



The Smashwords Book Marketing Guide

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Smashwords Edition

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Other Smashwords Titles by [Mark Coker](#):

The Smashwords Style Guide
The 10-Minute PR Checklist – How to Earn the Publicity You Deserve
Boob Tube

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Also by Mark Coker

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Introduction – About the Smashwords Book Marketing Guide:

This guide provides authors and publishers practical advice on how to market their books. The ideas presented herein cost nothing to implement other than the investment of your time.

In the last three years, tens of thousands of authors and publishers have improved their book marketing with the Smashwords Book Marketing Guide.

Although the Smashwords Book Marketing Guide was originally written for the benefit of authors who publish and distribute their ebooks at Smashwords, the principles you’ll learn here are universal.

Some of my tips require only a couple minutes of your time, yet will reap dividends for years to come. Other tips require a greater ongoing investment of your time and attention. Do the easy things first.

This guide begins with a short summary of how the Smashwords platform assists an author's marketing, and then continues on with over thirty book marketing tips any author can employ.

This guide is a living document, so I welcome your suggestions for new tips and techniques we can share with the Smashwords author community. Write me (Mark Coker) at first initial second initial at you know where dot com. I'll update the guide based on your feedback, and as we introduce new free marketing and distribution tools for authors.

Background on Smashwords:

Smashwords is a free ebook publishing platform and distributor serving ebook authors, publishers and retailers. Since its founding in 2008, Smashwords has helped nearly 20,000 authors and publishers release and distribute over 50,000 ebooks. The Smashwords service distributes to most major ebook retailers. Smashwords offers various free tools for digital publishing, marketing, sampling, selling and distribution. These tools help you connect with your audience.

Setting Expectations:

Book marketing is a tough uphill battle. Even most authors published by large commercial print publishers complain they get little or no post-publication marketing support from their publishers. Most authors, whether they're traditionally published or self-published, must do their own marketing.

At Smashwords, we don't make promises we can't keep, so we cannot promise you your book will sell well, even if you follow all the tips in this guide. In fact, most books, whether they're traditionally published or self-published, don't sell well. Whether your book is intended to inspire, inform or entertain, millions of other books and media forms are competing against you for your prospective reader's ever-shrinking pie of attention.

Ebooks represent the fastest growing segment of the book publishing industry. Ebook sales have been increasing over 100 percent per year the last few years, according to the latest industry research, while traditional print book sales have stagnated or declined. If you're an author, you need to expose your work to the digital realm.

Despite the rapid growth of ebook sales, ebooks still represent a small fraction of overall book industry sales. But this is changing. For all of 2010, according to the Association of American Publishers, ebooks accounted for over 8% of trade book sales in the U.S., up from about 3% in 2009 and 1% in 2008. Yet these industry statistics dramatically understate what happens when publishers make their books available in ebook form. Sourcebooks, a large independent publisher, reported that 35% of its revenues came from ebooks in the month of January, 2011. Some of the best-selling indie authors at Smashwords are selling over 100 ebooks for every print book.

Bottom line, you're smart to get your book out there as an ebook.

How Smashwords Helps Authors and Publishers Market Their Books

Okay, in the previous paragraph, we leveled with you and told you how you're unlikely to sell a lot of ebooks in the near term. Now that we have that out of the way, let's review how Smashwords helps market your book today, without you lifting a finger:

1. Exposure at Smashwords.com, our retail operation - Simply by publishing your book on Smashwords, your book is exposed to thousands of customers who pass through our virtual doors each day. Once a visitor starts browsing, we make it easy for them to serendipitously discover other books and authors of possible interest with features such as category searches, bestseller lists, highest rated lists, “People who recently purchased this book also purchased these books,” and “People who recently viewed this author also viewed these authors.”

2. Distribution to Apple, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Sony and others

Smashwords is one of the world’s leading distributors of ebooks. Ebook distribution is important, because if your book isn’t widely available in all major retailers, then it’s not discoverable. Once your book is accepted into the Smashwords Premium Catalog, Smashwords can distribute it to the Apple iBookstore (U.S. U.K. Canada, Australia, France and Germany) Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Sony and the Diesel eBook Store. More retail agreements are in the works (stay tuned!). Most Smashwords authors and publishers derive 80% of their sales through the Smashwords distribution network. It’s free and easy to earn inclusion in the Premium Catalog. Simply format your book to the requirements of the Smashwords Style Guide. Learn more at <http://smashwords.com/distribution>

3. Distribution to Mobile Reading Apps - Did you know Apple’s iPhone has quickly become one of the most popular ereading devices for ebooks? It’s true, and this rapid ascendance of the iPhone as a strong competitor to other e-reading devices is largely thanks to the success of one of the most popular applications for the iPhone, the Stanza e-reading app. Over 2.5 million book lovers have downloaded Stanza onto their iPhone or iPod Touch, allowing them to browse, download and read thousands of books. At Smashwords, we offer full integration with the Stanza reader, making it easy for you as an author to reach this important and fast growing audience of voracious readers. Within seconds of you publishing your book at Smashwords, it’ll appear in the native Stanza catalog. In addition to Stanza, Smashwords books are distributed via Aldiko and Word-Player, two popular mobile reading apps for Android phones.

4 Profile page - When you publish with Smashwords, we automatically create a personal web page for you with a unique web address. You can post your bio and picture, provide a listing of your published books on Smashwords, add links to outside web sites, integrate your external blog, or provide links to where readers can purchase print versions of your book. Your profile page also lists reviews you have written of other Smashwords books (more on this later).

5. Book pages - For each book you publish with Smashwords, we create a web page dedicated to that book. You can upload a book cover (or some other artistic representation of your book), upload YouTube book trailers, and add a synopsis and descriptive tags to help readers find your book. Your book page is where prospective readers can access samples of your book in formats readable on any ebook reading device. Customers can post reviews of your book on your book page.

6. Sampling - Smashwords offers the most powerful and flexible sampling system you’ll find anywhere. Sampling allows readers to try your book before they buy. Smart authors realize that you’re competing more for your reader’s time and attention than you are for their wallet. If you can get the reader to invest their precious time to read the first 20, 30 or 50% of your book for free, odds are they’ll want to purchase the book to finish it. This is why sampling is so critical to your book marketing success.

7. Search Engine Visibility - Your profile page, book pages and online book samples are designed so search engines can easily discover and index them. Simply by publishing your book on Smashwords, you'll have dozens, sometimes hundreds of inbound links to your pages from the leading search engines, making it easier for prospective readers to discover you.

