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a professional organization
of writers of popular fiction



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President's Voice

By Lisa Hughey



One of my efforts for the summer has been to reframe things more positively and I recently read a quote by Robert Louis Stevenson that really resonated with me.

“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.”

I loved this. I think it is easy to get frustrated when the outcome we want does not immediately happen, especially in these days of very instant gratification. So, I started making a “seed” list, rather than a done list. The deliberate intention of calling the actions *seeds* reframes the act with less importance on the outcome and more on the expectation that opportunities will grow—but growing takes time.

Joe Solari, financial advisor to authors, was our guest on Clubhouse and he reinforced this idea with his emphasis on the Cumulative Effect: an effect produced by something happening over a long period of time. (Unfortunately, we can’t record the Clubhouse sessions but if you’re at the conference, be sure to check out his workshop. And if you won’t be at the conference, watch the newsletter for the written report on the workshop!)

I started looking at everything and reframing my actions as seeds. For me, this year as president has been all about updating our policies and procedures, inviting in new volunteers and paid employees, refining our bylaws, and expanding our offerings to accommodate our growing membership. On the surface, not very sexy, but we are planting the seeds for NINC to grow and I’m proud of our progress.

Speaking of growing and changing, it is time for NINC elections. [Here is the link](#) to vote online. Starting **today**, you have a month to vote (**Aug. 5 - Sept. 6**), but why not cast your ballot right away? As a reminder, there is **one** candidate for officers (Secretary, Treasurer, and

President Elect) who were vetted by the 2022 nominating committee—who were elected last year. Also on the ballot are the candidates for **next year's** nominating committee. You can vote for up to five choices.

Thanks for participating in our election process!

~ Lisa

USA Today bestselling author [Lisa Hughey](#) writes about strong heroines who are perfectly capable of rescuing themselves and the heroes who love both their strength and their vulnerability. She pens romances of all types—suspense, paranormal, and contemporary—but at their heart, her books celebrate the power of love. She lives in Cape Ann, Massachusetts, with her fabulously supportive husband, two out of three awesome mostly grown kids, and one somewhat grumpy cat.

About NINC

NINC is committed to welcoming a diverse and inclusive membership to our organization and serving all members. No author will ever be discriminated against on the basis 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](#), [traditionally published 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/>



NINC2022: Work Smarter is just over a month away. I hope you're as pumped as the conference team is for this year's event—it feels as though we're all coming back together again after a too-long hiatus.

If you are registered and have not yet reserved a hotel room, you can call the TradeWinds at 1-800-808-9833 and request the NINC conference rate, but we have exceeded our room block—as well as the increased room block—and can no longer guarantee that the hotel will honor our rate.

We have arranged for an overflow hotel: The Hilton Garden Inn, 6100 Gulf Blvd., St. Pete Beach, FL 33706. If you call the TradeWinds and cannot secure the conference room rate at the Rumfish, we suggest that you call The Hilton Garden Inn at 1-877-782-9444 and reference the NINC conference. The rate there will be \$169 per night, available from the night of Wednesday, September 21, through Saturday, September 24 (checking out Sunday, September 25). **This rate is for registered conference attendees only.**

A tentative general conference schedule and a list of workshop blurbs are both available on the NINC website [here](#). Please note that this schedule is *not* final and is subject to editing and change.

What's new this year? What favorites will you especially enjoy? In addition to our jam-packed workshop schedule, filled with a wide variety of topical options, we're also offering snack breaks on several days, two breakfasts (Friday and Saturday), coffee every morning, lunches on Thursday and Friday, desserts and drinks (and roundtables) at NINC After Dark on Thursday and Friday—and of course, our not-to-be-missed Beachside Blowout Buffet on Saturday night, followed by karaoke! Wow!

We're also excited about two new big events we're including this year:

- Our Sponsors Happy Hour on Friday afternoon from 4-5 p.m. In the Banyan Breezeway, you'll cruise all of the sponsors' tables with your special passport in hand. Stop to visit with each one to get a special stamp or sticker, then bring your completed passport to

the official NINC table to receive a ticket for our drawing—the prize basket is going to be EPIC (chock-full of donations from our awesome sponsors). And oh, did I mention there'll be a bar and snacks, too? You won't want to miss this.

- A live taping of Mark Dawson's SPF Show, happening on Saturday afternoon at 4:30. You can be part of the audience as Mark and James and company unpack NINC and publishing circa 2022 in general.

Check out my article in this issue for a more detailed description of what to expect—and how to maximize your time in St. Pete Beach.

If you are interested in volunteering to moderate workshops, please email our moderator coordinator, Karen King at katymadison@gmail.com.

If you are interested in reporting on any workshops for upcoming issues of *Nink*, please email Trish Milburn at ninkacquisitions@ninc.com.

And please *do* remember to thank all of our conference committee volunteers who are working so hard to bring you a fabulous event!

Programming

Chair: Tawdra Kandle

Assistant Chair: Hallee Bridgeman

Sponsorship

Chair: Sarah Woodbury

Assistant: Dylann Crush

Hotel

Liaison: Karen Fox

Assistant Liaison: Tegan Maher

Registration

Chair: Pam McCutcheon

Assistant Chair: Stephanie Julian

Social Media

Chair: Violet Howe

Assistant Chair: Sylvia McDaniel

Roundtable Coordinator

Tamsin Ley

Moderator Coordinator

Karen King

Trad Liaison

Vicki Thompson

Graphics, App, and Design Queen

Laura Hayden

Tawdra Kandle is the USA Today bestselling author of over 100 romances that span genres from contemporary through paranormal. Her engaging and realistic characters bring readers back again and again to devour the steamy love stories she spins. She lives in central Florida with a husband, a mischievous pup, and too many cats.

How to Get the Most Out of Attending the NINC Conference

By Tawdra Kandle



Whether you've been to every single NINC conference since the beginning of time (or 1989) or 2022 represents your very first time with us, I can promise one thing: you're going to find something new and exciting at NINC2022: Work Smarter this year!

Our entire conference team has been working very hard since last fall to make this year's event spectacular. We want everyone to know what to expect—and how to maximize your NINC2022 experience.

I don't know about you, but any time I go on vacation or head to a conference, the experience actually begins a few weeks before I leave home. Planning meals and get-togethers, deciding what to pack, perusing the schedule for can't-miss events is all part of the excitement! If you're already thinking about packing and planning, here are a few tips:

- The vibe at NINC conferences is definitely beachside casual. Feel free to leave your high heels or your wing-tips at home in favor of sandals and comfy sneaks. For women, sundresses, shorts, and capris are the way to go. Most men are in shorts, too, or casual jeans. Be sure to bring a light jacket, sweatshirt, or sweater, though, as the air conditioning blows **cold** in the workshop rooms. (You'll note that some seats have signs letting you know that they are **cold** seats, right under the a/c vents. Act accordingly!)
- Taking notes at NINC workshops is essential. None of the sessions are recorded; it's actually against NINC bylaws to record or videotape our workshops. While all of the sessions will be reported in the November and December issues of *Nink*, you'll want to jot down the important points. Notebooks and pens are a great idea (but if your pen gets lost or runs out of ink, the TradeWinds supplies us with tons of extras in each conference room), and computer tablets and/or laptops are also helpful. (Most seats in the

conference rooms are at tables, making laptops a breeze.) Many presenters will provide the attendees with a link to their slides and/or the outline of their talk.

- You will be able to access the NINC conference via the **Whova app** a few weeks ahead of our kickoff in St. Pete Beach. (You'll receive an email inviting you to join the app in early September.) Take advantage of this! Introduce yourself, set up meetings with other authors in your genre, arrange dinners or drinks with old friends or new-to-you NINC members, and don't forget to say hello to our sponsors and industry guests too. They're excited to see you and share all the news from the publishing industry.
- Speaking of the app, you can see the schedule there *and* [on our website](#). Note that while it is mostly final now, we reserve the right to make a few necessary tweaks. It's a great idea to begin laying out your own individual schedule which you can easily do on the app.

