If the answer is yes to both questions, then you have a duty to write what you have learned and share your wisdom with the world.

My darling Hard Knocks, you do not state what eld you would write in, but let's ponder a few options. Have you learned how to manage an addiction? You may not be a quali ed counselor, but your story would most de nitely help others traveling the path you once trod. Perhaps you are a business owner who can guide budding entrepreneurs through the stages required to build a successful enterprise, though you never set a foot in Harvard Business School. Maybe you are a self-taught musician who has developed a unique system for learning new instruments, and you are planning to write a series of beginner's guides to the ute, lute, and harpsichord.

Only you know if you can help someone else with your books. Are you able to solve a problem they face? If the answer is yes, then write away, my dear friend.

I suspect your fear lies less in the writing of your series and more in its promotion. How will you market a series when you appear to have no credentials? Why would anyone buy from you? Are you some quack selling snake oil?

Well, like the snake-oil sellers of old, it's all about the pitch. People don't buy credentials; people buy hope. ey buy answers, so if you are solving a problem, you are more than halfway there. And they buy into the person who is selling. Make sure your blurb sells you and announces clearly that you are what they have been looking for.

Do you have a guaranteed way to lose weight, make a killing in Vegas, or sell a thousand books? Can you organize the cluttered? Motivate the listless? Or teach a starving college student how to boil an egg?

I leave you with the works of one Mrs. Isabella Mary Beeton (1836–1865). Her legendary guide to Victorian housekeeping is one of the best-selling books of all time. And what were her quali cations? She was a young Victorian housewife, nothing more. But it was more than enough.

Happy writing,
Indie Annie

10 Tips for PATREON

Patreon, an online platform, allows people to nancially support creatives, including authors, throug a monthly tiered membership. It o ers an excellent option for any indie author looking to diversify their income and create a new revenue stream.

But how do you optimize your pro le on the platform for maximum returns on your time investment so that you entice existing fans as well as new readers and supplement your income at the s time? Read on for our top ten tips for mastering Patreon.

---

1 MAKE THE MOST OF THAT FIRST IMPRESSION

A pro le on Patreon without an introduction will quickly turn away potential patrons. Introduce yourself, your books, and your genre. Welcome visitors to your page, and le them know what you'll be o ering should they become your patrons. In turn, share what their support means to you and what they're helping you achieve through their pledges. You can e remind your current fans just why they clicked through and became a patron.

Bonus points if you include a welcome video—people often appreciate putting a face and a vo to a name. A video is much more personal than a block of text. rough the video, you'll also show visitors that you're active on the platform, serious about it, and that ultimately, it's a great idea for the to become your patron. In that vein, you could also create a personalized thank-you video for tho who do click through and become patrons. is will make them feel special and connected to you.

Also, don't assume that everyone visiting your Patreon page will know who you are. Make sure include a link to your website or Amazon author pro le to help convert random browsers into patrons

2 LIST A RANGE OF TIERS

You'll want to give your potential patrons a variety of options to choose from. at way, they can adjust their pledges accordingly. A one-dollar tier is a great entry point for patron who wish to support you but who may not be able to a ord more expensive tiers. Non ction author Joanna Penn o ers the bene ts of a simple thank-you and a hug if you ever meet the patron person. Other bene ts of higher tiers include listing the patron on her website, access to a bon monthly Q&A, and polls on character or setting names. You could even o er patrons special role on your private Discord server.

Likewise, an exclusive, extravagant, or expensive tier for superfans could also be an excellent if it ts in with your business model. Mountaindale Press publisher and author Dakota Krout has a one-thousand-dollar tier in which he promises to y the patron to anywhere in the continental United States, buy them dinner, and hand deliver a signed copy of all his books and a clothing item. Fo superfan, that would be a dream come true.

---

3 BRAND YOUR PATREON

Treat Patreon as part of your business, and make sure that it aligns with your website an other social media platforms in terms of look and feel. Give your tiers names related to your books, and include header photos that relate to your books and your brand. is will create a cohesive experience between all your platforms and will make your patrons feel a they're part of your world.

---

4 GO BEHIND THE SCENES

You may wish to o er behind-the-scenes glimpses into your process as one of the ben ts of joining a particular tier. ese could include your outlines, handwritten notes, edits, or deleted scenes. ese are invaluable to readers, who often want to see your creative process glimpse "how the sausage gets made."

---

5 DON'T OVEREXTEND YOURSELF

 is is an important one: Don't try to do too much. It's easy to get carried away and ll your tiers with all sorts of goodies for your patrons—after all, they're handing over their hard-earned cash to support you, so you want to keep them happy. But left unchecked, Patreon c become a full-time job and eat into your writing and production time.

It's better to o er items that you already produce as part of your process. (See tip 4.) ese can include bonus or deleted scenes, early access (which requires no new content), or polls for cove or character names. You can even o er to list your patrons in the acknowledgment section of yo next book—this takes minimal e ort on your part, but readers will be thrilled to see their nameS in a published book. You could also list their nameS on a dedicated part of your website with an option link back to their own website or social media pro le.

---

6 CONSIDER "CHARGE UP FRONT"

If you're publishing content regularly on your Patreon (for instance, chapters of your books as you write them, or early e-book copies of your books), then you may wish to consider th "charge up front" option. If you select this option, your patrons are charged both when they join and again on the rst of the month as opposed to only being billed on the next rst of the month. For instance, if a patron joins on July 20, they will be charged on July 20, then again on August only twelve days later. You could add a disclaimer to your pro le, clarifying the policy and advisin potential patrons that if it's close to the end of the month, they might wish to wait until the rst of the next month. at way, they won't be charged twice in a short time frame.

e upside to the "charge up front" option is that you won't get a patron who checks out your content, downloads your patron-only e-book, and cancels their pledge before the rst of the mont without paying anything. e downside is that potential patrons won't be able to see what's behind the paywall and decide if they like your content enough to become a regular paying patron.

Pro Tip: Author beware—once you change to the "charge up front" option, you can't change back to the default billing method. So choose wisely.

7 SET GOALS

You may also wish to set goals on your Patreon. Goals are a great way to track your progr on the platform and to let your patrons know where the funds you raise will go. For instance you could set goals for audiobook production, new covers, editing—the sky's the limit.

In addition, goals involve your patrons in your creative process. ey can follow along and help you reach that next milestone in your career.

8 HAVE SOCIAL PROOF

When you're just starting out on Patreon, you may want to ask a friend or relative to contribute at a lower tier.

By default, anyone who visits your Patreon pro le can see both how many patrons you have a the total amount that you make per month. You can hide one (or both), but it may be a smart idea t keep the number of patrons visible. is could encourage potential backers to support you, especial when they see they won't be the only one.

is is why it's extremely important to get those rst few backers on board—social proof works wonders when it comes to convincing those who may be on the fence.

9 OFFER MERCH

Everyone loves physical rewards. ey'r tangible and often make recipients fe like their pledge was money well spent.