8. Coupons! - Smashwords offers a custom coupon generator that makes it easy for you to create coupon codes you can distribute to your fans on your email lists, web site, blog, or social networks. To generate a coupon, click to your Dashboard at <http://www.smashwords.com/dashboard>. Coupons are tremendously popular with some of our best-selling authors. Read on below for some ideas on how you can market with coupons.

9. Book Reviews - Book reviews help sell books, so we make it easy for your customers to review your books. Whenever someone buys your book, we send them an automated reminder to review your book if they enjoyed it. We also work with third party reviewers to help them review your books.

10. Embeddable YouTube Videos - As an author, you can embed YouTube videos in both your profile page and your book pages. This is great for book trailers, or just you in front of the camera talking about your book. Video offers you a chance to engage the senses of the prospective reader and entice them to sample and purchase your book.

11. Book tagging - We realize even our extensive hardwired book categories can't accurately describe all books, so we allow you as the author or publisher to add additional tags, or keywords, to help describe your book and make it easier to connect with prospective readers. The book tags you enter help people discover you when they do a book search from the home page search box, or when they click on the tag cloud on the home page. Don't enter more than ten tags.

12. Tag Cloud - You've probably noticed the tag cloud on some pages. The tag cloud offers readers another way to discover books of interest to them. Simply by clicking on a keyword in the cloud, the reader is presented with all the books that match that tag.

13. Other books by this Author or Publisher - When you publish multiple books on Smashwords, you magnify the opportunity for readers to discover you and your works. If a reader is browsing one book page, they'll see a link that reads, "Also by this author:" or "Also by this publisher:".

14. Integration with Social Networking and Social Bookmarking Sites - You've probably heard the term, "social media," but may not be sure what it means. Put simply, social media is all about taking what we've always known as "word of mouth marketing" and unleashing it on to the Internet, where people can easily share information and interests. On each book page, you'll notice links to popular social media sites such as Twitter, Delicious and Facebook. Simply by clicking on this link, you or your readers can share your book with friends. Each time someone clicks on one of these links, they're building a virtual pathway (a hyperlink) that leads back to your book page.

15. The Shopping Cart - We help you sell your book. We offer a simple to use shopping cart for your readers, and we make it easy for them to pay via PayPal or any of the most popular credit cards. And best of all, up to 85% of the net sales proceeds from your book go to the person who deserves it most: You, the author or publisher (70.5% for affiliate sales). After all, Smashwords was created by an author (me) to help my fellow authors.

16. Smashwords Affiliate Partners Program - The Smashwords Affiliate Marketing Program provides incentive to third party websites, blogs and affiliate marketers to link to and promote your books. Affiliates receive a commission in exchange for all book sales they help generate. As a Smashwords author or publisher, your books are automatically enrolled to benefit from this program.

17. Promotion on Smashwords Satellites – Smashwords Satellites are a collection of over 30 specialized micro-sites operated by Smashwords. Readers can browse Smashwords ebooks by category and topic. The Satellites offer experimental book discovery interfaces that make it easier for customers to discover and sample books of interest. As a Smashwords author, your book is automatically promoted on multiple Satellites. For a complete listing of Satellites, visit <http://www.smashwords.com/labs>

18. Site-wide Promotions - Several times per year, Smashwords offers special promotions. The most popular promotion is Read an Ebook Week, which usually occurs the second week of March. Another promotion is our July Summer/Winter Sale (because it's summer for our Northern hemisphere customers, and winter for those in the Southern hemisphere). With each of the promotions, you can enroll your books at different discount levels, and we promote your books within a special promotional catalog on the home page and at our mobile retail partners such as Stanza and Aldiko.

Adopting a Proactive Marketing Mindset

In the previous section, I shared what Smashwords will do for you, all for free, and all without you lifting a finger. After all those great features, you might think it's okay for you to relax, wait for the royalty checks to pour in, and start plotting your next book. **Wrong!** Odds are, even with the marketing and distribution benefits listed above, if you do nothing else you're not going to sell many books. To reach more readers and take your sales to the next level, you must proactively market your book. Although there are hundreds of books out there that will tell you how to market your book, and many of them are quite good (and published on Smashwords too!), most aren't tuned specifically to help you market your book on an advanced digital publishing platform such as Smashwords. That's where this guide comes in. We're going to focus on the top things you can do today that will help you get the word out about your book. Do the easy stuff first, and then refer back to this guide often for the latest updates.

Marketing Starts Now - Build Your Social Networks

If you're waiting until the book is finished to start marketing, you're already behind the curve. As an author, you should devote a portion of every day to get your name out there and to build relationships with prospective readers, partners and friends. All books live or die based on word of mouth. If you try to build your network after you release your book, you'll face a more difficult challenge. However, if you can build a large social network before you release your book, your marketing efforts will be much more successful.

Hyperlinks Help Readers Discover Books

In the old days, one advantage of getting your book "traditionally" published was broad distribution into bookstores, where you hoped book buyers would stumble upon your book, read a few pages and purchase it. In the realm of digital books, distribution remains critically important but shares similar importance with a characteristic that is unique to digital media: the hyperlink. A hyperlink is the path your web browser takes to reach a certain destination. It's the web address for everything you find on the Internet. Hyperlinks create the signposts, paths, roads and

bridges that help your readers discover your book, even if your book was not the original destination they had in mind.

Prospective readers may go to Google and do a search on “how to plant tulips,” and if that’s the book you’ve written they’re more likely to find you if you created the paths to your book. Every time you or your fans publish a hyperlink on the Internet that points to your Smashwords author profile or your book page, that hyperlink makes your book more findable by the billions of people on the Internet. Many of the tips provided in this guide are focused on how you can leverage the tools of the Internet to build the digital paths that lead readers to your doorstep.

When you publish hyperlinks on your blog or website, you can link directly to your book pages at Smashwords or Amazon or any other retail platform. Make it easy for your readers to read your work!

Some authors who already have personal web pages may wonder why they should work to build paths to their retail pages when they should be building paths to their own web pages. Great question! You should work to build paths to both pages, and to the extent you’re successful building paths to your Smashwords pages or other retailer pages, you’ll also assist your search engine optimization efforts for your personal standalone web site. Here’s why: Search engines use hundreds of algorithms to determine which sites they believe are most relevant to their users for a given search query. Of all the different criteria they use, one of the most important is their technique for measuring relevance. Put simply, the more sites link to a web site, and the more sites that link to the site linking to your site, the more relevant your site becomes in the search engine’s eyes. So if you have hundreds of sites linking to your Smashwords profile, and your Smashwords profile links to your personal web page (and yes, we support this), then that link from Smashwords becomes a positive endorsement of your web site in the eyes of Google and the other search engines.

