



**Publishers Association of Los Angeles**  
EDUCATION • NETWORKING • RESOURCES

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#### UPCOMING MEETING:

### LEGAL ISSUES FOR PUBLISHERS

**Monday, September 23, 2013 -  
7:00 pm**

Are you up to date on the profound changes that are taking place in the publishing industry and what they mean for your publishing business?

Recent cases, new laws, and sweeping changes in book publishing technology present special challenges to publishers and may mean that your existing contract forms and business practices are out of date.

We are thrilled that one of the most respected experts in publishing law, Jonathan Kirsch, will cover these legal issues of vital importance to publishers as well as take your questions.

#### LOCATION:

Veterans Memorial Building  
4117 Overland Avenue  
Culver City  
Parking entrance on Culver

**COST:** \$5.00 for PALA members;  
\$15.00 for nonmembers. Advance admission can be purchased until the day before the program with PayPal on our website: <http://www.pa-la.org>.

**QUESTIONS:** Sharon Goldinger,

Program Chair, [pplspeak@att.net](mailto:pplspeak@att.net),  
949-581-6190.



#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

### MEMBERS SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Members supporting members— isn't that what it's all about? PALA has the good fortune to enjoy the active support of PALA members, which allows the organization as a whole to better support you. It is with this support that organizations such as PALA exist and thrive. An active membership in any organization is not only good for the organization but an important resource for the active members as a source of direct information, direct networking, and fortuitous "inside" ideas and methods that come up during meetings and other events. PALA has the good fortune of many of those advantages.

Along those lines, I want to remind you of two PALA member-only perks:

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**PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES (PALA)** <http://www.pa-la.org>

**President:** Gary Young ([artsy12@earthlink.net](mailto:artsy12@earthlink.net))

**Vice-President:** Sharon Goldinger ([pplspeak@att.net](mailto:pplspeak@att.net))

**Secretary:** Sanjay Nambiar ([sanjay@umiyapublishing.com](mailto:sanjay@umiyapublishing.com))

**Treasurer:** David Evans ([teddytravelerbear@earthlink.net](mailto:teddytravelerbear@earthlink.net))

**FACEBOOK:** [360829964913@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/360829964913)

**TWITTER:** @PALAPUB

## Members Helping Members (cont'd from page 1)

1. As a member of PALA, you are entitled to a discount on your Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA, [ibpa-online.org](http://ibpa-online.org)) membership. As long as you are a paid-up member of PALA, when paying your IBPA yearly membership fee, include the code "PALA," and a discount of \$30 will be applied.

2. Many of our members are also writers, so please remember the PALA discount for Independent Writers of Southern California (IWOSC, [iwosc.org](http://iwosc.org)) meetings. Our members receive \$5 off the nonmember price at meetings and about a 20 percent discount if you choose to become a new member.

We are a volunteer organization. Active participation by our members is essential to our existence. I am very grateful for the participation and support from Sharon Goldinger, one of the original members of this group and in my opinion the person most responsible for PALA's success; David Evans for his years on the board; Sanjay Nambiar, a recent addition to our board; Robin Quinn, Ina Hilenbrandt, and Hattie Fishburne for their work on the programming committee (there is always room for more ideas and more help); and for all of the past board members and administrative personnel, including our current administrative director, James Mills.

Our new season begins. Let's all share the information, energy, and creativity.

I look forward to seeing you at our September meeting.

Gary Young  
President



## MEETING TRANSCRIPT

### Maximizing Website Visibility

Tammy Bleck ([Tammy@WittyWomanWriting.com](mailto:Tammy@WittyWomanWriting.com)) is a ghostwriter, a proficient columnist, and the author of the award-winning book *Single Past 50 Now What?* and the award-winning blog *Witty Woman Writing*. She's known for her humor and is often compared to Erma Bombeck and called the female Andy Rooney. Her writing has been published in countless magazines and newspapers, such as the *Daily News*, the *Denver Post*, the *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Portland Post*, the *Jewish Writing Project*, and the *Jewish Journal*. Tammy is the recipient of the Certificate of Commendation from the mayor of Los Angeles for her work in educating the public.

Steven Sanchez ([Steven@BookPlatform101.com](mailto:Steven@BookPlatform101.com)) is the founder and CEO of the Los Angeles-based Internet agency Inexus. For the past 20 years, Steve has helped large and small companies start websites and get discovered. He's taught numerous workshops on starting web businesses using social media to promote one's visibility. He's also worked on several web design books, such as *Homepage Usability*, *Web Design on a Shoestring*, and *The Unusually Useful Web Book*. Steve is currently developing BookPlatform101.com, a web community, to help authors build successful platforms for growing businesses out of their books.

TB: I earn my living writing. I don't have a day job—that is my day job. I've only been blogging for two years. I am very good at learning to monetize everything I do to turn a buck, and that has helped me very well. I ghostwrite, I do columns, I speak—anything to do with writing, I do. I've also been a correspondent for the *Jewish Journal* for the last six months. They actually sent me business cards, so that means I'm on

the payroll. I do a lot of celebrity things. I make my website and blog work for me. All my social media is working for me right now, and that's why I can pay my bills by doing what I love to do. It's a pleasure being here with you to share what I know.

SS: I'm the other side of the spectrum—for 20 years, I have built websites. My company, Inexus, has built anything from small one-person web businesses to the back end for the National Hot Rod Association and the website for Crystal Cruises, so we've done a lot of the large-scale things. We've seen it all. We went through the dotcom bust, we went through the outsourcing overseas, and we've seen the rise of blogging and social networking. I started way back in '92 when it was bulletin boards, and the Internet hit the next year. Everyone wanted to hook their bulletin board up to the Internet, and then the next year everyone wanted to throw away the bulletin board and just have a website, and no one has ever looked back.

Tonight I am recommending a book, *Start with Why*—arguably the best book I've read this year—by Simon Sinek. He's a TED speaker, if you're familiar with the TED talks. Simon basically tells the audience, instead of beginning with what you do or what you think you need to do, start with the question, why? Why are you doing what you want to do? I won't go into his book; I just want to recommend it to you. I want to ask you two sides of the same "why" coin. We want to talk about what you should be doing strategically. On the back of the handout are 100 things you can do to promote your book. We want to talk about what choices you should be making given the state of where the Internet is now.

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### *Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 2)*

Starting with why—why do you want to be found? There's a book I read years ago about publishing your book, and the author asked, Do you want to be famous? Do you want a book for a legacy? You have to ask yourself, Why do you want to get it out there? Are you ready for the fire hose to be turned on you? Honestly, a lot of people are not ready. Have you known anyone who's done Groupon? About 90 percent of the companies that do Groupon are not ready because they can't handle the volume. So one thing to consider is, are you really ready to be found? Are you ready for the flood of traffic, the positive and the negative of the social media? Are you ready to ramp up and sell hundreds or thousands of books? Ask yourself that, and if you're here, I assume that you are and that you realize Borders and other bookstores are closing. The gates are down, anybody can publish, and you can get to a worldwide audience—not just to who your local distributor or your publisher is willing to promote you to—so that's the good news.

The flip side of that why coin is, why would people want to find your book? I find that most authors don't ask themselves this question. They've written a book, and now they're trying to find their audience. Let's start with the why question. Think about your ideal reader. Why would they find their answer in you? Starting with that question will guide a lot of what you'll do. We have 18 categories that these 100 action steps all fit into, and we'll touch on some of the more important ones for you to get into.

TB: Over two and a half years ago, I had six blog subscribers, and they're all related to me. Now I have over 4,000. Content is king. Writers know that, so if you write cruddy stuff, don't expect too many good things to happen. You do need to concentrate on your writing. On your website, you better have all your ducks in a row—that's your place of business, that's your face, that's what you do.

