

Promoting Your Book: A Resolution for 2012
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As 2011 comes to an end, many are taking the time to reflect on the year past and make plans for the year to come. Whether you plan to exercise more, quit smoking, lose some weight, eat better, be nicer, look for a new job, relocate, etc. Whatever your resolution, make a resolution to stick to it.

As a literary bug, those resolutions may be to stop taking constructive criticism personally, to write a set number of words or pages every day, to begin that book on planting you have always dreamed about or to start your publishing business. After polling several authors, the most popular resolution has been to begin promotion of their upcoming book. However, many are resistant to take the plunge because book promotion can be expensive.

People always hinder themselves because of money or what they think things will cost instead of making it happen by researching first. Research is free. The more you know, the further you can go.

Here are five sure-fire book promotion methods that are free (or low cost):

#1: Start A Website: Websites used to be expensive. Now there are free websites like wordpress.com, webs.com and wix.com, to name a few. Take a look at the different sites and what they offer. Choose the site with the most options that will help maximize your exposure. Some will want to keep their name in your domain, but for a small fee (usually less than \$20 per year) you can have their name removed. Remember: you are building your brand. There is no need to have someone else's name on your website if there is no direct affiliation.

#2: Utilize Social Media Sites: Social media has helped many literary personas. With the Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+ explosion, many authors are now in direct contact with their readers. This social intimacy has allowed them to gain new fans and cultivate lucrative relationships. Another key to websites and social media sites is the use of their RSS (Rich Site Summary) feeds, which automatically upload your ever-changing web content to all those that follow you.

#3: Blog Talk Radio: Blog Talk Radio has grown in popularity within the last few years. It allows authors to share their message with listeners all over the world. It affords them the opportunity to reach and converse with fans in real time. Trying to become a featured personality on one of the bigger radio networks is next to impossible for an unknown author, Blog Talk Radio fills this niche. A few well-known shows that cater to independent authors are Destiny

Carter's "Urban Book Shelf Radio," "Word on da Street Radio Talk Show" with Lisa Tyrell Perry-Amos, and Nakota Williams' "MackMamas World Radio."

#4: Book Clubs: As a writer, you need to go where the readers are. Readers follow book clubs to find out what's new, what's good and what's worth their money. If you are looking for a free endorsement, cozy up to the myriad book clubs and see if you can get a mention. Book clubs feature new authors, new releases, book giveaways, award nominations, etc. Many authors who have been featured or endorsed by a book club have gained fans that they didn't know exist. Tamika Newhouse's "African Americans On The Move Book Club" (AAMBC), "ARC Book Club Inc." with Locksie Locks and Tee C. Royal's "RAWSISTAZ Literary Group" are a few to pitch to. Many others can be found through an Internet search or on Facebook.

#5: Book Reviews: Sometimes it's close to impossible to get a reader to review your book. You can ask until you are blue in the face, and still only receive three anonymous reviews with one-word sentences. If you are looking for quality reviews, you can get these from book clubs like the ones previously mentioned, or you can reach out to those who only specialize in reviews such as UrbanReviewsOnline.com, TheUBS.com (The Urban Book Source) and GoodReads.com.

Another great source for promotion is Black Literature Magazine! As our bio states, Black Literature Magazine's purpose is to uplift and promote seasoned, new and aspiring authors. The mag's goal is to shine an unbiased and much needed light on the positive and often looked over aspects of every genre within African American literature. Spotlights also include poetry, professionals within the industry, news, commentary and book reviews.

As Wayne Dyer says, "*Procrastination is one of the most common and deadliest of diseases and its toll on success and happiness is heavy.*" You don't have to wait until the book is released to start promoting, and you don't have to have a new book coming out to continue marketing your brand. Start spreading the news! No one will know about you or your book until you tell them. "*Sell Yourself Shamelessly!*" is Treasure Blue's motto and believe me, there is nothing more true.