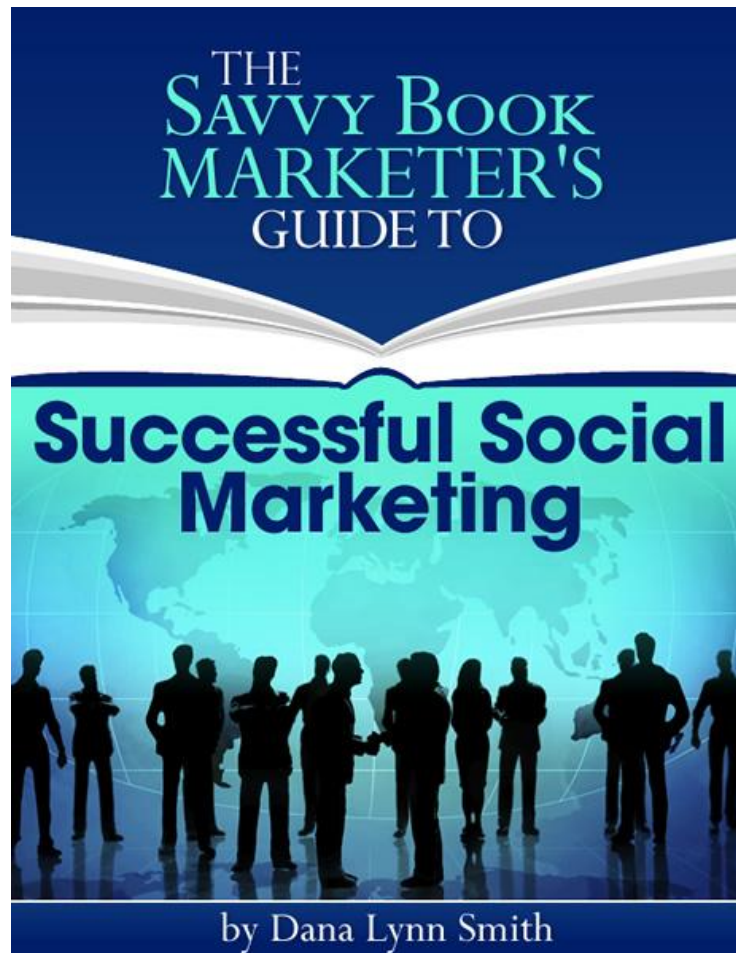


*Excerpt from
The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to
Successful Social Marketing*



This excerpt contains chapter one, plus selected pages from the remainder of [*The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Successful Social Marketing*](#), copyright 2010 by Dana Lynn Smith. See the detailed table of contents for the book at <http://bit.ly/DBUOm>.

How to Use This Book

As an author seeking to promote yourself and your books, you probably have many questions about social marketing. This book aims to answer questions such as these:

- What exactly is social marketing?
- What are the best ways to use social marketing?
- How does social marketing tie into my other marketing efforts?
- What websites or activities should I concentrate on?
- Is social marketing cost-effective?
- How do I measure the effectiveness of my social marketing activities?
- What is the proper etiquette?
- How can I make the best use of my time?
- How do I get started?

It's important to develop a strategy before you dive in. **Don't try to do everything covered in this book!** Determine what type of promotions might work best for your book and your audiences, prioritize your social marketing activities, and implement them one at a time. Evaluate and adjust your strategy periodically.

Successful Social Marketing includes descriptions of a range of social marketing opportunities, including:

- Blogging
- Social Networking
- Reader Communities
- Online Forums
- Expert Sites and Wikis
- Media and Content Sharing Sites
- Social News and Social Bookmarking

At the end of each chapter, there's a list of action items to help you organize your marketing activities in that category. Numerous resources

for further information are listed within and at the end of each chapter. The final chapter will help you in developing a social marketing plan.

If you don't have a lot of experience in online marketing, I recommend first reading over the Glossary to familiarize yourself with the lingo.

Tips for Fiction Authors

In many ways, fiction is more challenging to market than nonfiction. You may need to think creatively to apply some of the tactics described in this book. As you read, think about how each social marketing tactic discussed might apply to your book, but don't stretch too far.

