

Get Exposure for your Book

Transcript:

Lisa Abbate, author's coach and editor, interviews Penny Sansevieri, book marketing expert

Lisa Abbate: We are recording, and I do want to say welcome and I'm really glad we at last get to have a talk, and introduce people to Book Marketing. It's been a little while since we've been trying to set this up so I think it's exciting to have a meeting of the minds.

Penny Sansevieri: It is!

Lisa Abbate: I was thinking I would just talk a little bit about what I'm doing, and putting this in context and then talking a little bit about your work. And then we can get into sharing some really solid information for people on great ways to get exposure for your book on a budget.

Penny Sansevieri: That would be great!

Lisa Abbate: Okay. So again my name is Lisa Abbate and I am an independent editor and author's coach working with private clients and also in groups through a program I created called Book Boot Camp for the Entrepreneurial Soul, which is a combination of teleclass and private coaching, and also a special write out loud component where I help clients speak their book, which saves them many hours of time in the writing process. And I am also an editor and moderator at Absolutewrite.com, which is the best and biggest writer's resource on the internet for writers of all genres around the world. And I really was excited to connect with you and meet with you because my clients who are largely nonfiction writers—entrepreneurs who are working on their books—they write a book, but then they want to know what they need to do when their books are done and ready for the world, and how to get it out there.

So just to tell people, I've asked Penny if she would give us a little bit of help in this. Penny Sansevieri is the CEO and founder of Author Marketing Experts, Inc., a best-selling author in her own right. She is also an internationally recognized Book Marketing and Media Relations expert. Penny, I understand you're also an adjunct professor at NYU, New York University, is that right?

Penny Sansevieri: I am. Yeah, I am. I'm teaching publishing there.

Lisa Abbate: That's very exciting.

- Penny Sansevieri:** Yeah.
- Lisa Abbate:** You're also the author of five books yourself, including Red Hot Internet Publicity, which I understand has been called the leading guide to everything internet, which is very exciting.
- Penny Sansevieri:** Very exciting, yeah definitely.
- Lisa Abbate:** And also, you are the first Marketing and Publicity firm to use a special internet promotion called The Virtual Author Tour, which works with social networking sites, Twitter, blogs, book videos, etc., to help authors get their message into the community, into the virtual community. Is that right?
- Penny Sansevieri:** That is, yeah. That is.
- Lisa Abbate:** You'll be able to tell us a little bit about that also. And then I just wanted to tell everyone that you have had your company, Author Marketing Experts has had, was it ten? Ten recent books on the bestseller list, including the New York Times, USA Today, and the Wall Street Journal.
- Penny Sansevieri:** Actually the number is now eleven. So we're pretty excited. Yeah.
- Lisa Abbate:** Congratulations!
- Penny Sansevieri:** Thank you!
- Lisa Abbate:** That is very, very exciting and maybe I could kind of get into some of the great ways to get exposure, but if you would like to kind of preface that with anything – how you got into Book Marketing yourself and I think that's an interesting subject.
- Penny Sansevieri:** Yeah, well I got into this industry... actually I'm one of those sort of accidental entrepreneurs. I've been in Marketing and Publicity for years, and then in corporate America, got laid off twice in one year – once when our CEO was let go, the second one the company closed. And I took it as a sign. And I figured that it was time for me to go off and do my own thing. I knew I wanted to be in books, and I looked around and I realized that there were no book marketing companies that were really specializing in the self-published market, which 11 years ago, was just in its infancy.
- Lisa Abbate:** Right.
- Penny Sansevieri:** Yeah, so that's how I got into this and really took the time to specialize in that industry. And we work with traditionally published

authors, but the self-published market for those quality, quality self-published books, was really underserved.

Lisa Abbate: So you said you work with traditionally published books as well as self-published books, and also with fiction as well as nonfiction, is that correct?

Penny Sansevieri: Yes.

Lisa Abbate: Well then let me ask you, here's a question. Do you find a big difference between marketing nonfiction books compared to marketing fiction?