Before you start turning people on to come to you, you better have your website looking the way it should look and being what it should be before you start directing traffic. If everybody says, "Did you read that book? Did you read that article? Did you see that post?" and you have people coming and widgets that aren't there and things that aren't placed right, you're going to look not so awesome. Writing is a profession; it's not a hobby. We're here to make a difference and to say what needs to be said, so you need to project yourself as the business person that you are. Your website is your mark, so it's super important.

I'm not computer savvy. I taught myself because I had to know. It's amazing what I've learned and easier than you might think, so don't get intimidated by it. This little website works for me while I'm sleeping.

SS: If you're settled on the why question—you know what it is that you're all about, you know who your audience is, you're ready to be found—how do you want to be found? Do you want your phone ringing at 3 a.m. from someone in London? Do you want to wake up and have your inbox filled with hundreds of emails? I get about 400 emails a day, and that's after they're all filtered. You start adding up how much of your day you spend doing that, and that's where that question comes in—are you really ready to be found?

You want to think about what type of lifestyle you want—start with that. Think about what you really want. Start that decision now in terms of what type of foundation you want to lay, what type of life you want to have—whether you're chained to your computer, whether you can go away on vacation or walk away from your blog for a week with no Internet access and that's okay, or whether you're chained into doing three tweets a day and when you drop off, people start wondering what happened to you. Once you have the lifestyle question settled, what do you do?

We made a little acronym about how you're going to build your web. I want you to envision your website as the hub of your wheel. You have to focus on your home base. If you want to be found, the question is, *where* do you want to be found? You want a piece of real estate that you own. You don't want it to be your publisher's website or the website your publisher set up for you. You don't want it to be a WordPress.com site where it's free and they control it all. You want it to be something that is yours; that's where you put your money, and it's not much. You have your home base, and everything else that you do—the spokes around the wheel, the social networking sites—all point to your hub.

So you may engage people on Facebook, you may tweet, you may build audiences in different places, but they all focus back to this one hub, this one center, your authoritative home base. So that's the idea of the website first, then your exposure, and then the last thing is something that Tammy already hinted at. This needs to be a business. There are a lot of things you can do free. In fact, most of the things we're going to talk about tonight are things you can do free, but at the end of the day, you're going to be trading time for dollars. There comes a time when you're going to want to have someone else do that so you can focus on doing what you do best, whether it's writing or whatever the thing is you like to do. So you need to be a business at some point. You need to start thinking that way. Most writers don't like thinking that way. They want to have the money, but they don't like the idea of having to learn to do the marketing, promotion, those kinds of things. Some of that you can outsource, but those are the three things: a website, the exposure, and having it be a business.

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### ***Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 3)***

TB: Right. What was intimidating for me were all these different things I had to learn—Twitter, Pinterest, Google+. You don't need to link into all of them because if you do, you could make yourself crazy, and you have no life. What works for me is Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook. Who hates Twitter here? I do. But I do it because it works for me. You don't have to be on everything; you don't want to cut yourself too thin.

SS: Absolutely. Let's talk about your website for a minute here. We talked about your publisher's website versus your own. What about Amazon? What about having an Author Page on Amazon? Yes, that's absolutely important. Instead of your own website? No. It's very important to have that network, and Amazon is becoming a network, maybe one of the largest ones. There's a lot of teaching out there that's saying you want to build all of your work on Amazon. That's important to do, but again, come back to that home base of your website.

Several of you have had a website for some time, a few years now. How many of you have a static website, where it's just HTML, not driven by a database? I feel your pain. The question now is whether you want what I call a brochure site, a static site, versus a platform. We're going to talk a little bit about building a platform and converting what you have over to something that you can then grow with. Once you get to a certain size, it becomes a real problem. I was talking to someone who has 200 pages on their website, and he wants to convert it over to a WordPress website. He's going to be working on that for a few months. So you want to build a dynamic website so that you can change and go with the flow as things change. Design has changed massively in the last five years. If you put \$10,000 into a website two years ago, if someone comes to it today, it looks two years old.

TB: It's important to always update

your look. You need to be current, contemporary, and fresh because it's your face. It's your product.

SS: The other advantage to having a dynamic website is that it becomes a real system for you. There are systems you can plug into it that will handle things for you. It will handle the integration with your social media. It will handle the collecting of your list. It basically becomes that home base for you, that headquarters where everything you do comes in, and you have one point of presence. Instead of having 40 blogs on all kinds of different platforms, everything you do ultimately pulls them back and is seen almost like a satellite. It does a little bit of work out there. It's like putting salespeople out in different regions and calling them back to one central place. The system of choice—I've been doing it for 20 years—you want to build it on is WordPress. If you have a TypePad site or a Drupal, that's fine. Stay with it. You don't have to throw it out and build something else. But if you're just starting to get into it and you're thinking about investing and putting time and energy into it, WordPress is on 10 percent of the world's websites. It's free, and there are about 3,000 developers for it, so anything you could possibly want to add to it, you can add to it. They have great support, they have great selection, and they're always updating.

#### *Q: What about FrontPage?*

SS: FrontPage is an HTML editor. Dreamweaver is the main one that professionals use. I was with FrontPage years and years ago. It's good for doing the editing of the actual code. The point of WordPress is, you won't need it. And this is the advantage of WordPress. As writers, you want to be writing. Or you want to be interacting with your tribe or your audience. You don't want to be spending your time buried in HTML code.

There are three reasons why you want to use a system like WordPress. The first one is design. Tammy talked about needing to change your design. If you have a 200-page

website that you have to change every couple of years, it can become very expensive to hire a designer to do that. The reality is that when it comes to design—even though, for creative people, design is very important to you, I get that—no one cares. They really don't care. If you look at Google, Amazon, Facebook—these are not pretty websites. Think about the gorgeous websites you've seen. Then think about all the websites you *use*. Are they the gorgeous ones? Are those the ones you use every single day? No. It's the functionality. So the nice thing about WordPress is that instead of paying a designer thousands of dollars to build a custom theme for you and change your pages and do cascading style sheets, you buy a theme, or you get a free theme, and you put it on your site. There's your look. You want a theme for Christmas? You put up a Christmas theme. You want to change it for Valentine's Day? Now you've got a Valentine's theme. You have a new book coming out? Hire someone to do some graphics and change some things, and in five minutes, your new theme is up. No coding, no difficulties. So one of the critical reasons why WordPress is so popular right now is because you can change your theme very quickly.

The second reason—and this is the power of WordPress—is plug-ins. There are thousands of plug-ins where you can plug in bits of code that you would have had to pay someone to do for you. You can then get that code on your website and do everything you want to do. If you want to bring in a YouTube video and have it playing on a corner of your website, there's a plug-in for that. You want to have your tweets show up in a sidebar of your website? There's a plug-in for that. You want to do all your analytics? There's a plug-in for that. You want to figure out the whole thing about SEO (search engine optimization)? There's a plug-in for that. Anything you want to do on your website? There's a plug-in for that. And if there's not, one of two things is true. Either there's a need to be, or it's so new that someone is going to write it.  
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### **Maximizing Website Visibility** (cont'd from page 4)

So the new thing now is Pinterest. The website's been out for about 18 months now. There aren't a lot of plug-ins for it. There are some now, but in the early days, there weren't. Where do you think that the first plug-ins are going to come from? Are they going to come from a Drupal site or a TypePad site? No, they're going to come from the WordPress community because there are a lot of people who are developing and working in that community. And most of the plug-ins are free. When you need something, then you look for it and then add it to your website. Generally, you're not coding. You're bit configuring.

And that's the third part of it. You're making choices instead of code. There are plenty of plug-ins that you can buy, like membership plug-ins if you want to have a site where you sell stuff, e-commerce sites if you want to sell your books from your website. There are some that cost money, but generally they are less than \$100, so you're not spending thousands of dollars on your website. So those are the three major reasons you want to use a platform like WordPress.