Patreon now o ers merchandise ful llment o its website for a range of items: clothing (T-shi and hoodies, among others), tote bags, pri stickers, mugs, or posters. Simply customize item and choose a tier, and Patreon will han ful llment, tracking, delivery, and support.

By wearing or exhibiting your merch, patron are also supporting you and your brand ext nally. at's a win-win for both of you.

10 BE CONSISTENT

Consistency is king. Your patrons a contributing to your business nancially every month, so be sure to put out ne content at least once per month. You don't wa your patrons—who are arguably your most lo supporters—to feel shortchanged.

Posting new content more than once a month often better, but remember tip 5: Don't overcomm Patreon should be a natural extension of your b ness, not an all-consuming, full-time job. It i however, a versatile platform, and you can certa tailor it to t you and your business' needs. So out there, create your tiers, and have fun!

Kasia Lasinska

DO YOU HAVE A UNIQUE TAKE ON THESE TOPICS AND WANT TO WRITE FOR IAM?

We're looking for unique perspectives on:

Paid Ads, Market Research, Finances, Organic Tra c, and Goal Setting

https://indieauthormagazine.com/contributors/

How Nick Thacke Rewriting the Rule-

THE THRILLER WRITER SAYS TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING IS BROKEN. HE'S GOT PLANS TO FIX IT.

hen someone called Nick acker's novels "airplane books" early on in his career, he took the term and ran with it.

e description was meant to be an insult—as in his books were the kind you buy at an airport to help kill time during your ight. But to the Action-Adventure riller author, the comment was high praise. If you can pick up one of his novels and be entertained for a few hours, acker says he's done his job.

"I'm not trying to win a literary prize," he says. "I don't want to win the Pulitzer. My prose isn't artistic. I'm treating this like what it is, which is entertainment. And I want to do that well."

Many would likely say he's succeeded in that respect. After ten years in the industry, acker has published around thirty books, and by 2017, he was making enough money to turn his author business into a full-time career. Along the way, he's also undertaken projects that boost independent authors around him, including a radio station for writers (https://radiowrite.com) and an email marketing service (https://authoremail.com). Six months ago, he embarked on his newest venture: launching Conundrum Publishing, a traditional publishing company that seeks to right the wrongs of other tradi-tional publishers.

"What he's doing with Conundrum Publishing is revolutionary," writes Kevin Tumlinson, an author, podcaster, and the director of marketing and public relations at Draft2Digital—as well as a close friend of ack-er's. "He's taking the best strengths of both indie publishing and traditional publishing, throwing out the bits that don't work, and building a plat-form that can nurture authors and books in a

speci c genre. ... And it's a replicable system he can apply to more genres, going forward. He's building an empire there."

WORK-LIFE-WRITING BALANCE

You'd think acker would've always enjoyed writing with the way his life looks now. But when he was still in school, the future author hated it. He swore he'd never write long-form again if he could help it.

en, in 2011, his grandfather died. In the wake of his passing, acker decided to write a book to gift to his father, just like the riller paperbacks the three would often swap. After all, he asked himself, how hard could it be?

"I knew nothing at all about anything," he says. Convinced he would only write one book, he tried to t every trope and idea he could think of into a single story. It didn't work. Some time and a few books on craft later, he had a nished manuscript—plus a list of ideas he'd had to cut out that would work themselves into his later novels—and began querying agents for a traditional publishing deal. He didn't even know Kindle existed at the time, but when he discovered Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), he decided to give it a try.

He didn't nd instant success with the rst book, but the process sparked something in acker; he kept writing. "I guess I enjoyed it more than I thought I did," he says. Even while juggling a job at his church and raising two kids, he would nd time "in the cracks" to jot down new books a few sentences at a time.

By early 2017, he'd started to make money for a few bills each month, and his wife suggested he focus his energy on either his author career or day job instead of stealing time from both. After a few months, he made his decision o cial—he quit his job to pursue writing full time. Anxiety set in a day later. "All

the sudden, I was faced with, 'Wow, if I don't show up and do the job every day, then we don't get to eat next month,'" he says.

e pressure of that transition to full-time was challenging, acker says. He'd come to the publishing world with a minor in entrepreneurship and marketing, but textbooks hadn't quite conveyed the realities of the business model. e stress weighed on him; for a time, acker struggled with panic attacks and severe anxiety. "I de nitely still struggle with it," acker says. "If I'm left to my own devices and let my guard down, I will start to feel anxious." But he's also learned to manage it over the years and embrace his diagnosis—something he encourages others to do as well.

"Let's make this part of the discussion of what it means to be a full-time author because there's some version of this that we're all struggling and dealing with," he says.

BREAKING TRADITION

As acker has spent more time in the industry, his interests have broadened beyond just writing books. He's become involved in the indie author community, speaking at conferences and sharing advice and tools with newer writers. He uses his marketing background to manage Author Email, a publishing-focused email marketing service. He o ered an author coaching service for a time—it was how he met Tumlinson in 2013. Now the two joke that Tumlinson bought him as a friend during that session. "He owes me two hundred bucks," Tumlinson says.

Along the way, he also received advice from other authors he met, with one message in particular cropping up regularly: that an author could generally nd more success through self-publishing than traditional publishing. acker agreed, but he wanted to prove himself right. So he sought a traditional publishing deal of his own.

acker's Jake Parker series was published with Bookouture in 2020, and he says they are some of the best books he's written. And though he emphasizes that the publishers at Bookouture were fantastic, "as an industry, traditional publishing is, in fact, broken," acker says. Among its faults, traditional publishers are stuck in a business model that favors selling print books over competing with Amazon and independent authors, he says. " ey're just a little bit antiquated." As for the Jake Parker books, acker urges anyone interested in reading them to wait a few years—he's hoping to republish the trilogy once his seven-year contract is up.

But for every problem traditional publishers carry, acker believes self-published authors have the solution. His answer comes in the form of a new traditional publishing company. Conundrum Publishing models a di erent approach

to the publishing process, acker says. Where most traditional companies hire developmental editors, Conundrum brings manu scripts in front of "the roundtable," a team of four or ve professional authors in the same genre who can critique the books from a market perspective. Where other companies use human copy editors, Conundrum reduces cost by running books through a machine learning tool known as the AI Gauntlet. e books are then distributed to a two-hundred-person street team of beta readers and ARC readers. e company pays for advertising once the book is released and gets paid a percentage of royalties—it only succeeds if the author does, at no upfront cost to the latter. "I always tell people, at Conundrum Publishing, our MO is 'authors win rst,'" acker says.

Conundrum was born out of the publishing company acker started when he began publishing books, but it only o cially launched earlier this year. Already, the company has signed between fteen and twenty authors and is set to have published fty books by the end of 2022. " ere is so much that we could do as an industry that isn't being done yet. We're on the cusp," acker says. "My goal is to be a part of that."

THE NEXT ADVENTURE

When he looks to the future, acker has goals for every part of his career. He wants to grow his author business and continue writing, and he wants to help Conundrum grow as well. e publishing company exclusively publishes rillers at the moment, but he hopes it will one day expand to include other genres.