The Importance of Authors Helping Authors

Although your book is competing against millions of other books, your fellow authors are not your competition. They are your partners. You should treat them as partners. Join author groups, both online and in the real world, and do everything you can to contribute to the success of your fellow authors. Share ideas, and share experiences of what worked for you and what didn’t work. Do joint promotions with them so that your fans can learn about them and their fans can learn about you. When you open doors for your fellow authors, they will open doors for you as well.

30 Free Marketing Tips

Tip #1: Update your email signature

Your email signature is one of the most powerful marketing tools at your disposal, yet few authors take advantage of it. Most of us send emails to dozens if not hundreds of people each week, and each of these people (often friends, family, business associates, fans) represent potential customers for our book. By updating (or creating) an email signature, you’re providing email recipients a low-key, unobtrusive path to discover and purchase your book. Nearly every email program and service allows you to create a single email signature file, usually a simple text file, that then automatically appends to every email you write. For your email signature, add a direct hyperlink to both your Smashwords author page and maybe even your book pages, so it’s

easy for your readers to go straight to your book. To find the direct hyperlinks, go to the Smashwords home page and enter your name into the search box, which will bring up a listing of your books. Click on a book. Then cut and paste the URL of the web address of your browser into your signature. Next, click on your hyperlinked author name from your book page. That will take you to your author profile page, and from there you can cut and paste the exact address of that page into your signature.

Note that when you compose an email, your email program or service will automatically compose the email either in plain text or HTML. If it composes an email in plain text, you can list your hyperlinks in your signature as plain text, such as <http://hyperlink.com>, and most receiving email programs will automatically make the link clickable (this is what you want). A clickable link usually appears as blue and underlined. If your email program composes your emails in HTML, however, it's not enough to just list the hyperlink, because it won't be clickable by the recipient. To ensure it is clickable, you should make the link clickable in your signature file. If this sounds confusing, study the help files associated with your particular email software or email service, because no single software or service handles this issue the same. After you compose your signature, send a test email to yourself to see if your hyperlinks are clickable or not.

Here's what my signature could look like:

Mark Coker
Founder and CEO
Smashwords, Inc.
<http://www.smashwords.com/>

Co-author of Boob Tube, a satire on Hollywood celebrity
My Smashwords profile: <http://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/mc>
Sample or purchase Boob Tube: <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/3>

Tip #2: Post a Notice to Your Web Site or Blog

If you have a standalone web site or blog, as many authors do, be sure to post a notice that your book is now available at Smashwords. Make sure the links are live, or clickable, so the reader can just click and go. It's fine to post a generic link to www.smashwords.com, but also make sure you provide direct hyperlinks to your profile page and your book page, such as:

Find me on Smashwords at: [insert link to profile page]
Sample or purchase my ebook at Smashwords: [insert link to book page]

Important: To find the exact Internet address of your profile page, click on your My Smashwords link, and then you'll see your profile page address in the URL (the Internet address of your browser). You can also enter your name or book title into the search box on any page, and then when your book comes up, click on your author name, and then you'll see the exact address of the page in your browser's URL. My profile page address, for example, looks like this: <http://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/mc>.

Tip #3: Contact your Friends, Family, Co-workers, Business Associates and Fans

After you publish your book on Smashwords, be sure to tell everyone you know, and politely ask them to share your email with their friends to spread the word. You don't need to be pushy or salesy, just send them a short email, such as:

Dear friends and family,

Just wanted to let you know that my book, [insert your book title], was published today as a multi-format ebook by Smashwords. As many of you know, the book [is about/covers/explores] [insert a short one sentence description of your book]. I hope you'll take time to check it out at Smashwords, where you can sample the first XX% of the book for free.

Here's the link to my author profile: [insert the direct link]
Here's the direct link to my book page, where you can sample or purchase the book: [insert direct link]

Won't you also take a moment to spread the word about my book to everyone you know?

Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,

Your first Name

[if you completed your signature, your signature appears here.]

Tip #4: Post a Notice to Your Social Networks

If you're a user of Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Twitter or other online communities, tell your friends and associates that you just published your book at Smashwords, and provide a direct hyperlink to the book page. If you're not already participating in some of these networks, why not?

Tip #5: Update Your Message Board Signatures

Most message board communities allow you to create a signature that appears at the bottom of every post. It's a subtle, non-intrusive, and non-salesy (is that a word?) way to tell people where they can learn more about you. One Smashwords author in 2009, simply by adding a single link that read "Read my writing at [she inserted the hyperlink to her profile page at Smashwords]," drove over 1,200 people to her profile page in the span of only about 5 weeks. And note that in her posts, she wasn't even talking about her ebook! It was because she made herself a valuable member of the community that other community members took the initiative to learn more about her and her writing.

Tip #6: Reach readers with Twitter

If you're not already a member of Twitter, drop everything and go join right now. Twitter is a micro-blogging site. It's like blogging, but you're restricted to posts of only 140 characters. Many people when they first hear about Twitter think it's the stupidest, most egomaniacal thing anyone could do with their time (this is what I thought, before I saw the light). But they're

wrong. Give Twitter a chance and you'll discover it's a great tool. After you open a free account (twitter.com), Twitter asks you a simple question, "what are you doing?" Answer the question, and you just tweeted. To send messages to other Twitter users, you can post, "@username, message....," like "@markcoker, I'm telling all my friends they should publish at Smashwords." Your friends, family and fans can follow all your utterances, which are called "tweets" in Twitter parlance. You can also follow other Twitterers by visiting their profile and clicking "Follow."

You can follow me at <http://twitter.com/markcoker>, where I typically tweet about developments at Smashwords and trends in the publishing industry.