TB: And the analytics that WordPress gives me are amazing. I can tell who's clicking in from where—who's clicking in from Facebook, who's clicking in for what, what page they're going to. If I'm bored and it's 11 at night, I could click into my Google analytics and see. I actually have a small percentage of people who click in to feed my fish. I have a small fish aquarium on my website, and I don't know if I should be happy or depressed about that, but there's a small percentage of people who come for that. I get to see this. Why is this valuable for me? I can see a lot of people are clicking in through LinkedIn. I can see that LinkedIn is really valuable for me. And I don't have to do the work. The work's being done for me! So the analytics are amazing with WordPress. I wouldn't be anywhere else, just because of that.

SS: And if that's pulling them to your website, then they're exposed to everything else. And it's your website—it's not Facebook with all the Facebook ads. It's not all the others.

The hundred things from the back of the sheet that you have are grouped into different subjects or topics, and we're going to talk about that in terms of what you should do, how to get found, and how to get your book found. There are three ways that you can be found. You build your traffic, you buy your traffic, or you borrow it. Building it is a little slower, but it tends to be free. You're using your time more. Buying it is far and away the fastest, but you pay as you go. Borrowing is kind of in the middle, and that's where social media comes in. Tammy, do you want to talk about that? You're the blog expert here.

TB: Yes, I chose to build my website through a blog. I'd never blogged before, and everyone said you have to blog every day. After about two months, I wanted to kill myself. So then I started blogging twice a week. That was still bad. And then I just found my own pace and started blogging once a week on a given day. Now I'm trying to train my tribe to accept a blog from me every two weeks because that frees me up a lot. But what I want to tell you about blogging is this: People say to me all the time, "What do you get out of it? You don't get paid for it." Oh yes, I do get paid for it. There have been so many of my blog posts that I have sold as articles to magazines. I did a fun little blog on man versus dog that got sold to *Dog World*. I've actually been asked to speak at a dog conference, and I have. I did a blog called "View from the Non-Jew" that has sparked an association with the *Jewish Journal* and got me a 4-page layout. They are also the same people who sent me business cards and are sending me to a gig here on a Saturday with some prestigious people. It's my blog that did that. The relationships that I'm making are super valuable. I'm a *Huffington Post* contributor. I don't get paid for that, but you know what that does get me? Speaking gigs—because everyone is

impressed with the *Huffington Post*, and all of a sudden my speaking fee went up because I'm a contributor to the *Huffington Post*. And it all comes from where? My blog.

I also get radio spots, and I do some television, and it's all from the blog. I happen to do a commentary blog, so I talk about everything. You have to be very careful when you blog. You don't want to be a one-trick pony. If you talk about surviving cancer, eventually you're going to run out of something to talk about unless you can segue that into formulas and hospitals. You have to be able to talk about a few things. Controversy is good; profanity is not. You're not going to impress anyone with a four-letter word. We already know it, and you're just going to turn off a lot of people.

So a blog has really paved the way to my success. And I only started two years ago. Now I'm selling product—on my blog page, I sell my book with a PayPal button. And of course, with WordPress, you can get this stuff. You can buy with PayPal direct. It just works great. And when Steve says, "Think about what kind of business you want—do you want to be rich, do you want to work from a tropical island, do you want to be famous?"—I want a comfortable lifestyle where I don't have to tear my hair out and sit on a freeway two hours a day. I want to do something I love to do and get paid for it. But I also don't want to be sitting up all night doing it.

Blogging helps me do that. I can knock out three or four blogs and put them in a queue, and they'll go out every two weeks. It is extremely lucrative. And what does it do for you? You're building relationships because you're getting to know people—I got to know a *Huffington Post* writer by writing my blog because I commented on her blog. I crisscrossed. Then she sees my little gravatar. What's a gravatar? It's your little picture, your insignia.

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### **Maximizing Website Visibility** (cont'd from page 5)

That same gravatar should be on your blog, your business card, LinkedIn, Facebook. You shouldn't put your puppy on Facebook; you're here for business. It should be your gravatar. It should all be the same so that when they link into me everywhere, they see this picture, and they think, "I don't remember her name, but I remember the lady in the red shirt." And I get business that way. When you're commenting on *Huffington Post* blogs or any of the blogs that are in your tribe, they recognize you and start to comment back. Bloggers are extremely giving. And by the way, never argue with the blogger. I've had so many people say to me, "I'm going to get them to pay attention to me. I'm going to disagree with them." You're just going to set them off. And when you make them angry, they don't like you. And they do remember you. And that's not what you want to do. You want to build relationships. If I have an article in any given magazine, I go to my blog and say, "I've got this article in the *Jewish Journal* about so-and-so, and it's awesome. I would so appreciate some of you stopping and clicking." Now all of a sudden, they've got 100 comments. Do you think they want to hire me again? Yes, because of my blog.

There's a lot of power there, and that's the first thing I concentrated on. And that was by a stroke of luck. My instinct just said that I'm going to do this and write for free and hope that someone reads it. I did it for about three months and said, "Why is nobody listening to me? I'm here. Oh, I have to do social media! Darn." And then it took me a while to learn that. Your blog is your best tool other than your website. I have about seven or eight pages on my website. I have my Home Page, my About Page. Keep it brief, keep it clean—I don't want to know that you have seven kids and four dogs. I do want to know what your careers have been because I might relate to that. Are you a single mom? I can relate to that. Do you work full-time? I can understand that. Give me things I can

relate to. Were you a gas station attendant and then a priest and now you're a writer? I'd like to know that. So those are things that you talk about. Your website is your personality. If you're cold and stark, I'm most likely not going to listen. If your blog is cold and stark, I'm most likely going to read it only once. When you sell yourself, you sell it on your website and your blog. And that's where the writing comes in. That's why you're going to be so good at it—because you're writers.

So concentrate on yourself, build up your blog, and visit other people's blogs. How do you find people you want to talk to on your blog? How do you find your tribe? I use it all the time; it's called alltop.com. I write in "women's issues" or "women with pets" or "mechanics." It's on your cheat sheet on the back. There are about 500 places where you can go to find things. And that's what I did wrong. I visited all 500 of them. Don't do that. Go to one or two special ones, and you'll find everything you need there. And what do you do then? You visit them. You talk about sewing quilts. Go in and say, "That's beautiful, what stitch did you use?" and she thinks, "That's great, she likes me." And when I start a blog, she's going to come visit me. People start subscribing because they want to hear what you have to say. It's immensely important that you socialize. Basically, you're making friends online. But don't give too much information.

SS: How many of you don't want to blog? Be honest. I'm not crazy about blogging either. The strategy is to blog maybe once a day, once a week, whatever. When you combine it with all your social media, it gets to be a little overwhelming. There's a book I want to recommend, by John Locke —*How I Sold 1 Million eBooks in 5 Months!* He's the fifth or eighth top seller on Amazon of Kindle books. He's sold one million books. He's got eight titles, and he sold each one of those books for 99 cents. He wrote this book about how he did it. You know how he did it? He has a blog and he uses Twitter. You know how often he blogs? Once a month. When

I read that book, a sense of relief came over me. I don't want to spend all my time tweeting and Facebooking and blogging. There are some type A people who are ready for that. I have a life, and it's not all online.

TB: My blog goes out on LinkedIn as soon as I put it out because I have a plug-in for that. It gets tweeted as soon as I put it out. And it goes to several other places. I just had a blog picked up two weeks ago by the *Huffington Post*. That brought 2,000 more people to my website.