He has ideas for the future of the self-publishing industry too—a distinction he doesn't always believe will be necessary. "We're going to call it publishing in the future [instead of self-publishing]," he says, referencing a phrase he'd heard from Tumlinson. He believes independent authors are on the verge of gaining more recognition and a louder voice in the book publishing world.

When talking about another close friend, author Ernest Dempsey, acker shares nothing but praise for his dedication to writing and his work's caliber. "He's the pinnacle—the consummate professional, if you will. I'm always getting distracted by other crap," acker says. But those side projects re ect acker's dedication to helping other indie authors. And for every challenge and distraction that comes with author life, acker also sees reward in a simple fact: he likes to make stu up for a living. "To be able to put all these things together in a way that I think is entertaining and that I think makes sense—it's exactly the kind of stu that I would've wanted to do as a kid if I had known that that's what writing was," he says. He hopes other authors at any stage in their writing careers can realize the same.

"I often get lost in the details. I often get stressed about how much stu I have to do. And the best thing I can do for myself is remind myself that I'm a writer," he says. "Writers write. Don't lose sight of the core thing, the core activity, we do."

Nicole Schroeder

STRIKE IT RICH WITH BOOKS ALREADY ON YOUR AUTHOR SHELF

f you have published multiple books, then you may be working with two "lists." Your frontlist is made up of newly published, fresh, exciting titles. Your backlist is books that have been out for a while that might be neglected by you and by readers. But gold is buried in the backlist, and you owe it to yourself and your readers to mine that gold for all it's worth.

Many of the best methods for increasing backlist sales are similar to, if not the same as, what you would do for a new release, but these titles o er some interesting possibilities you'll want to explore. We list them in order of least to most di cult to do; though none are hard, some may just take longer than others.

OTHER BOOKS BY ...

As you're releasing a new book, consider adding an "other books by …" page in the back of the book after your "about the author" page. A linked list in your e-book makes it very easy for readers to click over and keep on reading. New readers who loved the book they just nished reading will be excited to read even more from you, and longtime readers who might've missed a couple of your earlier releases will be thrilled to discover these lost-to-them titles.

e downside to having a comprehensive list in the back of the book is that you need to update this list every time you publish another book. In the beginning, when you have only a few titles out, this is fun and exciting. But it can get tedious quickly. And if you publish frequently and use IngramSpark, it can get expensive as well, even with free codes for some updates.

Pro Tip: Link to a page on your website that you can easily keep updated with links to all your books instead of updating each book individually. Or link to the series page on Amazon if you're exclusive with them. ese evergreen links will not need updating.

Consider using the cover image and blurb as an advertisement in the back of your book. Many traditional publishers do this not just for the author of the book but for their other authors as well. You could promote the rst in a series of a related series or a title in the same or a similar genre that might catch the eye of the reader and draw them to more of your books.

Pro Tip: Images can increase deliverability costs for e-books, so use a small le size to keep these costs low. Six hundred to eight hundred pixels wide is usually su cient, though you may want it smaller for a longer blurb.

PROMOS AND STACKS

As with a new release, you can periodically promote your backlist titles in the same way that you would a new release. Frequently, this is done with the rst in a series. Newsletter swaps, ad blasts, and other promotional sites can inject some life into your sales.

Price promotions are also e ective, according to BookBub (https://insights.bookbub.com). Many of the most successful indie authors o er the rst book in a series as permafree. If you're not a fan of making a book free for all time, discount it for a limited time to create a bit of a buying frenzy.

Backlist titles are great for group promotions and book bundles as well, writes author Daniel Parsons in a blog post for Self Publishing Formula (https://selfpublishingformula.com). Gather a group of authors in your genre, and create a book bundle of the rst book in each of their series. Cross promotion will help all of you attract new readers and give you a great excuse to make a lot of noise on social media. en, watch the gold roll in.

RELAUNCHING

If your book has been out for a few years, you might want to critically look at its cover. Cover design trends change. is is more of an issue for ction than non ction titles, as non ction cover trends have a longer lifespan than do many ction genres. Still, you may not have nailed the cover the rst time around, or perhaps it could use a refresh. If so, a new look is a solid excuse for relaunching your book with all the fanfare of a new title. You might be surprised at how much an on-trend cover will increase your pro t margins, even with the extra expense of the cover.

NEW EDITIONS

Are your books in all the available formats? If you originally published an e-book only, a print version will add to your repertoire, and you can tell your fans about it. If you have print, think about creating some additional content and doing a special-edition hardcover version. Professionals at Reedsy suggest including additional features, such as a map, character artwork, additional illustrations, or a Q&A with you or your characters. Audio is a growing format that is worth considering as well.

If your original version didn't include them, discussion or re ection questions can provide additional engagement for readers. e se ques tions can work just as well for ction as they do for non ction, and they'll make your book a strong contender for a book club.

BOOK SETS

If your series has reached a decent length, combining the rst three or more books into a book set can be another format that you can promote and use to gather fresh eyes. Often these are also called box sets, but unless you actually put them in a box, it's best to avoid using that speci c term.

If you have several related series, you can also put the rst one or two books from each into a book set to introduce readers to all of your series.

Book sets can be short or long, so combining smaller sets into a series omnibus can also e ectively attract more readers.

GOING WIDE

If your books have always been in Kindle Unlimited, you might nd a larger readership on other platforms than just Amazon. is will be genre dependent. Some authors have found greater success outside of KU than in. Your mileage may vary, so do some research rst on what successful authors in your genre are doing, and recognize that it takes a while to build readership, so you may not nd instant success. Wide readers are not the same as KU, so be willing to experiment with promo tions and ads to nd the right mix.

TIME- OR TOPIC-SENSITIVE TITLES

If your book is set during a holiday season, B&H Publishing Group (https://bhpublishinggroup.com) recommends promoting it during that season every year to gain new readers. You might think about creating a holiday-themed book set if you have several that you could include. What about a " rough the Year" set if you have several books set in di erent seasons or holidays?

Keep an eye on the news and trending topics on social media. If you have a book that would address or relate to that topic, then seize the opportunity and promote it quickly and widely. If you can enter the conversation people are already having in their heads or with others, then you'll be hitting a very e ective target.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE ...

We don't have time or space for additional ideas here, but this list should help spark your creativity and give you new tools to mine your backlist's gold.