Twitter lets you create a short profile, so it's important you do that so your followers know where to go to learn more about you. It allows you to insert a hyperlink to a web page, so you can either enter your profile page at Smashwords (see tip #2 above on how to find the right link) or you can enter the address for your personal web site or blog. Once you join Twitter, you can promote your Twitter address on your Smashwords profile by clicking to <https://www.smashwords.com/profile/edit>

After you add your Twitter address to your profile page, you'll receive additional promotion on Smashwords by gaining an automatic listing in our directory of Smashwords authors on Twitter. You'll find the directory here:
http://smashwords.com/twitterbuzz/smashwords_authors_on_twitter

Whenever you tweet about Smashwords on Twitter, your tweet will also be promoted on Smashwords Twitterbuzz, here: http://smashwords.com/twitterbuzz/smashwords_on_twitter

Like all social media, it's important to join and participate in the conversation. Make friends. Share ideas. Add value. Follow smart people and learn from them (this is the #1 reason I'm on Twitter). If you're only there to flog your book, people will tune you out fairly quickly.

There are typically four types of Twitterers at Twitter:

- 1. Sharers:** Sharers find useful information, and then share it with their followers, usually in the form of hyperlinks to interesting articles. Often they will "retweet" other interesting tweets from people they follow. Retweets begin with the symbol "RT" or you can click the "retweet" link in Twitter. Twitterers re-tweet tweets from other Twitterers they think would be of interest to their fellow tweepers (twitterism for peeps, or people who follow them). Make sense?
- 2. Conversationalists:** these are people who spend most of their time in conversation with their followers and friends via "@"username" messages. When you add a person's screenname to your tweet, preceded by @, you're saying, "this tweet is for you," or, "at you."
- 3. Marketers:** People who are trying to promote themselves or their product.
- 4. Followers:** People who use Twitter mainly to follow Sharers. This is actually my favorite use of Twitter. The tweetstream of the people I follow is like an incredible real-time curated news feed of important trends and news in ebook publishing.

Most Twitterers are a blend of varying degrees of all four of the above.

Use Twitter however it best suits your needs and personality. There's no single one right way to use Twitter. For example, I'm a Sharer, Follower, and Marketer.

I often share Smashwords-specific information and ebook publishing news and trends of interest to Smashwords authors. I "follow" some really smart people who teach me new information about book publishing each and every day. This is my favorite use of Twitter. Even if I never tweeted another tweet ever again, I'd still use Twitter simply to follow some of these smart people. Be selective about whom you follow, because if you follow too many people you'll soon find yourself drowning in too many tweets. Try to find smart people with common interests, and before you follow them, review their recent tweets and ask yourself if those are the types of tweets you want filling your twitterstream each day.

I rarely engage in conversation on Twitter, mainly because the folks who follow me are mostly interested in Smashwords and ebook publishing-specific tweets, not my private conversations about a friend's weekend barbeque. I also don't like receiving support inquiries over Twitter, because that's what our "Comments/questions" form is for (and most questions are answered already in our FAQ). Conversations are also difficult to follow for your followers, so when I do participate in a conversation I try to make sure my tweets offer context so my followers can follow along. So, my Twitter strategy can be summed up as follows: Respect my followers' time and try to provide them value in every tweet.

As you gain followers (people who have subscribed to receive your tweets by clicking "follow" below your username), your opportunities for marketing, connecting and learning increase. There are various strategies for gaining followers, and many social marketing consultants do nothing but write articles or sell ebooks about how to increase your following. Read the articles, but maintain a healthy dose of skepticism. Many strategies are underhanded and will turn off people. For example, one strategy is what I call the "bait and switch." These folks start following thousands of different people, in the hope that some percentage of people follow them back. If the people they're following don't follow them back within a few days, they "unfollow" them and then move on to follow more people. Or, even if the person does follow them back, the bait and switcher unfollows them anyway. When I see someone following me who's also following 20,000 other people, I view their follow as virtually worthless. How can you engage such a person in meaningful conversation?

I minimize the number of people I follow, because if I follow too many people it creates so much noise it diminishes the value of Twitter to me. Other people "autofollow" anyone who follows them. I don't recommend autofollowing.

Twitter etiquette tips:

Begging - NEVER NEVER tweet at people and ask them to follow you. You should earn your follows, not beg for them. Earn your follows by serving the followers you have. If you tweet worthwhile and insightful tweets, your followers will retweet your tweets and word will get out about you.

Spamming - Don't spam your twitterstream with tweets only about your book. Noone wants to be sold to all the time.

Quality, not quantity - Every time you tweet, ask yourself, "will this tweet inform or entertain my followers?" It doesn't matter if you have two followers or 2,000, you should respect the time and twitterstreams of your subscribers.

I could go on and on about Twitter. If it all sounds confusing, don't worry. Just jump in, join the conversation, and you'll get the hang of it in no time. Many authors drive dozens if not hundreds of visitors to their websites and book pages each day via Twitter, so it's a powerful marketing tool you shouldn't ignore. But like all tools covered in this guide, you have to invest time over the long term to reap the biggest rewards.

Tip #7: Publish more than one book at Smashwords to create a multiplier effect

The more books you publish on Smashwords, the more discoverable you and your works become. All of your works are cross linked with one another, which means if a customer is viewing one of your book pages, they'll be presented with links to your author page and links to your other books. It's like casting multiple fishing lines in the sea, instead of just one. As Smashwords customers look at books by other authors and then look at your books, it creates a trail of bread crumbs that other Smashwords visitors can follow. They will visit one author's book page and discover links to your books that read, "People who recently viewed this book also viewed these books:"

Tip #8: Advertise your other books in each book you publish

If you have multiple books published at Smashwords, add hyperlinks straight to your Smashwords book pages and author page, directly within each of the books you publish (see how I did it at the top of this book?). A good place is either at the beginning of the book, after the copyright page, and at the end of the book, right when you've left the happy reader curious to read more of your work.

Tip #9: Make it easy for readers to connect with you

At the end of your book, make sure you have a short "About the Author" section. If a reader just took the time to finish your book, they're probably curious to learn more about your background and inspiration. Tell your readers how they can connect with you online via email, or your web site, blog, Smashwords author page, Twitter, Facebook, etc. Make it easy for your reader to form a relationship with you, even if that relationship is as simple as following you on Twitter.

Tip #10: Issue a Press Release on a Free PR Wire Service

As some of my readers know, my background is in public relations. 18 years ago, I founded a PR agency called [Dovetail Public Relations](#), and to this day I continue to own and operate it. Press releases are one of the most powerful marketing tools you have, and here's why:

1. The press release is a proven form of communication. Recipients of well written press releases, such as reporters and bloggers, know that it will contain all the information they need to evaluate the news value of your story and cover it. A good press release tells the reader what you're announcing, why they should care, and where they can learn more information if interested.
2. Press releases aren't just for the press any more. With the advent of Google and other online search engines, press releases are commonly read not just by traditional media (newspapers, magazines) and new media (bloggers), but by your target readers too.
3. Press releases help you build roads (hyperlinks) back to your profile page and your book pages. This means you're building paths to help Internet users discover you and your book. The more paths you build to your book pages and profile page, the more likely you are to rank highly in the search engines, which means your prospective readers are more likely to find you.

