

The Complete Guide To Building A Writer / Author Platform That Sells

Written on Tuesday, February 16th, 2016 by [@Paul Harrison](#)



Your writer platform / author platform is the key to landing a literary agent and getting your book published. And the key to establishing a reputable author platform is to engage with your audience.

In a way it couldn't be easier. You find your target audience. You let your audience know your vision and your story. And you give your audience ways to follow you.

That's how you build an author platform. But, of course, it isn't quite as easy as that. Because finding your audience, engaging them, and making them want to follow you is a challenge—a challenge all authors should embrace with enthusiasm.

Having worked with numerous authors to help them establish their author platform, I've discovered that most authors have a good grasp on what they need to achieve, but could use some guidance in implementing a strategy that yields profitable results.

In this guide I want to help you to create your author platform in simple-to-follow-steps.

So let's just dive right in at the deep-end. If you need advice or help with any of the following points, simply contact me at PaulMHarrison@Hotmail.com.

Building Your Author Platform through your writing

1. What is your passion? The number one thing you must have to succeed as an author is a passion. Readers want to follow someone who is enthusiastic and passionate about their work. That enthusiasm is infectious. So ask yourself, what is your passion? Put that passion in one line. This line will inform you of the message and voice you're carrying. It will shape all your efforts at building your author platform / writer platform.

2. Know the result you're hoping for. To get from A to B you have to know where B is. What are you aiming for? If things go perfectly, who will read your book, what will they get out of it, and what will the ultimate result of your book be? Take time answering these questions. The best way to hit any target is to lock your sights on it. Lock your sights on your ambition right now.

3. Write in a way that motivates followers: As a writer odds are you're already writing online. If you're not you should start. Writing online is one of the best ways to establish your author platform. But to get followers you need to write in a way that makes readers want to keep in touch with you. Use your story to make people believe in you or believe in your work, then they will naturally want to keep up with you, meaning they'll subscribe to your newsletter and / or join your social media pages.

4. Understand your demographic: Your book will cater to one demographic, or at least it should do given that demographics are one of the most important parts of marketing. As an author trying to build your author platform, you should learn everything you can about your demographic and then you should tailor your content to their liking. If you need help discovering your demographic, use Google Analytics to see who's reading your blog, and use Facebook Insights to see who's following you on Facebook.

5. Know your niche / market: While you're studying your demographic you should also make sure to learn everything you can about your niche. Start by accurately defining your

niche, then read extensively everything you can find that's related to that niche. This will make you more aware of your competition and will help you to target your book accurately.

6: Gradually earn respect and become an expert: You're not going to be certified an expert overnight. Becoming a recognised expert is the result of a good deal of work. But if you take the attitude, right now, that you are the expert, and you write every post, comment, tweet etc with authority, people will gradually begin to respect you and to value your opinion more and more.

7. You don't need a professional photo: A lot of people think that the photo they use for their social media or their blog should be professional. But in truth you do not need a professional photo. You need a personable one.

If you go and get your headshot taken at a place that usually does passport photos you are going to seem really, really boring. No one likes passport photos. People like personable photos. They like photos of you happy, excited, doing something fun. So, point one, make your photo fun (well, perhaps not if you're writing business articles, but for most topics, fun wins). Secondly, show yourself doing the thing you're writing about. If your book is a fantasy novel, show yourself doing something fantastical. Maybe you went to a convention a few weeks back and you dressed up as a witch. Cool. Use that. It looks a lot more fun than your usual photo and it also tells people what you're all about.

8. Create list posts for topics related to you niche: There's one really easy trick you can use to attract other bloggers in your niche and also to generate backlinks (which, long story short, will make your site get more traffic). That trick is to create list posts about topics related to your niche. Think about it. You're writing about (for instance) life coaching. What better way to introduce yourself to other life coaching authors than to write a list of the top 100 life coaches. They'll thank you for it. They'll link back to your site. It's a win / win.