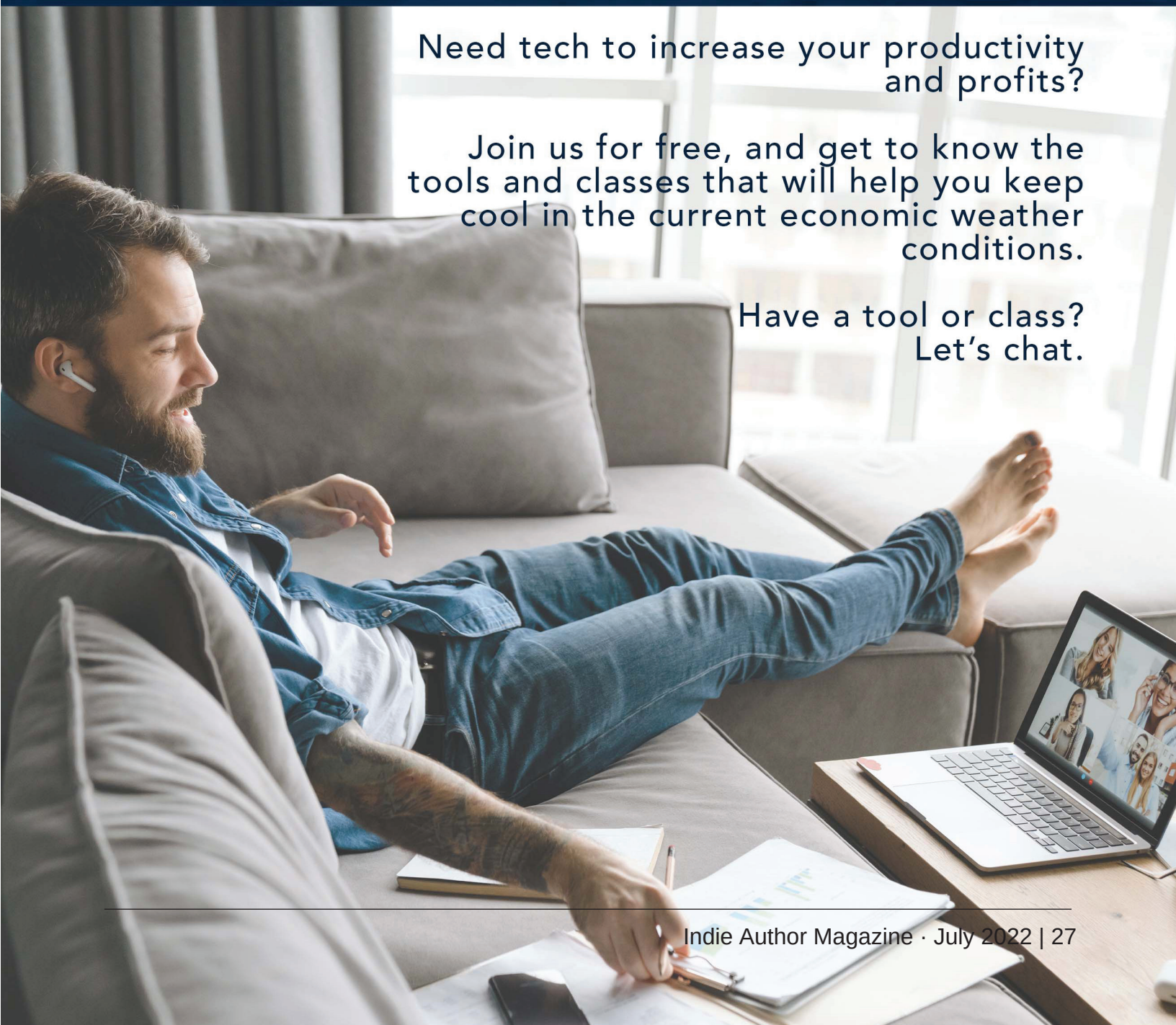
- Remind readers of backlist titles with social media posts, as Craig Martelle of 20BooksTo50K® suggests in his Successful Indie Author Five-Minute Focus series
- Use an older title as a reader magnet
- Create a spoiler alert Q&A for your blog, YouTube, or newsletter
- Design merch
- Remind your readers to review your books
- Post a book quote on a great graphic on social media, as MK Williams, of Author Your Ambition (https://1mkwilliams.com), explains
- O er review copies
- Participate in library or bookstore readings and signings, recom mends author and editor Chrys Fey in an article for Fiction University (http://blog.janicehardy.com)

Alice Briggs

AUTHOR·TECH·SUMMIT

Begins: August 30, 2022

AuthorTechSummit.com



Need tech to increase your productivity and profits?

Join us for free, and get to know the tools and classes that will help you keep cool in the current economic weather conditions.

Have a tool or class? Let's chat.

11 Ways to Earn Mo
from Your Non ction

You've no doubt heard the truism, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." But if you're a non ction author still selling on only one platform, your income eggs are tightly packed into one container.

You can make money in a myriad of ways from your non c-tion backlist. Create multiple streams of income for yourself, and no matter what might happen to your platform down the road, you won't run the risk of being left hanging.

at's easy to write, but where do you begin?

To start, you need passive income as well as active income.

When you write a freelance article or provide consulting, you have to do the work every time you want to make money, and you can only sell that article or consulting time once. at's active income. And given we have only twenty-four hours in each day, you might really struggle to scale your income past a certain point if that's all you do.

However, when you create an asset, such as a course, video, or book, you can sell that product thousands of times without

ever creating anything else. at's passive income. Of course, you still have to do some work to sell what you've created—passive income isn't completely passive. But you're not exchanging time for money anymore. ere's really no limit on what you can earn with that model.

You've already worked toward having passive income if you have a non ction backlist. Here are just some ways you can bring in new income streams to ensure you thrive in your non ction career:

1) CROSS-PROMOTE YOUR BOOKS

 e easiest way to make more money from your non ction is to add links in the back of each of your non ction books to promote the rest of your backlist.

Nothing is stopping you from referencing and recommending other books you've written within the content of your other books. Don't overdo it, though. A common complaint in reviews for some non ction books is that the author appears to be simply copying from and promoting their other books in the text rather than writing anything new.

As long as you know what you've linked to is genuinely helpful, this technique should work for you.

2) MAXIMIZE YOUR FORMATS

E-book, print, large print, hardback, audiobook. How many of those di erent formats have you set up? You've already written the content. All you need to do is change the format of your current work, and you'll have a whole new product. You'll also be catering to people who prefer to listen rather than read and to people with disabilities.

3) TRANSLATE YOUR BOOKS

English is an international language, but there's a whole world out there. At the time of this article, Amazon alone will let you self-publish in over forty di erent languages, and they're working on adding to that.

Why not take advantage of that and break into global markets?

4) ADD WORKBOOKS

People love to work through exercises and guided prompts when they're learning something new. Could any of your current books bene t from accompanying workbooks?

If you create a workbook for each non ction title you already have, you've just doubled your published books and created another product for people to buy.

5) CREATE COURSES

How many e-books do you need to sell to bring in a thousand dollars compared with a single thousand-dollar course? We'll let you do the math. You can create a large course based on your whole book, a series of minicourses based on each chapter, or both, as long as each course o ers solid value to your readers. Add video and audio, checklists, worksheets, planners, and anything else that might be bene cial. You could even o er a small email course delivered automatically by an autoresponder.

Don't forget to encourage people to join your email list with a lead magnet, such as a bonus e-book or free course. Once they're on your list, you can market your newest non ction books, courses, and any other products.

6) SET UP A MEMBERSHIP

Recurring monthly income, for the win! Package your knowledge into a continuing membership where people pay a xed fee every month to learn from you.

If you charge only ten dollars a month but have anywhere from a few hundred to a thousand members, your income will see a nice boost.

