

# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

## Tim Grahl on how to bake marketing into your book – and why that is so important

In this Q & A with book marketing expert Tim Grahl of <http://OutThinkGroup.com> we talk in detail – and with lots of examples – about how to “bake marketing into your book” and how your book should get readers to take a “next step.”

**Debbie:** Let me introduce you to **Tim Grahl**, founder of Out:Think. In his words, he “works with writers, speakers and world changers to build their platforms, engage their tribes and grow their businesses.” His clients include best-selling authors **Dan Pink** (*Drive, A Whole New Mind* and the forthcoming *To Sell Is Human*), Tim Sanders (*Love Is the Killer App* and *Today We Are Rich*) and **Pam Slim** (*Escape From Cubicle Nation* and working on her second book, tentatively titled *Body of Work*).

What he does is very pertinent to what the Beta Authors are doing. He helps authors build their sites and online presence, and then optimize their online platform, so they can meet the business goal they have set for their book – which may be to sell more books, or do more speaking. Tim, are you there?

**Tim:** Yes, I'm here. Thank you for having me.

**Debbie:** Tim, I'm going to ask you to help us review that very first question that we started with at the beginning of Beta Author Boost. Which is, to start with the end game. I know that this is something you talk about, but it's just a great way to frame up this conversation and how to market a book. Let's start with the first question. Everyone on the call and everyone listening in is a business person, and an author second.

“Why are you writing a book? What is your business goal?” Talk a little bit about why that's such an important question to answer before thinking about how to market your book.

**Tim:** I think that starting with the end in mind really helps, because it helps you understand how to craft your book, and what kind of marketing you're going to do for the book. It allows you to plan ahead and put things in the book as you're writing it that as specific to what you're shooting for.

If you do that from the very beginning, it allows you to really write a book that meets your goal, instead of trying to figure out what you want to do at the end. You end up trying to redo a lot of things. Especially when we're talking about



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

self-publishing small books like this, where you have complete control over the content.

You can even think through how the book will drive people back to your website, or drive people to contact you, and really put that in from the beginning. Whereas if you wait til the end, a lot of time you either can't do what you were hoping to, or you have to go back and change a lot of things.

So really focusing on that end goal upfront helps you do that planning. A good friend of mine recently self published a small book, about 100 pages. It's called *A Non-Profit Narrative*. His name is Dan Portnoy. He wanted a way that he could spread his name to a lot of non-profits in an easy way, without sending brochures or things like that.

And since a book is a gift, first and foremost, he decided to do this. He has it for sale, and he's done some promotions, but the number one thing he's doing is buying copies and giving it away to everyone he knows in the non-profit sector.

He's given it to past clients. One of his clients was the United Way of Los Angeles. He gave several copies to the CEO, who's going to pass it on to heads of other United Way members. He knew from the beginning that this was going to be his plan.

And so, he wrote the book in a way that is really great information. Obviously, you want to write a great book that stands on its own. But it also shows that he's an expert in what he does. So everyone who gets the book is going to assume that he's the expert.

The book has only been out a little while, and he's already gotten several speaking opportunities because of the book. He's gotten several leads for new clients. One of them has already turned into a new client, and it's a really great thing that he can give out to anyone and it turns into new clients.

So that's a very different goal than selling a lot of books or just trying to get speaking events. The main goal was to get clients, so he wrote a book that supported that, and had the marketing play in from the beginning.

**Debbie:**

I went and looked up his book on Amazon, and it looks great. It's available also in print, and for Kindle. So you're talking about giving away printed copies of the book that probably cost him about \$2 a copy. This is very important, and we haven't really deeply explored this enough in the program – whether it makes more sense to also come out immediately with a print version. How important is that?



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

There is a guy named Lewis Howes <http://lewishowes.com/> and he's written a book about how to do a webinar to get more business, and it's only available for Kindle. It's not that well written and there are typos in it, but it's brilliantly effective. Interestingly – and appropriately – the eBook is sponsored by Citrix. Tim, any thoughts on digital books, versus having that print companion in order to use it for business?

**Tim:** With Print-On-Demand, it's really easy to do both. So pretty much the only additional cost to get it ready for print is getting it laid out and ready for the printer, but from there, everything is Print-On-Demand. So Dan will order 50 copies and when he runs out, he'll order 20 more, or he can order them and have them shipped somewhere.

He can even order hardback copies. You can do that independently of having it for sale on Amazon too. But since it's Print-On-Demand, it's not like he's carrying any kind of inventory. If someone does buy it on Amazon, it just comes out of what he makes. He's not spending any extra money.