SS: And under "get subscribers" on the back, that's where syndicating your blog, using things like feed burner, come in. Then when you make a blog post, with the plug-in on WordPress, you can have your blog post show up on Facebook, on Twitter. You can coordinate all this stuff. Do it once and have it appear in many different places. And depending on what you like—do you like doing it on Facebook? You can do it in the reverse order. There are different ways you can do it. WordPress gives you the power of doing that.

The nice thing about the blog is that you write it once and your audience gets that. There was a woman about two years ago, before all this self-publishing was exploding, who was *momblogging*—moms who work at home and write about Procter & Gamble and different things, and those companies pay them to do blogs and reviews. This woman said that she only had 10,000 people who read her blog every week and asked if that was enough. I turned it around and asked her this: "If I were a publisher, and I wanted to sell 5,000 copies of your next book, and you told me that there are 10,000 people who hang on your every word every single week, do you think I might be able to sell a few books?" And the light bulb went on for her, and she realized that that's what a blog is for. It isn't just where I had lunch today and what I'm doing.

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### *Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 6)*

This is the "start with why" that I started the whole thing with. When you know your why, then you know what you're about, and you can write to that. You find your audience that wants to respond to it—what your personality is. You share what your personality is. You share about your dogs and all of that, but it's all relevant. John Locke writes once a month, but he puts two hours into each one of those blog posts. And then he comments with people back and forth. They'll respond to the blog post that he did, and then he answers them back. He builds a dialogue with them. If you go to his website, you'll find all the junk and the people that spammed it and everything else, but he builds his tribe there.

TB: I comment on everyone who comments on mine. I had a post last week that had 67 comments. I commented on every single one. It's a relationship.

SS: A little trick you can do is close your comments after a certain while. So let's say you want to allow only 50 comments. Post something that says "For the first 50 people who comment on my blog, I'll give you a free download of whatever." And set it up on WordPress so they have to put in their email address when they comment so you don't just get people flaming you or doing terrible things. Then you have this list of all the people who commented on your blog, and you have all their emails. And then you can send an email back to them. So when you want to have a new book come out, you want to stir the pot a little bit, you send it out to this list. They already know you, they have a relationship with you, and you've slowly built that list, all because of your blog—and all because they've been commenting on your blog.

TB: I want to caution you about something that I figured out pretty quickly. When you share your blog on Facebook, which I found was an awesome idea, I started pulling that. I

no longer leave my blog on Facebook until the week has passed. I want those comments, and I want people to come onto the blog, click on the comment, and give me those clicks so the Google recognition boosts me higher up. When I leave it on Facebook, you know where they comment? On Facebook. I get nothing for that. And so I no longer do that. I do it after the week has expired and I've already accumulated clicks, and then I'll take that. Some of these things can take away from you, and so you need to be really cautious of that and understand that that's not working for you.

SS: And when that goes away, then what do you do? People did Google Places, and all of a sudden, Google changed that. What do you do when you have that kind of thing on their website, when you don't control it? That's again that wheel we talked about, when the hub of that wheel is your website—everything you do and all the different online/offline things all pull back to the place that you control and can go as long as you want. It's the same principle as whether you own your book and your intellectual property or whether the publisher does. If the publisher wants to put it out of print, you're stuck if you don't own the rights to that book. But if you own the rights, you can republish it as long as you want. It's the same kind of thing with your blog.

So let's move on. I talked a little bit about getting subscribers. One other thing I want to talk about is AWeber. It's called an autoresponder—instead of you having to send out emails to every single person that comes back to you, you can send one email. AWeber is something I really want to recommend because when you start having a following and you want to write something once and send it out to many different people, you either syndicate it with FeedBurner on your blog or you do it with something like AWeber.

Content creation—this is where you want to not talk about just what you had for lunch or what you're feeling about this or what you're thinking

about that. This is where you want to contribute unique, valuable content to the world. You guys are writers. A lot of the people who are putting out blogs don't know what they're doing, they aren't literate, they don't edit, they swear. You guys have a flair with the language. You can write things that people want to read. You can brighten their lives. You can expose them to ideas that they don't have in any other public media available to them today. So take advantage of that. That's what content creation is all about. You've heard the phrase "content is king." It is absolutely true on the Internet. The nice thing about a blog on your own site is that you start building this content, and now you've got a repository. There are people who have taken their blog posts and actually published them as books. You've heard of a man named Seth Godin? He frequently will take his blog posts and compile them all into a book, and he sells millions of copies.

Also, I want to talk about link bait. It's a term that most people don't know because it's kind of industry jargon. It's the things you put out in the world that draw people back to your website. So if you're on Pinterest, it's an infographic that links back to your website. It's a cover of your book somewhere that links back to your website. It's some content you put up there—statistics, things that would make people say, "That's really valuable. I want to retweet that or tell someone else about that. I want to share it with my friends." It could be a humorous photo. All those things are link bait. It's bait to get people to say, "I like that idea. I want to share it with someone else." That's how your marketing can go viral. All of a sudden, you put one thing out there, and the next thing you know, you have all this traffic coming in that you didn't do anything to get.

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### **Maximizing Website Visibility** (cont'd from page 7)

TB: Every post you have should have a picture. I learned the value of pictures when I did a Valentine's post last year. I purchased a picture from iStockphoto. You can buy pictures that are licensed for you to use. It was a picture of a little dog, a terrier, holding a rose between his teeth. It was adorable. He had a little bow tie. I thought, "That's great for my Valentine's post." I had more hits on that than anything, and it was because of the picture. The eye is what attracts people to your post in the first place. They haven't read a sentence, but they think, "That looks interesting. I wonder what that's about. I'm going to read that." I had a picture of a lady in a bra, and she was holding her breasts, and the post was about Bloomberg's ban on breast milk. The picture was provocative. Those are the ones that got the most hits—thousands of hits. Pictures are usually important.

SS: A couple words on pictures. The one I put on the sheet is stock.xchng. (That address is sxc.hu.) The images are free. It's a greater commons license, which means you can use them for whatever you want to use them for. So, about images—iStockphoto is a great way to get better quality photos, but you'll pay a little bit of money for them. What you don't want to do is Google Images. You don't want to take someone else's intellectual property and republish that. Right now on Pinterest you can kind of get away with that. If you use that as link bait to pull back to your own website, that's probably OK. Pepsi or Coke isn't really going to care since you're helping them sell products. But if you have a beautiful image that Getty Images owns, people from Disney will be coming to send you a cease and desist letter. Definitely don't use Mickey Mouse. Definitely don't use these pictures in a book that you publish, or you will get an invoice for thousands of dollars. Make sure that you have the rights to use the image. How many of you have smartphones? Just use it. They don't have to be perfect pictures. They

don't have to be *National Geographic* pictures. But create them yourself; use those things. The pictures will drive it more than anything else. A picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a thousand pictures. The hot thing this year is video. You are going to be hearing so much about video you're going to be sick of it. People have been putting videos on the home page of their website.

A lot of writers don't want to use video because they have a face for radio. Or they feel that way. I don't like how I look on video. Years ago, I did a thing for my church working with kids. I took this video; I was so proud of it, and I put it up in front of the whole congregation. Well, I had a cameraman who came up afterward and said, "Don't do video again," letting me know that all the skills I thought I had, I didn't have. Today people are a little more forgiving of video. They're not forgiving of audio. You can get away with a bad video—you cannot get away with a bad audio. I'm recording the session tonight on my phone, but I bought myself a little high-quality thing at Best Buy. It plugs into my phone and allows me to get a higher-quality recording. Things like that are very inexpensive, and you can get a little better quality audio. Use that if you're doing video or even just doing audio and using podcasts. This is under "create or use multimedia" on the sheet.

TB: I will even be doing video blogs. Video blogs are huge. And even think about video business cards so that when you're a speaker or you want to be a speaker, you have something on your website that shows that you can put two sentences together.