And still speaking of the app and the schedule, you'll notice that on most days, we are running **four workshop tracks**. This is regularly our biggest complaint from attendees: we offer such amazing content that it's tough to choose which session to attend. Well, unfortunately, we haven't perfected the Time Turner yet, and we can't clone you before the conference. You're going to have to make some hard choices.

But we do have some advice: before you arrive at the TradeWinds, or perhaps shortly after, form a posse. Chat with the other attendees on the conference Facebook group, the i/o group, or on the app. Find two, three, or four other authors—and you don't even need to write the same genre—and agree to split up the schedule. Yes, this will require some seriously dedicated notetaking, since you'll be responsible to your posse for conveying the essence and details of the workshops you attend, but you'll definitely make the most of the sessions.

You might consider using a shared Google doc to take notes so that everyone has access to the information in real time. Be sure to share links for slides or other presentation details too.

All of this planning and plotting will make the time before the conference fly by, and before you know it, you'll be arriving at the TradeWinds and relaxing in the beautiful Grand Colonnade to await the opening of attendee check-in. Registration check-in is going to be extra fun this year with our **Ice Breaker snacks** available as you collect your badge and conference info and mingle with friends new and old.

Our conference has a reputation for being one of the friendliest, most welcoming author events around, so if this is your first time, go right ahead and walk up and introduce yourself to a group of folks. And if you're an old pro at NINC, please keep your eyes open for anyone who might appreciate a warm hello. As a favorite podcaster of mine suggests, make horseshoes, not circles—leave room for others to join your group!

At 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, be sure to join us at the **Welcome to NINC Session**. This is *not* just for first-timers; considering that we'll be welcoming back many of our regular attendees after a few years' absence (thanks, pandemic), we want to make sure everyone knows what to

expect. Right after that session, we'll enjoy our fabulous **Welcome Reception** with heavy appetizers and a cash bar, and then hang out for a bit of fun at genre roundtables.

Beginning on Wednesday and running through Sunday morning, we'll have a **charging station** in the Grand Colonnade. You can plug in Apple and/or android devices—no more worries about dying batteries!

Coffee will be available for attendees on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday mornings. Continental **breakfasts** will be offered on Friday and Saturday mornings. Of course, our regular Thursday and Friday **lunches** are still a big part of the conference schedule. And on Saturday afternoon, we'll have **snacks** toward the end of the day, just in case you're feeling peckish.

On Thursday and Friday evenings, plan to come enjoy delicious treats and a cash bar while you discuss a wide variety of topics at our **NINC After Dark roundtables**. These run from 7:30-9:30 p.m.; each table will offer one topic from 7:30-8:30, and then another from 8:30-9:30. At the half hour mark (8:00 and 9:00) we'll ask participants to change tables so that everyone can soak up as much knowledge as they can.

The whole team (and our sponsors) is tremendously excited about a brand-new feature of the conference: **Meet Our Sponsors Happy Hour**. Immediately following the last workshop on Friday afternoon, everyone will throng to Banyan Breezeway, where all the sponsors will be waiting at their tables. As you walk in, we'll hand you a special passport with spaces for each sponsor to stamp or sign. Once you visit all of the tables, bring the passport to the official NINC table, and we'll give you a ticket for our prize basket drawing.

What's in this **prize basket**? So many fun goodies donated by our generous and <ahem> creative sponsors. More info on that coming in the app!

Usually on conference Saturdays, we're all a little knowledge-drunk, trying to fit the last few facts and ideas into our overstuffed brains. This year, workshops will end a little early and give us time to munch on snacks before we watch a **live taping** of *The Self-Publishing Show*. Mark Dawson and James Blatch, who we've missed over the past two years, will entertain and inform us. I can't wait.

After the taping, you'll have enough time to relax in your room or at the Tiki Bar before our famous Saturday night **Beachside Blowout Buffet**. Enjoy one of St. Pete Beach's legendary sunsets over the Gulf of Mexico as you dine on lobster tail and other delicacies.

But wait, there's more! After the sun sets, we'll all wander over to sing (and dance!) the night away at NINC Karaoke, brought to you by our friends at Draft2Digital and BookFunnel. They'll have a bar for us to enjoy as we wrap up our incredible conference experience.

We have a few more ideas and tips to make NINC2022 even better for you:

- TradeWinds Island Resort recently announced that they are cashless as of July and will **no longer accept cash** for payments throughout the properties. They will be offering mobile ordering at some restaurants, self-pay kiosks, and RFID wristbands that make it easy to charge something to your room account. Also, they have installed "cash to card"

machines—a sort of reverse ATM without fees so that you can convert your cash to pre-paid debit cards. You can still use cash to tip employees, but you'll have to have the exact amount as there will be no option for making change onsite. So—keep this in mind if you prefer to use cash.

- One of our industry guest partners suggested that the TradeWinds needs a guest library —two or more shelves of books that resort guests can borrow and return, or take a book and leave another. We thought that this would be an amazing way for our attendees to share their work with other travelers, so we're asking anyone who wishes to, bring *one* paperback to donate to the TradeWinds' new library. You can drop this title off at the registration check-in desk.
- While we are certainly going to feed you well at this conference—we'll have no hangry authors, thank you!—you may want to have some basics on hand for a quick morning nosh or a late-night snack. There's a Publix supermarket down the road, and it does offer grocery delivery. You could also check with others on the app to arrange a group grocery run with someone who has a car onsite!
- One of the best parts about this conference? Networking. If you're an early riser, don't sit alone in your room waiting for the official day to begin. You can set up or take part in a morning beach walk and get to know some new friends. Or if you'd rather stay in the a/c, come down to the Grand Colonnade, grab a beverage of choice, and sit down—you'll find company sooner than you think. Over the last few years, as I open the office each conference morning, it's been so cool to see people chatting and making new connections. Don't be shy!
- If you're more of a night owl than an early bird, make sure you visit the beachside Tiki Bar following our NINC After Dark sessions. Legend has it that more business happens at the Tiki Bar than anywhere else at the conference, and I think that might be true. I recommend their Almond Joyous if you indulge in sweet adult beverages. Their french fries are top-notch, too.
- Don't hesitate to start a conversation with our industry guests. I've heard attendees say that they don't like to bother the IGs even if they're hanging out in the lobby or the bar by themselves, but all of the industry guests I know assure me they love to meet authors. Most have traveled a long way just to talk with people like you—so go ahead and introduce yourself!
- Download and set up Whova as soon as we send you the go-ahead info in early September. If you can, don't wait until you're on your way to NINC or at the hotel already to get started—you'll miss out on some incredible opportunities to meet new people and network even before you arrive. Are you getting to St. Pete Beach before Wednesday? So are many others—why not organize a dinner meet-up? Are you running to Publix or CVS or the super-delish Italian bakery down the street? Post on the app and ask if anyone wants to come with.

- Finally, no matter what else you pack, make sure you bring these two essentials: patience and a sense of humor. We're a sold-out event this year, taking place at a sold-out resort, which means the lines for lunch will be slightly longer than they've been the past two years, and you might have to wait for a table when you go out to dinner. Even with all the precision-level planning we've done, something is going to go wrong somewhere at some time. That's how the world works. The unexpected pops up sometimes! But if we can all roll with it, we'll have a great conference.

Your entire conference team is eager to see all of you at the TradeWinds in September!

Tawdra Kandle is the author of over 100 romances that span genres from contemporary through paranormal. Her engaging and realistic characters bring readers back again and again to devour the steamy love stories she spins. She lives in central Florida with a husband, a mischievous pup, and too many cats.

NFT 101

Is it time for authors to add an NFT to the bottom line?

By Kelly McClymer



When I was a newly published author, marketing to readers was mostly done blindfolded. Authors created swag to give away at events, to bookstores, and to libraries: branded pens, sticky notes, calendars, bookmarks, etc., and handed them out far and wide with no way to measure whether any of their efforts resulted in enough book sales to cover the cost of the swag. There was only cost involved, with hope of profit being made at some future time.

Now we can measure the effects of our digital giveaways, and even some of our physical giveaways.