9. Comment but only if you have a comment worth reading: You might have heard that one of the best ways to build backlinks is to comment on people's blogs. Yeah. Just one issue. It doesn't work. Google does not credit links left in comments, and bloggers hate it when you leave a comment just because you want the free publicity. Don't do it. Instead, think of a comment that is truly smart / funny / interesting and write that instead. The blogger will think "Hey, this person seems interesting" and will reach out to you. And the readers will think "Wow. This person's awesome. How do I follow them?"

10. When you're self publishing, make the actual writing of your book a reason for people to follow you:

You're writing a book to be self published. When you hit PUBLISH you want thousands of people to be ready to buy your book. But how do you make people interested in a book before it's even finished? Make the writing of the book an event in itself.

Document your writing. Share the events in the development of your book. If, for instance, you're writing fiction and you're working in the fantasy genre, talk about all the other books and movies you're reading / watching for research. If you travel for research share that, tell people about your journey and how it relates to the book. Build hype while you're writing so that when you hit PUBLISH you have a horde of followers who are already invested in your book. That's the key to a successful book launch.

11. Ooooh "Free PDF": There was a time, a few years ago, when having a PDF was a great way to establish yourself in your market because, heck, if you put a book out on a subject you must be really knowledgeable. Unfortunately everyone caught on to this trick. Approximately 3 billion other bloggers did the same thing, putting free books on their site and on Amazon. Most of them were garbage. So naturally people started to lose respect for free books and PDFs.

Here's the thing. Even though books and PDFs aren't as powerful as they once were, they still can be useful. Provided you a) Create high quality articles to promote the PDF and b) Make the PDF really good, you can still garner a lot of potential clients or readers from that PDF. Just don't expect people to go all googly eyed simply because you're giving them a free ebook. Make it good.

12: Use Google Alerts to be notified when people mention you: Hit up [Google Alert](#). It's a free service that will send you an email when a website mentions a specific keyword. For instance, my name's "Paul Martin Harrison", so I could head over to Google Alerts and create an alert for "Paul Martin Harrison". Google will then notify me when another blogger mentions my name, at which point I can thank them, thus building rapport.

13. Know the one thing that gets them every time

For your author platform to take off you need to know how to generate word of mouth. Whether it's through social media or elsewhere, having your content shared is the key to generating the free marketing that you need. But just what the hotcakes makes people share something?

Thankfully science has the answer. The most important paper on the psychology of sharing was written far back in 1966 when [William C Schutz published "A Three Dimensional Theory Of Interpersonal Behaviour"](#). Schutz's paper revealed that there are three keys to making people share something: Control, Affection, and Inclusion.

Control: Essentially this is the idea that people want to control the way they're perceived. They will share things that make them look like the person they want to be seen as.

Affection: People want to be seen as caring about people and about groups they belong to. They will share posts that show them as caring for other people in their group / social circle.

Inclusion: People want to belong, in general and also to specific groups / circles. They'll share posts that make them belong to whichever group they want to belong to.

So how do you take advantage of that? You workout (research) how people want to be seen, who they care for and how they care for them, and what groups they want to belong to. Then you create posts / books that tick those boxes. Don't write another post until you know these things about your audience.

Building Your Author Platform Online: The Basics

You probably don't need me to tell you this, but the internet is both the easiest and arguably the best place to launch your author platform. Here's how you can use the internet to build your writer platform / author platform.

14. Hire a professional web designer: Having a professional website design will help people to understand your voice and to get involved with your project. As a web designer myself I know firsthand what a powerful impact a great web design can have. Everything from the colours of your site to the font to the layout speaks about you as an author. Make sure your web design communicates your personality in a favourable way.

15. Create a successful newsletter: Embed sign-up forms into your website and also promote them on your social media pages. This will help you to establish an email list. Email lists are regarded as the single most important element in online marketing, so make sure you get started on yours today.

