



The official newsletter  
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a professional organization  
of writers of popular fiction



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# *Nink* June 2020

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# President's Voice

*By Tawdra Kandle*



For the past few months, on this page I've discussed the September conference and how the board is addressing the challenges we face as we try to work out what it means to run an event in the age of COVID-19. This topic has been on our minds constantly; for me, it's especially hard to escape thinking about it, as I receive emails, messages or see social media posts wondering what we're going to do almost every single day.

It would be tempting to be frustrated or annoyed about the questions, since the answers are not necessarily clear yet, but instead, I'm choosing to see the interest in what happens next as a testament to how many people value the conference that NINC presents every year. It's true: NINC members, as varied and different as we are, seem to be united in loving our conference and wanting the best for it, this year and every other year.

What's not to love? Every fall, our organization hosts a gathering at a beautiful resort set on one of the most gorgeous beaches in this country. We present top-level workshops delivered by some of the best minds in the publishing world. We offer the opportunity to network with industry guests who most authors wouldn't ordinarily be able to access.

All of the above would be enough to make the NINC conference stand head and shoulders above other meetings, but what I've heard most often, both from those urging us to hold the conference live this year and from those who believe it should go virtual, is that the most valuable aspect of the NINC conference is the interaction among authors.

I understand this completely. Authoring can be a lonely, solitary business, and for some, our conference offers the only opportunity all year to meet and socialize with our tribe. Back in February, I wrote about my first NINC conference, coming in as an author who didn't know anyone else personally when I ventured to the UnCon. I felt like a kid arriving at a new school for the first time (and as a military brat, I know that feeling well). I expected to remain on the sidelines, watching, listening and absorbing information from the amazing cadre of authors who'd been in the business much longer than me.

But that wasn't what happened. Instead of allowing me to stand outside the circle and lurk, the authors I met pulled me in. They asked about my experience, and they actually listened to what I had to say, gave me wise counsel and appreciated what I brought to the table. It was at NINC that I felt like a legitimate author for the first time in my career. I knew that I was part of something bigger—and that's something all of us need, no matter how long we've been published.

Recently, I read something in Glennon Doyle's book *Untamed*. She noted, "Horseshoes are better than circles. Leave space. Always leave space. Horseshoes of friends > Circles of friends. Life can be lonely. Stand in horseshoes." As I see it, that's exactly what everyone did at NINC for me—and it's what I've witnessed happening countless times since for other first-time attendees. That's why everyone is so passionate about our conference. It's why we care what happens this September. It's why some of us will be disappointed, no matter what decision the board makes—because some of us will miss this time with our tribe.

However, a wonderful aspect about the time in which we live is that every day, we have the chance to stand in a horseshoe, even it's only a virtual one. Whether we're posting on the NINCLink Loop, on the conference loop, or on any of the Facebook groups associated with NINC, we can leave space for others to join us. We can be welcoming in our phrasing and in how we respond to each other. We can recognize each member's right to contribute, and we can be respectful of a point of view or experience that is different than our own.

I'm always proud that this is how our membership behaves, almost without fail. We live in an unprecedented age of divisiveness. Opening social media any given morning gives us the opportunity to argue and to alienate. But in our groups, I see a drawing together and a willingness to listen and consider other viewpoints. We're opening space for others, and we're honoring it.

No matter what the decision is regarding this year's conference, there is going to be disagreement. I want to thank our members ahead of time for recognizing that expressing disappointment and even anger is perfectly valid. I also want to thank all of you who have written to us on the board with support and compassion, understanding that we're all doing our best in a difficult situation.

No matter what happens, we are still a tribe, and we can still come together, even virtually, to interact, to welcome and to share. We are NINC, and that is what we do.

Know that the board is working hard to give our members the best possible horseshoe we can for NINC2020.

—Tawdra Kandle

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*Tawdra Kandle* is a USA Today best-selling romance author with over 80 books released. Her titles include new adult and adult contemporary romance; under the pen name Tamara Kendall, she writes paranormal romance, and under the pen name Tessa Kent, she writes erotic romance.

## **About NINC**

NINC remains committed to serving all of our members, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual beliefs if any, ability, nationality or age. It is NINC's desire and goal to make sure that every author member feels welcomed and accepted and heard.

## **About *Nink***

*Nink's* goal is to provide our readers with high-quality articles that offer critical business advice, marketing how-tos, advanced craft coaching, or strategy to continue building a career, all geared to established authors. All members should feel confident that *Nink* provides something for them. We welcome pitches and submissions from all members; [propose an article](#) or submit a [letter to the editor](#).

## **NINC Member Benefits**

Don't forget to sign up for the [email loop](#), [critique/brainstorming group](#), and the members-only [Facebook group](#) if you haven't already. The Pro Services Directory, member [discount page](#), and [sample letters](#) are also great resources.

Missing a newsletter? Past issues can be found [here](#).

## **Accessing the NINC Website**

Not sure how to log in to the NINC website? Visit the login page here: <https://ninc.com/membership-overview/login-to-ninc/>

September 23 - 27, 2020



- **Conference information:** <https://ninc.com/conferences/about-the-ninc-conference/>
- **Conference Registration:** <https://ninc.com/conferences/registration/>
- **Conference e-loop:** <https://groups.io/g/BeachNINC2020/>

# The Latest and Greatest: Part Two

## Identifying, timing, or ignoring trends in publishing

*By Trish Milburn*



In the April issue of *Nink*, we began our exploration of creative and marketing trends and how best to make them work for your career. This month, we continue to look at how to identify trends or a gap in what is available to readers that present opportunities to authors. We'll also tackle how to learn from missing out on potentially lucrative trends.

### Think unconventionally

When [Wayne Stinnett](#) started publishing his sea adventure stories, he didn't know he was at the starting point of a trend. He was simply taking something old and making it new again.

"The category was there, but it was mostly swashbuckling tales by long-dead traditional authors," he said. "Now the category is full of modern-day tales of action and adventure on the high seas with fast boats and drug smugglers. So many, in fact, I'll never be able to read them all."

Sometimes it's not about spotting a trend but spotting a lack in what is being offered to readers. This often takes some peeling-away-of-the-onion-layers thinking. Noting that Sandra Brown had effectively created modern romantic suspense and Suzanne Brockmann did the same for military romantic suspense, [Matt Buchman](#) spent a couple of years watching for a fresh idea.

"It came when I stumbled on the Night Stalkers, the army's secret helicopter regiment." Buchman said. "I read their application. In 2008, the second line was, 'Women may not apply.' Bang! I knew that I had my idea. Combined with the Night Stalkers, the woman who was so good they couldn't keep her out."

[Nicole Evelina](#) points out that trendsetting authors often have ideas that readers may not even know they need until the books are available. "That's why it's a shame that publishing is less likely than it used to be to take risks," she said.



