

HOW TO FIND YOUR READERS AS A FICTION WRITER



a 4-step workbook to walk you through finding your readership online

Many fiction writers believe that they don't need a platform. And while it's true that literary agents and editors don't expect aspiring novelists to have platforms, it's just as true that writers must know how to find their readers if they want long-term success. Unfortunately, a lack of familiarity with the online landscape and a discomfort with putting creative work out there can cripple even the most promising book launch. This workbook will show you how to start putting your work in front of potential readers **now**, so that you can earn the trust and goodwill of the readership your work deserves.



Building an author platform will allow you to:

- Sell more copies of existing books with less effort
- Launch a new book (or other content) successfully
- Get to know your readers so you can serve them better
- Avoid burnout so that book marketing is sustainable and rewarding
 - Make a living as a full-time writer

step 1: you

Writing anything--whether it's a novel or a tweet--starts with you. A platform will be meaningless drudgery if it doesn't revolve around topics you love to talk about and read about. So here's a chance to visualize yourself just as clearly as you would your next main character. This character sketch will help you pull up all the words that define you and lay them out visually, so you can inspect them as a whole. Feel free to jot down words, phrases, images--anything!

Questions to ask yourself:

How do you spend your free time?

How do you spend your money?

How do your favorite online personalities make you feel?

What are you struggling with?

What do you seek to understand?



you

step 2: your readers

Do you know who your readers are? Just like it's helpful to visualize yourself as the main character in your story, creating a character sketch of your readers will help clarify exactly who they are. And once you understand them, you can see what their pain points are, as well as how you can provide relief, comfort, or guidance.

Questions to ask about your ideal readers:

How do they spend their free time?

What are they struggling with?

How do they spend their money?

What do they seek to understand?

How do they want to feel?



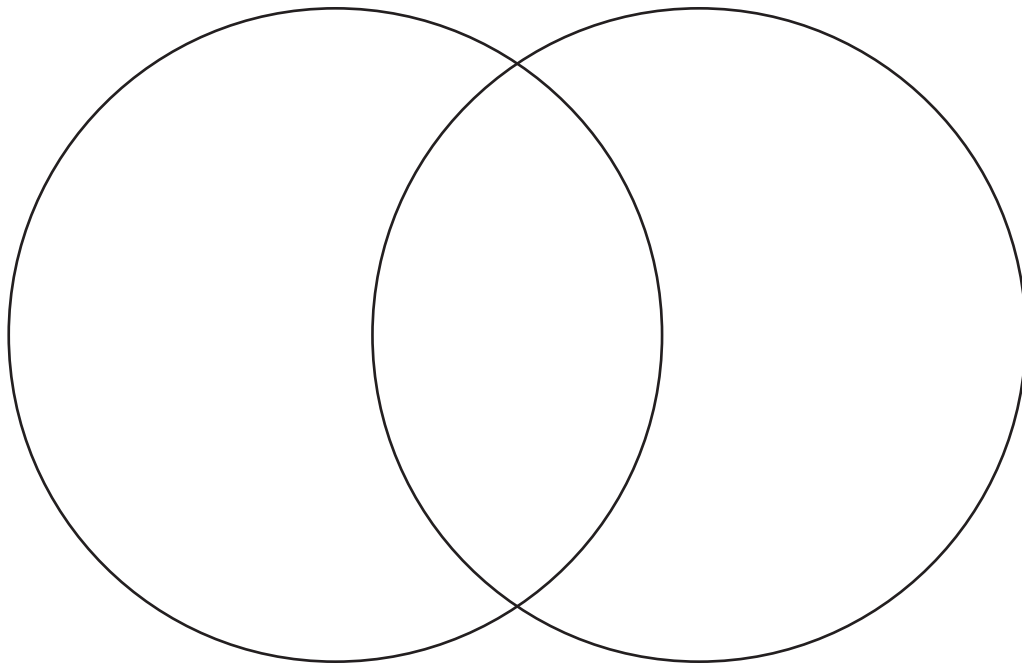
your ideal reader

step 3: merge

Pick 3 key words--yes, just 3!--from your ideal reader list and 3 from your own list. Think carefully about what topics you find exciting enough to write about frequently, and think carefully about what your readers would be excited to hear about frequently. List the key-words below. Where do you and your readers overlap?

your readers

you



your topics

How can you write about the topics above from your unique point of view?

How do you want to make your readers feel?

step 4: act

Now that you know who you're writing for and what you're going to write about, we need to figure out where you'll be sharing that writing. And naturally, that starts with understanding your ideal reader. Where do they spend their time online? Do they read blogs? Do they love Twitter? Do they hang out on Tumblr or gravitate toward Instagram? Pick just the 2 most popular places where your ideal readers hang out.

1. _____ 2. _____

Who is already in that space that you admire? Are there other authors in your genre who are active on that platform? Pick 4 people who you like following online, then jot down why you enjoy them.

1. _____ Why: _____

2. _____ Why: _____

3. _____ Why: _____

4. _____ Why: _____

Using your topic list and your emotion list from the previous pages, write a 1-sentence mission statement for your platform. A common mission statement format is: "I'm a [your profession], and I write about [3 topics] so that [audience] can [goals your readers have]." But you can (and should!) be creative so that the statement truly reflects your personality and goals.

Example: "I'm a science fiction writer, and I write about new scientific advances, SF releases, and self-publishing, so that other SF fans can nerd out right along with me."



go forth!

Now that you know **who** your readers are, **why** you're writing for them, **what** you're writing to them about, and **where** you're communicating with them, you're ready to go out into the world and build your author platform!

For more platform-building advice, book publishing insight, and free workbooks like this one, visit:

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