7) OFFER COACHING AND CONSULTING

 e more access people have to you, the more they will pay if they want to learn from you. You could charge a higher rate for group coaching than you would for a course, and an even higher rate for one-to-one coaching—all from the knowledge you already have.

8) RECOMMEND OTHER PRODUCTS AND COURSES

If you sign up as an a liate for other businesses, you will earn a commission if someone buys their product through your a liate link. e best type of a liate income is recurring income where you are paid every month to sell a product once.

You can add a liate links to your courses, blog posts, your email signature, your website copy, your email newsletters, and more. Find a liate products and courses to promote that relate to the subject matter covered in your non ction. Just note, the Federal Trade Commission requires that you state that these links are a liate links.

Do your research and only recommend relevant products that you really believe in. Your reputation matters, and you don't want to damage it by recommending unethical or unhelpful products.

9) GET YOUR MERCH ON

ink beyond books to merchandising opportunities. You could sell mugs, T-shirts, key chains, bookmarks, tote bags, note-books, stickers, and more, all branded to t with your books and your author business. You can do this directly on your website, on Etsy, or via a site such as Zazzle (https://zazzle.com) or RedBubble (https://redbubble.com).

10) SPEAK AND EARN

You can be paid to speak at conferences and events. If you're comfortable with this, it can be an excellent stream of income and a great opportunity to promote your non ction books. In addition to payment for speaking, you can also receive travel expenses and accommodations, depending on the event.

To nd speaking opportunities, get to know other speakers and conference and event organizers. Join related Face-book groups and look out for author events, literary festivals, and other suitable events. Network to nd out about opportunities, and be proactive in approaching organizers.

Pro Tip: Don't forget to bring physical copies of your books so that you can sell them at the event after your speech.

11) SELL THE SHOVEL

Who got rich in the gold rush? e people who sold the shovels.

If you're a highly successful non ction author, can you teach others how to publish their own non ction work? You might have your own specialist

subjects for your books, but if you've done it for long enough, you'll know a whole lot about writing non ction and making a success of it.

Your knowledge is valuable, and people will pay for it. Consider doing the following:

- creating a series of small courses on di erent aspects, such as research or planning.
- writing a non ction book on how to write a non ction book (very meta!) or on self-publishing.
- setting up a membership for people who want to learn from you.
- providing group coaching.

 ese are only some ways to make more money from your non ction books. You could also consider sites such as Patreon or Kickstarter, sponsorships, licensing your content, private label rights, and more.

Take it slow! If you try to do everything at once, you'll nd yourself stuck or burned out very quickly. Add one stream of income at a time and build it up little by little when you know you have the time and the mental space for more. Eventually, you should see your income increase over time, and you'll nd that you're no longer reliant on just one income stream or platform.

One nal bit of advice: Don't limit yourself. Keep thinking about what you can adapt, and keep an eye on technology. New possibilities are emerging all the time. e current craze for NFTs has hit the publishing world, for example, and you could nd a way to get your own slice of that pie. Who knows what might be invented next?

 e only certainty is that there is no certainty. If you have multiple streams of income, you're more likely to be protected from the vagaries of the publishing world and the global economy.

And that creates real peace of mind.

Gill Fernley

ScribeCount Wants to Your New Best Frien

TIME IS MONEY, AND THE SALES DATA TOOL AIMS TO SAVE YOU BOTH

ScribeCount bills itself as an indie author's best friend—and if you're looking for a-platform that provides deep insight into your aggregate sales data, then its claim may be true. With the ability to collect data from multiple sales platforms, customize your own reports, and a pricing structure that exes with your monthly sales, ScribeCount has the potential to become a valuable addition to your indie author toolbox.

e folks behind ScribeCount, Randall Wood and Phillipa Werner, are authors themselves and set out to create a product that would become the preeminent author service platform on the internet. A quick glance at the program's testimonial reel shows that they've won over more than a few bestselling authors, so it may be well worth your time to spend a few minutes checking out what ScribeCount has to o er.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The ScribeCount browser extension allows you to gather your sales data from multiple platforms and display them in a single reporting session. It currently supports the following sales platforms and plans to add more in the near future:

- Amazon
- Google Play
- Apple
- Barnes & Noble
- Kobo
- Draft2Digital
- Smashwords
- IngramSpark (coming soon)
- Audible (coming soon)
- Findaway Voices (coming soon)

The extension is optimized for use with most common browsers, such as Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, and Firefox. The website lists Safari as an option that will be coming soon. The processing and storage of your data is done in the cloud and protected with the same type of encryption used to protect government data. An in-depth technical explanation of ScribeCount's Privacy Policy regarding your personal data, storage, and encryption capabilities can be found on its website.

Once you've installed the ScribeCount extension to your browser, all you need to do is open the extension, log in to ScribeCount, and visit each of your sales pages to establish the connection between ScribeCount and the sales page.

Once you initiate a reporting session, ScribeCount pulls the following data elements from your sales pages every fteen minutes and displays them in a convenient and customizable dashboard format:

- sales numbers
- ENP data
- book IDs
- book ranks
- book reviews
- book prices
- KU enrollment dates
- geographical sales data, both current and historical

KWWSV ZZZ NERDUGV FRP WKUHDGV VFULEHFRXQW QRZ ZL 5HWULHYHG

The ScribeCount dashboard contains a combination of interactive charts and graphs that let you slice and dice your report data as needed. This is great for tracking sales promo results, ad performance, read-through rates, and more.

Subscribers can remove their data from ScribeCount's servers at any time by doing one of the following as stated in the program's FAQs:

- "Disable all the connections to the platforms and then log out. If you [choose] this option, ScribeCount stops asking for data, your doorman shuts the door, your settings are deleted, and your data is purged from our servers. Logging out in this fashion means the purged data will need to be reloaded to start another session, requiring a longer wait time."
- "Keep connections enabled and use the 'Delete my Data' button to purge your data without losing your settings."

If you're a strictly KU author, don't feel left out. ScribeCount's custom KU dashboard works just as well for you as it does for wide or hybrid authors.

WHAT FEATURES ARE AVAILABLE?

The extension was built with Bootstrap open source, which means it will work just as well on your table or mobile devices as it does on your computer. The extension is designed to run only while your session is active, which means it will not run in the background and chew up your processing capacity or battery life.

Authors who have both wide and KU sales data have the option to switch between separate dashboards for each sales channel.

One of the nicer features this product offers is full access to the product's functionality for every subscriber, regardless of the pricing tier. This is quite the deviation from most of its competitors. The ScribeCount site lists the following report-focused features available to all subscribers:

- customized dashboards to fit the wide or KU author
- dynamic reporting from all the major platforms

- a worldwide sales map showing the-coun tries where your books are selling
- a news feed that is updated regularly, keeping you informed of what's happening in the world of indie publishing
- downloadable spreadsheets in Excel format so you can easily customize your income and expenditures
- current and historical data updated every fteen minutes

ScribeCount plans to add more sales and advertising platforms each month and to expand its product o erings to include production, marketing, and translation tools.