[Katie MacAlister](#) suggested, “If there are books out there that aren’t quite what you want, dive in and write ones that fill your need. The likelihood is that readers will go along for the ride, even if you don’t see an immediate market for those books. It’s why I started writing both the funny vampires and dragons. There were no romances out there like that, and I wanted to read them. So I wrote them instead.”

Buchman believes that with the ability of indie writers to write anything and find an audience without the interference of New York gatekeepers, trends are probably becoming less and less important.

“New York’s declaration that the Western is dead hasn’t stopped indie writers from selling lots of Westerns,” he said. “Nor the death of horror, the burnout of vampires, or any of the others. But it has allowed the rise of authors with strong voices and a clear vision to create a niche where traditional presses may not have ever thought about or been willing to market.”

### **Learning from missing the boat**

Whether one chooses to chase or not participate in trends, they nevertheless exist. If you like to use them to your career’s benefit, it can sting when you miss out on one. But even if you fail to capitalize on one in time, all is not lost. You can learn from the experience so that you’re better prepared the next time you have an opportunity to ride a wave.

[Cynthia Sax](#) said she waited far too long to explore indie publishing when that became a viable option for authors. “Buddies told me it would suit me, but I resisted it. And I regret that decision because they were right. It does suit me,” she said. “I learned from the experience that if trusted friends tell me I should try something, I should, at the very least, experiment with the trend.”

Skyler Wood, who writes LitRPG novels as [Skyler Grant](#), said she had a quartet of magical academy covers done a year before the genre most recently blew up, but by the time she got around to those books she’d already missed the trend. “Whenever you spot something like that the time window is really limited,” she said. “If you are one of the first names in, you can do well and do well for a long time. But if you are late to the party, there’s nothing left but scraps on the bone.”

Believing in your gut feelings also can pay off when it comes to trends, but if something or someone blocks your path the optimum time for capitalizing can pass you by.

“I missed jumping on the original trend of chick lit back in the Bridget Jones day,” [Mindy Klasky](#) said. “I had a great idea for a book, and I presented that idea to my agent. He shrugged and said he’d seen a lot of chick lit lately, and he wanted me to work on something else. I accepted that without pushing back. Chick lit persisted strongly for another two years, with some of the biggest U.S. books yet to come. I wish I’d pushed harder, explaining how my idea was bigger and better than the existing ones. Now, of course, I could pursue my perception of a trend in indie publishing without waiting for my agent’s imprimatur.”



For [Cat Johnson](#), taking what at the time felt like a positive step ended up inadvertently causing her to miss the initial wave of a trend and the benefits to the authors who took advantage of it. When a second chance came, she was quick to jump on it.

“After years of saying yes to everything and having some negative experiences, I decided to have a year of saying no,” Johnson said. “Unfortunately that was a year that the multi-author, shared-world series of standalones got really big. I said no to a spot in one and watched all the books hit a list at release. But more than that, those authors were in each other’s Also Boughts and continued to ride that heightened visibility wave, selling great for the next year while I was struggling because my books of the same genre were not as visible. What I took away from that was I needed to stop saying no to everything and consider my options and the consequences. The second year of that shared world when I was invited again, I said yes and that book, over a year later, is still my top-selling title, beating even my frontlist titles. I have to attribute that to the greater visibility in the back matter of the other authors’ books where we promote each other, in the Amazon Also Boughts and algorithms, and in the cross-promotion in newsletters, social media and advertising we did as a group, taking advantage of all our audiences combined.”

There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to following creative or marketing trends. While some authors totally dig trends and are always on the lookout for the next big thing, others prefer to buck trends and make their career choices based on their own preferences rather than those of others. Success can be found down either path. You just have to make the decision and then map out a plan about how best to capitalize on that decision.

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*Trish Milburn is the author of more than 50 novels and novellas, including her current Idol in Love series set in the world of K-pop.*

# From Zero to Sixty

## Rebooting a stalled writing career

By Mindy Klasky



*Author's Note: While this article was written during the coronavirus pandemic, all authors mentioned were interviewed prior to the pandemic. Due to the personal nature of the stories shared, individual authors are not named. No reference to specific coaches, counselors, or books is intended to be an endorsement by NINC or by me.*

The front page of the [Novelists Inc. website](#) proclaims: “NINC is a network of successful authors helping each other manage successful writing careers throughout a lifetime.” Every single member of NINC has enjoyed publishing success. The vast majority of us has retooled at least once. Some have shifted from traditional publishing to indie publishing. Some have shifted from Big Five publishers to small presses. Some have juggled multiple pen names in multiple genres.

But what happens when those ordinary business practices fail to move the sales needle? How do authors recover when their sales drop substantially or nearly disappear? The causes of such a fall-off can be legion—family illness, vendor algorithm shenanigans, failed ventures, just bad luck—but how do authors reboot stalled careers?

### Personal stories

When I posted a request for authors to share stories about coming back from career standstills, the responses all had one thing in common. All the authors who responded wrote at length about the circumstances that had led their careers to stall. Every story was heart-wrenching in a unique way. And every story was identical in a brutal display of basic economics. Authors who once saw high six- or seven-figure incomes were reduced to a few thousand dollars a year. (Also, all authors who responded were women, and all wrote in one or more sub-genres of romance.)

Some people never recover from that type of loss. Others dig in and rebuild—but not without substantial costs.

## Professional guidance

Most authors who successfully rebooted their careers hired professionals to help. Some swore by business managers or coaches—using trained facilitators who assisted the author in identifying how they worked, what strategies had been successful in the past, which techniques they were willing to try in the future, and how to create specific, measurable goals to achieve change.

Authors who hired coaches invested relatively high sums of money, sometimes spending tens of thousands of dollars for career guidance. While some authors vehemently kept their advisors' names confidential, other authors noted the services of Robin Blakely ([Creative Center of America](#)), Melissa Storm ([Litring.com](#)) and Becca Syme ([Better Faster Academy](#)).

Some writers who were unable to afford the cost of personal coaching relied on books to guide them through a similar career exploration. Once again, Becca Syme was noted by several authors, with multiple references to her “*Dear Writer*” series: *Dear Writer, You Need to Quit*; *Dear Writer, Are You in Burn Out*, and *Dear Writer: You're Doing it Wrong*. Other authors found guidance from prolific author [Dean Wesley Smith](#), particularly his book, *Writing into the Dark*.

Finally, authors looked outside the specific world of writing to find guidance and comfort. Some writers worked with professional therapists, including psychiatrists who were licensed to prescribe medicine. One author actually dedicated her first post-crash book to Xanax: “Thanks for lifting me up and pushing me through the hard times. The world could've crumbled and I would've watched in fascination because of you.”

## Words, words, words

Individual authors adapted unique publishing strategies when successfully relaunching stalled careers. There was, however, one common theme: each author focused on a series to accomplish her reboot.

