

## Virtual Book Tour E-mail Pitch Template

Online buzz is increasingly important to a book's success, especially since an Internet mention with a link to an online bookseller can provide instant purchasing gratification to the reader. This kind of chatter about books is also viewed as word-of-mouth promotion – a recommendation from a friend. This is more influential than other forms of conventional marketing, including advertising and direct mail.

While on a virtual book tour, an author visits specific Web sites or blogs during the course of a specified time period – usually a week. At each “stop” on the tour, the author might be interviewed, make blog entries, answer questions from site visitors, or submit their book for review – or any combination of these options. What sets a virtual tour apart from real-life book tours – besides the lack of travel expense and the fact that you don't have to dress up – is that once the content is posted on a Web site, it's available for later access – often indefinitely. This means that those who couldn't visit on the day of your appearance can still view the material any time – at their convenience.

Identify blogs read by your target audience (type “blog search engine” into Google and follow the links). Review past postings to determine which option – a Q&A, book review, guest posting, etc. – is the best fit for each site. Then send an e-mail inquiry to each blogger individually about three weeks before your tour should start. Use your preferred contact management system to follow-up with contacts and to schedule your tour stops.

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Your brief e-mail message should include this information:

**Your name, book title, and any special, relevant expertise.** Put this in the first two or three sentences.

**Your proposal.** Are you proposing a book review? An author Q&A with the blogger? An author Q&A with blog readers? Author postings on the blog? Something else?

**Timing.** When is your virtual book tour?

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**Other information that will influence the blogger.** This might include links to favorable book reviews or an upcoming event that makes your proposal timely. Think in terms of what might influence the blogger to accept your proposal.

**Your book's announcement press release.** Paste this into the body of the e-mail below your signature. It's important background information that will answer many of the bloggers' questions about your book.

**Next steps.** Will you send a book if they write back saying they'd like to see it? Send a follow-up note in a few days? Make it clear who should do what next.