Fiction authors need to find promotional "hooks" within their books. It might be the profession or hobby of the main character in a novel, or the town or historical era where the story is set, or some aspect of your book that relates to current news or events. If the story line involves a particular health condition or ethnic group, that could be a hook. The key is to market to "like-minded people" or people who have an interest in some specific aspect of the book.

For example, if one of your main characters is a horse trainer, then horse lovers are a natural target market for your book and you can direct online marketing efforts to them. A book that's set during the civil rights movement will appeal to people who are interested in that topic or era. A story involving corporate scandal could be tied to today's headlines.

Hyperlinks and Website Updates

This book contains hundreds of active hyperlinks, numerous screenshots, and step-by-step instructions for several websites. If you print this book and are manually typing links into your browser, watch out for the underscore character—it may be hard to see and may look like a space between two words. If a link appears at the end of a sentence, the period at the end of the sentence is not part of the link.

In cases where links are very long, I have also included short "snipped" links that are much easier to use.

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Introduction to Social Marketing

Online social marketing (also known as social media marketing, social network marketing, or Web 2.0 marketing) is the hottest trend in marketing today, embraced by everyone from solo entrepreneurs to major corporations.

Marketing through social media (referred to as "social marketing" in this book for the sake of simplicity) involves participation in online platforms where the focus is on community, interaction, and sharing, and the content is user-generated and/or interactive. Social marketers communicate with "like-minded people" or people who share similar interests.

Social media is still relatively new, but usage is rising rapidly. According to Forrester Research, the proportion of Internet users consuming social content at least once a month grew from 48 percent in 2007 to 69 percent in 2008, and the growth shows no signs of slowing.

Social marketing can be very effective for:

- Building author platforms and brand recognition
- Driving traffic to websites and blogs
- Developing relationships with peers, influencers, potential customers and partners, and others who share your interests
- Indirectly or subtly promoting books, products, and services

- Improving search engine optimization and search results ranking through back links from social sites

It's a great tool for generating word-of-mouth and viral marketing, where your message gets passed along by others. For example, when people enjoy a book, article, blog, or video, they often recommend it to others online. This type of user endorsement is more effective than traditional marketing.

How Effective is Social Marketing?

The effectiveness of the social marketing tactics described in this book will vary depending on the author, the type of book, the characteristics of the target audiences, and the amount of time and effort invested. In general, I think that fiction authors will be best served by blogging, reader communities, social networking and perhaps media sharing, but other tactics may work as well. All of the tactics covered in this book are appropriate for nonfiction authors, but reader communities are probably less important for nonfiction.

You may find that some social marketing tactics are better for reaching potential book buyers, while others are more valuable for developing relationships with peers and influencers.

In terms of generating revenue, think of social marketing as a way to bring potential customers into your "marketing funnel." You don't "sell" directly to people through social media. For example, with social networking, you meet people online and get to know them a bit through repeated contact. They start to recognize you as an expert in your area, and then they visit your blog or download your book excerpt or free report. Some of them will purchase your book or other products.

Another benefit of social marketing is that it creates a lot of incoming links to your website and/or blog, which can bring direct traffic to your sites and improve your search engine ranking. As you engage in social marketing activities, be sure to link back to your sites every chance you get, whether you're commenting on a blog post, uploading a video,

writing a product review, creating a profile on a networking site, or posting in a forum.

In the *Social Media Marketing Industry Report*, produced by Michael A. Stelzner in March, 2009, 81 percent of respondents said that social marketing has generated exposure for their business, with half saying that it generates qualified leads. More than half said that their search engine rankings have risen as well.

Survey participants reported that their top social marketing tools were (in order) Twitter, blogging, LinkedIn, and Facebook. It's interesting to note that 72 percent of the survey respondents said that they have been using social marketing for a few months or less.

This report was derived from a survey of 880 marketers, of which 49 percent were sole proprietors such as consultants and freelancers. The median age of participants was 40–49, and 56 percent were female. You can download the report at <http://www.whitepapersource.com/socialmediamarketing/report/>.

Measuring the Effectiveness of Social Marketing

It's important to measure your social marketing progress to determine if your investment is worthwhile. Social marketing is a free or very low cost strategy, but your time could be devoted to other marketing activities that might yield better results.