SS: The #1 website last year was Google. In March, it flipped, and the #2 website became the #1 website, which was Facebook. One billion people now use Facebook. To give you a sense of the numbers, there are 300 million people in America. There are one billion people on Facebook. So there's your audience. Guess what the next biggest search engine is? That would be YouTube. Did you know that Google bought YouTube?

So when you think, "What's this Google+ thing all about? There's already Facebook, and I don't want to learn another social network," well, the #1 search engine (Google) bought the #1 video site (YouTube). Do you ever do a search on things and wonder how things get on that #1 page? You'll see ads at the top, and one or two things, and then you'll see a video. On the home page of a Google search, you'll have the ads at the top, you'll have maybe one or two links, and then you'll usually have either a blog post or, more likely, you'll have a link to a video. You want to get on the first page of Google and drive traffic to your website? Do video.

All right, let's move on. I want to talk about optimizing your website. There are a lot of hints under the "optimize your website" link about how to do that. If you use a platform like WordPress, a lot of that is already taken care of. The search engines know where to find things. They know what a title tag is. In the old days with FrontPage or Dreamweaver, you had to code all that yourself and use an h1 tag and a title tag. You don't have to do any of that in WordPress. WordPress will handle all that; you just fill out the blanks. Google knows how to read all that, promote that, and parse all that so that the keywords you use become the things that they key on. So, again, if you're writing a book about bullying or tropical fish, you can have that kind of stuff in your blog post. You put those keywords in your titles. You salt it throughout your article. Google knows how to read all that in a thing like WordPress, whereas in some of the other content systems, not so much.

KB: You always want to tag your blogs. You always want to use as many words in there as possible. For example, in your blog, whether it's about women or not, you should have *women* as a tag in your blog because it goes into a general end category

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## Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 8)

A category is like a library. For example, if you're looking on Alltop, and you want to find someone who blogs like you do, you're going to put in a name. You're going to put in a word.

SS: If anyone's confused about what a tag is—in WordPress when you're writing your content in a Word document, there's a place at the bottom where you can put certain words that talk about it. So if I want to say *Tammy, woman, writer, speaker, entrepreneur*—whatever words I want to use—those words are tagged so that when someone is looking for a woman entrepreneur who lives in Los Angeles and I can go hear her speak sometime, if the post is tagged with those words, then Google says, "This is much more relevant than the guy who's writing about scuba diving."

TB: I just did a fluffy post on Valentine's Day about Brian Williams, my celebrity crush. I thought it would be fun because I'm always doing all these heavy-hitter things. My tags were *NBC Nightly News*, Brian Williams. I also sent it—because I'm that person and I have no shame—to the executive producer of *NBC Nightly News*. You never know. That's what you need to do. You need to shamelessly promote yourself. And it's so much easier to do from your computer.

SS: You also need to look at your website with something other than your own computer. I know it looks great on your computer or on your Mac. But have you seen what it looks like on an iPhone? Or on an iPad? How about Windows 8, which is going to take over the world now because it's the new thing Microsoft is pushing? There are millions of platforms. How does it look on an Android device? How about Apple? They used to be only 2 percent of the market. Now it's about 40 percent of the market. Do you know what it looks like in a Safari browser? At browsershots.org, you can check your website in different browsers

and just see what it looks like.

TB: And that's why you want to keep your website simple. You know that old saying that they did in disaster preparedness? KISS—keep it simple, stupid.

SS: You can also speed up your website. There are programs that'll show you where your website is slow. If you're using your own pictures, they don't need to be 300 dpi. They can be 72 dpi because 99 percent of the monitors can't see more than 72 dpi. And if you scale it down, there are free websites that will do it for you—Photoshop or GIMP or any of those kinds of tools. GIMP is a free Photoshop tool, and I think Photoshop's website even has a free online version where you can filter that down a bit. You can increase the speed of your images and hence your website.

Again, with WordPress, you can cache pages. One thing you will find is because you're not going to spend a lot of money on your website, it's going to be slow. In the early days, when you first start off and no one's coming to it, it's going to be pretty fast. Then all of a sudden, you're going to be doing a public speaking gig and have 200 people coming to your website at the same time. Or you're going to use video on your website. This can slow your website down to a crawl or actually stop it completely. So these are some tools that can help you get around that. SuperCache is a WordPress plug-in. It takes all that content, instead of going out to a database and building the page organically, and puts it into the computer memory so that the server that serves your website doesn't have to go back to the hard drive to load and build the page. It's already built, and it will just serve it back to people who will use your site.

And finally, get a good web host. It's always dangerous recommending hosts because there's always someone who has had a bad experience with them. I recommend HostGator. There are three things you want out of a host. You want 24/7

availability of their tech support. When your website goes down, it's not going to go down at 10 a.m. on Tuesday. It's going to go down on Saturday at 11 p.m. You want to be able to reach someone—and not at a call center at New Delhi. You want to reach someone who can get on the phone with you and talk you through your problems. And you want the ability to scale your website. So when you have 200 people hitting your website and you need to have faster servers, they can service you. HostGator can ramp me into faster machines, even to a point where I can get a dedicated machine all to my own and put at much pipe or T1s or T3s into that, so it can serve thousands of people. So if any of you have high-traffic blogs or are doing live events through your websites, you can scale to that. HostGator will do that. The link I gave you is my website. It will give you about a 20 percent discount buying it there. You can find it there or on the website.

TB: To build your blog, there's one thing you really need to put on there. It's called CommentLuv. You want this installed because every time someone leaves a comment on your blog, if they're a blogger, it leaves a little of their first tag line on their blog, which means they're going to want to visit you on your blog because everyone can see their tag line as well. It's a plug-in, and it's free. Ever since I installed that about a year and a half ago, things really took off. It really makes my job easier. I see that they're a blogger, and with the little red heart that it gives me, I click on the link that it gives me, and it leads me right to their blog to leave a comment.

SS: What do you think that would have cost you if you had to pay a programmer to do that on your static website? Can you see why we recommend WordPress? If there's a problem, someone will write a plug-in to solve the problem and make life easier for you. CommentLuv costs you nothing.

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### ***Maximizing Website Visibility*** ***(cont'd from page 9)***

Search Engine Optimization—I want to end the "build it" section with this. Everyone gets all worried about SEO. If you've heard anything about Panda or Penguin updates—this is where you work so hard to get your website up to the first page of Google, and all of a sudden, you'll be on page 50. Relax about SEO. Buy an SEO plug-in. There are several. The All in One SEO Pack is one. It will work with your blog and handle all the SEO stuff for you. Avoid all the SEO tricks. Just write good content. I know of agencies that employ minimum-wage workers around the world to put links on all kinds of different websites just to drive traffic back to a website. It's gaming the system. And it works, for a while. Then Google finds out that you're gaming the system, and then they stomp you down. Did anyone hear about J. C. Penney? The company had a problem last year. It hired one of these firms to do this and reached the top of the search engines. Google said, "We don't like the way you're doing it," and they banned J. C. Penney from Google. If you went on Google for a while, you could not find J. C. Penney. You think that affected the company's bottom line?

TB: Google's always policing it and always on top of it.

SS: And Google's always changing it, several times every day. So don't worry about it. Don't worry about hiring a firm and paying thousands of dollars for it.

TB: What you *can* be worrying about is your domain name. You need to own your book domain name and your name domain name. I own *Witty Woman Writing*, I own *Tammy Bleck*, I own *Single Past 50*, and I own a few others for books I want to write. You need to own them. That's what you need to worry about.

