



Steps to Grow an Engaged Audience

*Blogging is a powerful way to create a built-in audience for a book. But it takes something slightly different to convert your blog readers into book buyers. It takes **engagement**. While high traffic is the best way to get readers (and advertisers) to your site, engagement is the best way to get them to stick around and support your larger projects. Here is a simple 2-step process to grow an audience that is engaged, excited about your work, and eager to benefit from it.*



Fostering an engaged audience will allow you to:

- Consistently grow your traffic, even if you post less frequently
- Launch a successful book, as well as other products or courses
 - Rely less on sponsored content and ads for income
 - Get to know your readers so you can serve them better
- Avoid burnout so that blogging is more sustainable and rewarding



Bring Readers In

Engagement centers around a sense of connection. Quite simply, readers become more engaged when they feel like they know you and like you as a person. And just like with making a new friend, you have to share yourself and your stories in order for people to get to know you.

Remember that readers can get straightforward information anywhere online these days. What they really come for is **YOU** and your unique perspective. So don't be shy about telling stories about your day-to-day life—everything from what's going on with your family, weekend plans, funny stories, personal struggles, and candid snapshots of real life. You'll also find that being yourself and being transparent makes blogging more relaxing and rewarding for you, too!

The same goes for the publishing journey—feel free to share an insider look at your work on the manuscript, photography, or other project development. After all, you wouldn't hide an important project from your close friends and only reveal it to them once you expected action from them, right? In the same way, you'll find that readers will be more invested in and excited for your book if they're included in the process.

ACTION STEP When sitting down to write a post, think about what personal peek into your life you can share with readers, whether it's a funny story about your day, a candid photo, or a behind-the-scenes shot of your process.



Keep Readers Close

*T*he only truly direct channel to readers is through email. These days, with social media algorithms always changing, it can be risky to rely on the happenstance of a feed to bring readers to you. Very often, social media platforms won't show all of your posts to all of your fans and followers, or your fans may simply not check social media at that particular time, or even on that particular day. With an email list, your work will always go to them through a channel that nearly everyone checks every day. Therefore, focusing on email is the best way to make sure that everyone who loves your work will know that you're releasing a book.

Your email list should send all of your blog posts to subscribers using a service like MailChimp, and it can also be used to send special emails about the book in the months leading up to release. Your email list will likely be much smaller than your total readership, but these will be your most engaged and enthusiastic readers, as well as the ones most likely to support your book and benefit from it.

ACTION STEP The most effective way to help your readers find your email list is with a pop-up. The pop-up should appear when a visitor first visits your site, and it should encourage readers to sign up to receive your posts in their inbox (offering bonus content is always a great incentive). Other opt-in methods are a scrollbar or a top-of-the-page banner.