Some authors placed one or more existing series in Kindle Unlimited, using a rapid release strategy to build reader interest and to activate Amazon's algorithms. Other authors tested new markets, publishing across all available vendors and supplementing their series launch or relaunch with substantial (in some cases, thousands of dollars) of Facebook ads.

One author chose to change genres, moving from spicy contemporary romance to sweet YA romance. In completing her transition, she studied every aspect of her new genre, including specific markets, successful covers, Facebook ad composition, etc. She noted that she treated her relaunched career as if she were an entirely new author entering the marketplace, conducting all the research she needed when she began her writing journey.

No author described a successful reboot accomplished solely by “rounding out” one or more existing series. Adding print, large print, foreign-language, and/or audio editions might increase some income, but those additional formats alone were not enough to rebuild an entire career.

## Personal support

Each author also emphasized the need for support as she navigated the rebuilding of her career. For some of those authors, support came in the form of in-person meetings with writing friends. Others found themselves relying more heavily than usual on writers' organizations, including attending NINC's annual conference.

After speaking with dozens of authors about career relaunches, I decided to create a discussion group for authors considering their own careers. My group, Second Draft Writers, functions as a private, hidden group on Facebook. I'm providing some of the particulars, in case you are considering building a similar support group.

The Second Draft Writers group description reads:

Second Draft Writers is a group for writers who are ready to edit the current draft of their writing careers. We've all experienced success in the past, and we're all questioning the current state of our careers. This group is a safe place to discuss disappointment, hope (or lack thereof), plans, and decisions, WITH A GOAL TOWARD MOVING FORWARD—either to writing and/or publishing in new ways (which we can share with one another) or to stop writing and/or publishing. Thank you for being kind to one another and for keeping all discussions in this group completely confidential.

I initially limited the group to authors I knew personally. Ultimately, though, we concluded that we didn't have enough of a "brain trust" to create new business solutions. I then opened membership more broadly by posting an invitation on three different professional-author groups to which I belong. Response was far more rapid and enthusiastic than I expected, and within 24 hours I was forced to put a temporary cap at 100 members. (I didn't want the group to grow any larger because members needed to meet and trust each other, so they could safely share personal information.)

Each new member of Second Draft was encouraged to introduce himself or herself to the group and then respond to a poll, specifying their issues of greatest concern. The top two issues—by a substantial margin—were "relaunching existing series with new covers, metadata, etc." and "branching out to new genres/changing genres." Other hot topics included Facebook ads, Amazon (AMS) ads, and Bookbub ads.

While discussions on those career-oriented topics has been brisk, the greatest amount of conversation has revolved around scaling back careers. Some authors are exploring accepting a slowed-down career, redefining "success" in a writing career, and deciding whether the effort, energy, and financial cost of a career reboot is worthwhile to them. Others are considering what "retirement" means to an author, especially to an indie-published author. Coronavirus and the effect of stay-at-home orders has also led to much discussion related to the future of the publishing industry, reader behavior, writing while distracted, and similar issues.

## **Nothing's ever easy**

Every author who successfully rebooted her career did so with great amounts of hard work and careful planning. Most spent a great deal of money as well, hiring coaches and/or marketing professionals to guide them on their paths.

Such an investment might not be feasible—or even possible—for all authors. But writers in every genre should be aware that they are not alone as they research and build an approach appropriate for themselves.

(If you are interested in joining Second Draft, please take the following steps: 1) Friend me on Facebook, 2) Send me a message on Facebook, saying you're interested in joining. I'll place you on a waiting list, and once Second Draft opens to new members, I'll bring you into the group.)

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*USA Today bestselling author [Mindy Klasky](#) learned to read when her parents shoved a book in her hands and told her she could travel anywhere through stories. As a writer, Klasky has traveled through various genres, including romantic comedy, hot contemporary romance, and traditional fantasy. In her spare time, Klasky knits, quilts, and tries to tame her to-be-read shelf.*

# Be Your Own PR Person, Part Two

## The real secret to writing a good press release

*By Michele Dunaway*



In the previous installment, we worked on the idea of your “Home Base” or your key message. This concept revolves around the idea that you don’t have to hire an expensive public relations firm to be able to stay on message with the media, and that with a little work, you can develop and disseminate your own talking points.

In this article we’re going to focus on what really matters when you write a press release. What we won’t focus on is stuff you can learn when you go online and Google “press release samples.” When you do that, dozens of images are going to pop up and they will tell you exactly what needs to go where. They’ll tell you what you need to include and give you sample formats where you can slot your words right into the fields of headlines and body copy and contact information. Easy peasy. Poof.

You’re done... only to have your hard work sent off and immediately deleted and discarded. After all, how many pieces of email come into your inbox only to be deleted unread? How many newsletters do you send to your readers that do not get opened, or if opened, are not really read or converted into sales?

Before we go on, I’m going to send you to [this site](#). Seriously. Go read it. Or give it a quick skim.

While all that information is relevant and important, you probably overlooked one line that seemed like a throwaway: **“Don’t waste the journalist’s time with a long-winded, self-absorbed introduction to yourself or your business. They probably don’t care.”**

I’m going to repeat that last part: “They probably don’t care.” It’s tough to hear, but true.

### What’s in it for them?

I ask my high-school journalists two critical questions when I’m coaching them on writing their news and feature stories: “Are you bored writing this?” and “Why should the reader care?”



Think about it. Every year there is a homecoming dance. Every year there's a varsity football team. Every year there are final exams. School starts sometime in August. Graduation is always the first Saturday of May. For 17 years, I've guided my students through the creation of award-winning yearbooks. We know, every year, we're going to cover the exact same stuff.

So do newspapers. There will be the sweet stories published on Valentine's Day. There's all the election coverage that ramps up every two and four years. 2020 was a leap year, and of course a story on leap year babies ran. The same principle applies for magazines. Fashion follows a cycle, so does sports, so does gardening, etc.

Your book release is one of all the other book releases out there, and with the advent of self-publishing, the noise of those wanting to be noticed is even louder. In order to get the press you want, to get to that interview stage or to get your press release to simply be printed almost verbatim if the media doesn't have time for anything else, **the content has to make the reader care**. In Part I of this series published last month, this all boiled down to answering the simple question the consumer wants to know: "What's in it for me?"

Your message map keeps you on point. However, when you looked at [the sample](#), were you bored? Did you care? Most likely no, you didn't care.

Pretend you're a journalist. If University of Missouri Extension sent you a press release about one of their programs, you would look at it because you had to look at it, not because you think it's the most exciting thing on the planet to receive.

As much as our latest book is the most exciting thing on the planet to us, it's not necessarily the most exciting thing for everyone else. So, as the next part of your media message, you have to figure out how to make your message the most exciting thing.