Penny Sansevieri: I do, and most of that is because nonfiction is always easier to promote, and candidly we got into doing a lot of the internet work because 8 years ago – and now even more so than back then – there really wasn't a lot of opportunity for fiction authors, especially self-published fiction authors. The window continues to narrow for these folks, and the internet has really shown to be much more open, much more accepting of authors who write fiction.

Lisa Abbate: I'm finding that people, some readers, they don't necessarily know or care who's published the book. They just want to read it.

Penny Sansevieri: Right, exactly.

Lisa Abbate: Let me ask you this then. If we start to kind of get into five great ways to get exposure for your book, I'll say that in general, there are some things that you need to have in place before you start marketing, such as a website and a capture page, but when do you think is a good time for authors to begin marketing their books or begin the marketing process? Some people wait till their book is completely is finished, but is that really the right thing to do?

Penny Sansevieri: No, it really isn't, and I would suggest that authors look at going after their market, or at least start to dig into that marketing as soon as they put pen to paper because with any book that you publish, whether it's fiction, nonfiction, self-published, traditionally-published, there is the long run way of promotion. Generally, it'll take twice as long as you think to get into your market. So the earlier, the better.

Lisa Abbate: So what are some great ways then to begin to get exposure for your book?

Penny Sansevieri:

Well, I think that we really want to just sort of step back from this, and I think in order for an author to get exposure for the book, they first have to understand the landscape. They have to understand their particular book's ecosystem. And most authors don't take the time to really assess what their market is. And there's a lot of hot stuff they can be doing. They can be doing video, they can be doing Twitter, they can be doing Facebook, but none of that makes sense unless they know what their market needs. And so one of the things I recommend that they do is put their sort of detective hat on and start to get to know other experts in their industry. So I generally recommend, authors listen: follow the top five to ten authors in your market, go on to Google, plug in your search terms, follow the five to ten authors, see what the guys are doing. Especially in fiction because this obviously gets a little tougher for those fiction authors, and I write fiction, so believe me I know how difficult this can be sometimes. See what they're talking about on Twitter, see what their posting on their Facebook fan pages. Now granted, if you're a fiction author and you're looking at someone like Heather Graham or Debbie Macomber, those folks have platforms that have been built over the years, so yes they're going to have thousands, and thousands, and thousands of people following them. But as you move down this list through the top ten, you're going to start to see authors you've never heard of who are still on the first page of Google and it's up to you to figure out why. So what is it about their messaging? How do they speak to their fans? What are they giving to their fans? Those are the types of things that will really help an author to start to put together a plan because anybody can put together a road map, but you got to know where you're going first. So to step back from it in that fashion, helps an author to really, really, really educate themselves. And the more time that you take doing this homework upfront, I'll tell you something, the more time and money you'll save in the long run.

Lisa Abbate:

That's really interesting. Also then for nonfiction, the same thing applies, in your category you go the bookstore. In addition to knowing a few of the authors, who they are, but going to the bookstore, looking at the big names, and seeing what those people are doing and what they're offering to their market, on their website, whether it is some kind of download or free information. Are you finding those kinds of things to be helpful? I know you just did a couple of big campaigns in nonfiction, what were some of the things that you felt were really working?

Penny Sansevieri:

Well, I think that people...it's not so much about free. I know there's a whole debate about free, and is free really good? And how much is too much to give away? But one of the things that I found is that the more that you give away, the more trust that you build with your reader. And I think trust is a big factor, because we all have a lot of different things coming at us, and everybody wants our money right? Everybody wants to sell us something. Some people are less obvious than others, who are out there just sort of what seems to be like the used car salesman sort of hawking their stuff, which is never an effective way to sell. So I think really building trust, I mean we have a lot of free stuff. We have a blog. We have a newsletter, and people have said to me for years, "Gosh Penny, you're giving too much away. It's going to hurt your business." Well, we've been in business for 11 years. We've seen growth every year. It's never hurt our business to do so. But what it has done is it's built a rapport with people over the years, and really helped to build that trust level, especially when an author is looking to invest in their book and hire a marketing company; you really, really need to spend the time building the trust.