It can be difficult to define "success" in social marketing, because the benefits are varied and are often indirect. For example, increasing the number of contacts in your field of expertise will pay off eventually, but it may be hard to measure and there may be no immediate impact on book sales. It's also difficult to track and quantify the value of word-of-mouth marketing (having others tell people about you and your book).

Some metrics are easy to measure, such as the number of:

- Friends or followers on each of your social networks

- Blog posts and the number of comments received from readers
- Your comments and guest posts on other blogs
- Forum posts
- Articles or pages posted on expert sites
- Social bookmarks and votes for your articles or web page
- Videos and photos posted online

It's harder to measure the direct impact of social marketing on lead generation and sales, because they are affected by all of your marketing efforts, not just social marketing. But you can make estimates based on your overall marketing activities and the impact on metrics such as:

- Sales (books and other products and services)
- Business contacts (peers, influencers, media)
- Subscribers to your mailing list and blog
- Visitors to your website and blog
- Inbound links to your website and blog
- Search engine rankings for your top keywords
- Alexa ranking and Google PageRank
- Speaking invitations and joint venture invitations

If you are consistently growing metrics such as subscribers, website visitors, and inbound links, your sales are likely to increase as well.

I record my metrics in a spreadsheet and update it on the first of each month. Don't forget to take a benchmark measurement of your metrics before you begin your social marketing campaign.

Be sure to install a statistics counter on your blog and website to help you track results. I use Google Analytics at <http://www.google.com/analytics/> and StatCounter at <http://www.statcounter.com>. Google has more features, but I find StatCounter easier to use for quick traffic checks. I'm also able to filter out my own website visits on StatCounter. You may find that different statistics counters yield different results due to their tracking methodology, but they should be close.

It's also helpful to monitor the online conversation about you. You can set up Google Alerts at <http://www.google.com/alerts> for keywords such as your name, your book title, and your company name. This will show you where you and your book are showing up around the Web and how your exposure is rising as a result of your marketing efforts. It's also a good idea to search for those same keywords on Google periodically to see how your sites are ranking.

Putting the Social in Social Marketing

Social marketing is about being part of the community:

- Meet and develop relationships with like-minded people.
- Engage in interesting conversations and keep in touch.
- Let your personality come through in your communications.
- Add value by helping others, answering questions, and sharing resources and knowledge.
- Ask questions of your own to encourage interaction.

Social marketing is permission-based. Users choose to participate and they can just as easily choose not to engage with you if you annoy them. Don't overtly promote your book or other products—that's a quick way to turn people off. Treat others as you would like to be treated. If you are seen as a helpful, knowledgeable, interesting person, then you will naturally attract friends and followers.

It's a good idea to lurk (observe) for a while in a new community, to see how others are interacting. You can watch what others post and visit other people's profiles or pages to get a feel for the proper etiquette. Some platforms, such as online forums, post a list of rules for participants. Be sure to read and follow them.

Branding Considerations

Before you begin your online marketing campaign, give some thought to how you will brand yourself, your book, and your company. It's important to choose meaningful names, be consistent with your naming, and to use the same author photo everywhere so people will begin to recognize you. Many people remember faces before they remember names.

For example, I use several different brands names: My personal name (Dana Lynn Smith), my online user name (BookMarketer), and my blog, books and ezine (The Savvy Book Marketer).

In cases where you need to use your personal name (such as your websites, your articles, your Facebook profile, and the real name field in other online profiles) it's best to use your name exactly as it appears in the byline on your books. If you write under a pseudonym, you will need to use that name in your online marketing.

I have chosen to use my full name, Dana Lynn Smith, for marketing purposes because it's more distinctive than Dana Smith and there are far fewer people in cyberspace using that name. While there are hundreds of people named Dana Smith on Facebook, there are only five other people using Dana Lynn Smith. I was also able to purchase the domain name www.DanaLynnSmith.com.

If you search for "Dana Lynn Smith" on Google, almost all of the first 100 entries relate to me. It's interesting to note that my social networking sites show up ahead of my own websites. Last time I checked, my Facebook profile showed up #1 in the Google search results, my LinkedIn page was #3, my Twitter page was #5, my blog was #7, and DanaLynnSmith.com was #8.