## Making them care

Let me digress with an example that I promise will make sense, so bear with me and please keep reading. I teach Walt Whitman, who is considered one of the most important American poets ever. Except if you're a high-school junior in regular English III. However, I usually introduce Whitman in the last week of January/first week of February, right around the Super Bowl. Spoiler: high-school kids are into the Super Bowl. So I ask how much does a Super Bowl commercial cost for 30 minutes? (Someone will know. They always do.) Okay, I say, Apple made this commercial a while ago and not only paid for a minute and a half of airtime (we calculate that amount in today's dollar value), but then they had to get the rights to the voice-over you'll hear and then film and edit it.

Then I play the commercial. Take a minute and a half and [go watch how Apple introduced the iPad Air](#).

Kids all know Apple. They have iPhones and iPads. Some may know *Dead Poets Society*, and most still know Robin Williams. And let's face it, it's a pretty awesome commercial with excellent visuals.

By the end of the commercial, it's clear that Apple made Walt Whitman cool again, and I let my students know that when this commercial came out, all over Twitter people were like "That's Robin Williams's voice" and others were "That's *Dead Poet's Society*." We talk about how Apple built an entire campaign around the slogan "What will your verse be?" (which excites all

the kids who like business class best) and how the campaign went beyond the Super Bowl. Suddenly Whitman is relevant again, and “O Me! O Life!” suddenly matters.

**To get people talking, you have to make them care.** You have to show them why it matters to them. The secret to making them care all comes down to this: **Stories are about people, not things or events.**

Your book launch is an event. Your book is a thing. **You are the real story.**

So how do you make the story about you, while still talking about your book and its launch? You have to find the hook that makes the reader care.

Your company has its message, but now that message must translate into newsworthiness. When editors decide what to cover, they look at various elements that make the story newsworthy.

Newsworthy elements include but are not limited to:

- **Celebrity and prominence:** How famous or important a person is. The more famous, the more attention.
- **Conflict and impact:** As writers we understand conflict and how it will impact or effect people.
- **Emotion:** Emotion means the story pulls on your heartstrings. Think of the old adage “if it bleeds, it leads.” Blood, tears, and laughter get attention because we feel them in a visceral way.
- **Proximity and timeliness:** Proximity means we care because it’s close or local, while timeliness means the story matters now and has a sense of immediacy.
- **Novelty and unusualness:** Novelty means it’s different, while unusualness might mean it’s weird or odd—like the guy who ate 20 hot dogs in one minute.
- **Human interest:** Human interest is a bit of a catchall, but it’s understandable as to why we love stories about puppies, kids with lemonade stands, a girl who conquers cancer, or why we want to help when we read about those who need help.

Looking at each of these elements is how my yearbook staff and I find a new and different angle for the stories that are essentially the same event each year. Like the books you write, the characters are different. Stories are about people, not events or things.

The unique hook I often use is “teacher by day, romance writer by night.” It’s novelty. When I spoke at the Kirkwood Public Library, the press release played up I was a local native, so proximity. The article began: *Twenty years ago, author Michele Dunaway was shelving books at Kirkwood Library for \$2 an hour. Now the library has all seven of her books on hand and Dunaway is the library’s June “Author of the Month.”* You can read the rest [here](#).

## Finding your hook

Now go back to your message map. Your hooks, your newsworthiness, should come from your positive, proof-positive, and more specifically, your distinguishing points. Your distinguishing points should explain how you are different from everyone else. This is your

newsworthiness. What can you do to hook the person who will receive your press release? What can you do to make them care about you? Or be intrigued? Or curious?

Your uniqueness is what makes the reader care and why they will want to know more. There are tons of authors putting out books. So what makes your story the one that should be told? How can you sell them that writing about you is a different approach to the same old story?

Here's an example from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on Jan. 19, 2018, the fifth anniversary of the death of Stan Musial, baseball Hall of Famer, the first million-dollar player, and a St. Louis icon. The challenge for the reporter was how to find a new angle to commemorate the day of his death. Ben Frederickson started his story like this:

Swap a Stan Musial story today.

If you don't have one, hear one.

It's not hard.

You can't throw a four-seamer in this city without hitting the glove of someone with one to share.

On the five-year anniversary of the day we lost "Baseball's Perfect Knight," find a moment to remember what made him so much bigger than the game.

I'll go first.

Leo and Jane Garvin can't forget their Musial story, because without Stan, there wouldn't be a Leo and Jane.

Trust me, go [read](#) the rest of the story, hyperlinked under the word read. I'll wait.

Now that you have, I'll let you in on a little secret. Jane is my late father's sister. Leo's my uncle, and Patrick is my cousin. I don't know Ben. I knew about the birthday party, but not about the fact there wouldn't be Leo and Jane without Stan.

I had a reason to care when I read this article. But did you care? This story has emotion, human interest, and celebrity. If you said yes, if you kept reading even if you didn't know Leo and Jane, or if you found yourself finding yourself thinking "this was cool," even though you aren't a St. Louis Cardinals fan, this is because the story is about people (Stan, Leo & Jane), not events (in this case, the anniversary of Stan's death).

When you craft your press release, when you write your story, if you are bored, the person reading it will be, too. **The secret to a successful press release is figuring out how to make the reader care, so don't be afraid to dig deep and focus on you.** Trust me, your story is worth telling.

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*Michele Dunaway is in her final year as your Nink editor. Writing press releases and giving interviews don't scare her. The fact that her term is almost over and she'll really miss doing Nink does.*

# Effective Ebook Pricing

*By Elaine Isaak*



With NINC members releasing both backlist novels and new indie projects, effective pricing strategies for ebook releases are key. Amazon, the 2000-pound gorilla in the arena of ebooks, encourages price points between \$2.99 and \$9.99 with its royalty model, offering 70% royalty rates between those prices, and only 35% outside that range. Barnes and Noble has a similar structure, while Apple allows 70% royalties across price points; other retailers range between 40-60%.

The following advice focuses on series novels. When promoting a standalone book, the focus is less on price than on garnering reviews and building the reputation of the book itself.

## **Series strategies**

Early in the ebook revolution, influenced by binge-watching and consumer-driven release timing, most authors agreed that having the first volume free was a great way to draw readers into the series. While you might get a lot of downloads from readers just looking for freebies, many of those readers would purchase additional volumes. Authors and indie publishing resources agree that some form of loss leader really helped to bring in the sales.

A sampling of author posts suggests a conversion rate of 5-15% from a permafrost Book 1 to Book 2, and a conversion rate of 45-60% from a low-price Book 1. If your numbers are much lower than that, you may need to revisit the cover and blurbs. [Wayne Stinnett](#), an indie-first author of sea adventure novels, found that he had a 61% conversion rate when pricing Book 1 at \$2.99. It dropped to 46% at \$.99, but the book sold twice as many copies. Of course the download velocity of a free book can boost you onto the bestseller lists and trigger other support from the algorithms, which can be a significant factor in your pricing strategy.