There are several free press release wire services you can use to get good exposure for your press release. One I've experimented with is PRlog.com. If you're willing to pay for more exposure, try PR.com or Prweb.com. For an industrial strength wire service, I recommend PRNewswire at <http://www.prnewswire.com/>. Try the free services first, because it can be difficult to sell enough books to justify the expense of something like PR Newswire, which will run you \$300 or more. When you use one of the paid services, run your press release only on your "local" circuit. Many of the paid services offer so-called "national" or "international" circuits to give your press release broader distribution, but my experience over the last 20 years has show that these broader circuits are a waste of money. The local circuit gets you 80 percent of the benefit by posting your release into all the online databases.

Many authors mistakenly believe that simply by running a press release, they'll get press coverage. While this is most likely to occur with PRNewswire above, regardless of the wire service you use you should plan on doing your own proactive promotion of the press release.

Let's say you just published a book titled, "How to Protect Your Garden from Squirrels without Killing the Little Buggers." There are probably hundreds of gardening reporters at major newspapers across the country who would like to learn from your wisdom. Research who they are on Google, or pay the \$650 or so for the print version of the [Bacon's Media Directories](#) where you can find the gardening reporters at major daily newspapers and magazines. Better yet, call your local library and ask if they have the directory (you'd have to sell a lot of books to cover that \$650).

What should you write your press release about? How about announcing that you've published your book on Smashwords? That's news worth sharing. Or announce a limited time promotion (and include the coupon code). Or, for the fictional book example above, you could publish a press release that shares the top five tips for ridding your garden of pesky squirrels. A press release must include information of value to receive press coverage.

How do you write a press release? Press releases have a fairly strict format, which you should follow as closely as you can.

Headline: The headline words are typically either ALL CAPS or Initial Caps. Summarizes the high level message of what you're announcing.

Subhead: The words are typically Initial Caps. Provides additional context about your announcement.

Dateline: typically follows the format of City, State -- Date. The dateline precedes the body of your first paragraph of the press release:

First paragraph: Usually follows common phraseology, such as "XYZ today announced..." A good first paragraph should tell the reader what the announcement is about, why it's important, and who should care.

Second paragraph: More detail, or maybe a quote from you. Quotes should follow a strict format, such as "First sentence," said [your firstname lastname], author of [booktitle]. "Second sentence. Third sentence."

Third paragraph: Possibly more detail, if needed. If you're writing non-fiction, this is a good place to summarize what the reader will learn from your book. If

you're writing fiction, this is a good place to provide some juicy details about your story, and the challenges faced by your characters.

Boilerplate: This is where you put the author bio, and summarize where readers can purchase the book. Add hyperlinks to your Smashwords Author Profile Page, your book pages, your personal website and your blog. Include contact information such as your email address, but obfuscate it (see below).

Contact information: Even if you put your contact information in the boilerplate (and you should), the press release should also contain a separate section for contact information. Typically an email address is fine. But don't just put your address in there, because otherwise it'll get picked up by the spam spiders (these are automated robots that scan the Internet for email addresses, and then add those addresses to spam lists). Instead, obfuscate it, similar to how I do with my email address across the smashwords site, where I list the address as: "first initial second initial at smashwords dot com."

Here's an actual sample from a Smashwords author, including some fresh new edits I added for this Smashwords Book Marketing Guide to make it serve as an even better example. I also added parenthetical notes IN ALL CAPS to correspond with the sections above.

Free ebook Memoir, "That Day In September," Commemorates Anniversary of 9/11
(HEADLINE)

Author Artie Van Why Witnessed Tragic Event from His Office Across the Street from Twin Towers (SUBHEAD)

(DATELINE) Lancaster, Pa. September 11, 2008 -- (YOUR FIRST PARAGRAPH FOLLOWS)Lancaster (NOTE IT'S SMART TO ASSOCIATE YOURSELF WITH YOUR HOME TOWN SO YOUR HOME TOWN MEDIA ARE MORE LIKELY TO COVER YOUR NEWS) author and resident, Artie Van Why, has published "That Day in September," a 108-page book that chronicles Van Why's firsthand experiences on 9/11 and in the weeks and months that followed. On the morning the first plane struck the tower, Van Why was sitting in his office directly across the street from the twin towers.

For a limited time (Thursday, September 11 through Sunday, September 14) an electronic book version of "That Day In September," normally priced at \$9.95, will be available to the public as a free download at Smashwords at <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/154>. (NOTE DIRECT HYPERLINK TO HIS BOOK PAGE. WHILE IT'S NOT NECESSARY TO DO A LIMITED TIME PROMOTION LIKE THIS, IT'S NOT A BAD IDEA EITHER. LIMITED TIME PROMOTIONS BUILD URGENCY. WITH SMASHWORDS' COUPON GENERATOR (find it in your Dashboard), YOU CAN INSERT YOUR COUPON CODE DIRECTLY IN THE PRESS RELEASE)

While many stories have been told about September 11th in the past seven years, Van Why's effort to keep the memory of that day alive and to honor those who died offers a truly unique perspective and a moving commentary that begs to be read in one sitting. (THIS PARAGRAPH DID A GREAT OF TELLING THE READER WHY HIS BOOK IS A WORTHWHILE READ)

About Smashwords (THIS IS THE SMASHWORDS BOILERPLATE, WHICH YOU CAN INCLUDE)

Founded in 2008, Smashwords operates the world's leading ebook publishing and distribution platform serving authors, publishers, readers and retailers. Smashwords makes it free and

easy for the world's authors and publishers to instantly publish and distribute their books as multi-format ebooks. Smashwords puts authors and publishers in full control over the pricing, sampling and distribution of their works. Authors and publishers receive up to 85 percent of the net proceeds from sales of their works. Smashwords has distribution relationships with leading online retailers such as Apple, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Sony and Diesel eBooks, and leading mobile e-reading apps including Aldiko, Stanza, Kobo, FBReader and Word-Player, spanning all major mobile platforms including Android, Blackberry and iPhone. Privately held Smashwords is based in Los Gatos, California, and can be reached on the web at <http://www.smashwords.com/>. Visit the official Smashwords blog at <http://blog.smashwords.com/>

About Artie Van Why (THIS IS HIS PERSONAL BOILERPLATE)

Originally from Maryland, Artie Van Why lived in New York City for more than 25 years. After 9/11 he left his job of 13 years and began writing about his experience of that day, and the weeks and months following. His writings became the basis for the one man play of "That Day In September" which Artie performed in L.A. and Off Broadway in New York. It is on that play that his memoir "That Day In September" is based. Artie now lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Contact:
Artie Van Why
firstname at emailprovider.com

(symbol for "end of release")

Where to Find More Press Release Samples

For more samples, you can visit the Smashwords press room at <http://www.smashwords.com/press>.