16. Use keyword research for successful search engine marketing: You've probably heard of Google's Keyword Tool. It can help you find the right keywords for your blog. Except, it doesn't. Here's why. Keyword tools tell you words that have been searched before. And almost all of those words that have been searched before already have plenty of sites competing for them. Those are worthless keywords. The keywords that matter are the [20% of keywords that have never been searched for](#). Those are the keywords with little competition, the ones you will actually rank for. So instead of using Keyword tools, think like a human. Consider what people in your niche would be thinking about and looking up today and then use those subjects to create your blog content.

17. Your author bio is your calling card. Oftentimes when you're writing online you're writing for other blogs. In these cases your author bio is everything. You need to craft those few lines in such a way that people want to know more about you. Obviously include a link

to your blog and social media profiles. That's the easy bit. But also write your bio with passion and enthusiasm and make it scream of personality.

18. Be a news reporter: In order to be an expert you have to be involved in your field and of-the-moment. The best way to do that is to write about the news events taking place in your niche. Essentially, be a news reporter.

19. Link out to other blogs: One of the best ways to ingratiate yourself with your peers is to link out to their articles. By linking to their blog or article you send them "link juice" (which helps them in Google), you give them a little morale boost (who doesn't like a shout-out?) and you create a relationship with that other blogger. That blogger may very well reciprocate your generosity, which will bring more traffic to your site and help improve your search rankings.

20. Pillar posts: Pillar posts are long articles that are truly helpful, that have "evergreen content" (content that won't age), and that provide some incentive for your readers to stick around (whether that be subscribing to your newsletter or following you on social media). These articles bring heavy traffic to your site and can become one of the most important aspects of your author platform. [Yaro Starak gives a good explanation here.](#)

21. LinkedIn: LinkedIn is not a place where you're going to achieve hundreds of thousands of followers. But you might make friends with 10 to 100 other authors or people in related industries who are power players. These people can make a real difference in your career. Set up a professional LinkedIn Profile that will impress your fellow writer's and other influential people in your niche. Also reach out to professionals on LinkedIn to start building valuable business relationships.

22: Give other authors reviews: If you're self publishing your books, one of the most important aspects is the reviews your book receives. You want positive reviews from influential people (mostly other authors). Make sure you review other authors' works so they will be inclined to return the favor.

23: Understand that you represent your audience: If you're writing online a huge part of your author platform will come from social media. On social media (even more than elsewhere) you represent your audience, because your readers share your content and the content that they share is viewed by their friends. In other words, when someone shares your content they are saying something about themselves. Take advantage of this by making sure that being associated with you is a positive thing. Case in point, if you write positive and optimistic articles people will share them, where if you're negative no one will want to share

your content because they themselves do not want to be seen as negative people. So, make sure that *the act of following you and your blog says something positive about the follower.*

24. Guest Post: Guest posting is one of the quickest ways to get your content in front of hundreds of thousands of people. Reality is, your own blog won't generate that much traffic without a lot of effort, simply because of technical matters like [Domain Authority](#) and [Page Rank](#). It's much quicker to achieve high readership levels by writing compelling guest posts on blogs related to your niche. Start by picking ten to twenty big blogs that you could guest post for and starting pitching some stories. In this article [Ramsay Taplin explains how to write compelling guest posts.](#)

25. Use tools like Google Analytics and Webmaster Tools: Tools like these can help you understand your traffic generation and the flow of users on your site. This can be valuable information both for increasing traffic and for getting visitors to see the right parts of your site.

26. Utilize the most “visible” areas of your blog: When people browse blogs they focus on specific regions or areas of your site. For instance, the space directly below an article headline and the top left portion of your site are two highly visible areas that people focus on. Make the most of these areas by placing your subscription button and social media buttons there. Too often I work with authors who have great blog content but who don't use the screen real estate properly. Don't make that mistake. Know where people's eyes go on your blog, and place your social media and subscription buttons there. Heatmap services like [Crazy Egg](#) can help.

27. Make the most of lists, both for your newsletter and your social media: All your readers are interested in your content, but different readers are interested in different aspects of your content. In an ideal world you would serve the more relevant information to each visitor. To begin to achieve this, organise your email list and your social media followers into different groups with different interests. Then target those people specifically based on their individual needs.