But there's a new kind of swag in town. NFTs. Non-fungible tokens. The idea is that you can create digital one-of-a-kinds by tying the digital creation to a unique digital address. Digital one-of-a-kind seems impossible, but go with me for a minute. I'll explain more in the how-to section.

There's been a lot of hype around celebrities and their NFT success (or failure). Should authors jump on the NFT bandwagon?

The answer is yes (for now) in only two instances: if you love to create on the cutting edge and don't mind losing a little money in hopes of making a profit; or if you have a rabid cryptocurrency-using, NFT-buying community ready to purchase, trade, and talk about what you have to offer.

Otherwise, it is a big fat no, not yet, if ever.

Let's talk about why that is.

Why an author would create an NFT

There's a vocabulary we're going to need to define to get into the nitty-gritty, but first let's explore the reasons why an author would decide to create an NFT by looking at why people buy NFTs right now (according to a [Twitter survey](#) of 1,318 survey takers by Dexter Lab):

- **#1 (64%): to make money.** NFT buyers are not looking to collect, they are looking to find rare and valuable NFTs for resale at a higher price. *For authors, this means you need to be offering something other people are willing to outbid each other to buy in the hopes your NFT will significantly increase in value in a few months. Very few authors are in a position to do that, unlike NFT celebrities like the Bored Ape crew.*
- **#2 (14.7%): to be part of a community.** NFT buyers are often part of communities like Bored Ape or Women Rise. They mint, buy, and sell NFTs to belong. These communities tend to be invested in cryptocurrency already and are looking for ways to invest their cryptocurrency. *For authors, there is a [cautionary tale](#) in what happened to a group of YA authors that included New York Times bestseller Marie Lu who tried to launch a community of young writers around NFTs. Their audience revolted, and the launch was halted in under a day's time.*
- **#3 (12.4%): to collect art.** This is probably the sweet spot for most authors who are talented at art and music to offer additional ways for readers to add depth and dimension to their storytelling. *For authors there could be a market for simple things like jpegs of handwritten favorite quotes from a book, autographed; special fan editions of a book; or character sketches of favorite characters by the author, etc.*

There's one other big factor to consider when thinking about creating an NFT: what you think of the future of cryptocurrency itself. If you think it is the way of the future, and you already own, or mine, bitcoin, this may be a natural fit for you. Your homework would involve finding out how many of your readers feel as you do, and also how many of your fellow crypto-lovers might be interested in an NFT created by you.

Why an author would *not* create an NFT

Most of you reading this are now sure that NFTs are not for you because:

- You can see they are not for your reading audience (at least, not yet).
- You don't believe cryptocurrency is the way of the future.
- You don't want to jump on yet another new learning curve.
- You have concerns about their environmental impact.

If it's any of the first three, the good news for you is that you can let those few eager cutting-edge types try it out for a while, find the strategies that work for authors, and jump in later (or never). This is what many did when ebooks first showed up on the horizon.

But there is still one lingering question for many of you.

Will authors ever want to offer NFTs to readers?

Many of us have lived through the ebook evolution. I remember vociferously defending the idea of ebooks as "real" books that could bring more opportunities for authors in the future, and more money. That's no longer an open question. The verdict is in. Being able to self-publish ebooks has made many a happy millionaire author. It took time and a steep learning curve, which readers found much easier than authors in some cases. But it happened.

Will NFTs have the same possibilities one day in the future? It depends on the future of **cryptocurrency**, which the Oxford dictionary defines as: *a digital currency in which transactions are verified and records maintained by a decentralized system using cryptography, rather than by a centralized authority*. You may have heard of this as Bitcoin, Ethereum, Solana, or tokens. You cannot buy or sell an NFT unless you use cryptocurrency.

I sat down with [Brian Meeks](#), who also writes as Arthur Byrne and likes the cutting edge, including crypto and NFTs. Let's begin with a few definitions, according to Meeks.

- **NFT:** "So first off, NFT stands for non-fungible token, meaning, as an example, people often compare them to JPEGs, which for art is sort of true, sort of not true. If I send you a JPEG of a picture of that dog on the couch, then you can make a copy, and you can send it to your friend. But you still retain a copy. If I make an NFT and you send it to your friend, you no longer have a picture of the dog. That's a very simplified version."
- **Smart Contract:** "... smart contract makes it sound like it's a legal document. It's intended to sound that way. But really, a smart contract is a piece of code written on the blockchain."
- **Blockchain:** "A blockchain is an immutable record. So that if I buy crypto, or I buy an NFT, it's written on the blockchain. And if you later claim that the NFT is yours, well, there's a record and it says, 'No, Brian owns it right now, because it came from the Creator, it went to Brian, and Brian never sold to anyone. And so he has the original.'"

The blockchain is where cryptocurrency and NFT creation/sales meet. It is also where most people fail to understand the linear simplicity of an immutable digital record-keeping system. Meeks says, "You can look on the blockchain and find every transaction I've ever made with regards to crypto, nothing is hidden. And so because of that, it's wonderful. It eliminates enormous amounts of middle people, whether it's simple transactions, banking, especially real estate, where there's all these middle people that make things happen between two parties.

With the blockchain, you can sell your house to me, and I can pay you crypto. And there doesn't have to be any middlemen." According to Meeks, who is all in on cryptocurrency, "...because of that, there's history and it's linear. And so you can always find the order of things."

Meeks created his own art NFTs early on, but now he is on the other side, creating for the lucrative area of NFT creation at the moment, which are generative NFTs like Bored Ape. Meeks says, "The issue is the NFT market for art is a little bit of a challenge because it's not the art that is driving the insane prices. It is the underlying mechanism of how the project launches. If you've seen Bored Ape, if you've seen Crypto Punks, it's not good art. The reality is people are spending \$1.5 million for a Bored Ape or \$69 million for 5,000 days at Christie's art auction house. They're not necessarily art collectors, for the most part; they're speculators. Speculators are interested in rarity." This means that, like Bored Ape, the creators are creating parts that can be put together in many different ways. Only a few will be rare and extremely valuable. A lot like Pokemon cards, or Magic the Gathering cards...or sports cards.

So what does an interested author need to know if they're going to dip a toe into the NFT arena? Meeks says, "Most NFT projects don't make any sales. And so when you go onto Open Sea and look at the top 500 projects, they're all generative art, they all have the rarity table, their Discord social channel, and the whitelist (to let fans know the NFT is about to go on sale). And so to even get sales, it's very hard because an NFT created outside of that methodology won't have any resale value because there's no demand, there's no rarity table, there's no hype, there's no community that is taking their new NFT that they got and putting it up on their Twitter channel. NFT sales are all driven by FOMO (fear of missing out)."

When pressed about whether he thinks there is a place for authors in NFT in the future, he said, "In the future? Yes. 100%. I do believe that books can go that direction." For Meeks, the mark of the NFT space being ready for authors will come when the barrier to readers is not so high. For now, he advises interested authors to learn about cryptocurrency, the blockchain, and keep an eye on what NFTs are doing. "I don't think the NFT space is ready for books, not because it can't be done. But because the barrier to entry for a consumer is even higher than it is for a crypto-interested person."

Further reading

- <https://www.themarysue.com/6-popular-ya-authors-nft-writing-community/>
- <https://www.theverge.com/22310188/nft-explainer-what-is-blockchain-crypto-art-faq>
- <https://fewocious.com/about/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/14/style/teens-nft-art.html> (Paywall)
- <https://decrypt.co/102469/web-nyc-gallery-nft-remotely-display-art>
- <https://www.creativebloq.com/how-to/create-an-nft-for-free>
- <https://dexterlab.com/why-people-buy-nfts-dexterlab-survey/>
- <https://medium.com/@LAMINA1/announcing-lamina1-bb7119d19a0d>
- <https://southbeachdesk.com/blog/f/bitcoin-winter-is-comingagain>

Kelly McClymer is a USA Today bestselling author who likes to live in the future, at least vicariously. When she thought about creating her own NFT, she started doing her research and found out she wasn't famous enough and didn't dare risk the amount of money needed to successfully launch an NFT to a non-crypto-loving audience. If she had done so, her journey might have looked like [this](#). One day, at a future date yet undetermined, she just may take the plunge and create an NFT.

