

WEDNESDAY, August 8, 2015 • 6:30PM

Building Your Author Platform: How to Grow a Fan Base and a Presence Online and Off

You've probably heard the phrase "author platform" before. And you probably know you're supposed to build one. But exactly what is a platform and how do you go about growing it?

According to Christina Katz, author of "The Prosperous Writer," "The word platform simply describes all the ways you are visible and appealing to your future, potential, or actual readership."

That's a good start. Another way to put it is this: The bigger your reach, the more books you are likely to sell. It's that simple.

Authors with platforms sell books!

You might say that Bob Baker, SLPA's past president and our September speaker, has built a platform. With 15,000+ people on his email lists, more than 525,000 YouTube channel views, nearly 17,000 Twitter and 5,500 Facebook followers, this indie author has established an online presence.

At the Sept. 9 meeting Bob will cover:

- Exactly what an author platform is and why you need one.
- His top platform-building essentials, based on 20+ years of publishing activity.
- Your two primary platform options: use the media or be the media.
- The four modes of online communication (and how to determine which one is right for you).
- How to build credibility using the "association formula."

Bring a pen and notebook and be prepared to do some fun, interactive exercises. After this meeting, you'll know how to create a magnetic platform that attracts readers and will help you sell more books.

Bob Baker helps musicians, authors and creative entrepreneurs use their talents and know-how to make a living and make a difference in the world. He is the author of the highly acclaimed "Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook" (which appeared in the movie "The School of Rock" starring Jack Black).



Bob Baker

Bob's other books include "The Empowered Artist", "The Guerrilla Guide to Book Marketing", "55 Ways to Promote and Sell Your Book on the Internet", "Unleash the Artist Within", and more. Check out Bob's blog, podcast, video clips, and more at www.FullTimeAuthor.com and www.TheBuzzFactor.com.

Also, be sure to attend **Bob's Creative Entrepreneur Summit**, where you'll learn **7 Steps to Building a Thriving Career in the Arts**. It will be held Saturday, November 14, in Webster Groves, MO. Visit <http://bob-baker.com/buzz/creative-entrepreneur-summit/> for details.

Two Social Media Mistakes Authors Make

By Bob Baker

You have good intentions when you take action to promote yourself online. But there are times when you may unknowingly make things more difficult for yourself. Here are two mistakes you want to avoid when promoting your book on social media:

1) **Putting the medium before the message.** The first thing that self-promoting authors think when they have something to promote is, "Oh, I'll create a Facebook event page, tweet this out to my followers, and post a photo on Instagram."

That's great. I applaud your enthusiasm. But what message will you send? That's really the first question you should ask. What do you want to communicate? And, how can you put an intriguing spin on it so that it catches the eye of your ideal reader?

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are all tools (or mediums) to communicate your message. They are NOT the message itself. So take a little time to strategically ponder a fun or interesting message you will send about your new book or event. Then use the mediums to broadcast that specific message!

2) **Getting frustrated and wondering "Why?"** I hear this more and more every day. "Why am I wasting all my time on Facebook?" "Wouldn't I be better off spending my

(Social Media continued on page 2)

COMING UP THIS FALL

There are a lot of difficult things to do to bring your book to market. Publishing it on Amazon.com isn't one of them. On October 14, co-publishers Patrick Dorsey and Evan Willnow of *Legendary Planet* will show you exactly how easy it is to put your book on Amazon. To prove it, they will upload the Planet's latest release to Amazon LIVE, in front of the SLPA audience!

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SLPA FALL WORKSHOP

"HOW TO PUBLISH YOUR OWN BOOK: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW."

November 7 • 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Meramec Community College

(MCC class # WRIT 704, fee \$39 seniors \$25)

Social Media continued from page 1)

marketing time writing my next book?"

Well, the answer to that last question is: Absolutely, you should work on your next book, if that is your desire. And, you can still do that and get on friendly terms with using the Internet to reach people. The key is tapping into your big why?

Why did you want to write your book to begin with? Was it just to feel good about being a published author? Or did you have a story or message that you knew a lot of people would benefit from ... if they only knew about it?

If you only focus on the websites, tweets, and updates, it can seem senseless. But when you look at the big picture, you realize the reason you do all that social sharing is to reach more readers. Touch a few more lives. Make more of a difference with your message.

So remind yourself of these things the next time you log in to promote yourself in the digital world. What's the real reason you want people to know about your book? And what's the best message to share to reach the readers who will benefit?

We've Been Having Fun!

St. Louis Publishers Association has been very busy this summer. In early August we sponsored our annual Vendor Showcase at the Richmond Heights Community Center. We had a lively crowd and the vendors reported great feedback from the attendees.

Then at the end of the month SLPA sponsored a table at **The Writer's Guild** event at the Kirkwood Community Center.

If you would like to become more involved with the vibrant book publishing community in St. Louis, join our Board of Directors. Contact Warren Martin to find out how to join the SLPA's Board. You will get the chance to participate at the city's best book events.



Top: Vendors talking with guests at the August Showcase

Board member Andrew shown left.



Top: Board members Kevin and Linda manning the SLPA table at The Writer's Guild event.

Left: Warren, SLPA President taking a selfie, with Board members Cathy and Pat at the table.



THE BOOK CORNER



A vibrant, small press culture exists in St. Louis. Small collectives of comic book artists are printing anthologies. Literary magazines are cultural institutions. Zinesters are challenging our political landscape and gender norms. Contemporary artists are discovering zines as a medium. Booklovers are investing their money to publish fiction written by writers they admire and adore.

The St. Louis Small Press Expo (SPEX) celebrates all these publishers (and more) by connecting them together, and to the public. It hosts a yearly—daring, sparkly, diverse, badass, free-entry—DIY book fair.

(As seen in *The St. Louis Egotist*, July 2015)

LOCATION: St. Louis Public Library—Central Branch
1301 Olive St.
St. Louis, MO 63103

LAUNCH PARTY: Friday,
Sept. 25th 7–10:30 p.m.

EXPO: Saturday, September 26th
11a.m.–5 p.m.

SLPA Meets on the Second Wednesday of the Month

**RICHMOND HEIGHTS
COMMUNITY CENTER (THE HEIGHTS)
The Angus Room
8001 Dale Ave.
Richmond Heights, MO 63117**

Doors open for networking at 6:30 p.m. and meeting begins at 7 p.m. The formal meeting concludes at about 8:30 p.m. with networking until 9 p.m.

Regular meetings are free to members. Guests — \$10 at the door, cash or check only.

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