Lisa Abbate:

And especially for nonfiction, because with fiction, what is there to really...what do you give away for nonfiction? Authors – their book is part of their business and it's a component of their whole letting people to get to know them and being part of that trust.

Penny Sansevieri:

Exactly.

Lisa Abbate:

One of the questions that I had from someone when I told him of about this upcoming call was: Do you find it helpful for people to give away a chapter or two chapters in their book? I know that in fiction world that happens on occasion and it's a big discussion about whether that's useful or not. What do you think about that?

Penny Sansevieri:

I do think that that's useful. I think though that you really need to look at this a little bit differently because now with e-books, right? You could actually create an extra chapter to a book that if, for example, somebody buys the book they get this free extra chapter, whatever that is. You know, we've had authors who are mystery writers, where they write a series of books for the detective as the main character. And so the detective is maybe solving another crime, or whatever that is. So I do think that chapters are a good idea. I think sample chapters are a great idea. It just really depends a lot on the book. Now keep in mind that 83% of Americans want to write a book. So even if all you do

is write about the craft of writing and character development and how to find a publisher/agent whatever, you could absolutely give those tips away, because 83% of the audience that could be popping on your site is going to go, "Gosh! I wonder how Lisa did it. I wonder how, I would really like to publish too." And that works as well for nonfiction folks if they're looking for more stuff to blog about or give away or whatever. We've seen great success with authors who write about how to get published.

Lisa Abbate: Right, I mean a lot of what I do is how to get your book completed. How to start a book...

Penny Sansevieri: Exactly.

Lisa Abbate: I do some of that myself. So this is a good learning call for me too. So what are some other ways to get exposure? You said you have to start with doing your background work, looking at where the top authors in your category are and what they're doing. What's another way for authors to get exposure? And connected to that is, there's also a big debate now as to whether in person book signings are useful or not useful. I was wondering what you had to say about that.

Penny Sansevieri: Well, I think it's really going to depend on how engaging the author is in person. Let me tell you a little story that we encountered with a book that we worked with, which actually was a bestseller in November. And I'll keep this really short because I know we've got limited time on the show. We were working on a book called The Kennedy Detail. And this book was written by a former Kennedy Secret Service. For those who remember the Kennedy assassination in Camelot and everything, we all know that there's still a lot of intrigue around that. The problem with this book, while it was super interesting, very well written, there was no conspiracy theory. And every single time that we would go out online, bloggers and websites that were devoted to Kennedy, they really wanted more conspiracy theories. So we really didn't get a lot of blogger requests for this book. And so, I went to the authors and I said, "Look, let's go. Let's do an event. Let's go on the road." And that, because they were telling stories, because they were both engaging, and one of the other guys was another Secret Service who was the guy that jumped over the back of Kennedy's car after he was shot and threw himself over Jackie and JFK, these guys, put them on the road, they did great! And that was the thing that turned the corner for this book. At one event in one day, we sold 500 copies of that book and the reason for that is – is

because after the campaign I started, I said, "You know what? Americans still want to touch Camelot." And these guys are still part of... they were part of that whole icon. They were part of that whole era. And that's what we did. So not everybody's going to have a book like that obviously, but I would say you got to look at your audience. So if you have something that better connects in person, if you're going out on the road and you're talking to women or whatever, and you're getting great feedback from those sessions, but maybe you need to be doing more of that. But if you don't like to speak in public, if all you want to do is sit there and just read aloud from your book, then I would say, "You know, you're better off being online, but first you have to kind of see where your limits are." Does that make sense?

