

Tips from a Real-Life Editor

Interview with Shay Totten

Shay Totten has served as communications editor and editor in chief of a Publishing House, Chelsea Green, a small New England press. A writer and poet, he's sat on all sides of the writing desk. He'll give you pro tips on how to get your writing in front of the editor, published and then out into the world.

Use this worksheet to help guide you through the important points of his presentation.

Don't worry; it's not a quiz. It's just meant to help you focus. The answers are available on the lesson page.

ONCE A WRITER, ALWAYS A WRITER

Top promotion tips on how to "brand manage"

- Craft your work into _____
- Pitch to places like _____
- Adapt _____ into _____
- Think about how to _____ your own work

Top Tip: What to AVOID when Pitching a Publisher

- The main thing: This book isn't necessarily going to get you and _____ or _____
- _____ is the first step in a process
- _____ doesn't sell books, _____ does
- Don't expect _____. It is work
- Be patient
- The author still has to do plenty. People want to hear from _____.
The more you're invested in doing that, the better things will go down the road

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Author Platform

- What's the "magic size" of followers? _____

- How should you set up your facebook page? _____

- What kind of website should you have? _____

- Which social media channels are the best? _____

- What one thing should you definitely have? _____

- Why?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

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Authorship: The Business Side

Where can you find good examples for creating your platform? _____

The only way it's going to work is _____

True or False

Over time your platform changes. _____

Whatever works and feels comfortable is the best plan. _____

Traditional vs. Self Publishing

Top Tip: How much _____

Without the _____, the _____ doesn't have a book.

Top questions to ask a traditional publisher

Will there be a _____ ?

Ask to see a _____ .

Sample support and _____ last.

Is it just a _____ ? Is there someone to _____ ?

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Ways to market if you're self-publishing

_____ on Amazon up to date, updated _____

Change things in email to _____ .

Are there advantages to traditional publishing?

- Reputation
- _____
- Cover design taken care of
- _____
- Development editors
- Look for a publisher who cares about _____ .

The Cocktail Party

- Look for the publisher's _____
- Prepare a _____ ?
- Sample chapters
- _____ of all chapters
- Full list of what all _____ cover?
- Market potential of book

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TOP TIP: PITCHING A PUBLISHER

When you're going to pitch a publisher, _____

You need to come across as an _____ in what you're doing.

Slush pile _____

Top Tip: Read the _____ !

Increasing your chances of being published

- Write a compelling cover letter.
- What makes this a _____ idea?
- What makes it unique in the _____ ?
- Why are you the _____ to bring it to the marketplace?
- Make sure you follow every single one of submission guidelines.
- Make yourself look the best possible.
- Narrative CV

Published articles, be the authority. Show that you're _____ or at least an expert.

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TOP TIP: PITCHING A PUBLISHER

Market Research

- Use Amazon
- Search for other books based on _____ that are most associated with your book
 - Go to Library Journal and _____ and Publishers Weekly. Look at books reviewed in those categories
 - See what other books are out there and have been published. What's been out there? What's selling?
- Amazon's a good _____ for what's selling
 - Look for top selling categories
- Who are the authors?
- What are the books on the _____ ?
- _____
- _____

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TOP TIP: PITCHING A PUBLISHER

Tomato Gardening by Annalisa Parent

- See when book published, how old the book is
- Look for books that have been published more recently
- 5 attributes to look for:
 - Publisher
- _____
 - Title
- _____
 - Ranking
- Analysis of author and publisher

Think about your niche

Is this a tomato gardening book for

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Top Tip: Take your great original idea and make it _____ .

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DEAR SHAY: WHAT'S IMPORTANT IN A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

How your book positions against the market.

HOW TO: Demonstrate that you've done the homework

- Done the research
- Willing to be _____
- Understand the market and where your book places in market

Top Tips:

- Be yourself
- Start a _____ and get feedback on what works
- Know the publisher and what they publish
- Do your research. Follow the guidelines
- Keep your work _____

Top 3:

- Know your voice
- Know your market
- Research

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What is a specialty publisher?

- Specialty publishers focus on a core group of _____ They're a more targeted, focused publisher.
- Advantages of a specialty publisher:
 - Know market really well
 - Know all the _____ in that market and the s _____ in that market

Top Tip: Look at _____ of authors you like and you'll find an imprint of a publishing house that will take you.

Marketing Land:

- Alert your _____
- Get assistance from _____ re _____
- Research bookstore talks, _____, book fairs, _____
- Find your _____ and figure out how you get your voice into that mix
- _____ that talk about books, google community
- Have people review your book on _____, _____, _____
- Send and email to friends, crash on their couch and do a _____
- Ask them to share with friends
- _____ tour
- Try a whole bunch of things. Build on them. Don't be afraid if they _____

Top Tip on email pitches: You have a subject line and two lines in a window pane.

There's a lot of _____ and _____ in marketing.

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From the editor's perspective

You never know the factors that weigh into rejection

- _____
- Subject matter
- _____
- 5 bad submissions before yours

How to find out if your idea will fly

Start a blog to build a responsive audience. Everybody needs an editor.