Although you must use your personal name (or pseudonym) on your Facebook profile, on many other social sites, such as Twitter, you can choose a "user name." Unless you are really well known, I recommend that nonfiction authors choose a topical user name. Try to think of a name that describes what you do in 15 characters or less (the Twitter limit), and capitalize the first letter of each word. Most sites don't allow spaces in the user name and I recommend against using the underscore character because it can be a problem for those accessing the Internet through mobile devices.

I've had very good results with my user name, BookMarketer, because people know instantly what I do. SavvyBookMarketer would be better branding, but it's too long.

If you're a consultant or entrepreneur, it might be best to use your company name as your social user name, if it's short enough. Novelists could use their book name, if it's very short, or choose a topical name like RomanceWriter. Some authors use the word author or writer along with their name, such as AuthorSueGreen. You'll have to get creative with 15 characters.

Managing Your Time Effectively

Repeat exposure is critical to social marketing success. It's usually more effective to concentrate on a few activities and do them consistently than to dabble in too many areas.

While most social marketing is free or very low cost (unless you hire an assistant to help), it can take a significant investment of time to develop

a strategy, build networks, reach out to people, keep the conversation going, and track results.

In the *Social Media Marketing Industry Report*, those just getting started with social marketing reported spending about two hours a week, but 39 percent of the respondents spend 10 or more hours a week and the most experienced marketers devote 20 or more hours. However, two-thirds reported that increased website traffic occurred with as little as six hours a week of social marketing activity.

It's important to manage your time wisely and not let social marketing activities overwhelm you. Here are some tips:

- Develop a social marketing strategy before you begin, prioritizing based on the activities you believe are most likely to succeed.
- Don't try too many things at once—implement one strategy at a time and master it before you move on to another.
- Don't join too many social networks. Choose one or two primary networks to focus on (mine are Twitter and Facebook), and perhaps set up profiles on a handful of others that you will visit occasionally.
- Avoid checking your social networks first thing in the morning. It's easy to get sucked in and spend way too much time there, neglecting your higher priority tasks for the day.
- Set aside a specific amount of time for social marketing. For example, you might start out by budgeting one hour a day, with 20 minutes at mid-day devoted to networking and 20 minutes in the evening for other activities, plus a few quick Twitter sessions during the day. Establish a routine and stick to it.
- Look for timesaving tools and applications. For example, my Twitter posts and blog posts automatically flow to my Facebook

profile and newsfeed, and my blogging platform allows me to write several blog posts and pre-schedule them to be posted.

- Evaluate your progress regularly and make adjustments to your strategy, devoting more time to the activities that produce the best results and dropping those that don't seem worthwhile.

Common Mistakes in Social Marketing

- Diving in without a strategy or plan
- Joining too many networks and trying too many different things at once
- Spreading yourself too thin
- Spending too much time on social activities while neglecting other writing, marketing, or business tasks
- Sending out friend invitations on social networks with no introduction
- Trying to "sell" on social media sites
- Making it "all about you" rather than reaching out to add value to others
- Forgetting the "social" part of social media

Getting Started in Social Marketing

To develop a social marketing strategy, you need to first define your objectives: who you are trying to reach and the outcomes you desire. Then you can choose the best social platforms to meet those objectives. Your objectives might include:

- Building name or brand recognition
- Building your reputation as an expert
- Meeting other authors, publishers, and experts in your field or genre
- Learning from others in your field and finding material for your books
- Finding joint venture partners
- Driving direct traffic to your website
- Increasing your opt-in subscriber list
- Selling more books
- Increasing the number of links to your website
- Getting speaking engagements or consulting customers

Prioritize your objectives so you have a clear picture of what's most important to you.

Your target audiences will probably include potential buyers for your book, your peers and leaders in your field, and influencers (including media) who can recommend your book to others.

Think about the characteristics of your target audiences: what is their age group and education level, how much time do they spend online, how likely are they to participate in various social media and networks, where do they hang out online, do they use mobile computing devices?