28. Understand that writing online is not the same as writing for print: If there is one thing I wish I'd know when I started writing online, it's this: writing online and writing offline are very different. In print you can create long articles with long paragraphs and people will have no problem reading them. Online people want their information served in chunks and in short paragraphs. That's almost universal among all internet readers. The speed of the internet demands a fast reading experience. Write your online articles in shorter paragraphs than you would in print. *Of course, there are some exceptions to this. This very article, for*

instance, is intended for authors, who of course enjoy reading and don't mind long and in-depth articles, hence the writing style I'm using here.

29. Write Clickable Headlines: When you write for print publications your headlines are extremely important. But when you write online, they become even more so. The reason is simple. The first time people see your article online they only see the title and maybe a little excerpt. Twitter has a 140 character limit per tweet, so that's probably just the headline itself. Both Google and Facebook give you the headline plus a couple of extra lines. So naturally, the headline is extremely important. Learning to write highly clickable headlines will double your readership. So how do you do it? Read my guide to [writing highly clickable headlines](#).

30. Podcasts: Podcasts have become a highly popular way for bloggers to gain more followers. And the good news is it's pretty easy to do a podcast. Just get a microphone, recording equipment, and some basic editing software, record your podcast and share it on your blog and on social media. It's relatively easy and hugely popular. While you're at it, interview influential people in your field and ask them to share your podcast. This will give you free traffic, and it will be a good lift for your author platform.

31: Call To Action: So many bloggers just chuck their content onto their site and leave it there. What a waste. The point in having content on your site is so that people will visit your site and so that you can make them do *something*. What that something is will depend on your goals. It could be to buy your book, to sign up for the newsletter, to join your social media profiles... whatever your aim is, write all your content in such a way that it naturally leads people to do what you want them to do. In other words, create actionable content that generates results.

32: Create a killer About Page: So many bloggers write their About pages in less than stellar ways. They think "Well, I have to have an About page so I'll write it, but it's just a formality so I won't spend much time on it". Mistake. The About page is often one of the most visited pages on a blog (see what [Derek Halpern said about About pages on DIYThemes.com](#)).

People are going to visit your About page, so it would be simply crazy not to write your About page in a compelling way. So how do you do that? Essentially, choose one line that describes what your blog will do for your reader. For instance "This blog will make you a millionaire". Then spend the remainder of the about page showing how your blog will achieve that ambition. This will motivate readers to get involved with your blog and to follow you on social media and via your newsletter.

33: Check your page load speed: One of the most important aspects of your website is its loading speed. Both Google and readers themselves hate slow loading sites. If it takes your site more than 3 seconds to load you need to get in contact with someone who can speed your site up (I can help you with this, just contact me via the CONTACT button at the bottom of the page). If your site loads in 2 -3 seconds; eh, not bad. 1-2 seconds is ideal.

34: Share-ability: Your site should be optimised for both shares and followers. Make sure that your social sharing buttons are highly visible, either as a float that is constantly to the side of your content, or as buttons above and below the content. I personally like to use pure HTML social buttons because social media buttons can slow sites down, but provided your buttons are highly visible and they're not slowing your site down, then all's good.

35: Discover who you are online: You already exist online. Everyone exists online. And your online presence is already informing people about you. But do you know what your online presence is saying about you? Make it a priority to research yourself online. Then you'll see what people are reading about you and how your online presence is branding you as an author.

36. Make effective use of Youtube: Many authors use Youtube to build their own author platforms. But far too many of those authors use Youtube incorrectly. They simply upload a generic video with a logical and boring title and no custom thumbnail. Big mistake. The way in which you use Youtube will depend on your niche. But some of the essentials transcend genres. For instance, you should always use a custom thumbnail, and that custom thumbnail should always be highly clickable. Clickable thumbnails are a true art, but generally speaking, thumbnails that perform well have positive emotions and high contrast colours. Your video's title should be written as any other highly clickable title, which we've discussed above. Also be sure to use tags and the correct categories.