And then, as far as what an author can do, I would say, here's a great tip. So we talked about look at other authors in your market. The next thing that you want to do is you want to start to follow them, right? So get Google Alerts, which is free, you can go to Google Alerts and you can put their names, you can plug their names in and you can start to follow what they're doing. And every time that you see them appearing on a particular blog, that's a blog that you want to befriend because now you know that that blog reviews books in your genre, right? So get out there and start networking, comment on that blog post, start networking with that blogger. That is a great way for an author to get a foot in the door. Some of these bloggers have a waitlist of 75 books deep. But if you have a relationship built with that blogger, you might be able to go to the head of the line with your book when it comes out in time for review. Does that make sense?

Lisa Abbate:

That makes a lot of sense. I think people still underestimate the value of blogging and of bloggers.

Penny Sansevieri:

Oh yeah. I agree with that. Absolutely. I think they do underestimate it. And you know the internet is really one big networking event. And where do you start networking? You go to the hubs where your audience enters. So as I said, understanding what that ecosystem looks like. Know where your consumer enters. In some cases, it's going to be on Twitter, in some cases it's going to be on these blog posts, but if you can find their entry points, you can go after them there. So you can start to network with folks at their point of entry. And I'll tell you something, when you do this as an author it saves you so much time. Because a lot of times authors they go, "Great. Now I have a book. Oh I'm just going to start blogging," and they spend a lot of months on their

campaign sort of feeling around in the dark. They're sort of, "Well, let me try this blog, let try that blog." This will cut out all of that learning curve, so to speak, in order to get you right into your market.

Lisa Abbate: So it's knowing where your audience, where your target market, best time hangs out online...

Penny Sansevieri: Absolutely.

Lisa Abbate: And getting some press out there.

Penny Sansevieri: Absolutely.

Lisa Abbate: That's a really good one.

Penny Sansevieri: Thank You.

Lisa Abbate: I've read a lot about Timothy Ferris and his work in marketing his book and what he talks about blogging and bloggers, and you can't just go and make one post and do a fly by and be gone and think it's going to get you anything.

Penny Sansevieri: Exactly.

Lisa Abbate: So those are some really good ones and let's say, I mean there's also a difference someone on their first book, doing their first marketing campaign and someone who is a little bit more seasoned. And a lot of the people that I work with really... it is their first book and they are still feeling their way. And do you think... let me put it this way, for really big names obviously, in person book events are great; for example Deepak Chopra on his latest book was speaking down street from my house at Salem State University and it was sold out. I couldn't even get a ticket and I know people who work there who couldn't get me a ticket.

Penny Sansevieri: Wow!

Lisa Abbate: And so that selling many, many books. But for the newbies, for people who are still just starting out who think that they want to do something in store, what's a good way to go about getting physical presence, if that's what they want to do?

Penny Sansevieri: Well the first thing is, is to decide if they really want to be at a bookstore. When we were first, as I mentioned to you, 11 years ago, right? We're working with these self-published authors and everybody on the planet looked down their nose at these poor authors, right? Like, "Oh, well you weren't good enough for New

York, blah, blah, blah,” and so it was difficult. A lot of these bookstores said, ‘No, we’d really rather not.’ So I started to look outside of the bookstore and we’ve done events in coffee shops, we’ve done them in restaurants, we’ve done them at fitness centers, we’ve done them in video stores. So I would say first off, is a bookstore really right for you? And then what you should do is, whatever venue that you pick, remember that it’s much easier to get something interested in what they are already interested in, and I hope I just made sense. So let’s say for example you have a love story or you have a relationship topic, go out around on Valentines’ Day. Go out in June. We just had the Royal Wedding, maybe you’ve written a topic; maybe you’ve written a fiction book from the history of England and royalty and love stories and things like that. So try and tie your book into something that is ongoing, something like a holiday or some kind of an event or something, that’s the first thing. Get out early. So you’re going to want to get out there. Yeah, you look at the calendar. You’re going to want to get out a little early. So I would recommend probably 3 to 6 months prior to when you want to get your event, you want to start calling these places – especially if you’re doing bookstores because bookstores will always take awhile. And so with that, you’ll have an opportunity to sort of target them. The next thing is, is that when you go to these bookstores or alternative venues make sure that you have an attractive package. So they want to know that you can actually bring people into their store, okay?