SS: As I said before, buying paid ads is the fastest way to get traffic to your blog. Facebook ads—you've got a billion people who are on

Facebook. You can buy ads, and you are in full control. It isn't like the old days of the newspaper ads where they'd say, "Oh, 100,000 people read our newspaper," and you don't know how many of them see it. Everything is tracked now. That's why all the advertising is moving to the web. Find where your audience is. Find your why. Who's your audience, why are they looking for you, where do they live, do they hang out on Facebook, do they use Twitter?

*Q: Do these ideas work as well if your website is not a blog? For a static website?*

SS: Yeah. WordPress just makes it easier, but most of this stuff can be done. You can't use the plug-in, obviously, but the keywords, the meta tags, the things you do to promote your stuff—you can do all that in HTML; you just have to do it by hand.

So, buying ads. Say that I'm writing a book to men who live in the Southern California area in these zip codes who are age 35-45 and who like these musical artists. Facebook will say that of the one billion people, now you've got 100,000, now you've got 10,000, now you've got 300, now you've got 20. But those 20 people are my tribe. Those are the people that I'm trying to reach. That's how specific they can get now with ad placement. You can get that with Google, you can get that with Bing. The way you do that is, you open up an account with them. Google will give you, I think, \$100 free credit just to try it out. So try it out! Put \$20 into it, buy a few ads, and see what comes of it. They can be expensive, but there is no faster way to get people to your website. But again, the fire hose—be ready to have it turned on. You have to know what you're doing, you have to know what you sell, and then you can take advantage of all these things and go after your absolute tribe.

Paid ads are huge for doing that. And two things I want to talk about are offline and mobile. Everyone's all excited about online and will forget about offline. Even direct mail,

sending a postcard—there are things you can do. Book people know because they do the bookmarks and use some offline things. Get little stickers made and put them everywhere. Have your website address on the sticker and be strategic in your placement of these stickers. When you have a book, put a sticker on your book. How many of you have sold books through Amazon? You have no idea who bought your book. You could have had a sticker on each of your books that said, "Come to my website and I'll give you a free audio of the first chapter of my next book." When they come to your website, they leave their email address in exchange for that download—now you've got a list. Now you've collected people, and when you're ready to start your next book, you send an email out to them. You don't have to hope that they'll find you. You go directly to them. So use those little offline things to do that.

The other thing is mobile. I've talked a lot about building apps, and apps are only part of it. You need to start looking at how your website looks in devices like iPhones and iPads. Again, WordPress has a plug-in for that. There is a plug-in that will make your website very friendly for these small-form factors. The last statistic I heard was that 40 percent of e-commerce online was conducted through a mobile device. So it's coming, folks. You can't just think one way anymore. You have to be ready for the people in many different ways. Five years ago, the top five books in Japan were written on smartphones—not read, but *written* on them. People were riding on the trains and composing their books with their smartphones. It's a brave new world, folks. You've got a billion people on Facebook and only 300 million people in America? Your audience is out there, and they're looking for content.

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### **Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 10)**

Sixty percent of all the publishing income in Japan is usually from smartphones. The other thing that's huge—I just came from a writer's conference about three months ago and learned of a person who is serializing his book. Instead of writing a book with lots and lots of chapters, he's writing his book in six chapters, writing them like episodes of a TV series. And he's giving away the first episode, and then you buy the other chapters as they're done. So, \$1 per chapter. Short stories are huge. That's exactly how Charles Dickens did it. Amazon is very interested in this model. It's a model that Hollywood knows all about. It's the brave new thing on Amazon. It's going to be a whole new thing for publishing.

TB: If you go on Amazon and you type in "short stories," you get a million of them. I think that's what they're under right now, but it may not stay that way.

SS: It is brand new on Amazon, but it's coming. It's a great way to sell micro content overseas. People don't have room to store books, so they're buying it all on smartphone and Kindle devices, and they're buying the small, micro content and consuming it in small, bite-sized chunks. Right now, fiction is blazing the trail on it, but imagine the impact for nonfiction or how-to books or memoirs. Think about episodic TV. Think about the new generations coming up and who's on all the iPhones and mobile devices and what their attention span is. Are they going to sit down and buy a 500-page book, or are they going to want a 10-minute bit of content? Charles Dickens started this years ago, serializing it. Again, it's nothing new under the sun. It's coming around again, and it's going to be huge. Once Hollywood marries with that, you're going to see all kinds of collaboration in terms of publishing content in ways that we haven't even imagined yet. Webisodes are that with video.

TB: I wanted to touch on something about sponsors. I've been approached

on my website for sponsors who want to advertise and will pay money to be on my website. I thought that was an awesome idea. Dove was one of them; that's my demographic. They did that, and I had them on for four months. What I didn't care for was that they were monitoring my content. That didn't work for me. It wasn't worth the money, but it's something to think about. I wrote a blog entitled "Lipstick isn't just for lesbians anymore," and they didn't like the word. It really wasn't about lesbians; it was about a survey showing that when lipstick sales go up, the economy is down. And it's an interesting thing that was in the *Wall Street Journal*, and I did a blog on it. But that title got a reprimand from Dove, and the company said that it will pull its sponsorship. Well, you can take your sponsorship down the block! When you're writers, you're very protective of that.

SS: OK, social networking in 60 seconds. There are the big ones—Facebook, Google+ (which is not really all that big, but it's significant because it's Google's version of Facebook). How many of you have been in a webinar, where you can see someone's computer screen or presentation? The technology to do it is expensive. Google+ has something called Google Hangouts, where you can do it free. You're webcammed, and it's even to the point where Tammy and I could be doing it together, and I start talking and it picks up my camera, and as soon as Tammy starts talking, the focus shifts over to Tammy, and I don't have to touch any buttons. There's no engineer, the software automatically figures out who's talking and shifts the video that's streaming out to everyone else automatically. And it's free. Twitter—I know people who say that Twitter is dead and don't bother with it. It's like people who said radio is dead. Radio isn't dead. There are people who drive every day; radio is a very viable market. It's a different market than the TV market. You have to think of all of these different social media markets as newspaper versus magazine versus radio. Magazines are not dead. Magazines are having a renaissance

now on Apple, on iTunes. There are people who are publishing digital magazines, and they're going to be huge and a wonderful opportunity for writers.

TB: I can tweet a blog post, and I'll get 50-60 subscribers in a night from one tweet.

SS: Think about what that would cost you if you hire a publicist to get that many people to come to a book reading or a book signing. You can sit at home in your pajamas and write a blog post or send out a tweet, and you can tell people that you're doing a Google Hangout and that they should come check you out on Tuesday at 9 p.m. This is why most of the celebrities and music stars fire their publicists—because they went direct to their fans with Twitter.

Virtual blog tours—how many of you have heard of Amanda Hocking, the 21-year-old girl who sold a million dollars of vampire books? All digital, all Kindle stuff. Now she's getting more money, and she's trying to change the story about how it was done. She did something called the *Zombiepalooza*. It was a blog tour. She went out to everyone who had a blog and talked to their readers and built a readership in an already super-saturated market—YA *Zombie* books. And she made a million dollars and finally had a publisher pick her up. Now she's respectable and traditional. But she did it all online, as an 18-year-old when she first started.

The only thing I'm more excited about than Pinterest is YouTube, but I'm getting more and more excited about Pinterest. Now, as a guy, that's kind of weird because Pinterest's really more for women right now. Something like 60 percent of women are on Pinterest. It's all about shoes and bridal stuff. But it is changing—and the opportunities are there for authors, like taking the covers of your book and putting a little flag on the side of it that says what the book sells for.

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### *Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 11)*

It increases sales 30 percent. That's absolutely huge for authors. Or taking quotes out of your book, making a little graphic and putting it out there—some great dialogue, if it's a fiction book, or a significant statistic from your book. Linking it back to either your website or your sales page on Amazon is huge. Pinterest just opened up business opportunities. This is going to explode. The realities are in a home—men generally will not buy something over \$200 without talking to their wife. Women are the primary buyers, which is why all the TV ads are targeting women for purchasing. It's just the reality. Pinterest is their market.