37. SEO (Search Engine Optimisation): In a nutshell, SEO is about creating your content in a way that will make it rank highly on search engines like Google. SEO is a huge subject and a very important one for writers (if you'd like advice on this or a consultation, please contact me via the CONTACT button at the bottom of the page).

Your content will be read by more people when you optimise for SEO. At the very least you should know the basics of SEO, which include such things as: putting a keyword in the title; writing around a theme / keyword; including external links that open in new windows; using ALT tags and H2s, and creating a proper meta description. Those are the absolute basics of SEO. If you'd like to learn more, feel free to contact me.

38. Put highly clickable images in your content: Simple, right? But what is a highly clickable image? That's a huge subject. But to start off with, try including faces, showing emotions, putting a brief caption on the image, and also using infographics.

39. Cross-promote everything: Your Facebook followers can become Twitter followers. Your Twitter followers can become newsletter subscribers. Your subscribers can become LinkedIn contacts... you get the idea. Cross promote your profiles to create an optimised online presence.

40. Google authorship is dead. Forget about it. Oh wait: Were you around when Google authorship was all the rage?

Google authorship was a way to show your author pic and name in your search results, but Google closed it down in October 2014. Interestingly, however, they're still continuing to maintain author information. It seems Google wants to use author info somehow but hasn't found the right way to do it. Bottom line: if you had author tags on your content and haven't removed them yet, keep them. Sooner or later Google will actually work out how they're going to use author info.

41. Avoid that spam: Certain other marketers will tell you that you should email your subscribers every time you publish a new post. But let's just think about that for one second. Do you remember the last time you subscribed to a service that sent you too many emails? Odds are you unsubscribed pretty quickly. For me this happened when I signed up for the magazine service [Readly](#). Readly is awesome. I love the product they put out. You get tons of magazines for just £10 a month. Great. But then I started receiving their emails. I received about 5 emails from Readly in one week.

5 emails. One week.

That's a lot of emailing for a product that is just for entertainment. Those emails were so annoying that I very nearly stopped using Readly. That's right. I nearly stopped using a service I love just because they put out too many emails. The point, of course, is that if you send too many emails to your subscribers you'll annoy them and they will unsubscribe. So how many emails is the right amount? Personally I think once a week is fair, any more than that and you're not entertaining, you're irritating.

Building Your Author Platform Through Social Media

Social media, obviously, is a vitally important marketing tool for writers. With good social media marketing you can make your author platform / writer platform successful quickly. But using social media effectively requires understanding of both the strengths and weaknesses of social media networks. Let's take a look.

42. Make your social media profiles reflect your personality: Web design doesn't begin and end with your own blog. Your social media pages should also communicate your brand effectively. Make sure your cover photos, profile photo, and all the posts on your social media pages reflect your overall vision. Aim for a unified online presence with one clear voice and vision.

43. Don't be That Guy: "That guy" is the person who uses social media for no other reason than to promote their own work. That's a losing strategy. If you're overly promotional your followers will quickly catch on to what you're doing and will be put off your brand. As I said, that's the losing strategy. The winning strategy is to be social, get involved with other authors, share their content, and make sure that people actually like you on social media.

44. Do not use automated or scheduled posts: There are many management tools that can help you schedule your social media posts. Don't use them.... Whattttt...? Don't use them. People have a way of sniffing out who is actually online and actively engaging on social media and who is just using it as a tool. The former group win fans. The latter group get nowhere. Use social media the right way, and the right way is to imagine that every time you post online you're talking to friends and in person.

45. Check your online schedule: Timing is everything. When you post on social media you want to make sure that you're posting while your readers are online. On Facebook this is critical thanks to [Edgerank](#). You can find out when you're readers are online by visiting your Facebook Page > Insights > Posts > When Your Fans Are Online. Post at peak periods.

