

Virtual Blog Tours

From Just the FAQs www.JustTheFAQs.net

Establishing yourself as a new author requires getting folks to notice your book. Marketing statistics show that garnering reviews and endorsements sells books. That's because what others say about your book often carries more weight with a potential reader than what you say about it. Many authors dream of having their book highlighted by Oprah. The reason it's a coveted endorsement is because she provides a stage with an audience of millions. With over 150,000 new books coming to market each year, only a select few will ever reach this plateau. As a new author, it's up to you to find as many smaller stages as possible that targets an audience who enjoys reading the type of book you have produced. One of the best ways to do this is to go on a virtual blog tour.

There are millions of blogs on the Web, each devoted to a particular topic that draws the attention of a targeted audience. Many have a very loyal following. Having your book highlighted or reviewed on blogs that cater to folks who would find your book interesting is a great way to create buzz. Participating in a virtual blog tour coordinates your marketing effort by having news about your book appear on several blogs over the span of a few weeks.

The information about you and your book could be presented on each blog in several ways. These include:

- A review of the book
- An interview with you
- The book's synopsis
- Your bio
- Pictures of you and your book's cover
- A guest post, where you have the opportunity to talk directly to the blog's audience.

A virtual blog tour is one of the best ways to expose a new book to a wide audience of readers in a short period of time. It will also help you establish yourself as an author. But, it does require time to coordinate. You can tackle the project yourself or hire a tour coordinator. A few offer a mentored tour package to guide you through the process. If this is your first book and your first tour, you may want to seriously consider hiring a coordinator for two simple reasons, which are time and connections.

It takes at least a solid month to research potential blogs and contact the hosts. The acceptance to invitation ratio is about half or less. In other words, if you want to do ten to twenty stops on the tour you will likely have to contact forty hosts or more, which means finding that many appropriate blogs. For those who do accept, you will need to provide them with all related post information (see the bullet points above) and perhaps a copy of the book. That's a lot of time-consuming work.

The other reason to consider hiring a professional coordinator for your tour is that they have spent years building connections with high-traffic blog owners. These bloggers usually follow the tour coordinator's offerings and count on them as a valuable resource. Keep in mind that one of the reasons these blogs have a lot of traffic is because they are constantly posting about what's new. Being friendly with a tour coordinator helps them keep that edge.

If you really want to learn about the book business and marketing, you may want to consider a mentored tour. If you have the time to devote to it, researching the blogs yourself will give you an idea of what interests your target audience most. It will also give you ideas about ways to present your material that will stand out from the crowd.

Whether you do the tour yourself, hire a professional coordinator or do a mentored tour, you will make valuable connections that will pay off down the road. If the blog owners you tour with like your book, they will jump on board quickly to host your next tour. And, you can advertise their reviews and endorsements. Blog tours also give you a lot of link-backs to your own site, which gets you ranked higher with search engines. Overall, virtual blog tours are one of the most economical ways to create buzz on your book and establish yourself as a premier author.