[Brenda Hiatt](#), a hybrid author of romance for both adults and teens, finds that having Volume 1 permafrost continues to get a lot of attention, although she also feels her title that's been free for five years may have run its course in terms of bringing in new readers. She's tried then stepping up Book 2 at \$2.99, and subsequent volumes at a full price of \$4.99, as well as simply pricing Book 2 and onward at \$4.99.

Stinnett offers a low price for the first volume—usually \$.99—for several weeks to promote the series. He'll offer the new release pre-order at \$2.99 for three days, alerting his newsletter and social media followings, to give fans an extra incentive to buy early, then go up to full price. With his 18-volume-plus Jesse McDermitt series, Stinnett groups his titles, setting the first three at \$2.99, the next group a little higher, and so on up to the latest releases at \$7.99. Even at \$7.99, the books sell 30-35 copies daily. Stinnett plans to release his next volumes as high as \$8.99 or \$9.99, commensurate with traditionally published releases. Hiatt is similarly testing the waters with raising the price of her historical series books to \$5.99.

[Jennifer Ashley](#), who writes across a variety of genres including romance, mystery, historical and paranormal, has experimented both ways, with three series having perma-free first volumes, and others having Volume 1 at an introductory price. She's found that full-length loss leaders get more attention than novellas in terms of bringing in new readers. Shorter works are priced lower, including \$.99 short stories. When she started indie-publishing, she priced at \$.99 or \$2.99, but now finds that \$3.99 and \$4.99 books sell quite well, and continue to have good sell-through across her series. Her current trad releases at \$9.99 do well, though sales are not as high as for her moderately priced indie books.

All three authors agreed that they needed on-going promotional effort to support those early books in the series, as well as new releases. Bookbub remains the Holy Grail of promotion, but each author uses regular advertising on Amazon and/or Facebook to continue to drive readers to the series. Ashley suggests Freebooksy as an affordable way to get the word out, but notes that she doesn't get as many downloads there as with Bookbub. With a long-running, low-cost ad campaign for a free volume, she finds that the sales in subsequent volumes easily recoup the advertising investment.

Each of these authors found that \$4.99 was the most profitable price, allowing for strong sales at a decent rate of return, though this may change as they work with higher price points. Also the \$4.99 titles tend to be the next price bracket after the free or bargain-priced earlier volumes.

For 2018, [Written Word Media](#), which provides Amazon advertising services, analyzed three months of sales at various price points. This is specific to their customers on Amazon, but it may provide some insight. Books priced at \$.99 sold twice as many copies on average as books at other price points—so if your goal is volume sales, that's the sweet spot. On the other hand, the most profitable price point was \$3.99, for both 2018 and 2017. They agreed that \$4.99 was a good full price for a well-presented book. In his article, "[The Great Ebook Pricing Question](#)," David Gaughran, author of historical adventure novels, reaches similar conclusions.

When experimenting with low prices, make sure to position the book for readers so they don't perceive the book as having a lower value because it's cheap. Several sources confirmed that \$1.99 is likely to get lower sales than \$2.99, probably because readers suspect the higher-priced item is a better product. Savvy readers expect certain price buckets, and a price promotion on Volume 1 may get a lot of attention if readers feel they're being offered a special deal while the same price for a standalone or first volume *without* succeeding volumes available may suggest lower value.

Authors reissuing backlist or moving from traditional publishing may find that readers are willing to pay more than authors without an existing following, including those establishing new pseudonyms or new genres. Also, readers shopping on Kobo appear to have less price resistance, delivering on that \$4.99 sweet spot.

## **The impact of genre**

The authors I spoke to did not find significant differences between different genres, although Hiatt observed that her YA books could be priced higher, because most competition in that market still comes from higher-priced trad books. David Kudler, in an article on [The Book Designer](#), suggests that for genres with higher volume readers, i.e., most commercial fiction genres, readers are more price-sensitive, while for literary fiction or non-fiction, readers seem more willing to pay up to \$9.99. He also found that shorter works in volume genres carried an expectation of lower prices (\$.99 to \$2.99).

Amazon's beta-version price suggestion tool claims to take the length of the work and its genre into account, comparing it with works that are similar in those aspects. I ran a quick comparison of three of my own works: a fantasy novella of 145 pages, a fantasy novel of 574 pages, and a thriller novel of 398 pages. For every one of these projects, Amazon's tool recommended a price of \$2.69. So, I would take any suggestion based on that tool with a shaker of salt. The recommendations may be skewed by the larger number of free or loss-leader works in commercial genres.

## **Book bundles**

In terms of offering book bundles, Hiatt has specials that are only available through other vendors or on her own website, rather than accept the lower payoff from Amazon for works \$9.99 and up. On Amazon, she bundles three books for \$7.99 - \$9.99, depending on the original prices, so that the total ends up being \$1-2 cheaper in the bundle.

Stinnett laid out a very deliberate pricing structure. He said, "A bundle should obviously be priced lower than the total of the individual books it contains, but not so low that someone who bought Book One would want to buy the bundle to get Books 2-4 cheaper, rather than buying them individually. Assume four books in the bundle priced individually at \$.99, \$2.99, \$2.99, and \$2.99 if bought separately. That's a total of \$9.96. That's the high price point in this scenario. Books 2-4 total \$8.97 if bought separately, so that's the low price point. If someone has already bought Book One, you want to steer them to buy the rest individually, and you can do that by price. One cent will do it. In this scenario, I'd price the four book bundle at \$8.99. That's \$1.03 less than the combined price of all four and \$.02 higher than the last four in the bundle."

Written Word also found that box sets with promotional prices had the highest volume sales.

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*Elaine Isaak writes knowledge inspired adventure fiction, including the Bone Guard international thriller series as by E. Chris Ambrose.*



# Writing During a Pandemic

## Intuition and self-awareness

*By Denise A. Agnew*



In April and May, I detailed how authors found a way to push through hard times and continue to work. This month focuses on ways you can discover inspiration, even during a pandemic.

### **Let's get personal**

When the COVID-19 pandemic started, my generally calm interior started to wobble. I felt a little like the heroine of a disaster movie, preparing to jump over an enormous crack in a glacier shelf as it hangs by one inch of ice. I was startled and disappointed that my steel backbone wasn't holding me up the way I wanted. After all, I'm in an advantageous position in comparison to many. I can work from home and my husband has a secure job where he can also work from home. However, I didn't factor in that extra stressors might toss me off balance.

Even before COVID-19, my stress level started to rise in December when we discovered my dog had a mass cell tumor in one of his legs and would require surgery, chemo and radiation. Taking my dog for radiation in Tucson, which is 175 miles round trip, exacerbated my stress. For three weeks, I dropped my pup off at the vet on a Monday and he'd board there all week because he was receiving treatments every day. Friday I'd return to pick him up. (The good news is the treatments worked well and my dog is now healthy.)

