

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



BOOK MARKETING: How to Sell Your Book on Amazon Interview with Susanne (C.S.) Lakin

Susan Friedmann: Welcome to Book Marketing Mentors, the weekly podcast where you learn proven strategies, tools, ideas and tips from the masters. Every week, I introduce you to a marketing master who will share their expertise to help you market and sell more books. Today, my special guest mentor of the week is book writing coach Susanne Lakin. Susanne is an award-winning author and blogger at Live Write Thrive. She has 16 novels and 6 writing craft books published and works full-time as a copyeditor and writing coach.

In addition to teaching and speaking, she offers online courses for writers and editors. She loves to help writers achieve success and has guest posts on top blogs such as Writer's Digest and Grammarly. She specializes in manuscript critiques. She's done more than 200 a year ... That's pretty impressive ... and has helped many authors garner agent and publishing contracts as well as win prestigious awards in TV and movie deals. Susanne, welcome to the show and thank you for being this week's guest expert and mentor.

Susanne Lakin: Thank you for having me. I'm really thrilled to be here.

Susan Friedmann: You've done so exceptionally well using Amazon to market your books. Let's talk about that and what are some of the essentials a first time author needs to know to promote their book on Amazon.

Susanne Lakin: Amazon, of course, is the number one site for authors to sell their books. I just got the new author earnings report from Hugh Howey. I actually have it up on my computer screen as I'm talking here to you, not that I'm reading it right now, but I did catch this little line in bold where he says, "More than 50% of all traditionally published book sales of any format in the United States now happen on Amazon.com." Amazon is really the giant. Also, the thing to understand about Amazon is that it's one of the world's largest search engines. It behooves writers to take some time to understand how Amazon works, what its specific quirks are and methods because it has its own special way of searching for results and populating results when customers start looking for products.

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



I'd say the first thing that authors need to understand whether they're a non-fiction authors or fiction authors is that they're producing a product and they're producing this product for a specific audience. If you built a dog house and you were going to sell your dog houses online on the Amazon store, you want to make sure that when people search for dog houses, yours comes up. It sounds simplistic and brain dead, but honestly, many authors don't think in those terms. They think, "Oh, I've written my book. I'm just going to describe it the best I can and throw it up there on Amazon through KDP or CreateSpace or both and see if it'll sell, see if people will find it, and hope they will because I have this great cover and my idea is very cool, so maybe people will find me.

If you're looking for a dog house on Amazon and the person who's put the dog house product page and they haven't done it properly, their dog house isn't going to come up in the search results. Really, this is all about how to get at the top of the search results by your target audience. You want your target audience to be able to type in something in the search bar or click through the categories and sub-categories on the side bar in Amazon and you want your book to populate in those top results. That's how you get found.

It's really not so much a strategy about how to write the best book or how to figure out what plot is going to be the next bestseller, you want to write a great book whether it's a fiction or non-fiction, a how-to book, a cookbook, whatever it is, that's a given that you want to write that great book, but then you need to put on that marketing hat and look in terms of producing a product for a customer, a specific customer and then how can you actually reach that customer, how can you setup your product page in such a way that book will come up or in that results when the customer types in on the search bar and also will be the book that they're looking for, the type of book that they're looking for.

You don't want to type in "dog house" and then just get like a mosquitoes app or something. You're like, "What? That shouldn't have come up in the search." It's the same kind of thing with books, but a little bit more specified.

Susan Friedmann: Talk to us more about finding the right genre for your book, because it is all about that categorization. Let's say, let's pick a business book as leadership. If you'd written a book on leadership, how would you, for instance, go through and find some genres that maybe people would be looking in?

Susanne Lakin: Yeah, that's what you want to do whether you're writing fiction or non-fiction. Of course, if anything, you want to look at what your competition is.

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



You do have to do some homework. You need to go online to Amazon and you need to type in the search bar what you would use to find these books. Let's say you're looking for a book on like how to grow your business or how to start a business in 30 days or something like that. you're going to start typing in different things in the search bar and you're going to pull up results and look at these different books and see which ones are bestsellers.

From there, you want to take a lot of next steps, but before I get to that, doing a search like that on Amazon has its downside and has its problems. I talk about this a lot in my online course, Targeting Genre for Big Sales, because it's really important to understand that when people type in phrases in the search bar and the search results come up, all you're getting is the search results. That doesn't prove to you that any of these things sell big. In other words, if you type in the book section, "how to start a business," and then you come up with like the Top 10 books on how to start a business, that's just what's the most relevant to your search words. It could be that none of those books have sold even 3 copies. Don't be misled by thinking the search results are going to show you the top bestsellers.