Tip #11: Join HARO, Help-A-Reporter-Online

Each day, thousands of journalists across the globe are on deadline for stories they need to write, right now. These journalists often need to interview experts for the insights that build their stories. Merely because you're an author, you're probably more qualified than you think to serve as an expert on many topics. Journalists love to interview authors, and when they interview you they'll identify you as the author of such and such book, which gives you free publicity! If you were a large company, you'd hire a PR agency such as Dovetail and pay them \$5,000 or \$10,000 a month or more to get you interviews (and press coverage) from these reporters. But clearly, most authors don't have that kind of money, nor should they even consider spending so much, especially when there are some free publicity tools out there that allow you to do some of this yourself. One such tool is called HARO, which stands for Help A Reporter Online. HARO is a free service that emails you a summary of what reporters are working on, and the types of experts they want to interview. Subscribe to this service today. To read my review of the service on the Smashwords blog, go to <http://blog.smashwords.com/2008/09/haro-great-publicity-tool-for.html> .

Authors also use HARO for research purposes. If you're writing a non-fiction book you plan to publish on Smashwords, and you need to interview experts, you can post a query to the HARO list. Experts will want to speak with you because if you include them in your book, it's free publicity for them.

Tip #12. Encourage your Fans to Purchase and Review Your Book

Your prospective readers will feel more comfortable purchasing your book if they see that their fellow Smashwords members have already read and enjoyed it. Encourage your fans to write honest reviews. If you find skills (like your mother, grandmother, husband/wife, best friend) to write artificially glowing or embellished reviews, your book buyers will feel suckered and you can bet they'll react with their own review that is perhaps more negative and mean-spirited than if they didn't feel suckered in the first place. So encourage your fans to write intelligent, thoughtful and balanced reviews. Encourage them to state what they liked and what they didn't like. Your prospective readers will appreciate the honesty.

Tip #13. Write Thoughtful Reviews for other Books on Smashwords

Whenever you review another book at Smashwords, it creates a hyperlink back to your author page, so to the extent you participate in the Smashwords community and support the work of other authors, you'll raise your profile by building paths back to your pages. Like any community, you get out of Smashwords what you put in to it.

Tip #14: Participate in Online Forums

If you're like most authors, you probably participate in a lot of online forums or newsgroups. If your forum has a location for book announcements, then post a note about your book along with a hyperlink to your author page or book page at Smashwords.

If you have an Amazon account (who doesn't?), for example, you could visit the Amazon Kindle forum, where Kindle users share their experiences with the Kindle reader, and also talk about books available for the Kindle. Many authors also post about their new books. Head over to <http://www.amazon.com/tag/kindle/forum> and join the conversations. When you introduce yourself, consider telling folks there about your book (when you publish on Smashwords, your book is available in the .mobi format, which is readable on the Kindle). Be polite and conversational in tone, and be sure to provide direct hyperlinks to your book page. Something like, "Hi Kindle users, I thought you might be interested to know I just published the following book at Smashwords, available in Kindle format for immediate sampling so you can try before you buy. Here's a direct hyperlink..." Obviously, use your own words. Also, only post once. If you spam the board with notices, not only would that be disrespectful, it'll probably get you banned from the site. After you post your notice, you can subscribe to that thread so you receive an email whenever anyone replies. If they ask you a question, go ahead and reply. Engage your readers in discussion, and by starting a conversation, you'll expose your book to even more people.

There are hundreds of other great general ebook-related communities where authors connect with readers. Consider participating in Kindleboards.com, [Nookboards](http://Nookboards.com), [Goodreads](http://Goodreads.com), Ebookgab.com and Mobileread.com. If you write romance, check out the All About Romance message boards at <http://aarboards.com/>

You should participate in these communities. Don't just flog your books. Join the conversations, add value to the conversations, and make new friends. Did you write a book about gardening? Join a gardening community. Did you write a book about overcoming, or coping with, some medical condition? There are communities for that too. Just Google "topicname community" for a long list of prospects. When you join a community, be considerate of the community's rules.

Tip #15: Experiment with Coupons

In recent months, Smashwords authors have done some really interesting experiments using the Smashwords Coupon Generator, available at <http://www.smashwords.com/dashboard/coupons>.

The coupon generator makes it easy for you to issue limited time coupons to your fans and prospective fans. You can promote these coupons on your blog, your web page, your private mailing list, and on your social networks such as Twitter, Myspace and Facebook. You can do cents off, dollars off, percentage off, and even issue coupons to make your book free for a limited time. Limited time coupons build urgency in the minds of consumers, because everyone wants to save money and get a good deal.

In February 2009, one Smashwords author posted a notice on their blog that for the month of February only, they were offering a coupon code that entitled readers to download the book from Smashwords for free. The notice was reposted to Kindleboards.com, a popular independent online forum for Kindle users. Within two days, over 200 copies were downloaded.. A small minority of people even decided to pay for the book rather than redeem the coupon. 200+ copies in two days is a huge response, and if you too are an author struggling to build an audience (we all are!), then it's definitely worthwhile to experiment with such limited time coupons using the Smashwords Coupon Generator.

Other coupon ideas:

Virtual Print Book/Ebook Bundle: Create a virtual bundle. If someone buys the print version of your book, consider issuing them a coupon for a free ebook version on Smashwords, or a 1/2 off ebook, or get creative and think of another promotion that creates urgency in the mind of your prospective reader, or that rewards them for purchasing or promoting your book.

Blog promotion: If you have a blog, run a limited promotion that rewards your blog readers for visiting your blog. For example, you can run a contest. Do a post where you offer the first 10 or 20 or 50 people who comment on the post will receive a coupon for a free copy of your book at Smashwords.