Growing with German Translations

How to take your first steps toward conquering new markets

By Skye MacKinnon



You've published your books as ebooks, paperbacks, you might even have audiobooks and large print editions. What's next? How can you use your backlist to increase your income?

Translations are the logical next step (although I wish I'd started with them earlier, before audiobooks, because they've proven themselves to be more likely to break even fast). Once they've earned back their investment, you'll have a new source of income while also increasing your audience and size of your catalogue.

Why German?

German is the 11th most widely spoken language in the world with 100 million native speakers and the most widely spoken mother language in the European Union. But more importantly, Germany is home to avid readers. Germans spend the [second-most in Europe](#) on books, which is 10 times more than in the U.S. In 2019, the German book market was worth [7.63 billion Euro](#) (4.6 billion of that was fiction), more than twice as much as in the UK and more than three times as much as in Spain or Italy (should you be considering those languages for translations).

When talking to other indie authors, I consistently hear that their German translations earned out faster than other languages. It was the same for me: I have translations in German, French, Spanish, Italian, and Dutch, and the German books consistently make the most profit.

How to find a translator

Finding the perfect translator is not easy and will take quite some time. You'll want a literary translator who specializes in translating books and who has experience. If you write particularly steamy, violent, or religious fiction, your translator needs to be comfortable with that.

The easiest (and quickest) method is asking other authors for recommendations. You can also browse translated books on retailers and, after checking that they don't have any mentions of bad translations in the reviews, look at the Impressum (copyright page) to find the translator.

If that doesn't work out, here are some other places to look:

1. Translator organizations like the VDÜ and the BDÜ. They vet their members, so you'll be sure to get an experienced translator. Try these databases:
 - <https://literaturuebersetzer.de/uevz>
 - <https://search.bdue.de/>
2. Freelancer databases like Upwork, ProZ, PeoplePerHour, or Translators Café. This is where you'll find the cheapest translators, but be extra careful while vetting to make sure you get the quality your book deserves.
3. Reedsy has a marketplace for publishing professionals. They have a strict vetting system which means they only accept about 5% of applicants, so you'll definitely end up with an experienced translator who knows their craft.
4. There are also revenue-share platforms like Babelcube and Tektime, but you won't have full control over your translation nor can you be sure of the quality.

Costs vary wildly. The VDÜ literary translator association recommends a minimum of €0.076/word, but you will find translators charging both a lot less and a lot more than that. I'd personally be very wary of anyone charging less than €0.04/word.

Find out whether the cost of translation also includes proofreading. Just like a manuscript needs a proofread after editing, it's good to get a second pair of eyes to scan the translation for typos and punctuation mistakes.

Before you sign a contract, make sure to get a sample translation and have a native speaker check it. You might be surprised how many German-speaking readers you already have on your mailing list or as social media followers.

Wide or KDP Select?

Once you have your finished translation, you must decide whether to publish it exclusively to Amazon or distribute it to several retailers and libraries (a.k.a. "go wide"). You don't necessarily have to publish it the same way as the English original; a translation can be wide while the original is in KDP Select, for example.

As one of the admins of the Wide for the Win Facebook group, I'm slightly biased. All my translations are wide. My sales perfectly reflect the German book market: less than half at Amazon, about 40% at Tolino, and the rest is made up of Apple Books, Google Play and other smaller stores.

Tolino is an alliance of leading German booksellers like Thalia, Weltbild, and Hugendubel, plus around 1,500 affiliated, independent bookshops throughout Germany—meaning that Tolino is represented in over 2,000 brick-and-mortar bookshops. Since entering the market in March 2013, the Tolino alliance has successfully established itself as one of the leading brands for digital reading in German-speaking countries and have their own ereaders (which use the same technology as Kobo). They've offered the possibility of self-publishing with them directly since 2015, and I highly recommend taking advantage of that. By publishing direct with Tolino you get access to their (free) retail promotions that can give you some great visibility. You're not able to get into those promotions if you use a distributor like Draft2Digital.

Until recently, Kindle Unlimited bonuses were a lucrative incentive to be exclusive. It's too early to tell how their changes to bonuses have impacted author behavior, but I wouldn't be surprised if more authors will try to go wide with their translations in future.

Important things to be aware of

I wrote an entire book about this topic, so this is by no means an exhaustive list, but here are some important issues to keep in mind:

- It's extremely important to have a contract in place before any money or manuscript changes hands. The German copyright situation is a little different than what you might be used to: According to German law, the copyright of the translation lies with the translator. This is because they're seen as an author in their own right. Copyright cannot be assigned to you, but the translator can transfer the exploitation rights (*Nutzungsrechte*) to you, giving you full authority to publish the book (as set out in your contract, so make sure it covers not just ebook and print editions, but also audio, film rights, etc). However, if you don't have a contract, you technically won't be able to do anything with the translation (and neither will your translator), so it's extremely important to have a proper contract from the start.
- German law requires every book to have a unique title (*Titelschutz*, title protection). A book title is considered like a trademark which you automatically possess as soon as your book is published, and you cannot have the same title as another book to avoid. This also goes for similar titles that aren't word-for-word the same; the rule of thumb is that if readers could get the two titles mixed up, it's better to look for a different one.
- Every book aimed at German readers (no matter where the author is based) needs to have an *Impressum* (imprint) which clearly shows the reader who is responsible both for the content and the production/printing. This includes your legal name or your

company's name and your address (P.O. boxes aren't allowed). You will need one both for your book and your website, if you have one in German. Technically, you even need one on Facebook, if you have a page specifically aimed at German readers.

- Cover trends vary between markets. Do your genre-specific research and don't be afraid to get new covers made that are targeted at the German market. The same goes for blurbs: they're usually a lot shorter in German, so don't automatically use the same blurb.

Getting your books translated can be daunting. You're back to being an unknown author without an established readership. However, don't be put off by that. You have experience now that you lacked when you published your first book in English. Basic concepts of marketing and advertising are the same, so if you know how to run a Facebook ad or set up a newsletter automation, you can do the same for your translations (with a bit of help with the language).

Translations can be rewarding, not just financially. There's an untapped audience waiting for more books to read—will it be one of yours?

Resources

- [Marketing German Romance Books](#) Facebook Group (open to all genres despite the name)
- MacKinnon, S. (2021). *Self-publishing in German: how to translate, publish and market your books*. Peryton Press.

Skyl MacKinnon is a full-time romance author from Scotland with over 100 books published. She also writes fiction for children and young adults as Isla Wynter, and nonfiction for authors as Skyl B. MacKinnon. Her books have been translated into five languages, and she prides herself on having an international publishing strategy. She's passionate about having her books available in as many places as possible, as well as making the most of her backlist and increasing its value through audiobooks, translations, fiction apps and so on. She offers one-on-one consultations at perytonpress.com/consultations.

Creative Things Authors Can Do With Their Email Lists

By Troy Lambert



Building an email list is one of the best things any author can do. Why? Simple. You own your email list. You certainly don't own Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and all the other social media platforms where you promote your book. Most of us (while we might own stock) do not own a controlling interest in Amazon, where many of our sales likely come from.

In fact, the only retailer you own is your website, and the only channel to reach your readers that is yours to take with you (no matter who your email provider might be) is your email list.

But I constantly hear from authors things like this:

- I write only a couple of books a year. What do I talk about?
- I only sell books, not merchandise or anything else. How do I keep my audience engaged?
- So I have this huge list of readers. What else can I do besides sending them a monthly newsletter now and then?

The truth is, there is so much more you can do with your email list, from different kinds of content to building different teams to determining the best targets for your ads on Facebook and elsewhere.

Here are several creative things you can do with your email list.

Keep readers engaged with sneak peeks and shorts

Your readers want to know about you, sure. I mean, that's why my dog features so often in my newsletters: he is much more popular than I am. However, readers also want substance. If between book releases the only thing you share are posts about your family vacation, your pets, and how hot and cold it is where you live or are visiting, they'll get bored.

But you probably have other stuff you are writing besides books, right? Right?