The stress took its toll, and I started meds in February, after being diagnosed as having a mild case of hypothyroidism. Between the stress and starting meds, I lost more weight than I intended.

What's the point of me revealing this about myself? I expected the stress to block my creativity. It did, but not as much as expected. I've worked on a screenplay, and I've even started a new novel.

Here's what I did to keep the creativity flowing—I focused on intuition.

I spent many years denying my intuition always works far better than if I try to “logic” myself into a decision, even though evidence repeatedly showed I made my best decisions by following my gut. Now I’ve become far better at allowing my intuition to guide me in everyday life, including how I approach my muse.

I’ve discovered many writers struggling with creativity have abandoned their intuition, or perhaps they have never used it.

This means when my intuition told me to write a “pandemic time period” romance, I went with it. If instead I’d told myself no one will want to read that story in the coming months or years, I wouldn’t have started it. My guess is there are dozens of writers out there struggling to create even though they’ve got an idea calling. Take advantage of this inspiration. Don’t allow yourself to allow “logic” to stifle creativity by telling yourself the idea isn’t worthy.

Why do we deny intuition has value? Answer—it’s too uncertain and scary. In the Western world, we are geared toward an “outline until your eyes bleed” work process. Even when people tap into their intuition, they don’t always know that’s what they are doing. Maybe now is a good time to experiment with an outside-of-the-box approach.

How can you experiment with letting your intuition lead your creativity? Here are a few tips:

- **Experiment with writing by the seat of your pants.** If your writing is feeling clogged up during the pandemic, consider trying to write a story without an outline. It can be a story just for you. Let it rip and allow yourself to play. You never know where that story could evolve, and that’s a good thing. Go with inspiration and not logic to free up space for new ideas.
- **Grab some paper and solitude.** Take a favorite pen, paper, and schedule time when you won’t be disturbed. If you are locked in your house with other people this might prove a challenge. Schedule it anyway and don’t allow others to derail you. If the weather allows, you might go outside. Put on favorite soothing music, or “theme” music that goes with a story idea you already have. Set a timer for 10 minutes. Close your eyes and let images roll around in your mind’s eye. Don’t try to make those ideas conform to a story. When the timer goes off, immediately write down the images, thoughts, and feelings that came to you. Don’t be concerned if the things you wrote do not seem to embrace a coherent story idea and sound like gibberish. Don’t trash it even if the ideas seem mean-spirited or contrary to the way you’d like to think of yourself. Most of us try to be good people, and therefore we repress recognizing that we don’t always have charitable thoughts. Write it down anyway. You might find a story idea or tidbit immediately. If you don’t, that’s okay, too. Save what you wrote. These ideas and images might be useful for a project down the line.
- **Do more reading, not less.** If there is an old favorite you haven’t read in ages, why not read it now? Oftentimes, reading something you loved (yes, even a children’s book) can rev up your creativity. Don’t overthink. Just enjoy. If an idea comes for a new story, or if

it inspires your current project, it is all good. Write down the idea, no matter what, even if it sounds wild or is out of your typical genre.

- **Look to your dreams.** If you remember your dreams, immediately write down what you recall as soon as you awaken. Not every dream may evolve into a story down the pike, but you never know.
- **Reconnect with nature.** Depending on your current weather, can you sit outside for a few minutes or take a walk? Even a gentle stroll could refresh you physically and get your creative blood flowing. If your weather isn't cooperating, what can you write down about that weather that could shape or change a current project or inspire a new project?
- **Watch some television.** In our productivity-oriented world, people sometimes say watching television is a waste of time. Can it be overdone? Of course. Moderation is key. When I mentioned reading more and not less, I think that also goes for television. If there's a beloved movie or series that always makes you feel good or gives you creative ideas, why not find some time to watch it? Binge on whatever provides comfort and satisfaction.
- **Write down what makes you feel good.** Simply acknowledging what lifts you up can refresh your memory of it and could generate creativity and a sense of profound well-being. Many times people use journals to express their unhappiness. See if you're spending equal time to remind yourself of what is working right in your world and how grateful you are.
- **Acknowledge possibilities.** Write down every idea you've had about something you want to create in your writing world, even if it seems impractical. In our society, we often downplay loving to do something and devalue that experience. It goes straight back to the idea that if you enjoy doing it, it must somehow be unproductive or not worthy. I've coached a number of writers who've discovered that they want to write about XYZ and haven't because of outside influences and fears about what other people will think.

I hope these ideas give you some inspiration. Now is the time to discover new facets of your creativity you've always wanted to explore.

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*Denise A. Agnew is the award-winning author of over 69 novels and screenplays. Denise's novels Love from The Ashes and Blackout were optioned for film/TV by Where's Lucy? Productions, Bright Frontier Films and MDR Entertainment. Denise is a writer/producer (Where's Lucy? Productions, Happy Catastrophe Productions, Bright Frontier Films), a paranormal investigator, Reiki Master, and Certified Creativity Coach. As a creativity coach, Denise assists anyone in the creative arts to maintain lifelong creativity. You can find her at [www.deniseagnew.com](http://www.deniseagnew.com) and [www.creativepencoaching.com](http://www.creativepencoaching.com).*

# The Mad Scribbler

## Survey Report

By Laura Resnick



*"Latest survey shows that 3 out of 4 people make up 75% of the world's population."*  
—attributed to Stephen Hawking (1942-2018)

During various discussions last year on the *Nink* team, we decided that some 30 years into this endeavor, it would be a good idea to seek feedback from members about the newsletter.

Rather than just flinging out a general plea for casual kudos and criticism on NINCLink, we wanted to gather focused, specific feedback from members via a detailed survey. Our goals were to learn whether *Nink* was meeting members' needs and to ask how we might improve the newsletter to serve members even better.

Since we'd need to retain a professional to prepare, administer, and analyze such a survey, we decided this would also be a good opportunity to gather general data about the composition of NINC membership, which we try to do once every few years. And so the 2019 survey project got underway.

As you may or may not remember (it's been a rather eventful year, after all), [WTH Analytics](#) administered the *Nink* survey to NINC members during the first two weeks of November. The company subsequently analyzed the results and presented the NINC Board and the survey committee with a detailed report earlier this year.

Now it's my job to summarize 90 pages of analytics for you. This is no doubt yet another occasion when you really wish you were me.

### Participation

First of all, thanks and kudos to you for participating! A full 42 percent of NINC members completed the survey, which WTH Analytics described as "high engagement" and *more than double* the usual 15-20 percent rate of membership response to such surveys. The higher the rate of participation, the more accurately representative of membership the results are; this survey has a 3.5 percent margin of error.

The analyst also commented on the unusually high rate of written responses to various questions, as well as how detailed many of those answers were. We appreciate your investment in this survey, since we learned so much from it.