According to Forrester Research's Social Technographics report, online users can be grouped in the following categories, according to their level of engagement in online media:

- Inactives (use the internet, but don't really participate)
- Spectators (read blogs, listen to podcasts, watch videos)
- Joiners (use social networking sites)
- Collectors (tag web pages, subscribe to RSS feeds)
- Critics (post comments on blogs, post product reviews)
- Creators (create websites and blogs, upload videos)

Where do you think your target audiences lie on this spectrum? If you don't have a feel for the online habits and haunts of your target audiences, you may need to do some research. You could write a blog or forum post asking for feedback, conduct a brief online survey by email or through www.SurveyMonkey.com, conduct a survey by phone or mail, or talk with customers at book signings or speaking events.

In chapter eleven, I will go into more detail about developing a social marketing plan. But first, let's discuss some of the social media platforms that can be used to promote authors and books.

Resources

Dosh Dosh at <http://www.doshdosh.com> is an excellent blog covering Internet marketing, blogging, and social media strategy.

The Groundswell blog at <http://blogs.forrester.com/groundswell/> offers great insight into social media.

Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies is a hardcover book by Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff of Forrester Research, published in early 2008. <http://snipr.com/ground> or <http://www.amazon.com/dp/1422125009/?tag=texanpubli-20>

Social Media Marketing: An Hour a Day by Dave Evans was published in late 2008. <http://snipr.com/socialmm> or <http://www.amazon.com/dp/0470344024/?tag=teyanpubli-20>

The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use News Releases, Blogs, Podcasting, Viral Marketing and Online Media to Reach Buyers Directly is a hardcover book by David Meerman Scott published in June, 2007. <http://snipr.com/fpzgb> or <http://www.amazon.com/dp/0470113456/?tag=teyanpubli-20>

Search Engine News

To learn about search engine optimization in depth, I recommend a subscription to *Search Engine News* at <http://www.searchengineneeds.com>. With a 6-month subscription, you'll get a free ebook that's a great crash course in SEO, and there are some useful tools on their website.

Action Plan for Getting Started in Social Marketing

- Define your social marketing objectives, in priority order.

- Define your target audiences and think about their characteristics and online habits.

- Decide how you want to brand yourself and your products.

- Install a statistics counter on your blog and website.

- Set up a tracking system for measuring your social marketing activities and results. Start with a benchmark measurement for each metric you will track.

- As you read the following chapters, think about which of the social marketing methods discussed would be the best fit for you.

Excerpt from Chapter 2: Blogging as a Social Marketing Tool

Do a Virtual Book Tour

Virtual book tours (also called blog tours) involve making guest appearances on blogs, websites, and/or forums to promote your book. You can even do teleseminars, podcasts, or live interviews on Blog Talk Radio. Tours are often part of a book launch, but can be done any time.

Virtual tours are much less expensive than touring the country to do traditional book signings, you can generally reach far more people and a more targeted audience, and the virtual tour provides quality, lasting links to your own blog.

Tours typically last 5 to 20 consecutive days, with a different tour stop each day. If you want to do a long tour, you might schedule a 10-day tour and then do a second tour a month or two later.

Provide unique content to each host on your tour. Here are some suggestions for content:

- virtual interviews, where your host asks questions and you respond
- how-to articles in your area of expertise
- excerpts from your book
- articles about how you developed the plot or characters for a novel
- book reviews written by the tour host
- podcasts or teleseminars
- video or blog radio interviews with you

Excerpt from Chapter 3: Social Networking

Privacy Issues

On each of the social sites that you join, take a few minutes to look over the privacy settings and adjust them to your comfort level. To get any marketing benefit from participating in social sites, you will need to make your profile publicly available, but there are things you can do to protect your privacy.

You may not want to share too much personal information, like your full birth date, religion, political views, where you went to school, your kid's names and photos, or the fact that you're about to leave on vacation. If you're using social networking for business, remember not to post anything you wouldn't want your customers or colleagues to see.

Some sites show your email address on your public profile page unless you change that setting, so watch out for that. On many sites, you can control what type of emails you receive from the site. I have turned off email notifications on most sites, because they are too distracting.

Nick O'Neill has written an excellent article about privacy settings for Facebook: <http://www.allfacebook.com/2009/facebook-privacy>.

Networking on Social Networks

Once you've established a profile, you need to invite "friends" to join your network. On many sites you can send friend invitations to people who are in your email address book, search for names of people you know or would like to meet, search by keyword, and join groups to meet people with similar interests. Also, look at your friends' lists of friends for potential new friends. Be sure to write a personal message on your friend requests.