I'm assuming you said yes there. Give your readers a sneak peek at what you are working on. Give them a chance to give you feedback on an "unedited" chapter (note: be sure this is at least reasonably edited and not full of grammar and spelling mistakes). Start a series of short stories or character profiles related to your book or series and release them only to your newsletter list.

Or there is another alternative for using those stories...

Start a Patreon or similar reader support group

This might not seem like an incredibly creative idea, but these types of things are often overlooked by working writers. However, if you have a large email list or you want to grow it more, starting a Patreon group, or using something like MightyNetworks or TopFan is a good way to leverage the fact that readers want to support you. Your top fans want you to write more, and they want to see what you are working on.

For those not familiar, Patreon and similar platforms give your supporters a chance to show their support for your projects financially. Most authors give their "backers" on these platforms unique content, merchandise, prizes, and other items in exchange for that support.

Creating different levels of support with different rewards offers your readers and followers incentives to support you in a way they feel comfortable. The place you will find these supporters and superfans is most often your email list, and they are willing to go a step further to support your author career.

Build a list of reviewers and even beta readers

Some of your reviewers may already leave reviews every time your book comes out, but data tells us, on average, you get one organic review for every 1,000 books sold. Those are big numbers! How do you get more reviews? Ask for them. Who do you ask? Those who are a part of your email list, yes, but you are better to create a "street team" of review ninjas who post reviews as soon as your book releases.

Many authors do this in different ways, but usually the subscriber signs up for another list: the review team. You should have a creative name for this team, and make it seem like an exclusive club everyone wants to be a member of. Include an invitation to this group in the welcome sequence people get when they first subscribe to your list, but send out a targeted email a few times a year to invite people onto that team as well.

This is the group you send your advanced reader copy (ARC) to before anyone else sees it so they get the opportunity to leave a review. Remember to be careful here: you cannot require a review if you give someone a free copy of your book as it violates Amazon's terms of service, but you can track who reviews your book and who doesn't, and you certainly don't have to keep them on the team and give them a copy of your next book. I suggest using StoryOrigin or a similar service to track review copies and reviews.

For those superfans who send you lists of the typos or other things they found in your books, or little facts you might have gotten wrong, you can start a beta reader group with those who know your voice and your writing already. This can offer you feedback you wouldn't get anywhere else.

Take a survey to gather actionable data

"Those are all great ideas," you say. "But those seem like a lot of extra work." Well, they can be, but there are things you can do that enable you to act right away. When authors are running ads, they often struggle with targeting. But one of the greatest sources for targeting information? Your email list.

Getting that information is becoming more difficult. It used to be that with some hidden fields and clever manipulation, you could find out a lot of information about your email subscribers. However, with new privacy laws a couple of things are happening: it is harder to legally gather that information, and your subscribers are more likely to control the data they are giving away.

But there is a solution: ask your audience questions that help you take the right kind of action with your ads. Ask them things like:

- Who is your favorite author? (These are author targets other people like your readers will be interested in.)
- What other genres do you like to read? (Possible genre or subgenre targets.)
- What are your favorite books you have read this year? (Potential book targets.)
- Do you prefer physical or ebooks?
- What device do you usually read ebooks on? (Device targeting.)
- Do you listen to audiobooks? (Do you have an audience for these before you produce them?)

You can probably think of other questions more relevant to you and your list as well. Use this asset to gather data that you can use in your marketing and advertising, but in other business decisions as well.

Create lookalike audiences

The final, and perhaps most valuable, way to use your email list is to create a Lookalike Audience (LLA) for Facebook ads. How does it work? Well, quite simply you upload your list of email addresses to Facebook and tell it how closely to match the people it targets with your ads to those on your email list.

If the person on your list has a Facebook account, Facebook knows a lot about them, and they use that information to target other Facebook users with similar interests. The ins and outs are a little complicated, and you probably need at least a thousand subscribers to use this technique, but these are often some of the highest performing ads that authors see.

As Google evolves and changes, we will likely be able to use these audiences to run ads to Google books and even for similar audiences with Apple, but right now the most useful place for them is in creating Facebook ads.

This is the same technique that big ecommerce retailers use to create their Facebook ads, and it's certainly a proven technique for authors as well. Perhaps the most valuable use of the lookalike audience is lead generation ads used to find even more email subscribers.

Takeaways

This is far from a comprehensive list of things to do with your email list. You can build your list with newsletter swaps, group promos, and using reader magnets in a variety of types. You can use the front and back matter of your books to attract subscribers.

But once you have someone on your list, keeping them engaged and using the information they share with you is one of the greatest benefits of having a list in the first place. Just be sure not to neglect the other things you should be doing anyway, including a strong onboarding sequence, sending regular newsletters, building excitement around book launches, and all the other activities that make a mailing list successful.

At the same time, engage the same creativity you do with your writing when it comes to marketing and using your email list. Your readers will appreciate it, and you'll reap the benefits as well.

Troy Lambert is an author, editor, freelance writer, and the education lead for Plottr. He's written over two dozen novels, loads of short stories and novellas, and spoken at writers' conferences all around the country. He lives, works, and plays in Boise, Idaho, with his wife and two very talented dogs who are often asked to assist with writing blog posts and book blurbs.

An In-Depth Look at Historical Fiction

By Nicole Evelina



“Love the past. Love the TRUTH of the past. Honor the past. Be honest—show the past as it was, warts, beauties and all. Most of all, research, research, research. If it isn’t accurate, it isn’t worth reading.”

—Janis Susan May

With the success of shows like *Bridgerton* and *Outlander* and book series like Hilary Mantel’s *Wolf Hall*, historical fiction has been having a bit of a moment in pop culture. With this popularity comes increased interest from authors as well. Because of the necessity for deep historical research and accuracy, historical fiction can be a more difficult genre to transition into than some others. To help ease the process, I contacted my fellow NINC histfic authors to help me provide an overview of the genre and how to get started writing it.

Defining the genre

What exactly *is* historical fiction? That question isn’t as easy to answer as you would think. The Historical Novel Society, an international organization for writers and readers of historical fiction, defines it as “a novel which is set fifty or more years in the past, and one in which the author is writing from research rather than personal experience.”

But many authors, and readers, define it more loosely. For example, Lyn Cote and Neil S. Placky hold a broad definition that “historical fiction takes place in a time period different from our own... It reflects the thoughts, laws, and background of the time.”

Others attempt to define the genre through time constraints. Some place the cutoff at 1950 or 1970 or even removed “by at least two generations,” as Janis Susan May suggested. But the problem with looking at it that way is that the past is different for every generation. As my agent, Amy Collins of Talcott Notch Literary, recently reminded me, for the youngest

generation of writers and publishers, the 1980s are historical fiction; for me, that was within living memory, but for a 30-year-old, it wasn't.

Balancing research and storytelling

If there is one thing the authors I talked to agreed on, it is that research is the key to good historical fiction. However, we also must keep in mind that we aren't writing a nonfiction book; we're telling a great story. So historical fiction authors walk a fine line between truth and fiction.

"I believe that to put inaccurate/inadequately researched history in a story reflects badly on me as a writer and is not fair to the reader," said May. "Unfortunately, far too many people get what history they know from historical novels, which makes it our duty to make sure what we write is accurate."

It's not uncommon for historical fiction authors to consult a dozen or more books during the research process. But books and Google are not the only options; consulting period maps, research trips to the location, visiting museums, and interviewing experts are also recommended. Some authors even go so far as to incorporate a kind of "method acting" into their writing by experiencing what their characters did so they can accurately portray it for their readers. For example, Cynthia Woolf needed to know what it was like to ride a railroad in 1870, so she took a ride on a restored train.

One of the best forms of research you can do is to consult primary materials from your time period. If your subject was a real person and archives of their letters, journals, etc., exist, you are very lucky. But if not, other period materials, especially travel journals, memoirs, and other first-person narratives are incredibly helpful. Amazon has digitized many of these types of rare or out-of-print books. And don't forget period newspapers, which can be accessed at places like newspapers.com or genealogybank.com for a small subscription fee (which is tax deductible for us authors).