And you want to actually... don’t just hand them a book and go, “Can I be in your store?” I would put together a letter and say, “You know what? I know we’ve got, whatever it is, let’s say it’s Valentines’ Day or Mother’s/Father’s Day and I’ve got a children’s book that Dad’ would love to read to their kids,” or whatever that is. You really have to pitch them because now with the dwindling bookstore market especially, you know Borders are closing all over the place or many of them have already closed, you want to be attractive because the traditional New York publishers are still competing for that space. And of all people, I’ve actually had an author bumped off of his schedule for Donny Osmond.

Lisa Abbate:

You’re kidding.

Penny Sansevieri:

Yeah, I remember it. Two weeks prior to this author’s event they said, “Oh, you know what? We got Donny Osmond coming in. We got to bump you.” I said, “Donny Osmond? Really?” I mean with all due respect to Donny Osmond and fans everywhere, but really? No. I said, “He’s already got a big show. My author is here

trying to do...” and it just happens. And New York publishers, they generally always get first dibs, which is part of the reason why I went outside the bookstore market, because most New York publishers won't ever do that because they have such strong relationships with bookstores.

Lisa Abbate:

Right. I was actually speaking with someone who's writing a book a little while before this call and he dreads the marketing. He dreads the bookstore. He doesn't want to do it. He just wants to be writing. So the setting up an online campaign is much more attractive to someone like that who doesn't care about the bookstore at all.

Penny Sansevieri:

Oh absolutely.

Lisa Abbate:

He doesn't want to be there. He doesn't feel like he needs to sign any books. He could send them a book plate if they really want one, but he doesn't want anything to do with that. So for someone like that – starting a campaign, starting their book marketing process, do you think it's something that should be done like three months in advance if when a book is ready? Or what's a good timeline?

Penny Sansevieri:

Yeah, I think three months out. I think if they can have their website up six months prior and just already be blogging, but I think three months prior to the book, yeah you really want to get it set up early. And then three months out from the time that their book is actually going to hit the streets, you want to do things like sending out review copies, or if you're going to target magazines, do that. But I don't recommend that you do unless your book is up on Amazon as pre-sale.

Lisa Abbate:

Right.

Penny Sansevieri:

I would not recommend that you start marketing the book where people can buy it or people may want to buy it especially if they can't buy it. Does that make sense?

Lisa Abbate:

So are you saying don't market it unless it's ready to go?

Penny Sansevieri:

What I'm saying is don't do the things that are going to drive immediate sales. So the reviews, generally take awhile to generate. You generally have to go after them three to six months prior, but the instant stuff like Twittering and Facebook and all that – that can generate immediate sales. So you want to be careful with that.

Lisa Abbate: Ah okay.

Penny Sansevieri: Yeah, yeah.

Lisa Abbate: So for example, I have gone to Amazon to look at a book and then see that it's not ready and they're taking pre-sale orders and I've actually never bought anything that way. I get turned off. I wait, but not everybody does that. Some people, that obviously works for.

Penny Sansevieri: But you know what though Lisa, I will tell you something. You are absolutely in the majority because I am not a huge fan of pre-sales. I think people do get dissuaded from buying the book and I'm glad that you brought that up because authors really want pre-sale. They want pre-sales, they want pre-sales and we've worked with pre-sales and we've done pre-sales, and I just think that unless you are this mega bestselling author, most people don't buy that far in advance. We are such an immediate society. We want it now. So just be careful of the things that you do that will generate immediate marketing traffic to anything – your website, Amazon, don't hold off doing those things until you actually have a book to sell.

Lisa Abbate: It always turns me off. I go to buy the book and the book's not ready enough and I'm saying, "I'm not going to give you my money now and then wait three months to get a book."

Penny Sansevieri: Absolutely.

