

# 10 Marketing tips

*Disclaimer: I am not a marketing guru. However these tips seem to have worked for me, and may also work for your marketing campaign.*

## **Marketing tip #1: Get a website**

**Q: What is the purpose of a website?**

**A: To drive traffic!**

A user hears out about your book via word of mouth, business cards, or other forms of advertising etc. At this point, they generally know NOTHING (or very little) about your book.

(Remember, we are bombarded with thousands of marketing messages every day!)

A user should QUICKLY (within 2 – 3 seconds) understand what your site is about, and what they should do there.

Some examples: <http://thezonebook.com> <http://what-if-world.com>

### Design a website from scratch?

Recommended for graphic designers with web programming knowledge eg .html, .php, .css, MySql, PhpMyAdmin etc.

Example of a 'from scratch' website: <http://thezonebook.com>

NB: I am not a designer, and prior to this project had very little programming knowledge. I could have saved a great deal of time by using a blog platform with ready-made template and plugins.

Pros: Unlimited flexibility in terms of form and function

Cons: If you're not already a web programmer and designer, you could spend a LOT of time learning these skills, and possibly still end up with less than ideal results

### Use a blog platform such as Wordpress?

Recommended for those with limited knowledge of design.

Very little web programming (if any) required.

Example of a simple Wordpress site: <http://what-if-world.com>

Pros: A lot of templates and plugins to choose from

Cons: Can end up looking like just another blog, if you don't customise the template.  
Can take time to learn about the platform and plugins.

### Hire a professional web designer?

Pros: Results should be the best

Flexibility in terms of form and function

In all cases: Use google analytics to track visitor demographics

## **Marketing tip #2: Pre-release discount**

Allow people to sign up for a pre-release discount on your website. Before "Performing in The Zone" was released, I had a form on <http://thezonebook.com> where users could sign up for a 20% pre-release discount. The form collected user's email addresses. When the book was released, I sent out an email to the list with a link to the book on amazon.com Using this method, combined with collecting email addresses via relevant databases, "Performing in The Zone" became a #1 best selling new release by CreateSpace on amazon.com

### **Marketing tip #3: Give away free stuff**

When a user signed up for a pre-release discount, my system automatically sent them a thank-you gift - a short e-book in .pdf format on a subject closely related to my book. (Even if you don't use a pre-release system, your website could include a free download 'teaser' from your book, video, or album.) The e-book I sent contained a sample from "Performing in The Zone". I received a lot of positive responses to this ebook, which I responded to personally (ie. Not using a standard email template). Which leads me to my next tip...

### **Marketing tip #4: Treat people like people**

When making email contact with potential buyers, write to them in a friendly, personal style - but use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation!

This tells them "Ok. There is a REAL PERSON behind this site and this book. And hey, it looks like they actually know how to write". This gives the potential book buyer more confidence in you and your book – very important! It also creates goodwill, so that potential buyers will recommend your site to their friends/colleagues, whom hopefully will also sign up on your site/buy your publication.

### **Marketing tip #5: Contact magazines and experts in your field – send press releases and review copies**

Find magazines (online and offline) pertaining to the subject of your book, as well as noted experts in your field. Send them a brief email telling them who you are, include a press release, and say that you would like to send them a sample copy for review. In my experience, the magazines pertaining to the subject of my book (magazines for musicians, singers, actors, dancers etc) have been very responsive, and look forward to receiving a copy of my book for review. A note here: Magazine advertising costs the earth from what I've been able to find out. But a review (which IMHO can be BETTER than normal advertising) costs only as much as an author's copy of your book + postage. Also, having an expert endorse your book can give it more credibility.

### **Marketing tip #6: Contact online communities pertaining to the subject of your book**

Often these communities have email lists, send out their own newsletters to their members, or have forums. All of these can be excellent ways to find people who may be interested in your book. Send them an email from you (as a person, in a friendly style, informing them of your book, the website, and the discount they can get by going there - DO NOT write to them as if you are a salesman or seller of viagra!!!) Keep it brief, and be open and honest about what it is you are trying to achieve. Include a possibility for them to easily remove themselves from your email list. NO ONE like spam. But a friendly email between you and someone else in your field can do a world of good for your publicity and your book's image.

Use the wrong type of language, and you are likely to be branded a spammer. Check the rules of each website you visit. If it says "don't email our members about offers, don't solicit etc" then don't do it. An option is to ask the webmaster or administrator to mail their members on your behalf, allowing them to screen the email message you would like to send.

### **Marketing tip #7: Branding**

It can be useful for your book/CD/DVD to have an easily recognisable logo or brand image – something that makes an instant impression, can be easily reproduced at different sizes/resolutions, and something unique. An example of this is the big "Z" on "Performing in The Zone".

(Note – your logo or brand image doesn't have to be as huge as this one! ☺ )

### **Marketing tip #8: Create business cards, letter heads, postcards, brochures, flyers etc.**

Marketing materials – using your brand image or logo – can be printed quickly and easily at high quality and low cost using <http://vistaprint.dk>

### **Marketing tip #9: Get people talking**

Valuable to remember: Word of mouth is still one of the most (if not \*the\* most) effective forms of advertising. Firstly, if your book/album/film is appreciated by its audience, people will talk about it.

But what else can you do to get people talking about your book/album/film?

To start with, forget all about janteloven! Tell your friends/family/colleagues about your publication, and don't be shy about handing out business cards.

Include an area on your website – either by means of a forum or comments section – where users can easily add their own thoughts and comments. This can work particularly well if your publication is controversial and/or deals with current events.

### **Marketing tip #10: Online social networking and facebook ads**

You can also create your own facebook and twitter accounts to use for your marketing efforts. Invite your friends, and ask them to invite their friends etc. Online marketing via facebook and twitter is changing very rapidly, is a huge subject unto itself, and unfortunately falls outside the scope of this talk.

I do however advise against using facebook ads. In my experience, clickthru rates were around 0.02% and most of the visitors coming to my site from facebook bounced straight off - that is, they clicked on the ad, went to my site, and then within seconds, navigated away from the site. Then, the ads cost between US\$0.10 and US0.45 per click. They generally cost more thesedays.

However, facebook MAY be the best forum we have for marketing. For example:

The group "Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatoriet" has 995 members

"Join this if you've played music with someone in it" currently has over 85,000 members..

“American Idol” has over 4.4 million members.

“Barack Obama” has over 18 million members.

Now, what I would like to know is, "How can we, as authors/musicians/film makers get in touch with our target audience via these massive groups on facebook?"

### **In the end, it's a numbers game.**

I read somewhere that there is a rule called "the 1% rule" that applies to marketing and sending mailouts. That is, 1% of people who hear about your book will buy it. That might not sound like very many, but in reality, if I was taking a wild guess – and for the sake of simplicity – I might say that there are perhaps 100,000,000 people in the world who are interested in the topic of performing (to use that as an example).

That is to say, perhaps 100,000,000 who speak English, and are either dancers, musicians, actors, public speakers, singers, sports people, models, entertainers - amateur, students, professionals, beginners.

So, using the 1% rule, if 1% of them hear about my book, that is 1,000,000 people. If 1% of those people actually buy my book, that's 10,000 sales. And 10,000 sales at CreateSpace royalty rates would mean a hefty income.