Integrate all social media with your blog promotion: Leverage Facebook and Twitter to draw people to your blog promotions. Consider offering free Smashwords ebook coupons to the first 20 people who leave a comment on your blog, or consider some other creative prize. Such a promotion won't cost anything but your time to organize it.

Use Coupons for Book Review Promotions: Offer a promotion to bloggers. If any blogger anywhere agrees to review your book on Smashwords, offer them a coupon so they can download a free review copy. Since Smashwords makes your book available multi-format, anyone with any form of e-reader can review the book.

Tip # 16: Write a blog

One secret to good marketing is to engage your prospective readers in conversation. Share your thoughts, your insights, your opinions and of course your writing talent. Expose yourself and you'll attract a following of people who respect how you think, or who enjoy debating and discussing ideas with you. With hard work and time, you'll eventually build a following of people who are more inclined to read your books, or help you spread the message about your books. Starting a blog is easy. Google's Blogger (www.blogger.com) is a good free blog - it's what I use for the Smashwords blog at <http://blog.smashwords.com/>. If you want a more advanced blogging platform that gives you more control over the look and feel of your blog, take a look at Wordpress (www.wordpress.org). Good blogging requires a commitment. If you only

do a few posts and forget about it, your blog will be a failure. Try to do at least one post a week. If you can't commit to a blog, do Twitter instead.

Tip #17: Write Guest Columns for Blogs

Most literary blogs are run by people who love books and authors. Most bloggers do their blogs entirely as a volunteer effort. It's a lot of pressure for a blogger to constantly "feed the beast," which is how many bloggers feel when they can't find the time to write new posts on a frequent basis. Many of these bloggers allow their readers to write guest columns. These guest columns offer you the opportunity to write about a topic of interest and reach a large audience, often thousands of people. Usually either at the beginning or at the end of your post, the owner of the blog will give you a quick bio, where they'll mention who you are, your web address and your book. To write a guest column, first review the blog to ascertain if guest bloggers are allowed to contribute. If so, put together a great query for an article you'd like to write that you think would appeal to that blog's audience.

Tip #18: Invite other Authors to Post to your Blog

If you operate your own blog, invite your favorite authors to write guest posts for your blog. This is a great way to offer your fans interesting new content that increases the value of your blog. It also helps fans of the other author learn more about you.

Tip #19: Do Q&A Interviews of other Authors on your Blog

Every author appreciates free media coverage. Do Q&A interviews of your favorite authors in your genre. Simply contact the authors and offer to interview them for your blog. Send them five or six questions via email, and invite them to include both their head shot and book cover images. Once you publish your exclusive interview, your interviewee is likely to promote the interview across their social networks. This helps introduce their readers to your blog, and through your blog, they can learn more about you and your books. The other author may also reciprocate by offering you a Q&A on their blog.

Tip #20: Join the conversation on blogs

When you comment on another blog, you're often asked for your web address. You could give your Smashwords Author Profile page, or your book page, or your own web site if you have one. Whatever you do, don't spam other blogs with messages to buy your book. That's rude. Instead, participate in relevant discussion. If readers think your posts are intelligent, they'll be curious to learn more about you and will click on your name to access your link.

Tip #21: Organize a blog tour

Many authors go on tour to promote a book by organizing book signings at bookstores. But nationwide and worldwide tours are too expensive for most authors and publishers. With the Internet, consider a virtual blog tour instead. With a blog tour, you arrange to have news of your book published in multiple blogs, with each story timed to appear on a separate day. In a well-run tour, all of the participating blogs cross promote each other (this gives the blog owner incentive to participate), and readers are encouraged to follow the author day by day as the tour progresses. To keep the interest of readers, work with each of the blog owners to cover a different aspect of your book, or you as an author, for each day's story. Maybe one blog does a Q&A interview with you; another allows you to write a guest post; another examines a specific aspect of your book; etc. For an example of a well-orchestrated blog tour, and how to set one up yourself, see the Smashwords Blog for our story on Alan Baxter's blog tour at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2009/07/interview-with-alan-baxter-how-to-set.html>

Tip #22: Use Google Alerts to discover where the conversations are taking place

Authors are special people, because it takes an enormous amount of talent to write a book on any subject. Because you're a subject matter expert, there are probably dozens if not hundreds of online opportunities for you to join conversations and in the process, help promote and sell your book, and promote your own subject matter expertise. Let's say you wrote a book on how to grow prize-winning pumpkins. There are probably hundreds of gardening web sites and online forums that discuss that very subject! You can join the conversations by commenting on message boards, blogs and news stories related to that subject. Share your knowledge. How do you track where the conversations are taking place? Create multiple Google Alerts at <http://www.google.com/alerts>, and Google will email you whenever a new conversation, or a new news story or blog post on a given subject, appears. For this pumpkin example, you might want to track keywords and phrases such as "pumpkin growing," "prize-winning pumpkins," and "gardening tips." Remember, the goal is to join the conversation and add value with your wisdom and opinions. Don't spam.

Tip #23: Leverage YouTube Videos to Reach Readers

Another secret to book marketing is to engage the senses of your prospective readership. We humans are sensate creatures - we use sight, smell, touch and sound to inform us of our environment. When you simply write a textual book, and upload your book on Smashwords, you're engaging only a sliver of the reader's senses. If you embed a YouTube video in your Smashwords book page (we support this), possibly of you talking about why you wrote a book, or you reading a section of the book, or talking about your writing process or your muses, you engage the prospective reader on a completely different sensory level, because you're touching them both visually (sight) and audibly (sound). You're giving them a level of insight into you as a writer that they can't easily perceive by written words alone. You're engaging them, and with engagement comes action (like making the decision to sample or purchase your book).

Tip #24: Print up business cards

I realize it may seem sacrilegious for a digital publisher (who loves green trees more than pulped trees) to recommend printing business cards, but it's important to realize that our lives are unlikely to ever go 100% digital. We humans still meet face to face, in the flesh, with our fellow humans at church, conferences, restaurants, bars and the grocery store. Print up business cards to advertise your authorship, and add the web address of where your books can be found. Post the cards on community bulletin boards at bookstores, and hand them out to everyone you meet.

Tip #25: Encourage your fans to become affiliate marketers of your books

Who better to promote your books than your fans? With the official launch of the Smashwords Affiliate Marketing Program on May 25, 2009, your fans can earn generous commissions simply by adding links to your books on their web pages and blogs. All they need to do is sign up for a free Smashwords account, then click to the Account page for instructions on how to enroll in the affiliate program.