Lisa Abbate: Well this brings me to one other topic that I know is about getting exposure and about marketing and about getting immediate sales, and that is the idea of partner promoters and working with other people who are in your category or related to your category or target market, and setting up bonuses and different authors. And I think that's something that a lot of people don't know that much about, in terms of doing joint venture marketing or having your book marketed through other authors or other people with big email lists or a lot of presence. Can you tell us just a little bit about that?

Penny Sansevieri: Sure, absolutely. No we don't do a ton of that in-house because most of that is our authors', doing that type of version, but one of the things that I will say is that you can find authors – I mean it's a great, great, great way. I call it the 'buddy system' and I know people have much more sophisticated terms for it, but I'll tell something, if you are in a group of let's say ten mystery authors and you're all looking around thinking, 'Oh my gosh! How are we

going to market our books?' and let's say you each have a thousand people on your mailing list. That's now 10,000 people that you can target when you combine efforts. The flipside of that is, is that you have somebody who let's say already has a 500,000-person mailing list and you can partner with them to help market your book – and the offers have to be attractive. I mean what you decide to offer is really going to depend a lot on what your book is about, what their partnership agreement is; but partnership agreements could look very different, and what the author listening should do is, is that they should create an agreement that works for them.

Lisa Abbate: Okay. So they just set up different agreements and then market that way...

Penny Sansevieri: Well what they should do is, right. They should look at the partnerships that they can get to easily and then they should see what works within those partnerships. And like I said, there are no hard and fast rules; the thing is you have to be able to give your audience something that they want.

Lisa Abbate: Okay.

Penny Sansevieri: So in other words, you have to be able to give your market what they want and you have to be able to give them something that is going to entice them to want to buy your book. So first is look at the partnerships that you can easily get to, and then look at your audience, and then see what the partnership person has and then how you can both facilitate a successful campaign. And there also has to be something in it for the person doing the partnership. Right?

Lisa Abbate: Right.

Penny Sansevieri: Like for example, if I have a 500,000-person list and I have an author coming to me saying, "Can I use your list for x - while?" We are very, very careful about how we use our list. We generally don't use them for partnerships, but if somebody comes to me, like Lisa if you came to me and said, "Gosh you know what? I've got this great program and I'd really love to do XYZ." You and I have similar interests because we work in the same market. I would quite possibly, absolutely help you out with that because it offers my readers certain value. And that's the thing that I always look at. So I think remembering that partnership agreements, they're about the readers, you've got to offer people value.

Lisa Abbate: Okay. I think that's a really important aspect of the whole promotion thing because I'm on a million email lists and I get all kinds of things where bonuses are offered for buying a book on a certain day.

Penny Sansevieri: Sure.

Lisa Abbate: To help move things up the Amazon list.

Penny Sansevieri: Absolutely.

Lisa Abbate: Sometimes that looks great and sometimes it isn't presented in the best way. So you have to have a really great copy and really good bonuses.

Penny Sansevieri: Well, and the other thing in this again, that's such a great point that you just made. I don't know about you, but I've seen a lot of those Amazon campaigns and I'll tell you something, I don't always open those emails anymore. I think that the message here is just that you need to do something different. You need to do something different. And we've just been experimenting with an author sweepstakes because we have a lot of authors who want to give away a copy of their book as a prize, as a contest. And so one of the things that we found is, part of the reason why a lot of these types of campaigns don't work – so the Amazon campaigns, the author giveaway campaigns, those types of things, is because they overcomplicate it. We have to give out your email address, you have to do this, you have to do that, and people will leave. We've become a little sort of... I don't know it's almost white noise sometimes in the Amazon campaigns because we've seen so many of them. So I would suggest if you're going to do a partnership agreement, do something different. And if you're going to do that, make sure that it's super easy because if you want to go viral, you've got to make it easy. And I know that was a lot of information to support this time to our listener.

Lisa Abbate: So I'll use myself as an example. I have a book that I'm working on, its nonfiction and I also have an information product that should be ready in a month or so, and it's really a home study workbook to help people write a book. Let's say I'm ready to market or my book's going to be finished in a few months. I'm not even sure which way I'm going to go. I'm probably going to self-publish, but I might try the traditional route. I'm a little bit on the

instant gratification side, so I want to be able to see it in print soon. What are the first three things I want to do to start getting my book out there?