## Membership

According to the data collected, more than half of you joined NINC within the past five years. More than 1/3 of you have been in NINC 6-20 years. And about 10 percent of members have been in NINC for 21-30 years. (That includes me. I've been here so long, I remember when we used to publish *Nink* on clay tablets.)

More than 2/3 of members consider their NINC membership to be "very valuable" or "extremely valuable." Ninety-two percent of members surveyed in November intended to renew their membership. (Renewals took place Nov – Jan.)

Ninety percent of respondents live in the United States. Ninety percent also identify as female (though presumably not the *exact same* ninety percent). Eighty percent of members are 45 or older.

## Publishing background

Seventy-five percent of NINC members have published traditionally; 25 percent have not—their publishing history is instead entirely indie.

Thirty-three percent of members have traditionally published 1-10 books; 25 percent have published 11-30 books; 18 percent have published more than 30 novels.

We divided questions about indie publishing into original releases and backlist reissues to get a better sense of how many members are writing specifically for the indie market, whether exclusively or as hybrid authors.

Only 12 percent of respondents have never indie published an original novel. Thirty-seven percent have indie published 1-10 original novels; 31 percent have indie published 11-30 original novels; and 19 percent have indie published more than 30 novels.

Members under 45 are more likely to be indie writers than those over 45.

Only 49 percent of respondents have self-published reverted backlist novels. (I'm curious about how much of the 51 percent who have not done so is due to being unable to get rights reverted, as compared to other possible reasons.) Among those who have done so, 33 percent have self-published up to 10 backlist novels; 12 percent have self-published 11-30 such releases; 3 percent, more than 30.

"Most NINC writers are well established," WTH Analytics reported. "Two-thirds have been published writers for five to twenty years." Eleven percent have been published for less than five years; 23 percent for more than 30 years.

Forty-eight percent of respondents have had their titles appear on national bestseller lists. Fifty-four percent of NINCers earn somewhere between half and all of their income from writing.

## Agents

Here's the survey result that really surprised me: only 31 percent of respondents have a literary agent.

Another five percent responded "it's complicated."

Fully 64 percent reported they do not have an agent.

Any which way you slice all those publishing stats above, this is a *very* accomplished population of commercial fiction writers. Nearly half of NINCers have each published more than 10 novels (and all of us, obviously, have published at least two—the minimum requirement to become a member). The vast majority of us have been publishing for more than five years. Nearly half of us have had books appear on national bestseller lists, and (drilling further into this stat now), 47 percent of respondents earn 75-100 percent of their income from writing.

Yet 64 percent of us don't have a literary agent.

I didn't take the survey (as a member of the survey committee, it would have been inappropriate for me to participate), but that response certainly reflects my experience. I, too, don't have an agent.

I haven't had one since 2006, although my career is primarily in traditional publishing. I had very bad experiences with the four agents I hired over the years; one dumped me, and I fired the other three. I also had bad experiences with many of the other agents I'd queried during my career. Some just said "no," which is fine; but some threw tantrums, made ludicrous requests, or were almost bizarrely disorganized and unprofessional.

So I finally recognized that, overall, agents were more of an impediment to my career than an asset. I decided to represent myself in most of my business and retain a lawyer for my contract negotiations. At the time, this was so unusual that other writers were often dismissive, wary, or even very critical of my business model. The only other writers I knew back then who didn't have an agent were trying to get one.

So the result in this survey—64 percent unagented, in a population of accomplished, busy writers—made my jaw drop. I had assumed at least 2/3 of NINC members were agented; instead, our result is the exact opposite of that. Time has marched on, I haven't discussed or even thought about agents in a long time... and I see that things have changed more than I realized.

So I'm keen to hear more about this subject from the unagented majority in NINC, as well as from the "it's complicated" group.

## *Nink*

Survey responses indicate that after the annual conference, which many members consider the most valuable feature of NINC, the newsletter is the next most-valued benefit of membership.

Ninety percent of respondents had accessed (read) *Nink* within the past year; 53 percent accessed six or more issues in the past year. (WTH Analytics tells us that, like our survey response rate, this is an excellent percentage for an internal organization publication.) More



than half of members who start reading *Nink* report they typically read 3/4 or all of it. The issues with the detailed conference reports are the most-read editions of the newsletter.

The above figures may seem drier than dust to you, but we were pleased. This survey originated with questions posed about *Nink's* relevance, and our realization on the newsletter team that although we believed members read and valued it, we didn't have evidence we could cite or figures we could quote. Now we do.

## **Print vs. digital**

One of the subjects we thought this survey had to address was whether we should return to having a print edition of *Nink*. About 20 years into the newsletter's existence, we started gradually transitioning from a printed edition to offering electronic delivery. A few years later, we converted to digital only, now offered in a choice of formats (PDF, epub, and mobi).

The old print editions were enormously expensive for NINC to produce, and would be even more costly now, since paper, printing, and shipping prices have continued to soar. We're able to offer much more content in every issue ever since transitioning to digital-only, precisely because we don't have to pay those physical costs. We're also able to offer the writers a better pay rate.

Nonetheless, we're aware that there are members who miss the print edition and would like to see it revived. So we examined this question seriously for the survey. When pricing it out, we found the cost of shipping and printing *Nink* (which has a small subscriber base, making the physical per-unit costs high) meant we could only realistically consider doing this if two conditions were met: A substantial percentage of members wanted a print edition, and they were all willing to pay an extra annual fee for it, in addition to their membership dues.

Well, survey results showed that less than 1/4 of respondents wanted a print edition at all, even at no extra cost; and only a very small percentage of those members were willing to pay extra for a print edition.

So it's just not feasible. Barring an enormous and unlikely change in the costs of paper, printing, and shipping, I think this survey has permanently closed this question for NINC.

## **What you don't know about *Nink***

The survey found that most members aren't aware of how *Nink* works. Since learning that, we've previously included some of this info in the newsletter and will continue doing so in future.

For example, *Nink* is always looking for material. You can propose or submit an article or article series by contacting the editor at [NinkEditor@gmail.com](mailto:NinkEditor@gmail.com) or filling out the [form](#) on the website. *Nink* welcomes pitches and submissions from *all* members.

You can propose writing a regular column for *Nink*.

You can help guide content of this newsletter by volunteering to serve as Assistant Editor (non-Board position) or Editor (Board position) of this newsletter. The president appoints the newsletter editor, and Michele Dunaway's three-year term is ending in December in accordance with the bylaws.

*Nink* pays \$0.20/word, up to \$250 for original articles unless additional length is previously approved by the editor. If you have a previously published article (blogs count as published) to submit, we pay a flat \$100 for reprints should your piece be accepted. One thing to note, *Nink* runs articles anywhere from weeks to three months after approval. However, we pay upon acceptance. *Nink* reserves November and December for conference reports.