Now, of course, you can do a search by bestsellers in the Kindle store and that's a whole different way you can go about it. That's great. If you go and find bestsellers and then you do bestsellers in business, and then you start scrolling through these business books, then you can open up these product pages for these books and you can look up their rankings. It's the ranking that's going to tell you how well they're selling. Again, it's only going to tell you how well they're selling right now.

You could have a novel that's number one selling for 0.99 cents on Kindle store and it's ranking number 200 as many of my books have done because of a BookBub ad. You ran a BookBub ad and your books jumps to the top of the charts for a week. You may hit number 20 in the paid store and it looks like you're the number one bestseller in the universe, and that lasts for about a week or two and then you're back down to ranking at about 20,000 or 20 million or whatever. That's also misleading but it can give you a general overview of which books are selling well right now by looking at the ranking.

If your book has a ranking of a thousand or less, like a thousand all the way to number one, those books are selling many copies a day and can equate to selling thousands of dollars in sales a month. There's no real hard fixed numbers on that, too, because it depends on how many books are for sale on any given day in the Amazon store.

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



Basically, to sum this up in a little brief way, is that you want to search for a books that are like yours, you want to open their product pages and see how they're similar to yours or not, and what I always recommend through my Targeting Genre course is to start collecting descriptions and information on these different books so that you can see how you can align your book in terms of the style, the structure, if there's a certain type of cookbook that's selling big, if there's a lot of cookbooks that are following this special type of style or format, you want to think about how you can maybe fit into that niche genre and price yourself the right way in there and also provide the right kind of cover that will fit. All of these things are, again, trying to find that slot where you can fit your book in that will reach a target audience that's looking for a particular type of book.

Susan Friedmann: That's a lot to consider. I'm going to take you back a little bit. You mentioned something that I wanted to pick up on, and that was advertising on BookBub. Can you talk more about that and how that's worked for you? It sounds as if it's something that you're doing. Tell us more about that.

Susanne Lakin: If you don't know what BookBub is, it's the holy grail of book advertising. The problem is they only take about 10% of submission, so most people who submit to BookBub don't get accepted. I usually can run a BookBub ad every couple months. I've been doing free ads. I've got one coming up on June 20th for Colorado Hope, my second book in my historical Western romance series that's under my pen name Charlene Whitman, and I decided to start doing free promotions through BookBub. I mean I have to pay them like \$300 to run the ad for one day, but what happens is you get 40 or 50 or 60 thousand downloads and that results in huge sales in your other books in the series.

It's a good move to do if you have a series, whether non-fiction or fiction. They do both. Yes, so authors submit all the time to BookBub but very few get in. It's the ultimate gatekeeper in marketing. If you can get a BookBub ad, that's great and it usually does boost your sales and gets you lots of new readers and lots of reviews. You mentioned before we started the program that you wanted to talk a little bit about getting reviews, that's one great way to get reviews is if you have 50,000 downloads of your book, all of a sudden, you get a flutter of reviews coming in.

Yeah, BookBub is a great piece of marketing strategy that an author can have. It's very hard to get in. You have to just keep submitting every week or every few weeks and hope you can get in. They are beta-testing a new feature where you can actually pay to do an advertisement spot in their newsletter which I'm hoping to participate in and see how that works.

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



There are lots of other sides where authors can promote and market. I don't mean to put any of these down because there's some very good ones like Kindle Book Review and Digital World. Some other sites that I can't think of off the top of my head because there's a few out there.

Many of them are good to advertise with and you can see a little boost of sales, maybe 50 books in a day for a day or two, but overall, I found over the years that ... I tried different marketing strategies, combinations of these different sites, special promos where every 3 days every month I would discount a book for 99 cents and then do massive promotion. I did this for a couple of years with the help of a virtual assistant and I kept very extensive charts, and my ultimate conclusion after all my research was that it was a waste of time and money. That it really didn't impact my sales. Being known as an author and the only thing that really worked or made sense was in understanding how genre worked and targeting genre so that that target audience is reached.

Susan Friedmann: Let's talk about getting reviews. I know that many of my authors have a really hard time trying to find people to give them reviews or ... What's a good way? What are some of the techniques to get people to leave reviews?