46: Remember, it's not a numbers game: The biggest mistake people make online is that they think it's all a numbers game; they believe more traffic and more LIKES is what matters. Wrong. Think about it, how many Facebook pages have you seen that have millions of likes and their content is all copy & paste or quotes or viral posts? Having millions of hits or LIKES doesn't mean diddly squat. It's the level of engagement that matters, it's how many people are genuinely getting involved and genuinely caring about your work. You can't measure that in numbers. Forget the numbers game. Instead aim to cultivate positive relationships with your readers, the types of relationships that will make them want to support your brand and purchase your books.

47. Embed social media buttons in your Amazon books: If you're putting books on Amazon you should include links to your social media profiles. And you should also include pure HTML sharing buttons so people can share your book while they read it. Click To Tweets are also good in Amazon books. Click To Tweets allow people to share specific parts of your book as they come to them, essentially giving you free marketing. There are services that you can use to create Click To Tweets, but you're better off embedding pure-HTML Click-To-Tweet buttons in your blog and books. If you would like help with this, contact me using the Contact Me button at the bottom of the page.

48. Social metrics: There are lots of different tools you can use to research the types of articles that succeed online. I personally use the WordPress plugin [Social Metrics Tracker](#) for my own sites. This plugin shows you which of your posts have been shared the most (and the least) so you can learn what is and isn't working with your content. I also use the [Chrome extension Share Metric](#), which shows you the social metrics for whatever page you're currently viewing in Chrome. This is an extremely valuable tool. With it you can conduct competitive analysis on other bloggers in your niche. Simply visit their website and use the Share Metric tool to find their most shared content. Use that information to improve the share-ability of your own content.

49: [Know the serious limitations of Facebook:](#) I'm just going to go right ahead and shout this out loud: Facebook is an imperfect service and is a truly awful way of measuring your author platform. Whaaaaat?! It's true. And it's obvious to see why. Just think about all those Facebook pages that have millions of likes and the only thing they do is copy and paste viral stories that they themselves did not create.

Second to that evidence, go to your list of Facebook Page Likes and ask yourself “How many of these pages do I really care about?” Then ask “How many of these pages would I even consider buying a book from”. I rest my case. The number of likes you have on Facebook is irrelevant. Far more important is your Facebook Engagement Rate.

Far more important than that is the number of people in your email list. Far more important than that is the number of people who actually visit your blog frequently and who actually read your content. And still more important than that is the number of people who actually get involved with you. Yes, you. Not your page. Not your blog. You. Do you have people contacting you to say “I loved your article on...” or “Thanks so much for sharing that advice on...” or “I find you so inspiring.” Those people who actually care about your work so much that they reach out to you; those are the people who truly matter. They're the ones who didn't just think “Oh, a Facebook page... well, I'm bored so I might as well press this LIKE button”. People matter. Numbers do not.

50. Don't be a Facebook Martyr: While we're talking about the limitations of Facebook, here's a crucial point: Don't be a Facebook martyr.

“What’s a Facebook martyr”? A Facebook martyr is someone who lives the noble cause on Facebook. They’re those people who create genuinely intelligent / engaging Facebook content that then gets blatantly ripped off by a million other people on Facebook.

Have you looked at Facebook pages that get millions of likes? Have you seen how much of their content was actually created by themselves? The average million+ likes Facebook page does nothing more than copy viral posts. They even download viral videos of Facebook, edit them a tiny bit, and then re-upload them. The minor editing is done only so that the video bypasses Facebook’s inadequate filtering system.

These pages that just copy and paste other people’s content end up with millions of likes even though they’ve create nothing original. So why should you, as a hardworking individual, spend your valuable time creating original content that everyone else then rips off? Obviously you shouldn’t because your time is worth so much more than that.

It’s one of the problems on Facebook, and it is something Facebook seriously needs to sort out. It shouldn’t be possible for pages to get so many likes and so much attention when all they do is rip off your content. And until Facebook sorts this issue out, you would be well advised to not invest too much time on unique content for Facebook, because your content will only be stolen.