Excerpt from Chapter 4: Facebook Guide for Authors

Building Your Facebook Profile

To create a free Facebook account, go to <http://www.facebook.com> and enter your name, email address, password, gender, and birth date. Facebook requires a full date of birth, but you can adjust the privacy settings on your profile to hide that information.

Facebook's terms of use require that profiles be in the name of a real person, and each person can only have one account. If you want to set up a Facebook presence for your business, your book, your dog, or any other non-human entity, you'll need to create a Fan Page instead. You'll find information about Pages later in this ebook; this section contains instructions for creating personal profiles. You can have a profile and multiple Pages under a single Facebook account.

Savvy Tip: Before you dive in and start making friends, take a half hour or so to set up your Facebook profile for maximum marketing effectiveness.

To set up your profile, click the Profile tab at the top of the screen, then click the Info tab and click Edit Information near the top right of that section of the page. Go through each section and add as much information as you are comfortable revealing. Remember, you can skip over any sections you like. Don't forget to click Save Changes as you complete each section.

The About Me box (under Personal Information) is a perfect place to describe your book and your business. You can include links to your website and blog and your book's Amazon sales page here. Mentioning hobbies and interests can help start conversations with new friends who have common interests, but I recommend entering that information below your book information.

In the section called Contact Information you can enter multiple website addresses in the Website box.

Excerpt from Chapter 5: Twitter Guide for Authors

How to Write Effective Tweets

You have just 140 characters, so you may have to get creative to get your message across. You can leave out little words and use common text message abbreviations such as "u" for you and "pls" for please, but don't make the post too hard to read.

You should shorten all URLs in your posts, using a service such as <http://tr.im>, www.snipr.com, www.bitly.com, or <http://budurl.com>. When you link to your own website, be sure to use a service that lets you track how many people click on your link, such as Tr.im, Bitly or Budurl. Always double-check the snipped links before you post.

If you want to encourage people to re-tweet your best tweets, limit them to 120 characters, so that there will be space for the person's user name and RT to appear while staying within the 140-character limit.

What to Tweet About

The first rule of twittering for business purposes is to give more than you get. In other words, most of your tweets should be about helping others—recommending resources, introducing people, relaying news—rather than promoting you.

At the same time, you need to inject your personality into your tweets, to put the social into social marketing. It's a good idea to make some personal tweets to help people get to know you, but avoid tweeting about frivolous things like what you ate for lunch.

Here are some suggestions on what to tweet:

- Link to helpful articles, websites, blog posts, and resources in your topical area. Try to lead with action words (how to, where, why).
Example: *Learn how to promote your book in virtual reader communities at The Creative Penn blog <http://bit.ly/SSMtour5>*


Excerpt from Chapter 6: Reader Communities

Reader Communities

Virtual reader communities are a specialized type of social networking site where readers and authors network, and readers recommend books to others. For fiction and children's book authors, reader communities may be more useful than the more general social networking sites like Facebook.

Many of the reader community sites allow authors to set up a profile page to promote themselves and their books. Some sites allow users to create a "friends" network and join groups composed of readers and authors of a particular genre. Most of these sites are free, although some offer advertising opportunities to authors and publishers.

Following are descriptions of some of the most well-known reader community sites. I recommend looking over the various sites to find those that seem to be the best fit for your book and your audience. While you may want to set up a profile on several sites and visit them occasionally, it's probably not a good use of time to be very active on more than a couple of these sites. Focus on the most important ones first.

 Goodreads at <http://www.goodreads.com> says it's the world's largest social network for readers.

The site has 1.8 million members who have added more than 41 million books to their bookshelves on Goodreads.

Goodreads can be a good companion tool for book launches and virtual book tours, but you will need to build up a presence there first.

Published or soon-to-be published authors can:

- Set up a profile page and add friends
- Write a blog and post book excerpts

Excerpt from Chapter 7: Online Forums

Forums are online communities where people who are interested in a particular subject can ask questions, offer solutions, and share experiences. They are called by several other names, including discussion groups, list serves, bulletin boards, and newsgroups. Some forums are web based and others function as email lists.