TB: And it's the only social media I like.

SS: Women are rabid about this, the way that teenage boys are about video games. They don't even know why they like it, but they love it. It's almost an addiction, and the business opportunities are coming. For writers, there's not a lot there yet. There's an enormous opportunity of a website that's basically less than two years old but is getting huge amounts of traffic. For actually selling and monetizing your books, this is a huge opportunity.

TB: I made 30 percent of my bookings for public speaking through LinkedIn just by posting. I posted there where I am tonight, what I'm doing. I did a blog about three months ago and posted it, and LinkedIn called me, and I'm booked to do one for them for a hundred people on campus.

SS: LinkedIn is the #1 professional network. If you're a business person, you have to be on LinkedIn. You're all writers—you don't want a job, but you can be an expert on writing. You want a job writing, you want a job speaking. Redefine the job. The job is not you working for someone else. The job is you working for yourself. LinkedIn is where you make those connections, and it just works. I admit, I am not a big LinkedIn

person, but I am warming to it because I've seen the power of it for writers.

TB: A post is essentially called activity, at the top of your page, where it gives all the information. On the back of your business card should be your Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, email. Everything you give out should have all of that there. Every opportunity you have, you should do that. And if you want to know what a LinkedIn success looks like, I actually got an email from them saying, "Congratulations, Tammy, you're in the top 5 percent of the LinkedIn pages that were viewed this year." I was so impressed with that! Come visit me on LinkedIn, and if it works for you, copy the format. LinkedIn and all social media should be in your voice. It shouldn't be you talking about you. It should be you talking to them. They don't tune in to listen to someone else's voice—they want to hear yours.

SS: It's not just for resumes.

TB: I send all of my blog posts to my LinkedIn groups, and they start commenting on them, and maybe that's why I get so many hits. But I get hired to speak because I write something about how lipstick isn't for lesbians. I got asked to speak at a bunch of lesbian things, and I said, "Did you even read the post?" Not that there's anything wrong with that!

SS: YouTube—most smartphones have a video camera in them. That's good enough. Audio is the big issue. Get a microphone; don't rely on the microphone on your video camera. Don't stand in front of it with the microphone way out there, picking up the entire ambient room. Get a camera with a jack for a microphone. A couple years ago, flip video was all the rage. They're garbage. Give them to your grandkids. You want a camera that has a mic plug. A lot of the smartphones have a microphone in-jack. Audio quality is really important. They'll forgive poor video quality, but you really need to have good audio. And it doesn't have to be long. No one wants to listen to you for 10 minutes. You want your videos

to be 30 seconds, a minute and a half. It should be under 2 minutes.

Techsmith.com is where you can get a lot of tools for doing this. There's a program called Jing. It's free. It will give you either 5 or 10 minutes of video and take your screen capture of your computer. So if you want to use your webcam, it will allow you to capture that. Most smartphones now have apps that will do that. The entry bar for doing video is not high. The days where you had to have professional lighting and 3-point lighting—because YouTube is so popular and because people are putting out their webcam and cell phone camera video, people are getting used to the lower quality, and they're OK with that. Mic yourself and then read your own book. If you don't know what to give away to get people to give you their email address and join your list, read the first chapter of your book! Let them hear you. Again, it's about that why. It's about your relationship with your readers. It's about establishing that rapport. You're one to many; it's hard to do. But with all these online tools, it's not hard to do—because you do the "one to many," it's not the "one to one," where you have to send out 300 emails.

TB: I wanted to talk at the women's conference in Long Beach. It's a huge conference; 15,000 women go for the weekend. I got the gig, but you know what? She asked me two things that no one's ever asked me: What's your Facebook number and how many Twitter followers do you have? If I had said to her, 200, would she have hired me? I was able to say 2,500. It's respectable. It should be a lot more. But if you want to get those kinds of gigs, you've got to play the game.

SS: And here's the reality. There are venues where it matters, and it will matter more going forward. But everyone is in the same boat you are.

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The fact that you are here, getting some education on this, puts you ahead of 90 percent of the people. So if you feel, "This is so far above me, and I don't know how to do it," everyone feels that way, even the experts do. I've been doing it for 20 years, and I still get, "What was that again? I've never heard of that before." There's too much for any one person to keep up with. If you've been doing it for five minutes, you are more qualified than a guy who hasn't been doing it. That's just the reality of it. Your numbers will come. And again, it's not about the numbers. Three hundred people on Facebook who are targeted are better than three million people who aren't. Because those are the people who will buy from you because they know, like, and trust you.

TB: And they will also promote you.

SS: One last thing—I want to talk about forums, contests, and content hubs. These are free. Get onto a forum, get onto ask.com, get onto Yahoo! Answers. LinkedIn has a place like this as well, where you can take your expertise and answer questions. Obviously, if you're nonfiction, that's a little easier because you can be topic oriented. But I met a man who wrote a novel on bullying, so he found resources on bullying and started talking about bullying. He sold his book based on being an expert on the topic of bullying. Get into these free forums and start having a dialogue.

TB: It's where you get a lot of free information, too. I had a question about contracts for ghostwriting, and I got all kinds of fabulous ghostwriters—people who sent me their contracts.

SS: We went through 18 different subjects and covered 100 different action steps. Some of them you'll have to learn a little bit. Do you want to do a Facebook ad? You'll probably have to take a class on how to do that. Go on YouTube and find a video on how to buy a Facebook ad. A lot of this stuff is just getting out there

and trying it. Most of it's free. Once you do it free for a while, there's usually a paid option, which saves you time. If there's not, you can go onto fiverr.com and find someone who can do anything for you. You can also outsource to places like oDesk.com or guru.com. These are just places for outsourcing. Anything you need to do, anything that you're intimidated by, can be outsourced to someone else.

TB: This is a good time for the shameless plug, which I'm very proud to do. I'm not the least bit abashed by it. I do blog and social media consulting. I do it by a half an hour and an hour. I don't do contracts. I don't want to lock anyone into a contract. If you need some help, you've got two resources up here who can really help you with what you want. Most people just need an hour, and you're off and running, and it's awesome. My fees are \$199 for an hour and \$99 for a half hour. And I usually go over that.

SS: And she is discounting. That's low for the industry.

TB: \$250 an hour is the industry standard.

*Q: I have a question about Fiverr. I know there are a lot of people on Fiverr who will give you 5,000 likes. I know you can get 10,000 likes on a Facebook. You said something before about gaming the system?*

SS: Gaming the system, right. The question is whether you can use fiverr.com to get 10,000 likes or to get book reviews for your book. Do not do that. This falls under the category of gaming the system. Think about this: If there's some guy who's selling \$5 gigs on Fiverr—the same guy is going to be doing the same kind of bland reviews on Amazon. Eventually they get found out, and you get punished for that.

TB: There's also a privacy issue. I've run into a stalker or two. They're on your Facebook; they're seeing everything you're doing. Their intentions are not the best.

SS: Generally, you want to build loyal fans. You want to build people who know, like, and trust you and generally like your writing—people you want to hang out with. Just ask them if they would write a review for you, if they'll comment on blogs for you. If you like someone's blog, offer to do a guest post on there. Comment on their things and then ask them to comment on yours. Build relationships with people.

Putting links on Facebook that are going back to your own website—you really need to know who your audience is and what it is that you want to do. If your audience is already on Facebook, they're not going to appreciate you yanking them off Facebook and onto your website. So you need to engage them there. The reason you tweet, I would imagine, is because there are people that want to get your tweets. They don't want to read your tweets on your webpage. They want to get it on their cell phones. So use that to engage your audience. It's about audience engagement, and it's about building those relationships.