Additional features include

- the ability to choose from three di erent KU Page Read rates
- the ability to manually add KU Bonuses to earnings reports
- the ability to choose your preferred time zone and currency display
- twenty-four-hour customer service (phone, chat, and email)
- an a liate program that pays you 10 percent of each person's tier amount for those who sign up through your link
- access to the ScribeCount blog, which features articles, advice, and platform information of interest to indie authors
- the ability to lter or drill down into speci c markets, pen names, titles, and more via the dashboard

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Pricing is based on your monthly sales income and will adjust based on your earnings. As with any other business-related subscription, ScribeCount is tax deductible, and the company provides subscribers with a yearly payment report.

ScribeCount currently o ers a fourteen-day free subscription, no credit card needed, after which the following pricing tiers are available:

- Tier 1: $0/month for authors earning less than $1000/month
- Tier 2: $15/month for authors earning between $1001 and $2000/month
- Tier 3: $20/month for authors earning $2001 or more
- $185 Flat Rate Yearly Subscription

At the end of the 14-day free trial, subscribers are sent a sign-up form and asked to choose a payment method. ScribeCount currently accepts the following payment methods:

- PayPal
- Via Stripe:

  Visa
  MasterCard
  American Express
  ACH (direct debit from your bank account)

Once you've entered your payment method, ScribeCount will verify your previous month's sale income and charge your preferred payment method for the appropriate service tier. Similar to KU's payment structure, your sales total for the previous month will determine your pricing tier for two months forward. For example, your sales total in June 2022 will determine the amount you're billed August 1.

Subscribers are free to cancel at any time by clicking the Cancel My Subscription button. Cancel lations will be processed within forty-eight hours, and any charges made in error will be refunded.

Considering everything that the platform currently o ers and the company's focus on continued development, ScribeCount seems to be an a ordable, robust, user-friendly service that would make a powerful addition to any indie author's toolbox.■

Jenn Mitchell

Tech Tools

Courtesy of IndieAuthorTools.com
Got a tool you love and want to share with us?
Submit a tool at IndieAuthorTools.com

Books2Read Universal Links

6LPSOLI\ WKH PDQDJHPHQW RI \RXU
%RRNV 5HDG 8QLYHUVDO /LQNV
<RX FDQ FXVWRPL]H \RXU XQLYHUVDO
VSHFL“F VWRUHIURQW RU ERRN IRUPD
LWDO “UVW LQWURGXFHG WKH IUHH D
ZHUH RQO\ DYDLODEOH IRU GLJLWDO E
WKH VLPSOH HYHUJUHHQ OLQNV DFUR
IURP DXGLRERRNV WR SULQW WR KDUG
KWWSV ERRNV UHDG FRP

Author Unleashed Face-book Group

,Q WKLV)DFH ERRN JURXS PHPEHUV O
HGJH RI ERRN PDUNHWLQJ DV GHWDL
8QOHDVKHG VHULHV E\ 5REHUW - 5\DQ
UDQJH IURP UXQQLQJ SUR“WDEOH $PD
SURIHVVLRQDO OHYHO FRS\ IRU EOXUE
KWWSV ZZZ IDFH ERRN FRP JURXSV

UptimeRobot

7UDFN \RXU DXWKRU ZHEVLWH V XSWL
PRQLWRULQJ VHUYLFH 2Q WKH IUHH S
XS WR 85/V DW PLQXWH LQWHUYDO
DEOH IRU L26 DQG $QGURLG ,I \RXU EX
GLUHFW VDOHV RI ERRNV RU PHUFKDQG
WLRQ FRXOG EH D YDOXDEOH WRRO
KWWSV XSWLPHURERW FRP

Evernote

5DQNHG DV RQH RI WKH EHVW DSSV IR
QRWH DXWR V\QFV DFURVV \RXU GHYL
LQYLWH DQ\RQH WR FROODERUDWH RQ
WLOH DSS OHWV \RX VDYH DQG RUJDQL
DQG DXGLR UHFRUGLQJV
KWWSV HYHUQRWH FRP

Pozotron Studio

4XLFNO\ SURRI \RXU DXGLRERRNV ZL
$, SRZHUHG VRIWZDUH VXLWH OHWV \R
DXGLRERRN SURGXFWLRQ SURFHVV ,W
DOJRULWKP WDNHV FDUH RI FDWFKLQJ
\RXU PLQG LV IUHHG XS WR IRFXV RQ W
OLNH WRQH SHUIRUPDQFH DQG FKDUD
KWWSV ZZZ SR]RWURQ FRP

INDIE AUTHORS WEIGH IN ON THE CONTENT WARNING DEBATE

uthor Mariel Pomeroy left a cautionary message for readers of her debut novel that is hard to miss. It's printed on its own page in the front of the book just after the copy right. She also included it in the book's product description and in her social media posts advertising the novel. A general statement about the genre is even in the bio of her Instagram account.

Almost everywhere readers might nd her book, she made sure they could also nd trigger warnings for its content.

"It wasn't even a question if I was going to put it into my book or not," says Pomeroy of Book Daddy, LLC. "I would rather you look at my book, you read the trigger warnings, or even the genre—I ended up a couple of weeks ago putting ' is is a Dark Romance High Fantasy' before the summary on Amazon—so you know exactly what you're walking into."

In recent years, the use of trigger warnings online and on social media has grown considerably, according to The New Yorker (https://newyorker.com), raising the question for authors and their publishers as to whether they should follow suit. But so has the controversy surrounding the warnings. Some, such as Pomeroy, consider it an important step in allowing readers to make informed decisions about what they read, but others argue it is unnecessary, citing genre expectations, a reluctance to generalize audiences, and concerns of censorship.

The debate has expanded beyond the reader community. Professors have fueled the fire by providing trigger warnings for some classic books and well-known authors, according to the United Kingdom's The Week (https://theweek.co.uk). Critics of the practice, including the National Council of Teachers of English (https://ncte.org/statement/rating-books/), have likened it to the book-banning trend that experienced a resurgence in the past year when more than one thousand titles were banned in United States school districts between July 2021 and March 2022, according to Education Week (https://edweek.org). Scientific studies have also called the practice into question with results that suggest trigger warnings offer little to no benefit to survivors of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The term "trigger" is technically a psychology term used in reference to mental health conditions like PTSD.

Still, many readers emphasize how beneficial trigger warnings have been for their reading experience—and how harmful the lack of them can be. In the years since internet users began integrating trigger warnings into mainstream use, alerts to sensitive content have become almost expected in certain online communities, reports Buzzfeed News (https://buzzfeednews.com)—and corners of BookTok and

Bookstagram are no exception. Pomeroy says part of the reason she was so intent on including warnings for her own work came from knowing people who have experienced traumatic responses from distressing themes in books. “I’ve seen a lot of people that I know personally have very strong reactions and truly see a trigger warning and be like, ‘Oh my god, I cannot read this.’”

But for Sapphic Fiction author Adrian J. Smith, the question of whether to include trigger warnings doesn’t have a clear answer. Smith considers herself a “reservist” when it comes to the warnings. Only one of her books has ever included a trigger warning, which came at the decision of her publisher for depictions of torture and sexual violence. And although she agrees with adding warnings for those types of subject matter, she believes many other commonly flagged themes are redundant when readers look at the genre or the book’s blurb.