Typically, members post questions and other members offer answers. Some posts are informational, passing along a resource that would be of broad interest to the group. Many forums are moderated, which means that each message must be approved by the "list mom" or moderator before it is posted to the group.

Forums are free and they offer many benefits to authors:

- Network with people who share your interests.
- Build your reputation as an expert in your field by joining online discussions and answering questions.
- Follow what others are saying about your area of interest or book genre and learn from them.
- Promote your book and get backlinks to your websites through your forum signature.

Finding Forums

First, you'll need to find forums that are relevant to your book's topic and where your target customers are likely to participate. It may be helpful to join several different forums.

Excerpt from Chapter 8: Expert Sites and Wikis

Expert Site Strategy

Before you begin using expert sites, think through your strategy. On the major sites like Squidoo and HubPages, it's best to set up one main page, plus additional pages focused on narrow niche topics.

For example, if you have a book about losing weight, you could create a general page on weight loss, then create additional pages on sub-topics such as low calorie desserts, exercise tips for new mothers, evaluating weight loss programs, etc. Just start with the main page and add additional pages as time permits.

Search for your topic and study the competition, looking at the page titles, descriptions, and content. If there are already other pages on your chosen sub-topics, try to focus on a narrower niche or a unique angle, to make your page stand out. How can you make your page better than the competition?

Create a keyword-rich title for each page. If your page is about growing orchids, use "growing orchids" in the title, at the beginning if possible. If your desired title is already taken, try a slight variation by adding words such as best, top, guide, ultimate, secrets, or how to. For example: secrets to growing orchids, top tips for growing orchids, guide to growing orchids.

If you're using more than one expert site, you should use slightly different titles on each site if you write about the same topic. You will also need to re-write the content so it's not duplicated. A better strategy might be to cover different sub-topics on each site, so there's no duplication.

On Squidoo, don't try to create comprehensive pages all at once. You can add new content to existing pages any time. This helps keep the

Excerpt from Chapter 9: Media and Content Sharing

Using Videos in Book Promotion

Video is one of the most powerful types of online media. You can use many different types of videos to promote your book, including:

- A video greeting on your website
- Brief promotional videos for you or your products
- Video book promos (similar to movie trailers)
- Free tutorials
- Video blog posts (vlogs)
- Video testimonials from customers
- Video bios for your online media room

Any of these videos can be uploaded to media sharing sites such as YouTube. You can also create longer tutorial videos to sell.

Creating Video Content

Shorter videos get watched more often, so keep your video under three minutes. About 30 to 90 seconds is ideal for most videos.

Be sure to include a call to action in your video. To increase traffic to your website, feature your URL in the video.

Excerpt from Chapter 10: Social News and Bookmarking

Social news and social bookmarking sites are communities where users rate and/or submit links to web pages, blog posts, news stories, videos, and other content and share it with others. Many of these sites have social features such as the ability to add friends, join groups, and send messages.

While it may not be productive for authors to spend a lot of time being active on social news and bookmarking sites, I think it's worth experimenting with a few of these sites, especially for nonfiction authors.

Three of the most important social news and social bookmarking sites are described below, and several other major sites are listed. If you participate, it's a good idea to lurk for a while first (especially on Digg) to get a feel for the community and what type of posts and comments are welcomed.

I recommend that nonfiction authors try StumbleUpon or Digg. Fiction authors may want to submit their most important web pages and their Amazon page to Delicious and StumbleUpon. There are some fiction book categories (mystery novels, romance novels, etc.) in StumbleUpon.

Delicious is a useful bookmarking tool for everyone, even if you aren't active on the site.

It's important to encourage your website visitors to share your content with others through social news and bookmarking sites. Techniques for promoting sharing are covered later in this chapter.

Social News

Users of social news services post links to interesting web pages, rate or vote on them, and comment on pages other people have posted.

Excerpt from Chapter 11: Developing a Successful Social Marketing Plan

Use this checklist to develop an effective social marketing plan that coordinates with your other promotional activities.