Susanne Lakin: Well, there's so many methods out there and I know there's a lot of great blog posts. If you Google and you look up some of these blog posts, there are some excellent ones out there on how to, for instance, contact Amazon Vine reviewers, the top reviewers at Amazon, and how to send them an email and ask them if they will review your book. That's a really great idea. I haven't actually followed through on a lot of that. I've done that in the past with advanced reader copies for some of my traditionally published books, but there's definitely ways to do that and it's highly recommended.

There are many posts out there that tell you strategies for how to get reviews. My personal experience has been that if I send out some tweets and I posted on Facebook that I'm looking for reviewers, on Twitter, of course, you would use your genre hashtag like #mystery or #cookbook, #reviewers, things like that, I've gotten a lot of response through Twitter and Facebook, also on my mailing list. If I send out a newsletter on my mailing list and say, "Hey, I would love for anybody to review my book," you want to provide an advanced reader copy. It's fine if you only have a rough draft. That's totally fine.

The advanced reader copies usually put at the very top, uncorrected proof, so that they know it hasn't been final edited. It hasn't been proofread yet. You do usually want to get your advanced reader copies sent out before

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



your release so you can have some reviews ready to go. I have done this a lot. I do this with all my books before I release and I usually send out to hundreds of people. I provide them with an advanced reader copy.

The key to this is to go on to Draft2Digital which is a great site that I use for distribution online in addition to Amazon. On Draft2Digital, the two is a numeral 2, Draft2Digital.com, you can upload your Word document and then you can have it generated into a PDF, a MOBI file, an ePub, and maybe other formats. This is all for free, so what I do and what is highly recommended is when you send out an email or a blast to people saying, "Hey, I would love for you to review my book. Any format?" and then you can provide them with a MOBI or an ePub depending on what e-reader they're using. Kindle now can pretty much take anything. It used to be you could only upload a Word document on a Kindle or a MOBI, but you can also do PDFs now and other things, I think.

Yeah, that's really the best way to get book reviews. If you just continue at it, you'll just gradually just keep getting more and more and more. Of course, another strategy which I teach on my free email course which I can talk about in a minute, too, is that you always, in the back of your book that you're publishing, you always want to have a little page saying, "Hey, if you've really enjoyed this book, the best way you can thank an author is to leave a review. Click here to leave a review on Amazon," and then they can just click through. Amazon does a nice thing now, too. Whenever you buy a product, usually about 2 weeks later, you get an email, at least I do, I don't know if you do, but I get an email about 2 weeks later saying, "Would you like to review this product that you bought?" and then they'll give you a chance to click 5 stars or whatever, leave a review.

That's great, too, and that usually generate some reviews.

Susan Friedmann: Excellent information. It's interesting because I just looked at Draft2Digital and you've just opened up a whole new another avenue of how to use it, so thank you for that.

Susanne Lakin: Yeah.

Susan Friedmann: Let's talk about an effective book description. So many of my authors have such a hard time in giving a synopsis, a really crisp addition of what their book is about. What are some tricks that you can share?

Susanne Lakin: Oh, yeah. There are some definite strategies to how to do this. I think I mentioned I have at least two before we started talking, that I think at least two whole modules on writing description in my only course, Targeting

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



Genre for Big Sales, because the description is really crucial. Again, this is all about targeting genre. For instance, when I started writing historical Western romance, which I had never done before, I went into Amazon and found 10 or 20 or 30 top bestsellers in that niche genre and I copied and pasted their descriptions into a Word document so I could compare them. I studied them and I saw a trend. There was definitely a style. I believe that this is true with a lot of different genres.

Now, with huge bestselling authors like Stephen King or somebody like that, a lot of times you'll notice on their Amazon description like two sentences in the description field and they don't even bother to put much of a description in there because they know they're going to sell millions of copies and the author already has a huge readership. When you're just starting out or your mid-list or whatever, you want to make sure you know what genre you're targeting, which sub-genre you're reaching and then you want to look at all those descriptions and then see what the similarities were.

I learned some very interesting things when I did this for my first book. I saw that there seemed to be an introductory paragraph that described the heroine and her situation, sets her up in her world here, and then the second paragraph would be about the hero, and then the third paragraph would be about the complication and opposition and what challenges they had to face. Like, "Meet Jane, and she's blah, blah, blah. Now, meet Joe, blah, blah, blah." Not written like that, of course, but then in that third, these things get thrown at them, can their love survive, or whatever. This is for Western romance.