“If you write or read Dark Romance, putting a trigger warning for kidnapping is just stupid because it’s expected in the genre. If you write Post-Apocalyptic fiction or even a lot of Urban Fantasy or Sci-Fi, putting a content warning for violence is kind of stupid because, again, it’s expected,” Smith says.

In a similar vein, Smith says triggers in the psychological sense are too varied and subjective to adequately label everything that may affect a reader. In the same book where her publisher flagged some of her content with trigger warnings, other potentially triggering themes from the novel were left alone that she thought might’ve deserved a warning, and reviewers pointed out still other taboo topics in the book.

Overall, Smith says she prefers the term “content warning” to “trigger warning” as it removes ties to medical diagnoses and therefore any assumptions about how your readers might react. Yet even this doesn’t fix the challenge for those writing “on the edge of taboo” according to society’s standards, such as those who include LGBTQ+ content, like she does.

"Ten or fteen years ago, I would have needed a content warning for my book because my main character is a lesbian. And now in 2022, I don't need that, but you're also not likely to nd my books in a high school library," she says. "A lot of people still put content warnings on BDSM books. I have written a couple, and I won't do that because BDSM is just a way of living. It's a way of loving a person di erently than some other people do it. And it's not necessarily a bad thing. It's just content."

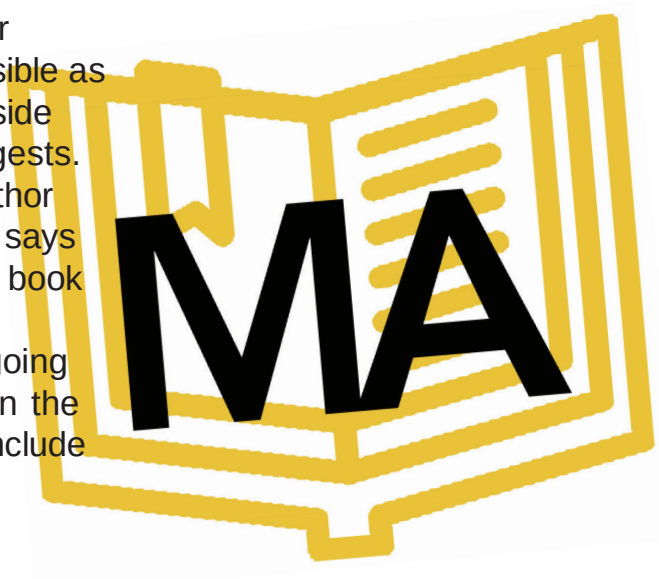
THE QUESTION FOR AUTHORS

So what options do authors have regarding how to write warnings in their own work?

In the self-publishing industry, a lot. Almost every decision rests on the author's shoulders, including whether to write a warning regarding a book's content in the rst place. For those who still struggle with whether they should write a note, however, Pomeroy says she suggests asking alpha and beta readers their thoughts on the book's content and what they think might require a warning.

She says she believes any sort of regulation or standardization for the practice would be di cult, though she encour ages authors to make their warnings as easily accessible as possible. List warnings in the product description, inside the front cover, and on your author website, she suggests. As for the wording of the note, there are ways to be thor ough without revealing too much of the story. Pomeroy says she's planning on changing her method for the second book in her series in order to be more descriptive.

"What I've seen authors do and what I want to do going forward is do that [provide a list of general themes in the book] and then, especially for the e-book version, include



a link to my website for a literal list," she says. e URL would provide those who are unsure about the book's content with more context regarding sensitive scenes without the risk of spoiling major plot points for others.

"Everyone's lines are di erent," Pomeroy says. "So something that might not be a trigger for me might very well be a trigger for someone else."

Looking at the debate from another perspective, Smith says authors should consider their genre and audience as they write trigger warnings for their books. If readers can readily expect sensitive themes based on the genre or the cover blurb, she says you might not need to be as descriptive in your note—if you need to include one at all.

Ultimately, as with any creative industry, there isn't a correct answer for how to handle sensitive content in books. When all is said and done, however, Pomeroy says she roots her decision more in her beliefs as an artist than in her strategy as a business owner.

" ere's not a reason not to list trigger warnings," Pomeroy says. "I want the people who are going to genuinely enjoy the things of this and the genre of this to read it, completely independent of sales or numbers or anything like that. at was the point of this book in the rst place. Of course, I want it to be a career. But numbers are probably the last thing on my mind when it comes to this, especially when it comes to sensitive topics."

Nicole Schroeder

Pro Tip: Authors and readers can visit http://BookTriggerWarnings.com or http://TriggerWarningDatabase.com, online trigger warning databases, for lists of the types of content that might require a warning and to browse current entries or create new pages for books not yet included in the databases.

The Paperback Podcast

KWWSV SRGFDVWV DSSOH FRP XV SRGFDVW WKH SDSHUEDFN SRGFDVW LG

%XVLQHVV FRDFK DQG KRVW 3DJDQ 0DOFROP VD\V WKLV ZHHNO\ VKRZ LV IRU DPELWLRXV DQG DVSLULQJ DXWKRUV 6KH VSHFLDO L]HV LQ KHOSLQJ WKHP WR XQGHUVWDQG WKH EXVLQHVV VLGH RI SXEOLVKLQJ DQG FUHDWH D OLIHVW\OH WKDW VXSSRUWV >WKH DXWKRUO\ JRDOV 5HFHQW WRSLFV KDYH LQFOXGHG PDUNHWLQJ \RXU EDFNOLVW SUHYHQWLQJ SUHODXQFK PLVWDNHV DQG PDLQ WDLQLQJ PRPHQWXP

Online Marketing Made Easy with Amy Porterfield

KWWSV SRGFDVWV DSSOH FRP XV SRGFDVW RQOLQH PDUNHWLQJ PDGH HDV\ ZLWK DP\ SRUWHU“ HOG LG

1HHG KHOS FRQYHUWLQJ ELJ LGHDV DQG VWUDW VWHS E\ VWHS SURFHVVHV" 7KDWMV PDUNHWLQJ “ HOGMV VSHFLDOW\ :KLOH KHU WRS UDQNHG S VSHFL“ FDOO\ IRU LQGLHV \RXMOO “ QG YDOXDE EXLOGLQJ PDUNHWLQJ DQG VRFLDO PHGLD

Unstoppable Authors

KWWSV SRGFDVWV DSSOH FRP XV SRGFDVW XQVWRSSDEOH DXWKRUV LG

)ROORZ WKUHH LQGLH DXWKRUV RQ WKHLU DGYHQWXUHV LQ VHOI SXEOL 8QVWRSSDEOH $XWKRUV 5HFHQW HSLVRGHV FRYHUHG FUHDWLQJ PXOW VWUHDPV RI LQFRPH SODQQLQJ DQG UXQQLQJ DQ DXWKRU HYHQW D UDLVLQJ FUHDWLYH FKLOGUHQ -RLQ +ROO\ /\QH -XOLD 6FRWW DQG $Q 7UHYHQD IRU PRUH RQ WKH ZULWLQJ OLIH RQ 0RQGD\V

The Truth about Texas:

WHY THE LONE STAR STATE MIGHT BE THE PERFECT SETTING FOR YOUR NEXT BOOK

hen you think of Texas, a few images might come to mind: cowboys, hot prairies with dusty tumbleweeds, herds of cattle, chuck wagons, horses everywhere, the Alamo, and more.