1. What other online promotions and tools are you already using?

- Website
- Author blog
- Online media room
- Ezine and email promotions
- Opt-in mailing list and autoresponder
- Amazon promotional tools (blog, tagging, reviews, etc.)
- Audio or video greeting or messages on website or blog
- Podcasting
- Online book reviews
- Online media releases (free and paid)
- Affiliate marketing (getting others to promote your book)
- Online advertising (pay-per-click, banner, classified, auction sites)
- _____

2. How does social marketing fit into your overall marketing plan? How high a priority is social marketing, compared with other marketing activities? How many hours a week can you devote to it?

3. Determine your target audiences. Who do you want to reach through social marketing?

- Existing customers (to sell additional products)
- Potential new customers
- Key influencers (people who can introduce/recommend you to potential customers)
- Media
- Peers and other experts in your field or genre
- Publishing and marketing professionals
- Other: _____

4. Set objectives for your social marketing. What do you hope to gain from marketing through social media? Number these in priority order.

- Increase visibility and name or brand recognition
- Establish myself as an expert in my field
- Develop relationships with other experts or authors in my field or genre
- Drive traffic to my website (directly and through enhanced SEO by creating new links back to site)
- Sell books
- Sell other products and services
- Attract speaking engagements

Excerpt from the Glossary

anchor text: The hyperlinked text on a web page that users click on to link to another page. Anchor text should contain keywords, if possible.

backlink: A link from another website. Also called an incoming link or inbound link. Backlinks help drive direct traffic to your site and provide search engine optimization benefits. The best backlinks are from high authority sites (like those run by universities), high traffic sites, and sites or pages whose content is closely aligned with your own content.

blog: A website that functions as an online journal, with the entries usually displayed in reverse chronological order. Each of the entries or articles is called a post and the posts are usually dated. Personal blogs often function as online diaries, but business blogs contain information, news, and/or commentary on a particular topic. Blog is used as both a noun (a website) and a verb (the act of posting content to a blog). Blog is short for web log.

forum: An online community where people who are interested in a particular subject can ask questions, offer solutions, and share experiences.

hyperlink: Text or image that links to a web page. When users click on a hyperlink, they are re-directed to another page. Hyperlinks are often (but not always) displayed in blue, underlined text. Below is the HTML code to create a hyperlink:

```
<a href="URL">TEXT</a>
```

In this example, URL is the address of the page you want to link to and TEXT is the anchor text that will contain the link. For example, this HTML code:

```
<a href="http://www.DanaLynnSmith.com">Dana Lynn Smith</a>
```

would create this hyperlink on a web page: [Dana Lynn Smith](http://www.DanaLynnSmith.com)

The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Successful Social Marketing

Whether you are already experimenting with social marketing or you're just getting started, in this book you'll learn:

- Why authors need to use social media
- How to avoid the most common social networking mistakes
- How to budget your time wisely and avoid overwhelm
- How to brand yourself online
- How to choose the right networks for you
- The right way to attract friends and followers
- How to use Facebook events to promote your book
- The secret to running a successful Facebook group
- 7 things that could get you banned from Facebook
- What to tweet about on Twitter
- 8 ways to use blogging in interactive ways
- How to use online contests to build buzz for your book
- How to measure the effectiveness of social marketing
- How to promote your book in virtual reader communities
- How to build an author platform with online forums
- How to build your expert status with Squidoo and HubPages
- 7 ways to promote your book with video
- How to promote your book with photo sharing sites
- How to use social news and bookmarking
- and much more

At the end of each chapter, there's an Action Plan to help you get started, along with resources for further information. The comprehensive Facebook and Twitter chapters include step-by-step instructions for quickly mastering these powerful tools.

The final chapter includes a ten-step blueprint for developing your own social marketing plan. The guide also includes hundreds of clickable hyperlinks, numerous screen shots, and an online marketing glossary.

To order, go to www.AuthorSocialMarketing.com.

About the Author



Dana Lynn Smith is a book marketing coach with a degree in marketing and 15 years of publishing experience. She develops marketing plans for nonfiction books and is the author of the Savvy Book Marketer Guides at www.SavvyBookMarketer.com.

Networking Connections

- Follow @BookMarketer on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/BookMarketer>
- Friend Dana on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DanaLynnSmith
- Connect with other authors on Savvy Book Marketing group on Facebook at <http://bit.ly/savvygroup>
- Like the Savvy Book Marketer page on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/SavvyBookMarketer>
- Connect with Dana on LinkedIn at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/danalynnsmith>

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