I followed that exact setup. There are a lot of other factors that you want to keep in mind, too, that Amazon now has that little annoying "Read more" tag or button at the top of your description. Used to be that you could read about a full big paragraph description on the top part of your product page on Amazon just right next to where your cover is, but now they only give you about two sentences. When a potential customer or reader comes to your product page and they're looking at your book, the first thing they're going to see is your title and then they're going to look at your cover and hopefully you have this like really cool cover, and they're thinking, "Okay, this might be the kind of book I like." Colorado Promise, and here's this really beautiful cover of Colorado with the horses running, that's Western.

Okay, so they see that, but then what has to happen is that first line or two in my description has to hook them, just like your hook of your book. You need to have some introductory sentence and I could open mine up with

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



my computer right now but it'll distract me. Anyway, you need some introductory sentence that sets up the premise. Basically, it's your one sentence story concept: "A rich woman from the East Coast goes out to Colorado because of whatever and meets so and so." You want it to be really interesting. You want it to be unique so that it's really telling your unique story and not just saying, "A woman finds love in the wild West." Okay, well, that doesn't really tell you anything.

Yeah, you need that one really strong line. You also want to format with HTML formatting. You want to make sure you use bold and you use the Amazon headers. I talk about how to do that in my course. It's really important for your description to look good, to stand out, to have that hook, and then when they click on the "Read more," it's going to open up the rest of that description so they're going to see your beautiful description all laid out all nice with a little bit of italics and a little bold of bold and some headers and things like that. You're selling your product so you want to have a nice product page.

Susan Friedmann: "I'm heading over and buying that course," Amelia says. I'm like, "Okay. I've got to know more."

Susanne Lakin: Yeah. I spent years trying to figure all this stuff out and failing miserably, so yeah, I have 15 modules and hours and hours and hours and just step by step of how to really just do this just from the beginning of taking your book and figuring out what genre and what niche, what audience, and then how to go step by step into figuring out how to reach that target audience and then how do you tailor your book.

A lot of times targeting genre means you need to write a comprehension different story. It may be that you only need to tweak a few things, and I talk about this a lot on my course. When you learn how to reverse engineer and get into Amazon and look at what's selling big and you find these niche genres, you might, for instance, discover that cozy mystery sell okay if they are about a woman that is a cook, maybe novels that are about cooks, mysteries about cooks are selling really well. You might also then learn in your research that books, mysteries that have cats in them sell 50 times more or 500 times more or a thousand times more on average than the average cozy mystery.

It could be that you'll decide that your protagonist who's a chef and caters part-time has a really funny cat, then she takes her car everywhere or her cat just causes all kinds of problems. Now, you can start marketing to that sub-genre audience that loves books about cats. Seriously, any books about cats or dogs usually, you ramp up the sales potential exponentially, right?

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



Susan Friedmann: Or babies.

Susanne Lakin: Or maybe babies, yeah, but definitely dogs and cats. Those are seriously popular. I mean there might be an audience out there for ferrets or for gerbils or something like that, but I doubt they're going to be as big as the cat and dog market. I hope you get the idea. What you want to do is figure out, "How can I figure out a niche genre to write in that I would love to write in, but that also will sell well, that has a huge audience, a voracious audience that buys a lot of books. Maybe there's not a big supply for the demand. You can figure those things out with the methods and the tools that I mention in my course.

Susan Friedmann: How about a non-fiction book? I mean that works really well for a novel, but how about ... What would you do in the case of a non-fiction?

Susanne Lakin: Yeah. It's all the same strategies with non-fiction. I mean this whole idea of finding the niche genres, making sure your description fits to match in there. If you're writing a memoir and it's a certain type of memoir, you want to take a look at what memoirs are selling well, what their style is like, how they structure their chapters, and what type of voice they have or tone, what their covers look like. I mean you're not trying to copy anybody else. You're just trying to fit on the shelf. Like if you go to Trader Joe's and you're going to get canned tomatoes, there's going to be six different kinds of canned tomatoes. Some might have Italian spices in them, whatever, but they are canned tomatoes, right?