How an author goes about their research varies as much as their plots. Some authors, like Cote, only research what they need to get going and then do the rest of their research as they write. I am the other way around. I research everything I can about my subject, location, time period, etc., then I write and fill in little details as I go.

This can lead to an interesting conundrum for the writer. When do we say when? How do we know we've done enough research? After all, it's easy to fall down the research rabbit hole and never come out. As Lauren Smith said, "Don't let the research slow you down and keep you from actually writing. I've met too many new authors who never actually finish the book because they use the research as an excuse to avoid writing."

Woolf has a simple answer: she stops researching "when my question is answered to my satisfaction and to what I believe will be my readers' satisfaction."

My personal stopping point is when I start seeing the same information repeated again and again in my sources. That tells me the well has run dry.

Taking readers back in time

The biggest element to getting your period right is your characters. While basic human nature doesn't change, historical characters will be constrained by the cultural attitudes, laws and mores of the time. Their worldview will be different because they didn't have the scientific, technical, and medical advancements we do now. As Cote said, a historical fiction writer must "leave the 21st century behind and try to think as people did in the past."

When a writer overly empowers or educates a character or otherwise changes the mindset of the time, the book becomes a costume drama—a 21st century book set in period clothing. As E.C. Ambrose said, true historical fiction has characters who "feel as if they have genuinely developed in this time and place. They may be outliers...but they should reasonably occupy the role and class they're representing in their historical world. When they deviate, it should be clear why this is so, and if that deviation places them at odds with their society, there should be consequences," just as there would have been in real life.

Dialogue and word choice can also be huge difficulties for historical fiction writers. Very often, modern words or slang slip into our manuscripts and we have to carefully strike them out. The easiest way is to consult the Oxford English Dictionary online or any number of etymology websites to find out when a word was first in use. Slang dictionaries are also a big help.

The other challenge with dialogue is the temptation to make our writing *too* accurate to the time. As Thompson pointed out, "For many time periods and locations, if we had the characters speak the way they would have spoken, it would be unreadable for modern readers. The trick is to figure out how to make them sound a bit different from modern times but still make them comprehensible." Many writers accomplish this by using correct English and formal phrases for the upper classes and "bad grammar and a touch of historically accurate slang for the lower classes," Thompson added.

Thinking about writing historical fiction?

For anyone who wishes to write historical fiction, before you put your fingers on a keyboard, make sure you read widely in the genre to learn what is expected by readers and what works and doesn't. Authors recommended by our NINC panel included: Johanna Lindsey, Julie Garwood, Jill Barnett, K.J. Charles, Merry Farmer, Francine Rivers, Lauren Willig, Karen White, Mary Doria Russell, David B. Coe, Anne Perry, C.S. Harris, Kate Quinn, Beatriz Williams, Elizabeth Peters, Bernard Cornwell, George MacDonald Fraser, M.J. Rose, Susanna Kearsley, and Deborah Harkness.

I would add don't let the idea of historical fiction or anything in this article intimidate you. If you have a passion for a time period or historical subject, go for it! Immerse yourself in history, let your imagination run wild, tune into your characters' emotions and just see what happens. Your first book in a new genre should be like your very first book. Write it for yourself above anyone else; allow yourself to fail and start over; you'll pick it up over time. Good luck!

I would like to thank the authors who volunteered their time and insight by answering questions for this article: Patricia Burroughs, historical romance, alternate history, and YA fantasy; Robert Peecher, westerns; Janis Susan May, Regency and Victorian England and Ancient Egypt; Gayle Callen, historical fiction; Victoria Thompson, historical mystery; E.C. Ambrose, historical fantasy; Lauren Smith, WWII historical fiction and Regency and Victorian historical romance; Lyn Cote, inspirational historical fiction; Neil S. Plakcy, historical MM romance; and Cynthia Woolf, historical western romance. While I couldn't quote all of you, your ideas and wisdom shaped this article.

Nicole Evelina is the author of 10 books, including five historical fiction novels set in times as diverse as early medieval Britain and 19th century Ireland and the United States. Her first biography, America's Forgotten Suffrage Couple: Virginia and Francis Minor, will be published on March 1, 2023, by Globe Pequot/Two Dot Press.

Smart Marketing for Savvy Authors

By Tawdra Kandle



This quarter of Smart Marketing is all about social media.

Post. Tweet. Pin.

Is it essential?

How do we grow our following?

How do we think outside the SM box?

Last month, I shared some insight from a wide variety of authors who offered their takes on social media and its place in the publishing world. From those who said they rarely use it to those who base much of their reader interaction and book promotion on posting, everyone agreed that platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest are part of how we do things now—for better or for worse.

If we start from that premise—that social media can be useful to us as authors—we have to consider how we use it to our advantage without allowing it to take over our schedule. Let's face it: if we did everything that's recommended to us to get the best bang for our buck—or for time invested—we could be writing posts and liking comments almost around the clock. The social media machine is one that never stops and never sleeps.

I have several friends who are absolutely *killing* it on TikTok. BookTok is a huge influencing factor in sales right now—particularly in paperback sales, interestingly—and some authors are reaping the benefits of stylized short videos that highlight their stories. But the time that's required to learn how to make TikToks, to understand all the features of the platform, and to capitalize on whatever's trending at the moment has given more than one author pause.

(Note: As of this writing, TikTok has agreed to make changes to how it uses data and to whom it gives access to this data in order to avoid a forced removal from Apple and Google platforms. While TikTok is a more extreme example of this phenomenon, it's important to remember that any social media has the ability to vanish. User beware.)

If you're convinced that social media is necessary (or even that it's a necessary evil) in order to succeed as an author, your first concern will probably be how to grow your following. Back in the early days of indie publishing, most of us were encouraged to establish a Facebook page at the very least and then to work hard to get 'likes' on that page. Do you remember the giveaways where an entry required a page like? I do! Rafflecopter and I were on intimate terms back then because I was running *so* many giveaways.

Nowadays, most of us have limited reach with our Facebook author page—and even the reader groups we were advised to start after pages lost some of their luster may have begun to lose their efficacy. But take heart! There are ways to bring your page, your group, and your other social media accounts back to life. My favorite is the Four Be's.

Be selective

If you are determined to be all things to all people, it is highly likely that you will end up burning out quickly on social media—or you'll take up so much time doing it that you won't be able to meet your writing schedule.

There are limited hours in each day. Even with the convenience of smart phones and tablets, it's neither healthy nor effective to spend endless hours catering to readers on every possible outlet. Start by choosing to focus on one. This doesn't mean you have to ditch all of your other accounts—you don't and you probably shouldn't—but it does mean that you're going to turn most of your social media energy and hours to just one.

Which should you choose? That answer depends on what genre you write, the age of your readership, and your own preference. Many of us know that an older-skewing readership (particularly in romance and mystery) is most easily reached on Facebook, the granddaddy of them all. Instagram is perfect for the thirty-something crowd. But if you're looking at teens and early to mid-twenties readers, TikTok (used in conjunction with Instagram reels, perhaps) is where to go.

You also should take into consideration your own preferences. If you write young adult but actively detest the idea of making videos or learning how to TikTok, don't make that your focus. You'll resent the time it takes, and you may end up avoiding posting altogether. If Facebook is your comfort zone, go for it. Hone in on what you can do to grow your reader group and get them more active. Commit to posting on your author page at least once a day.

Remember, you can increase your reach by cross-posting as well. While we were warned away from duplicating content once upon a time, it's actually not a bad idea. You can set up your Facebook author page to copy posts to your Instagram account. (While you can also do this for Twitter, it will be less effective as Facebook posts and tweets are very different animals.)

You can also duplicate posts to multiple groups if you happen to have more than one Facebook group in your quiver.

Once you've identified your preferred social media, do some research into what is currently working best to grow and engage your audience. Ask around in author groups, observe what others are doing, and practice some trial and error. Remember that it's going to take some time, and don't give up.

This leads us to our next Be.