Yes, I hate that too. But it is a reality right now. The good news is that Facebook are working hard to make sure that all those copy & paste viral pages are seriously penalised. Personally I hope that happens soon so that people who actually create content end up getting the attention they deserve. We’ll see what happens in the coming months. For now though, use Facebook to engage with your audience, but put more effort into putting content on your actual blog, in your newsletter, and in your books, rather than on Facebook. If you would like to discuss this with me, contact me via PaulMHarrison@hotmail.com.

51. Understand How 100 Can Be Greater Than 10,000

As I’ve mentioned, you can get a million likes simply posting viral content. And viral content is great if your only ambition is to get money from advertising. But for an author trying to establish an author platform it’s a truly ineffective strategy because most of those likes won’t end up translating into book purchases. A Facebook page that has 100 likes from other authors and avid readers, however, can quickly multiply within the right market, leading to high numbers of book sales. It’s better to have 100 people who will purchase your book than 1 million people who won’t.

More Great Ways To Build Your Author Platform.

51. Take it offline: Online is great. It’s a convenient way to establish an audience. But offline is just as important. Because let’s be honest, the people we feel closest to are the ones

we've met in person. That's why you need to get out and explore your niche in the real world. Whether that means attending conventions or joining writer's groups... well, that depends on your niche. But make sure you're actually meeting people and you're not exclusively online.

52: Act as one of your own readers: Your readers fit into a niche and a genre. If you're a sci-fi author your readers follow sci-fi. If you write life coaching books then your readers are in the life coaching niche. Those niches and genres have events that readers attend, blogs readers visit, specific subjects readers talk about. You should make it a priority to get involved with those things. Attend conventions in your industry / niche. Post articles and social media updates about the events occurring in those niches. Basically be your ideal reader, because by acting as an ideal reader yourself you will naturally befriend other ideal readers who will later become early adopters of your book.

53. Let people know what you're up to: It's so simple yet so many author's don't do it. Tell people that you are an author and that you are writing a book, and then tell them that they should follow you because (you're brilliant, sexy, hilarious...). And don't just tell people online. Tell them in person too. A lot of authors are shy, or if not shy humble and quiet. That's fine. Many of the world's best authors have been shy and humble. But neither of those traits are going to help build your author platform. You have to tell people and tell them with pride, enthusiasm, and passion. I'm Paul and I am a writer and a bloody good one so you should follow me right now by clicking this link to my [Facebook page](#)... go on, do it now... thanks. I appreciate it.

54. Own Your Beginnings: If there's one thing that holds author's (and other creatives) back it's this: They want to be successful and famous, but they're not happy telling people that right now they're at square one.

You probably dream of saying to your friends "I'm a famous author and I've sold 289 billion books" (which is still probably less than J.K.Rowling). But to have 10 million followers you first have to have had 100 or 10 or even just 1 followers. Problem is most authors aren't happy saying "Right now I have 3 followers". They don't like telling people that they don't have that many followers right now. But how in the Jiminy Crickets are you ever going to get to a million unless you're willing to start at 0 and say "I'm establishing my author platform and right now I have 0 followers"? You have to be willing to own it. Truly own it. Own the fact that you do not have a big author platform right now. Tell people, "Right now I'm a little leaf blowing in the wind but give me one year and I'll be a mighty oak". Embrace your humble beginnings. Own that, and the rest will follow.

55. Stick to your guns: I'm going to put my hands up in the air and admit full-heartedly that I have a weakness. My weakness is that I spread myself too thinly. Instead of focusing on the one thing I do about two hundred billion different things. That's probably my biggest weakness to be honest.

When you spread yourself too thinly you end up with an author platform that is too broad and not focused in one the one niche and one demographic. Big mistake. The smartest strategy is to hone in on one very specific niche, genre, and demographic and nail it. This is definitely a case where being a big carp in a little pond is better than being a small shark in a big ocean. Be huge to your one niche and your one demographic and focus everything on that.