TB: And you don't always have to tweet about what you're writing. When the Super Bowl was on, I tweeted something like, "Yes, I did cry at the Clydesdale commercial. So sue me." And I had an awful lot of people visit my website because they cried at the Clydesdale commercial, too.

SS: Ninety percent of your tweets should be about things other than yourself. Don't use it for shameless self-promotion. If you tell people about important things, things that are meaningful to you or, more importantly, things that are useful—if that's what you always tweet about, people will find your tweets valuable. Then you can slip in every once in a while, "By the way, I just published a book" or "I just had a really good blog post, and I would really appreciate it if you would come on there and comment." If they like you, if you're building relationships, they will do you the favor.

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### *Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 13)*

Let's say that you have an HTML site, and you also have a WordPress blog. You like WordPress and want to find out about eventually migrating it over, but your website has been up for a number of years, which means it has a certain higher placement on Google, since the longer a site has been up, the more they consider you an authority. The minute you take that down, all those wonderful links that drive the traffic go away. With WordPress, you can do the 301 forwards. You can take those links that are already in the search engines—the names and the addresses of those pages that are doing well for you, if you know what those are—and redirect those to the same blog post in the form you're converting. You won't lose those because the website will do that conversion for you. So it stays that way in Google, but it redirects it into your dynamic search engine now. It's called a redirect, and there is a redirect plug-in that will do that for you. You want to do that because if you already have some pages up, if you suddenly change it—let's say you have a lot of traffic and you realize you don't like the name of that address and you want to change it—you will lose all of the love that you got for that address because all of a sudden no one knows where that new page is. You have to build all that traffic again.

*Q: What if you want to change your IP?*

SS: IP is not as significant. In fact, most websites now are in shared IP. In the old days, it used to matter, and you had to have a dedicated IP. Every computer has an IP address. That's how the Internet works and how it finds where the computers are, but because the computers are so sophisticated now, many websites will share one IP address, and so the server has to do that translation. That's what the DNS (domain name system) does. They say this wonderful name like Amazon.com actually goes to the computer at whatever IP address. That's how it

works. Don't worry about the IP.

You can find most of the plug-ins at WordPress.com. WordPress.com is the free place where you can get a very limited version of WordPress, hosted by them. It's severely broken because they want to control what you do. WordPress.org is where you get all the goodies. HostGator will install the WordPress scripts on your site free, but you can download all of the plug-ins and free things from WordPress.org. There will be extensions, and there is a place for plug-ins you can search. You can do it from within your WordPress blog as well, but you can also go to the WordPress.org site.

TB: And if that fails, I go to Google. I type in "I'm looking for a plug-in that you can feed fish," and it gives me the places I can go.

SS: Type in "Top 100 plug-in," "Top 100 SEO plug-in," "Top 10 social media plug-in," or "Top 10 blogging." Google has things; you will find that people take the time to put their favorite plug-in on there, and you'll start seeing the same names on there. Or just ask someone like Tammy or me, and we can usually give you a list of the top 100 best plug-ins.

*Q: I'm thinking about having someone do it for me. Are there companies that will do this for me?*

SS: Here's the best answer. Generally there's a principle—lead with your strengths and staff your weaknesses. There used to be a webmaster, and one person did all that. There's no way that one person can do it all these days. You will need help, you will need education, you will need gurus—people like Tammy and me—who can teach you different things that you need to know, when you need to know them. That'll be my shameless plug.

TB: We can teach you how to do it yourself.

SS: That's my plug. I'm actually putting up a site—it's not up yet—called WordPress Beginner. I'm

launching WordPressbeginner.com. For those of you who don't know where to start with all this, it'll have videos and everything you need to know about where to start with WordPress. If you're interested in that, just send me an email, and I'll send you a link when that's ready to go.

If you don't want to set up your own blog, someone else can set it up, and you can focus on doing the things you need to do. Most people in this room don't need to be technology experts. You do need to be content creators. You do need to engage your audience. That you can't outsource. And that's the problem with the social media outsourcers. They can't represent you to your audience. They're not you. So they can't talk in your voice. They can't have your sense of humor. As you go on blogs, you'll see people who are trying to game the system by commenting on your blog. They'll have broken English because English isn't their first language, and they'll comment about your post, but you'll think, "This is not a real person." It's someone being paid \$2 an hour in the Philippines who's commenting so there's a link back to someone's website to drive traffic. It wastes everyone's time. Remember the acronym WEB—website, exposure, and business. Tammy talked about the fact that she does this as a business. You manage your business. You don't leave that up to an outsourcer. You don't leave that up to someone else. You are the one who runs your business.

TB: There's a liability there. It's huge!

SS: Particularly on the web. If you use Getty Images, there's liability. If you hire someone to just find images on the web and post them on your stuff, there's a liability. If you libel someone, there's a liability. You are becoming a publisher.

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### Maximizing Website Visibility (cont'd from page 14)

TB: Or if someone libels someone in your name.

SS: From a technologist viewpoint, we're not interested in partnerships. We're interested in money. We're in business. At some point, everyone who comes through my door wants a partnership. They need the technology; they want the expertise; they have their great idea. They say that they'll share their great idea with me, and I'll build the technology and do all the back end, and they'll offer me 18 percent. Most people will offer 50 percent, and it's not worth it. If I did all that, why would I need them? Most technologists won't do that.

Where your partnerships do come in is with joint ventures—when you have someone else who either has a list or has a website with a following. Typically, joint ventures are 50 percent: if you sell something, the person who sponsors it to their list gets half of the sale. So you have to build that into your business. But that is huge. Those are the people who have million-dollar weekends online. There are ways to build those kinds of partnerships to get huge audiences. That's where your partnerships do come in, and that will explode your website. But people who have those lists—Tammy, for example, isn't going to take just anyone who wants to do that. It has to make sense for her as well as for you. It would be great for you to have access to her audience, but she has built and cultivated that audience over a lot of time. They trust her. She's not going to violate that trust by putting just anyone in front of them. There has to be a really good reason for her to do that, and the reason is probably not money. That doesn't mean she doesn't want to be compensated. That's her business. She needs money to keep her business. But she also needs to have a reason to put you in front of it.

Before you approach someone with a partnership, you have to think win-win. You have to ask, what's in it for

them? Why would people want what you have to say? Don't just write because you have a message to say. You have to find the people who want that message, and once you find them, they love what you say. They are raving fans. And you don't care about the entire world. You care about those raving fans. John Locke, in his book that I recommended, talked about when he started getting a more traditional publisher, they wanted him to be a little more generic and less snarky with his book. He refused to do it because he said that his audience would know that wasn't him.

TB: And they would.

SS: And so he stayed true to his audience. And that's where the money is. You find your audience, you find your why—why you're doing what you're doing. You find out why your audience would want you—whether it's entertainment, whether it's information, whether it's how-tos, whether it's just beautiful fiction.

TB: It goes back to staying true to yourself.

SS: Just do the right things. Build relationships with your audience with all these wonderful technology tools. There are free videos on how to do it on YouTube, free blog posts on how to do that, paid membership sites, and places where you can get focused courses. The world is your oyster.

TB: I think we need to say goodnight, Gracie.

SS: Goodnight, Gracie.

## MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to PALA member Bill Stavers who was on *Good Morning America* this year.



## PALA LISTSERV

Have a question about publishing, marketing, or printing? Don't want to wait until the next members' only brainstorming session? Then use the PALA Listserv. It's a private group that lets PALA members and guests ask questions and share news, resources and information.

To sign up, go to <http://www.groups.yahoo.com>. If you're not already registered with Yahoo, you'll need to do that first (it's free). Then search for PA-LA (don't forget the hyphen). Follow the instructions for joining the list.