Be consistent

We all have seen—and maybe some of us have even been—that author or artist who posts once or twice a month, and then... crickets. Tumbleweeds. Nothing for weeks. We're reluctant to comment on the post because we suspect that no one's paying attention to what we write, so why bother?

Don't be that author. Once you've decided upon your social media platform of choice, make a plan for regular interaction. It's *so* easy to do this now with the wide availability of schedulers and virtual assistants. A social media content calendar is also a terrific tool—they're available for download on Etsy or free on Pinterest—just do a search. Or make up your own by jotting down on a blank calendar what you're going to post each day for the next month.

You can schedule just about everything now in social media. Consider taking one morning or evening at the end of the month and setting up all of your regular posts for the next thirty days. That way, you're covered even if you have a week where you're up against a deadline or you come down with the creeping crud and can't lift your finger to type. Scheduling doesn't mean you can't hop in now and then with a spontaneous comment—"I can't believe we got twenty inches of snow this weekend! What's it like where you are??"—but it's a nice insurance policy for when you're just not feeling it.

Once you've posted or tweeted or TikTok'd, remember to follow up by engaging with commenters. At the very minimum, you should like or love all of the comments. Dropping a few words in response—"I do that, too!" or "I love that state!" or "What a great idea!"—is enough to let readers know you care about what they're sharing with you. When they know you're paying attention and can count on you for steady presence, they'll interact more often. What's more, the algorithms of whatever platform you're using favor regular posting, so you'll be shown to more people. That's a win-win.

But what exactly should you be sharing consistently? So glad you asked.

Be creative

Listen, no one is asking any of us to re-invent the wheel on a daily basis. Sometimes keeping things simple is the best way to go. But we're authors, yes? We have more than one inventive bone in our bodies. We should be able to come up with some cute content.

Did you hear a story on the radio this morning that you know will make your readers giggle? Share it with them! Did you encounter a famous person at the airport last week? Tell that story! If you're willing to be a little more personal, you can recount amusing vignettes about your family (consider using vague nicknames to protect the not-so-innocent).

I share pictures of my granddaughters only in my private reader group, but everyone loves those. I have been known to jot down funny conversations between my kids and report them to my readers. You don't have to do that, but you could give pet updates or travel adventures if that's more your speed.

Asking questions are fabulous ways of increasing engagement. People love to talk about themselves, so perhaps try to post a question on your Facebook page two or three times a week. Right now, this is working best without a graphic, but experiment and see what garners you the most comments and likes. I have two standbys that seem to bring consistent reaction: asking people where they live (roll call!) along with what the weather's like there, and a holiday season post where I ask what gift they'd most like to receive. These have never failed to elicit massive response.

If you're posting on Instagram, you will need a graphic, but those are easy to find or make on apps like BookBrush or Canva. It doesn't have to be complicated. You can just use a stock photo that you find appealing.

Finally . . .

Be focused

This means that even while you're exercising your fabulous creativity in posts, keep it within the boundaries of your books and your branding. It isn't rocket science, friends. If you write squeaky clean romance or inspirational books, posting pictures of barely clad hunky men is going to jar your target audience. At best, they'll run away from your social media; at worst, they'll report you to the platform and cause all kinds of headaches.

On the other hand, if your books skew hot and steamy, *not* posting sexy guy photos may cause a mutiny. Readers have been conditioned to expect certain things from certain types of authors. While you don't have to be a cookie cutter, you shouldn't be so different that they'll be put off.

Start as you mean to go. If you begin by sharing serious posts, your audience will come to expect that. If you're a natural comedian and that shines through your social media, sharing heart-rending snippets will confuse them.

Being focused on your books is actually a great opportunity to keep readers within the world you've created. Regularly share short excerpts or teasers from your back list, your latest release, and your works in progress. Talk about your characters to remind your audience how much they love that on-going series.

I'll sometimes post in my reader group about people I encounter who remind me of my characters. "I was a restaurant this morning, and this couple was sitting in my line of vision. The

way they flirted and touched was *totally* Sam and Meghan. It made me think of their rocky love story!" (Full disclosure: I actually snapped a surreptitious photo of that couple and shared it in my reader group. They thought it was hysterical!)

The cool thing is that social media can actually be fun if we're doing it as a natural extension of our writing and who we are. If you haven't tried to grow your following recently, give it a shot. And if you're already actively working to expand your audience, I'd love to hear what's working for you! Share on the Ninclink loop, the NINC Facebook group, or email me at tawdra@tawdrakandle.com.

Tawdra Kandle is the author of over 100 romances that span genres from contemporary through paranormal. Her engaging and realistic characters bring readers back again and again to devour the steamy love stories she spins. She lives in central Florida with a husband, a mischievous pup, and too many cats.

The Mad Scribbler

A NINC tool you might not know about

By Laura Resnick



"Give us the tools, and we will finish the job."

—Winston Churchill

Some years ago, a publisher canceled a multi-book contract with me and immediately reverted all rights to me for the never-published books. The sole book in that deal which they had actually published was available only in print, and it disappeared from the market within a year at which point they reverted all rights for that title to me too. This was in the very early days of ebooks, so they had acquired the digital rights in the contract but had not actually used them. And now those rights were back under my control.

Happily, I later sold that canceled series to another publisher, and they were interested in releasing their own edition of that first novel.

But then I discovered that the first publisher had released an ebook edition of that title about six months *after* reverting the rights to me. I happened to learn this from a reader who told me she'd recently bought the ebook for her new Kindle. I looked online and, sure enough, the publisher's digital edition of that reverted novel was available wherever ebooks were sold.

I soon also learned that my former literary agent, who had stopped taking my calls or answering my emails as soon as that contract was canceled, had been receiving royalty statements for the ebook edition for the past 18 months without bothering to send the statements to me, or even tell me they existed. (There were no royalty payments, since the book never earned out.)

All things considered, I assumed that publication of the ebook in violation of my copyright was just a careless bureaucratic error. Probably the book had been in a long production queue, as the publisher geared up to start releasing titles in this new-fangled digital format. When the

rights reverted, maybe the legal department didn't notify anyone else in the company that they no longer held the license, and so the ebook got published and distributed. I thought it was just an unwitting mistake.

On that basis, I also assumed we could quickly clear up this problem. I wrote to the publisher's legal department. Obviously, upon receiving my letter and proof of reversion, they'd take immediate steps to get the book unpublished. Right?

Wrong. They ignored me—multiple times and for months.

Next, I decided to contact an editor I knew at the company. She told me she'd look into the matter and get back to me soon. Time passed. I didn't hear from her, so I emailed her. Still nothing. I called her; no reply. I emailed her again. A month passed. Then I happened to read in *Nink* that she had left that company soon after speaking with me and no longer worked there.

(Bartender—over here, please!)

I had now spent *months* trying to resolve this matter in a clear, reasonable, and businesslike way, and I'd gotten nowhere. The publisher, through its refusal to acknowledge me at all, was willfully turning this fixable mistake into a huge problem.

Indeed, apart from the fact that this was a clear case of copyright violation which (I assume we can all agree) *must* get resolved, I was also dealing with another company that was publishing the series and wanted to reissue this book *if* I could get the unlicensed edition withdrawn from the market. So the previous publisher, which had dumped me, was now further screwing with my career by compromising the potential reissue of this first book in the series I had re-sold after they'd canceled it.

I decided my next step was obvious: I had to retain a lawyer. I had not done so before this, because it seemed to me a ludicrously simple matter in which to involve an attorney. But the publisher's behavior left me with no choice by now.

So I applied to the **NINC Legal Fund**. The fund was created by Pat McLaughlin aka Patricia McLinn when she was NINC president. The Legal Fund pays for a NINC member to receive up to two billable hours per year of consultation and assistance from a lawyer to solve a problem arising from the member's writing career.

The problem I was now having—a major publisher essentially pirating my work and ignoring all my communications to them about this—was one good example of the many types of situations the Legal Fund was created to assist members with. The NINC Board of Directors approved my application, and I contacted an attorney. She, in turn, contacted the publisher's legal department, and—finally!—someone responded. Which demonstrates why I needed a lawyer; the exact same people who'd ignored me for months suddenly paid attention when an attorney contacted them about the same exact matter.