56. Get mentioned in press releases and magazines: My background is in journalism, so one thing I know a great deal about is how to get published in magazines and press releases.

If you're going to get into major magazines or blogs you're going to need to do something special... or something stupid, depending on which publication you're aiming for (silly videos, for instance, can very quickly go viral, leading to millions of views and a spike in your readership). Getting into print publications (either as a writer yourself or as a subject that another writer is covering) will give you credibility and also help built your author platform. There are many ways to get into these publications, but doing so effectively will depend on your niche, voice, and target audience. If you'd like to learn more, contact me at PaulMHarrison@hotmail.com.

58. Know what it is that makes you amazing: You are amazing. No, honestly, I trust genuinely mean that. People who are willing to follow a passion, like writing, are almost always awesome people. So I am 99% certain that you're awesome.

Question is: How are you awesome? In what specific way are you awesome?

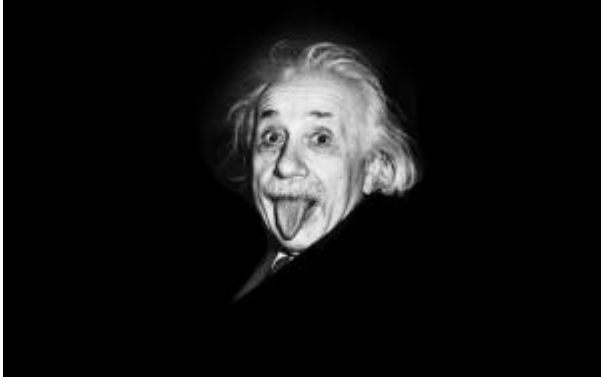
That sounds like a humorous question. Actually it is very serious. If you want to take off and if you want a strong author platform you need to know what it is that makes you awesome.

But here's the catch: the way in which you think you're awesome is probably not the same as the way other people think you're awesome.

You might think you're an extremely intelligent person. But maybe that's not why people love you. Maybe people love you because although you're extremely intelligent you're also funny and silly.

You know Einstein. Genius, obviously. But which picture of Einstein do people remember most? The photo of Einstein sticking his tongue out the car window like a dog.

Why do people remember that picture the most? Why don't they remember the photos of him at a blackboard doing equations, or other serious scientific photos?



The reason people love that photo is because it shows that despite being a genius Einstein also had a playful childlike persona. That's what makes him not just a scientific icon but a personality people love.

So what is it about you that people love?

I want you to truly think about this. And if you don't know the answer contact me and within one consultation I will tell you what's amazing about you. Promise. Picking up on people's special traits and personality is a real skill of mine.

For me, I know that although I'm extremely creative and a good writer, what people love about me is that I am an exceedingly warm-hearted and caring person with a natural propensity for making people smile. That's what makes me special. And that's part of what I must show for my branding.

Now, it's important for me to say that I feel more inclined to write highly intelligent articles that will make people think. That's what I *think* I must do for my writing. But it's wrong. Our views of ourselves often are wrong. We see ourselves differently to how other people see us. My charisma / charm isn't about intellect it is about the fact that within five seconds of meeting a stranger I can make them feel like I'm their best friend and can make them laugh and feel carefree. That's what people love about me. And that is the key to my branding.

But this isn't about me. It's about you. What is it that makes you special? What is it people love about you? Find that out.

There will be something exquisitely beautiful about you. I guarantee it. Find that thing. Express it. Do that and your author platform will take care of itself.

These are just a selection of some of the many techniques you can use to build your author platform / writer platform.

If you would like to learn more about building an author platform / writer platform, please contact me via PaulMHarrison@hotmail.com.

Thanks for reading.

AUTHOR



Paul M Harrison is an author, journalist, and SEO / SEM / SMM with over ten years experience. He's also an avid gamer and heavily involved in the gaming community, in which he is a reputable writer. A freelance journalist and copywriter, Paul Harrison can be contacted via [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) Email Paul Harrison via PaulMHarrison@hotmail.com