It's the same kind of idea. If you're going to write that business book or that cookbook or that memoir, you need to know where on the shelf you want to be, where your readers are going to be looking on that virtual shelf to find your book. I mentioned my Amazon course. I have a free email course put together. I put a huge amount of content. This was a major labor of love. It's totally free. If you go to my website, LiveWriteThrive.com, on the right side bar, you'll see a bright yellow picture and it says "Take my free Amazon course." What this is, is I think it's 7 or 8 emails. You get one every couple of days and it's just chock-full of screenshots and 8 essential steps to selling on Amazon and it talks about all these things that you're touching on, the description.

I go deep into keywords, your book cover, all the front matter, the back matter, what you should have and shouldn't have in the front and back of your book, so all that stuff but it's free. Just go over there and sign up for the email course. It'll put you on my mailing list and lots of people have been writing me back. I think couple thousand people have already taken

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



this course since I put it out in December, and lots of people are writing me all the time saying, "Wow, this is great. I applied everything that you told me and I've already ... Oh, my books have shot to the number one in the search results. I'm getting on all the bestseller list," and that's very cool.

Of course, I can't guarantee that's going to happen to your book. We had a lot of these books, especially the non-fiction books, a lot of times all they needed to do is just tweak the keywords and then find that niche genre and target to that using the right keyword phrases over and over in the product page which is a big strategy that I talk about that's very important. Then, really, researching how people are searching. What are they typing into the box? When you're looking for a book, you want to think, "What do I type in?" You don't usually type in one word. Amazon always suggests that for your keywords, you use like one weird word that makes your book stand out from everybody else's. That's about the worst advice you could follow, so don't listen to Amazon.

No, really. I mean think about it. you're a consumer. What do you do when you want to find something on Amazon? You don't usually type in one word. You don't type a weird word in. if I'm looking for historical Western romance, I'm going to type in "historical Western romance." I'm not going to type in "Colorado" or "cowboy vet" or something, because my protagonist is a cowboy vet. That's just part of that important strategy to get discovered.

Susan Friedmann: Give us what site again.

Susanne Lakin: My website?

Susan Friedmann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Susanne Lakin: It's LiveWriteThrive.com.

Susan Friedmann: Excellent.

Susanne Lakin: The "write" is like writing, not correct, yeah, W-R-I-T-E, Live Write Thrive.

Susan Friedmann: Excellent. Let's talk about a few mistakes authors make. With regard to Amazon, I know you've implied a lot of mistakes, but let's hit on a few big ones.

Susanne Lakin: I think the biggest one is not so much about Amazon, it's about you, the author, and your book. You need to know what your book is about and who you're writing for. As mentioned, I do about 200 critiques, manuscript ... I

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



do more than 200 manuscript critiques a year plus editing books. So many of them, I have no idea what genre they are or they're just a combination, like I'm working on one now that is a memoir/historical speculative fiction/Bible study because it has all these like Bible sections just dumped in there. It's just like this weird mismatch and the author is very excited about the structure. I'm like, "Well, dude, I don't know what to do with you here. It's like this book isn't going to fit anywhere. No one is going to buy it. No one is going to know what it is."

I really think it's so important ... Again, we might hate to think of our books as products, but the moment you decide that you want to sell that book, if you're writing a novel or a non-fiction book with the intention of selling it to somebody, you need to start thinking of it as a product and you need to understand who you're writing it for and why. If you're writing a memoir, you don't want to just write your life story because you think your life is so cool. It's like sharing home movies with people. They don't want to see your home movies. You want to think, "Who am I writing this memoir for? Am I writing it for people who are struggling with drug abuse because I went through years of drug abuse but I came out victorious and I have a story to share that will encourage and enlighten? Is that my audience?"

Regardless of what you're writing, you want to be very clear about what genre. Yes, certain books cross genre. That's popular these days especially with novels. You have books like *Time Traveler's Wife* or whatever, that sort of like contemporary fiction mixed with magical realism, and that's all fine. Again, it's finding that very specific niche audience or niche that you're writing to that you can fit that book into. You have to be able to know who is going to buy that book, who that reader is. I hope that makes sense.

Susan Friedmann: Excellent advice. Absolutely. What else would you recommend for our authors with regard to working with Amazon?

Susanne Lakin: For specifically with Amazon, I think a lot of it is learning; like I said, learning how Amazon categorizes products, how they do categories and sub-categories. For instance, another thing that fiction authors should be aware of is that when you drill down on the side bar to the different genres like mystery, suspense, romance, sci-fi, fantasy, you will see Amazon now has a new section on the side bar that populates called moods and themes, characters, and settings. Amazon suggests, for instance, that if you're writing fiction, that you use at least one or two keywords that tie into those sections.