So now my NINC-funded lawyer proposed a reasonable solution to the publisher: *All* I wanted was to get the ebook off the market, to be given proof that it had been withdrawn from all vendors, and to receive a guarantee that the publisher wouldn't do this again.

The publisher was still being annoyingly slow, uncommunicative, and evasive. Their unwillingness to acknowledge that there *was* a problem (perhaps out of fear of increasing their legal liability?) made it very difficult to *resolve* the problem. And so this mess took nearly *another* two months to conclude even after I retained the lawyer.

(My attorney, by the way, eventually got so exasperated with the publisher's behavior that she subsequently questioned whether I should let them off so easily and suggested I consider pursuing more serious action. I saw her point, but I didn't want to spend years in a legal battle with this *&^%#\$@! publisher. I just wanted them to get their hands *off* my property and get *out* of my life.)

As it happens, most of those final two months were spent just waiting for the publisher to respond to our repeated requests for an update, so the legal cost remained manageable. After the publisher *finally* unpublished the book and sent us the paperwork, I only needed to pay for a small amount of time beyond the billable two hours that the NINC Legal Fund covered. And considering how badly the publisher behaved every step of the way, I'm still convinced today that I couldn't have resolved that mess without legal representation.

Anyhow, it was thanks to the NINC Legal Fund that I didn't have to spend hundreds of dollars of my own money to clean up the problem that the publisher created through careless management and unprofessional behavior. And this is a tool that is available to all NINC members.

The main parameters for using the fund are:

- The Legal Fund is only for issues stemming from member's status as a professional author of fiction.
- The Legal Fund is not for negotiation of publishing contract terms.
- The Legal Fund is limited to two hours of billed time per member per year.
- Multiple members involved in a single legal action may pool their time up to ten billed hours (or two hours per member, up to five members.)
- Members using a lawyer who is paid from the fund shall enter into their own attorney-client arrangement with such lawyers and NINC shall have no involvement in such relationship other than to pay for attorney's fees.

(You can find additional details about using the fund in the NINC Policies and Procedures Manual [here](#). Go to **Section 3: Financial and Dues**, then scroll down to **Legal Fund**.)

Something important to understand about the fund is that it exists to help members with a legal problem that arises in your writing career/business, so that you don't suddenly have to dole out hundreds of dollars before you can even speak to a lawyer. Which is why, for example, contract negotiations are specifically cited as something the Legal Fund does *not* cover. Whereas if you have reason to believe your publisher is violating your contract, that *is* an example of what the fund exists to help you with.

All applications to the fund are confidential. If you have a legal problem with a vindictive and volatile literary agent (to borrow an example from my exhausting past), that agent will never know you applied to the Legal Fund and will also never know you consulted a lawyer, unless you instruct that lawyer to contact them on your behalf.

In some cases, like the experience I've just described, you may have a problem that can be solved in two hours of a lawyer's billable time, give or take a few minutes. In other instances, the fund might cover an initial consultation to help you understand the scope of your legal problem and the various options you should review. As became widely known at the time (so I am not breaking confidentiality), the class action lawsuit *Keiler v. Harlequin Enterprises Limited*, which [Harlequin eventually settled](#) with the authors in 2016, arose from an instance where multiple NINC members pooled their time to consult an attorney under the auspices of the NINC Legal Fund to explore their rights and options when contemplating a legal problem with their mutual publisher.

The fund is a valuable tool, but also possibly the least-known resource in the organization, since the members who use it seldom talk about it, due to the sensitive nature of most legal problems.

If you're ever in need of legal advice or assistance due to a legal problem arising in your writing career, you can apply to the NINC Legal Fund [here](#).

Laura Resnick writes fiction, nonfiction, and short fiction.

NINC Member Discounts

By Emilie Richards



Do you use the very popular [Scrivener](#) writing software? Are you tempted to try? Literature and Latte has generously offered NINC members a 20% discount for Mac version 2.x or Scrivener for Windows version 1.x. In 2020 that was updated to include Scrivener 3 for macOS, too.

Are you a pantsner and prefer to write in chunks? Scrivener helps you grow your manuscript your own way. Do you want to easily refer to your research? In Scrivener you can open it right next to your work in progress. So many more options, and their excellent website explains them all.

Aren't sure whether Scrivener is right for you? A free trial is available so you can make an informed decision. Just go to [Member Benefits, Freebies and Discounts](#) on our website after you've signed in to learn how to access the discount and free trial offer.

Scrivener won't tell you how to write—it simply provides everything you need to start writing and keep writing.



Emilie Richards is the author of over 80 novels, which have been published in more than 21 countries and 16 languages. She is both traditionally and indie published.

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 (these groups are for NINC members only):

- Email list for all Novelists, Inc. Members: <https://groups.io/g/NINCLINK>
- NINC Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/NovelistsInc/>
- Follow NINC on Twitter: https://twitter.com/Novelists_Inc
- NINC on [Clubhouse](#): Novelists Inc Virtual Tiki Bar
- Critique/brainstorming group: <https://groups.io/g/NINKcritique>
- Traditionally published authors: <https://groups.io/g/NINCTradPubbedAuthors>
- SF/F & speculative fiction writers: <https://groups.io/g/NINCswordsandrayguns>
- Authors of thriller/crime/suspense: <https://groups.io/g/NINC suspense-thriller-crime>
- Discuss creating book covers: <https://groups.io/g/NINCcovercreators/>

Conference:

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

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/>

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.

NINC is committed to welcoming a diverse and inclusive membership to our organization and serving all members. No author will ever be discriminated against on the basis 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.

Founders

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

2022 Board of Directors

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

- President: Lisa Hughey
- President-Elect: Celeste Barclay
- Secretary: Hallee Bridgeman
- Treasurer: Timothy Cerepaka
- Newsletter Editor: Harper St. George
- Advisory Council Representative: Steven Womack

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- Wayne Stinnett
- Vicki Lewis Thompson
- Victoria Thompson
- Steven Womack

2022 Committees

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

- Central Coordinator: Laura Resnick
 - Assistant Coordinator: Mica Stone
- 2022 Conference Committee
 - Conference Director: Mel Jolly
 - Assistant Conf. Director & Programming Chair: Tawdra Kandle
 - Assistant Prog. Chair: Hallee Bridgeman
 - NINC After Dark Coordinator: Tamsin Ley
 - Hotel Liaison: Karen Fox
 - Assistant Hotel Liaison: Tegan Maher
 - Conference Registrar: Pam McCutcheon
 - Assistant Registrar: Stephanie Julian
 - Sponsorship Chair: Sarah Woodbury
 - Assistant Sponsorship Chair: Dylann Crush
 - Traditional Publishing Liaison: Victoria Thompson
 - App Coordinator & Graphic Design: Laura Hayden
- Authors Coalition Representatives: Rebecca Zanetti & Hallee Bridgeman
- Bookkeeper: Terese Ramin
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee
 - Chair: Celeste Barclay
 - Misti Boehm
 - Pooks Burroughs
 - Malorie Cooper
 - Lynn Emery
 - Pamela Kelley

- Ellis Leigh
- Hildie McQueen
- Alison Perry
- Harper St. George
- Samantha Silver
- Social Media Committee
 - Chair: Violet Howe
 - Sylvia McDaniel
- Membership Committee
 - Boyd Craven
 - Sarah Woodbury
- *Nink* Newsletter
 - Editor: Harper St. George
 - Acquisitions Editor: Trish Milburn
 - Copy Editor: Cynthia Moyer
 - Production Manager: Laura Resnick
- Nominating Committee
 - Chair: Wayne Stinnett
 - Tanya Anne Crosby
 - Katherine Garbera
 - Pamela M. Kelley
 - Kathryn Le Veque
 - Kristine Smith
- Discounts Program: Emilie Richards

Central Coordinator

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Address changes may be made on the website.

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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.

To request reprint rights or to **submit an article proposal**, please contact [the editor](#).

Publication: 12 issues annually. Available in PDF, mobi and epub formats. Public issues redact NINC members-only information.

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