Tip #26: Create a reader's guide at the end of your book

You've probably seen these in print books: Publishers append short discussion guides for reading clubs and book groups at the ends of their books. Make it fun and easy for a book group to discuss your book. While most of like to read books in private, we enjoy talking about books with our social circles, both online and offline. If you create a reading guide, be sure to advertise it in your book description with a simple statement such as, "Contains a helpful discussion guide for reading groups."

Tip #27: Insert sample chapters from your other books

The last page of your book is valuable real estate. Your reader just loved your book, and they want to read more from you, so give them more book samples to read at the end of your book. At the end of each sample, provide a hyperlink back to the Smashwords book page for your other book, so readers can purchase it. Or, if the book isn't published yet, give them a sample teaser.

Tip #28: Do a sample chapters swap with another author

Identify another author you admire who writes in your same genre. Do you think your fans would enjoy their work? Do you think their fans would enjoy your work? If so, then partner with the author to introduce your fans to their books, and their fans to your books. Do a sample chapter swap. At the end of your book, offer your readers a few sample chapters from the other author's book, and then they can agree to do the same.

Tip #29: Invite other authors to join you at Smashwords

Thousands of new authors join Smashwords each month, and each new author brings with them additional fans and readers who can easily discover books from other authors such as yourself. With every new book, Smashwords becomes a richer, more vibrant destination for authors, publishers and readers alike. Invite every author you know to join you at Smashwords.

Tip #30: Promote your book to top ebook listing sites

Many popular websites and blogs specialize in providing directory-style links to ebooks, and routinely link to Smashwords ebooks. The sites I list here collectively drive *thousands* of readers to the book pages of Smashwords authors each month. There is no cost to you, although you must earn inclusion from the operator of the site. Many of the sites specialize in free books, although some will list priced books if you provide them a time-limited Smashwords coupon that will enable their visitors to access your book for free. I'm a big believer in such promotions, because it's a great way for you to gain a lot of readers in a short period of time, and many of these readers could be your first fans and your first reviewers. Before you contact the web sites below, be sure to study the sites and their rules. Provide them direct hyperlinks to your Smashwords book page, and pay careful attention to any other information they request, such as book descriptions, price, etc. If you carefully follow their instructions, you'll maximize your odds of a listing.

[Free-Online-Novels.com](http://free-online-novels.com) - This is a popular web site run by author Jennifer Armstrong. She provides links to ebooks in all categories, with one simple requirement: The ebook must be free. <http://free-online-novels.com/submissions.html>

[Online Novels](http://online-novels.blogspot.com/) - Online Novels at <http://online-novels.blogspot.com/> provides an attractive directory specializing in free books. Unlike the Free-Online-Novels.com, however, Online Novels will occasionally list books that are free for a limited time, such as Smashwords books that have 100%-off coupons. Consider creating a 100%-off coupon that expires at some date in the future, and then contact this site and ask them if they'd consider linking to your book at Smashwords and publishing the coupon code. Be sure to let them know when the coupon expires! Submissions link: http://online-novels.blogspot.com/2008/10/submissions-and-broken-links_02.html

[Getfreebooks](http://www.getfreebooks.com/) - An attractive directory of free ebooks. This site has become a real powerhouse for free books. It's not unusual for books featured here to generate over 1,000 downloads in a couple days. The operators ask that you carefully follow their submission guidelines, outlined here: http://www.getfreebooks.com/?page_id=81

Books on the Knob – This is a popular blog that actively supports indie ebooks. Offer the proprietress a coupon (free is best, but she runs discount coupons too). For submission guidelines, visit <http://blog.booksontheknob.org/p/about-this-blog-and-contact-info.html>

Free Books for Kindle – This up and coming site shows a lot of love to Smashwords authors. You can submit free books, or offer limited-time coupon codes that make your book free. The site even invites authors to write guest posts. Contact the operator at <http://ereader-freebies.blogspot.com/p/contact-us.html>

BookBarista.com – Founded by Smashwords author Mike Dion (pen name: Dodge Winston), his new site offers free directory listings for Smashwords authors. Visit <http://bookbarista.com>

Tip #31 – Share these marketing tips with your fellow authors!

Share the marketing tips you learned here in this Guide with your fellow authors. Remember, when authors help authors, all authors benefit.

Thanks for reading!

Thank you for taking the time to read the Smashwords Book Marketing Guide. I trust the ideas you learned here will help you become more successful as an author. Do you have suggestions for additional marketing tips I should include in future revisions? I welcome your feedback. Contact me at mc at smashwords dot com. If you found it useful, won't you please tell a friend?

Happy marketing,

Mark Coker
Founder
Smashwords, Inc.
<http://www.smashwords.com/>

Download these other Smashwords titles by [Mark Coker](#):

The Smashwords Style Guide (How to format and publish an ebook for free)

The 10-Minute PR Checklist – How to Earn the Publicity You Deserve

Boob Tube (a novel about soap operas)

About the Author



Mark Coker is the founder of Smashwords, an ebook publishing and distribution platform. Smashwords that has helped 20,000 authors and publishers around the world release and distribute over 60,000 ebooks. Prior to founding Smashwords, Mark served as president of Dovetail Public Relations, where he provided strategic communications counsel to dozens of Silicon Valley technology firms ranging from hot garage startups to some of the largest technology companies in the world. In addition to the Smashwords Book Marketing Guide, Mark is also the author of the Smashwords Style Guide (how to format and publish and ebook), The 10-Minute PR Checklist, and is the co-author of Boob Tube, a novel he wrote with his wife, Lesleyann.

Connect with Mark Coker

For updates on Smashwords developments, follow me on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/markcoker>

Smashwords blog (offers RSS and email subscriptions): <http://blog.smashwords.com>

Smashwords Site Updates (bug reports, marketing tips, Smashwords site news): <https://www.smashwords.com/about/beta>

My Huffington Post columns: <http://huffingtonpost.com/mark-coker>

Friend me on Facebook: <http://facebook.com/markcoker>

Connect with me on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/markcoker>

My Smashwords author profile: <https://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/mc>

Connect with fellow Smashwords authors

Official Smashwords Facebook page: <http://facebook.com/Smashwords>

Smashwords authors on Facebook: https://www.smashwords.com/socialbuzz/smashwords_authors/latest/facebook

Smashwords authors on Twitter: https://www.smashwords.com/socialbuzz/smashwords_authors/latest/twitter

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