For instance, under mysteries and thrillers, you have under characters, you might have a female sleuth, a male detective, British detective. There'll be

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



a whole bunch of different markers you could say for those various types of characters. If you are writing a gory detective story featuring a female FBI agent, you can put in your keywords, "Female FBI agent, gory," these are words they recommend on the site. If you click on gory under crime thriller, there's only 700 books that populate. You have a good chance of your book being discovered if you use those keywords. This, again, is part of that Amazon strategy because the whole objective being on Amazon is discoverability.

What you want is when you put your book up for sale, you want your books to come up at the top of the search list whenever people type in those keyword. Mine do every time. It's like even before I sell one copy, as soon as I upload my book even for pre-sale, within like an hour, my books are at the tops of all the list and I haven't even sold a copy. It really doesn't have that much to do with how many copies you sold. I mean that will factor in over time, yes, but it really has a lot to do with the keywords. Just like any search engine on any site, whether you're on like J. Crew or Williams-Sonoma or Kmart online, Walmart. When you type in some keywords, it's going to populate the pages, product pages that best match, that are the most relevant.

When I put up a writing craft book, for instance, as soon as somebody types in novel structure, my writing craft book will come up as number one at the top of the search results. It'll also come up as a hot new release. It'll also come up in new releases, in 30 days new releases. All those different factors will come into play only because of the keywords.

Susan Friedmann: Remind our listeners how they can get a hold of you.

Susanne Lakin: Well, the best way to reach me, whether you wanted to hire me to critique your manuscript or edit or you want to hire me to consult, because I can do this, just consult with people for marketing and go over their strategies with them, or you want to take my courses or whatever, just go to my website. Just go to LiveWriteThrive.com. You can click on the side bar to learn more about my free Amazon course, to sign up for that, or you can take my Targeting Genre course. Then I have a contact page so you can contact me. I love to help authors. I've really struggled. It took me 23 years to get published and then when self-publishing began, I really struggled for years trying to figure out this marketing thing.

I did everything the top selling authors told me to do. They said, "Just do this and you'll sell millions of copies." I'm like, "Cool." I tried all that and it didn't work. I really realized that my problem was I wasn't really targeting genre. I write really weird books. I write a lot of books that you can't really

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



define. They're not really quite mystery or quite women's fiction or quite fantasy or quite sci-fi and as a result, I've had a lot of trouble with sales because I couldn't figure out how to find my target audience. That's why I put that Targeting Genre course together that's been helping so many people finally sell their books. They're happy. They're actually succeeding as an author which is really exciting for me.

Susan Friedmann: Great. From your own experience, which is always the best way, so excellent. If you could leave our listeners with a golden nugget of information, what would that be?

Susanne Lakin: I would say, and I've said this many, many times in many blog posts. I would say the most important thing that you as an author can do is write your best book. I see a lot of authors in a hurry to get published, rushing through, not having their book edited, regretting it later. Once you put your books out there and you start getting a reputation, if it's bad reputation and you get a lot of bad reviews ... Amazon now is actually removing books that are badly edited. They're starting to do that which is shocking and scary to a lot of people. If there's a lot of complaints in your reviews that your book is not edited well, they will tell you to either hurry up and get it edited or they'll remove it. That's a very scary thought.

I would say you want to write the best book you can write and part of that means really learning novel structure if you're a novelist; if you're writing a non-fiction book, really learning how to write well, how to organize well, how to present your information clear and concise, and then having the book professionally edited and/or critiqued to make sure that you're putting out the best book you can. Everything you produce, everything you do in life, you want to have integrity. Your reputation is tied in with it. Whether you're making a care or raising a child, whatever you do, you want to do your best, right?

You want to put out books that you can be proud of. You want to be able, years later, to look at all these books that you've published and be proud of every single one. I'm glad to say that I can look at all my books and I love them all. I'm very proud of them all. I wouldn't change them. I don't feel embarrassed by any of them. That's what you want. You want to write your best book and you want to polish it and put it together and package it, great cover, great description, all the things that you tie in with that product, you want to make it the best you can make it.

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

Helping authors get their books noticed!



Susan Friedmann: Well, it's obviously working for you. You're enormously successful at this. Thank you for sharing all that great advice. Thank you all for taking precious time out of your day to listen to this interview. I sincerely hope that it sparked some ideas you can use to sell more books. Here's wishing you much book marketing success.