Penny Sansevieri: Okay, so you've got an information product. You've got a book. Let me just restate this and make sure I've got all the data right. You've got a book. Your book is complete and ready to go?

Lisa Abbate: Nope. My book will be ready I would say in about three to four months. Say four months.

Penny Sansevieri: Okay. Your information product, that's ready?

Lisa Abbate: That will be ready in about a month.

Penny Sansevieri: Okay. And what do you have right now, because I know you've got a lot of content. What do you have right now that you can give to readers?

Lisa Abbate: What I have now, I have a few interviews. I have interviews on my site. I offer a free consultation to nonfiction writers who are trying to write a book, either a strategy session if they're kind of stuck—a mini consultation to people who are just getting started.

Penny Sansevieri: Right.

Lisa Abbate: So I offer those things and I also have my program. I'm just finishing up my second one, but I'll have another program later in the spring, my Book Boot Camp for the Entrepreneurial Soul. So those are things that I have. My three things are my newsletter, where I send out information on writing and also on other authors who are in different stages of publishing their book or writing their book to give people motivation. I think that's the big part of it. So those are some the things that I have.

Penny Sansevieri: Well I think what you can start doing now is – depending on whether or not you want to do any kind of a giveaway or any kind of a promotion. One of the things that I did early on is, at this stage you've probably already have galleys of the book, so I would start offering those galleys to any of your followers who are reviewers on Twitter, or maybe on your Facebook fan page. I would start offering those to them to see if you can start getting galleys into the hands of reviewers. I would do that now. I would do that early. The other thing is since you have an entrepreneurial

bent to what you're doing and I mentioned earlier that 83% of Americans want to write a book, why would you not go after some business magazines? Like Entrepreneur magazine or something, talking about writing a book and how a book can help you enhance somebody's business. Businesses are always, especially now, looking for new ways to expand. And a book might be a very easy way for them to do that. So those are some of the things that you can do. I would also start to prep your newsletter list. You might want to offer a series of mini webinars, again leading up to the launch of the book. Those are some additional things that you can do.

Lisa Abbate:

Okay.

Penny Sansevieri:

I don't know if you currently write for Huffington Post, but you might want to approach them as well. It's phenomenal regardless of where anybody sits politically. It's phenomenal coverage.

Lisa Abbate:

You write for Huffington Post?

Penny Sansevieri:

I do work for Huff Po. And it's great. I just love it.

Lisa Abbate:

Do you get a lot of traffic that way?

Penny Sansevieri:

We do. Yes. I do get a lot of traffic that way. It's great exposure and one of those blog posts a lot of times gets featured on a lot of different sites, especially now with the AOL merger.

Lisa Abbate:

Right.

Penny Sansevieri:

It's a great venue. So I would definitely start to... you know whatever that you feel you need to do to raise the bar on what you're doing.

Lisa Abbate:

Okay. Those are great things and those are things that I hope our listeners do because I want to really be able to give people concrete things and those are all very concrete things. I know we've kind of pretty much used up our time, but is there anything that you want to add that you think is probably useful that I haven't heard or asked you about?

Penny Sansevieri:

Let me just say this, for those who are listening thinking, "Oh my gosh. I have to Twitter, I have to Facebook now. I have to follow my audience and I don't have any time." You know what? We all

have day jobs and we are all trying to do our best and market our books and we have families, we have commitments, we have all sorts of things. But here's what I recommend. Learn how to effectively recycle your content. And by that what I mean is that you really want to look at what do have that you can reuse because I frankly Lisa, I'm just not that creative. I cannot come up with an article.

Lisa Abbate: Oh come on, you're so creative.