### **Improving *Nink***

The survey asked for your suggestions — and you provided a lot of them. Your responses were rich with topic ideas for *Nink* articles — a few dozen of which we listed in the February 2020 issue when seeking authors for those subjects. (We're always still looking, by the way.) The newsletter team is taking those suggestions seriously, and we're happy to report that if we hadn't covered those topics already, we've reached out to contributors and we'll start covering many of them in future issues.

A number of members also asked to see *Nink* published in an additional new format, to be read directly on the website, which they would find more convenient than the current downloadable offerings. It's another suggestion we've taken seriously. NINC is looking into this and it's on the website committee's radar. (That doesn't mean it's "coming soon." There are various issues that have to be examined.) Remember, you can always access back issues of *Nink* in the newsletter [archives](#) on NINC's website; you must be logged in as a member to access the most recent issues.

### **Finally...**

As well as being one of the columnists, I'm the newsletter's production manager. In February, we switched to a different service for *Nink* distribution, and this has changed the way you access it. I want to know if it's working for you, and whether you find yourself more likely or less likely to download *Nink* this year — or same as usual?

In a few months, we need to decide whether or not to renew our account with the service we're currently using. So I'd like to hear about members' experience of accessing *Nink* since February. Please comment on Ninclink, or send me an email at [NinkDistribution@ninc.com](mailto:NinkDistribution@ninc.com).

Thanks for reading *Nink*.

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*Laura Resnick* writes novels, short stories, and nonfiction.

# Membership Benefits

Need industry intel, software, or legal help? We've got you covered.

Are you taking advantage of all your member benefits?

As a NINC member, your benefits include industry discounts, newsletter and website articles, professional services directory, networking opportunities, and more.

We've compiled all of these—which you can also find on our website—into this list as a helpful reminder.

## Networking

The email list for Novelists, Inc. Members: <https://groups.io/g/NINCLINK>

Join our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/NovelistsInc/>

We offer a critique/brainstorming group: <https://groups.io/g/NINKcritique>

Follow NINC on Twitter: [https://twitter.com/Novelists\\_Inc](https://twitter.com/Novelists_Inc)

## Conference 2020:

Conference information: <https://ninc.com/conferences/about-the-ninc-conference/>

Conference Registration: <https://ninc.com/conferences/registration/>

Conference e-loop: <https://groups.io/g/BeachNINC2020/>

## Newsletter

Propose an article: <https://ninc.com/newsletter/propose-an-article/>

Submit a letter to the editor: <https://ninc.com/newsletter/submit-letter-to-editor/>

Newsletter archives: <https://ninc.com/newsletter/news-archive/>

## Website (you must be logged in to access these services)

Legal Fund: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/legal-fund/>

Pro Services Directory: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/pro-services-directory/>

Sample Letters: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/sample-letters/>

Articles & Links: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/articles-and-links/>

Welcome Packet: <http://ninc.com/system/assets/uploads/>

[2017/01/2017\\_New\\_Member\\_Welcome\\_Packet-public.pdf](2017/01/2017_New_Member_Welcome_Packet-public.pdf)

## Member discounts

NINC members are eligible for certain professional discounts. A complete listing of these can be found at <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/member-freebies-discounts/> along with other member discounts.

## **Volunteer**

One of the greatest benefits of NINC is the opportunity to volunteer your talents to benefit other members—which pays incredible and unexpected dividends in networking and knowledge. Learn more about volunteer opportunities here: <https://ninc.com/members-only/open-positions/>

Open positions include:

- Social Media Committee
- Tweet Team
- Recruiting New Members
- Anything!



*Founded in 1989*

### **NINC Statement of Principle**

Novelists, Inc., in acknowledgment of the crucial creative contributions novelists make to society, asserts the right of novelists to be treated with dignity and in good faith; to be recognized as the sole owners of their literary creations; to be fairly compensated for their creations when other entities are profiting from those creations; and to be accorded the respect and support of the society they serve.

### **Founders**

- Rebecca Brandewyne
- Janice Young Brooks
- Jasmine Cresswell
- Maggie Osborne
- Marianne Shock

### **2020 Board of Directors**

*If you have questions regarding Novelists, Inc., please contact a member of the Board of Directors.*

- Interim President: Tawdra Kandle
- Interim President-Elect: Lisa Hughey
- Secretary: Hallee Bridgeman
- Treasurer: Pam McCutcheon
- Newsletter Editor: Michele Dunaway
- Advisory Council Representative: Lou Aronica

### **Advisory Council**

- Lou Aronica
- Brenda Hiatt Barber
- Linda Barlow
- Jean Brashear
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- Meredith Efken
- Donna Fletcher
- Kay Hooper

- Barbara Keiler
- Julie Leto
- Pat McLaughlin
- Kasey Michaels
- Julie Ortolon
- Diana Peterfreund
- Pat Rice
- Erica Ridley
- Marianne Shock
- Wayne Stinnett
- Vicki Lewis Thompson
- Victoria Thompson
- Steven Womack

## 2020 Committees

*Complete committee member listings are available on the website. Many committee positions are open and looking for new volunteers.*

- 2020 Conference Committee:
  - Conference Coordinator: Mel Jolly
  - Programming Chair: Tawdra Kandle
  - Asst. Prog. Chair & Trade Show: Lisa Hughey
  - Sponsorship & Trade Show: Rochelle Paige
  - Traditional Publishing Liaison: Victoria Thompson
  - Annabel Chase
- Authors Coalition Rep: Laura Phillips & Sue Phillips
- Social Media Committee:
  - Chair: Jenna Kernan
  - Rick Gualteieri
  - Lisa Hughey
  - Christine Breen
- Membership Committee
  - Sarah Woodbury
  - Boyd Craven
- *Nink* Newsletter
  - Editor: Michele Dunaway
  - Assistant Editor: Nicole Evelina
  - Copy Editor: Cynthia Moyer
  - Production Manager: Laura Resnick
- Nominating Committee:
  - Tanya Anne Crosby
  - Kathy Carmichael
  - Kristine Smith
  - Jenny Gardiner
  - Rick Gualtieri

- Technology Committee
  - Nick Thacker
  - Elizabeth Ann West
  - Jamie McFarlane
  - Erica Ridley
- Discount Program Chair: Emilie Richards
- Volunteer Jobs (Just One Thing) Coordinator: Lois Lavrisa

### **Central Coordinator**

Novelists, Inc. c/o Terese Ramin

P.O. Box 54, Hartland MI 48353

[admin@ninc.com](mailto:admin@ninc.com)

*Address changes may be made on the website.*

### ***Nink* Newsletter**

*June 2020 edition – Vol. 31, No. 6*

*Nink's* goal is to provide our readers with high-quality articles that offer critical business advice, marketing how-tos, advanced craft coaching, or strategy to continue building a career, all geared to established authors. All members should feel confident that *Nink* provides something for them. We welcome pitches and submissions from all members.

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