As with every American state, these are typical stereotypes with roots in reality. And sure, you'll nd all those things in Texas in some form or fashion. But when authors write about Texas, they could use a lot of imagery beyond the typical.

MAIN CHARACTERS REJOICE: TEXAS HAS DIVERSE ECOREGIONS

Need to hide a body in a sand dune? ere are 367 miles of shoreline facing the Gulf of Mexico with a chain of seven tropical barrier islands, stretching from Galveston Island to Brazos Island. Rather than

tumbleweeds, the lush coastline could be mistaken for any gulf coast town in Florida with plenty of seashells and sandy beaches. Just remember that the sun sets over land rather than sea, so plan your majestic sunset rendezvous accordingly.

Moody, gothic east Texas could be mistaken for Georgia or Louisiana with its moderate rainfall and lush rose gardens. Vampires and other supernaturals could blend in easily, inhabiting antebellum-style homes complete with moss-laden trees and plenty of bogs perfect for midnight roaming. Its piney woods could easily feel like home to a pack of werewolves.

Meet-cutes between rival winery owners need not be con ned to California or France. Texas' Hill Country with its rolling hills, proximity to winding rivers, and ample sunshine has fast become a tourist destination for food and wine enthusiasts, often being compared with Napa Valley.

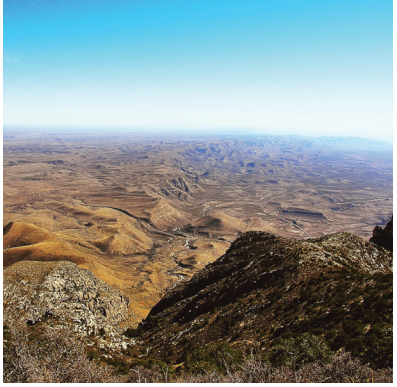
West Texas is often thought of as the Texas standard with at, dusty plains and oil derricks dotting the landscape. It's dry and arid, but as the saying goes, "If you don't like the weather, give it a minute." It can go from sunny to snow in seconds.

 e ecoregions of Texas o er new possibilities for settings, and these are just a few of the more obvious options designed to spark your imagination.

IT TAKES A WHILE TO GET FROM A TO B

Texas lives up to its reputation as a big state, and it might be easy to mistake how long a character realistically needs to get from one city to another. e following map will give you a better perspective.

If Texas were its own country, it would be the fortieth largest, and larger than every country in Europe, according to TexasProud.com.



e longest line from north to south through the state as th crow ies is 801 miles. at's nearly two hundred miles long than the United Kingdom's longest straight line from Land's E in England to John O'Groats in Scotland. In fact, nearly th United Kingdoms would t inside Texas. Moreover, ten-cou tries—Belgium, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Austria, Slova Slovenia, Macedonia, Luxembourg, Hungary, and the Net lands—could t inside Texas without overlapping.

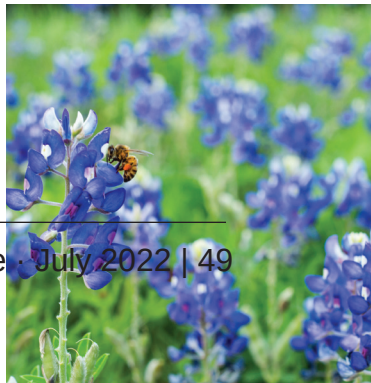
Traveling anywhere in Texas takes time. If you're writ about getting around Texas, bear in mind no central transporta tion system or railway connects the state's major cities of Da Ft. Worth, Austin, San Antonio, or Houston. To get from A t B, one must drive, often on what are known as farm-to-mar or "FM," roads. ese roads were designed for what their na implies—getting from rural farms and ranches to marke meaning that it's not a straight shot between places once y o the main highways.

Pro Tip: Use driving distance calculators to accurately desc the time it takes to travel within the state.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BIG BOX

e geographical diversity and sheer size of Texas could ma an interesting setting in an author's work if one looks beyond typical. ere's more than enough to work with to ensure yo keep readers engaged—just be sure to get the details right Texans will notice if you don't—you can hang your cowboy on that.■

Chelle Honiker



ale as ld a im etold

Remember those rst stories we heard as children? “ e ree Little Pigs,” “Little Red Riding Hood,” “ ree Billy Goats Gru ,” “Snow White,” “Cinderella,” and so many more? We could listen to them over and over again. Each time we were delighted with the end. e main character defeated the villain, found true love, and—my favorite—lived happily ever after. ese stories transcend time, extend to all cultures, and resonate with all generations.

We call them fairy tales.

ey were meant to teach lessons and life skills while entertaining us, but they are more than that. As authors, we can use fairy tales as a foundation to recreate retell stories. An entire genre has been constructed for this purpose.

In 2021, Midnight Voss’ Romance Writers of America (RWA) workshop, “Reinventing Fiction: Adapting Fairy Tales and Public Domain Classics Into Original Fiction,” o ered authors advice on how to navigate the genre. Author Shonna Slayton(https://shonnaslayton.com) has also written several books and blog posts on the subject over the years. ey are just a few of the great resources available fo authors who are interested in these stories. But before we go diving into writing with fairy tales, an aspiring author should know some basics.

At the top of the list is this: When an author uses a fairy tale as the structure for their story, it is considered a fairy tale retelling.

METHODS OF RETELLING

ere are several methods of writing a retelling. First, the fairy tale reinvention honors the original story, but the author presents the tale in a new way. In other words, they are capturing the feelings of the original story. Some elements may be changed, but otherwise, the author remains true to the story premise.

"Little Red Riding Hood" is a classic example. e original version of "Little Red Riding Hood" written by Charles Perrault was a cautionary tale of what could happen when a young woman divulges too much personal information to a stranger. Although the message is still relevant, the author may choose to present a di erent theme. In contemporary retellings, Red or the wolf are the main characters with a story arc showing the con icts they bring to the story and how they grow through their obstacles.

Next, the recreation of a fairy tale tells the tale in a di erent setting. It will have the same outcome as well as several icons to connect the readers to the original story.

Lastly, the "kitchen sink" method of retelling brings several stories together. e characters interact with each other and add to the story arc. is method comes with a warning. Don't be fooled by the abundance of material. Of the methods for fairy tale retellings, the kitchen sink has the most demands. e magic systems or setting parameters within the di erent story worlds cannot compete with one another. Braiding plotlines in the kitchen sink method requires asking questions about the story concepts and planning on which elements will enrich the plot and which can fall to the wayside.