Penny Sansevieri: You're so sweet. But you know I'm trying to be on Huff Po every week, I write a new article for the newsletter every other week. I've got Twitter. I've got Facebook, plus the blog. It just makes you want to sort of tear your hair out, thinking, 'I can't do all this.' So what I recommend that authors do is look at how much of it they can effectively recycle. So for example I use my Huffington Post article for our newsletter, which is not online and that's intentionally so. And then a lot of times, I'll rework that Huffington Post piece after it's been up on the site for about two or three weeks and then we'll put it up on the blog. So look at what you can effectively reuse because you know what? People enter your message from different areas.

Lisa Abbate: Right.

Penny Sansevieri: Not everybody is going to come to you from Twitter or from Huff Po or from your blog. And we've never had anybody come to us, I mean maybe nobody's wanted to say it, but our authors are pretty vocal. Its like, "Gee Penny, you're boring. You have a lot of the same content." Nobody's said that yet, but I'll let you know. So just do it, it doesn't have to eat up your entire day and your entire life. Find something that works. Do it. Outsource the rest and try to recycle when you can.

Lisa Abbate: Okay. That is really good because I am crazy like that. And I'll admit one thing. I'm not on Twitter yet. I confess.

Penny Sansevieri: You know what? I'll tell you something, you would rock out on Twitter. With your message – you would do so, so well on Twitter. And if you ever want to do – I know it's a challenging time to try and coordinate this and I apologize, I've just been on conferences and all kinds of crazy stuff. If you ever want me to come back or you want to do a separate talk on Twitter, I would love it. I think you would rock out on Twitter, absolutely!

Lisa Abbate: Okay. I would love that. I would love to share that with everyone because I know I have plenty of people that I'm working with who are not on Twitter yet. Now I'm confessing for the masses. We're not on Twitter yet. And can you tell us one last thing – you have something called the Virtual Author Tour, can you give us just a little bit more about that before we go? So people can have a sense of what that means?

Penny Sansevieri: Absolutely. What the Virtual Author Tour is is we tour the author online and how we tour them online really depends on the book. A lot of what we do is centered around going out to blogs and getting people talking about the book on blogs. And the other piece to that is some of the book reviews from some of the higher-end bloggers. And we also do social book marking. We'll get an author a column on a very high profile writer site and things like that. So it's really, really all about exposure. It's a very different type of a tour than what I think a lot of what's out there currently because it's all based on getting more eyes to the author's website.

Lisa Abbate: Okay. Well that sounds like a really strategic event and well-planned and something that I think a lot of us who are in the process of writing books need to hear about. It's all in the planning.

Penny Sansevieri: It's all in the planning.

Lisa Abbate: I would like to thank you so much and we will have this interview posted. We'll also send it over to Absolute Write, which is one of the top writer's resources on the internet—it has thousands and thousands of readers. And we will also get it transcribed and if anybody who's listening and wants to come to my list, please sign up. I will offer a mini session to talk about your potential book for the whole month of May. I don't know if you wanted to let people know Penny again, what your website is?

Penny Sansevieri: Yes. Absolutely, its amarketingexpert.com and anybody listening can reach me at penny@amarketingexpert.com. For all the listeners of your show, I'm offering them a free Twitter resource guide which is phenomenal, if I do say so myself. We just finished it. All they have to do is mention your show in the email and we'll get it right out to them. And they can reach me again at penny@amarketingexpert.com.

Lisa Abbate: Okay. Great! So this is Lisa Abbate at wordmountain.com signing off and saying Penny, thank you so much for great information and we look forward to talking with you again in the very near future.

Penny Sansevieri: Thank you so much for having me on the show.

Lisa Abbate: Okay. Thanks. Bye-bye!

Penny Sansevieri: Bye-bye!

To hear about more interviews from Lisa, get entrepreneurial writing tips, join her mail list at wordmountain.com. Also go to wordmountain to learn about the special *Creative Kickstart June sessions*. Email Lisa directly at Labbate@wordmountain.com to schedule your free mini-session.

Get Penny's Twitter Resource Guide from Penny at penny@amarketingexpert.com --and don't forget to mention you read about it here!