In general, I don't really see a downside in making it available for print as well. Again, it depends on your goals and what you're doing. But I've seen more and more reports of fiction going to eBooks, and I think there is still something in the business book market where people like to have print copies.

I don't necessarily think it's a bad thing, but I don't have an opinion either way. It depends on your goal. For Dan, he knew he wanted to hand out physical copies, so he wanted to make sure he had it ready to print.

**Debbie:** I don't want to leave anyone in confusion here. The purpose of Beta Author Boost was to get the Kindle edition out there. But as we all know, by the time you got the manuscript to that point, and you've found an eBook formatter and a cover designer, it's very little work involved to go the next step and make sure the book is laid out for print.

It wasn't that I was saying not to do it. I was just saying to get the first step out there. Once you're that far, it's a lot easier to continue and get the print version.

**Tim:** Since we're talking about starting with the end game in mind, I really want to talk about how important it is to think ahead. You want to think about what the next step is for people after they have read this book. Do you want them going to



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

your website to download resources you have available? Do you want them to contact you? You want to make sure you're *baking the marketing into the book*.

Again, it's not like the book is a sales pitch for you. It should be a stand-alone idea that people feel like they get their money's worth. But at the same time, there are lots of interesting ways where you can drive people back to your own marketing funnel on your website or to contact you. So you want to be thinking ahead on that.

You want to think about how you can weave that into the book. If you refer to a video, have a link to a video on your website. If you refer to a workbook that they can download for free, link to that on your website. Think about what kind of marketing funnel you're going to have behind the scenes to support the book as well. Starting from the beginning, if you're thinking about that kind of stuff, you can think about that as you write the book and how it's going to fit together.

**Debbie:** Tim, that's great. You're leading me right to where I would like us to go with this conversation. Let's talk about the website that supports a book. For the Beta Authors listening in, they may or may not want to do a whole separate website, but anyone can do at least a dedicated page.

We'll just call it a site. It could be a one page on your current site, or it could be a stand-alone site. What should happen on that page to fully leverage the potential of your book, as a business builder?

**Tim:** A couple things that would seem like common sense, but it is always surprising to me how many authors out there aren't doing some of the very simple things. You want to make sure it's very clear that you have a book for sale. I don't know how many author websites I've gone to, and there's no picture of the book. The cover isn't even there.

So you want to make sure that people know it's a book. You have to look at it with fresh eyes. People who are landing here that don't know who you are, don't know about your book, and don't know anything about your site. Is it going to be extremely clear that you have a book for sale?

There's a really great tool called Cover Action Pro <http://www.coveractionpro.com/>. It's a little technical. It works with Photoshop. But any Photoshop designer that you have should be able to use it. You can render an image. All you have to have is have the cover designed, and it can render an image as a paperback or hardback. You can use this on your website, so it's very clear. There's a picture of a book on your website. That's very important.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

And then you need to have it very clearly how they can buy the book. Have a link to Amazon. Use their logo on the button so it's very clear. Sometimes there's a tiny hyperlink that says, "Buy at Amazon.com." People are very visual, they click on pictures and they pay attention to picture much more than they do text.

So any time you can use a picture, especially with a brand as well recognized as Amazon, use a picture. Use Amazon's logo. You want to have very clearly a picture of the book, and where they can buy it. From there, you want to give them something they can do if they're not ready to buy the book. That should be signing up for your email newsletter.

If you use a service like <http://MailChimp.com> it's free. You can get started for free, up to 2,000 subscribers. Give them a chance to download the intro to the book, or maybe the part that's for free on the Kindle edition if they try it out. Give them a way where they can give you their email address in exchange for getting a portion of the book for free, so they can try it out.

But if they're not going to buy the book at this point, you want to get them to give you permission to stay in contact with them so that you can continue to market the book. You want to have a way for them to get in contact with you, and actually get into your marketing.

From there, it's a very simple thing. You need to have an "about me" page so they can read about you. You need to have a "contact me" page. You need to have some stuff that builds your credibility. If it's a business book and you have worked with big name clients, you need to have their logos on there.

You need to have testimonials from your clients, or testimonials from people that have read the book, on the website. On Amazon, one of the biggest drivers of sales is customer reviews. You need that same thing on your website. So, anything you can do to show your credibility and reduce the risk on the side of the reader so that they'll feel comfortable buying the book.

Also, have it very clear how they can contact you. If you're interested in being hired to speak, make sure there is a speaking page on there and have a video of you speaking for it. If you want to get hired to do this kind of stuff, have a very clear page on there for it.

You just want to think through, "What are the top 3-5 things I want people to do when they come to my book website." Make sure they are very clear and hard to miss. You don't want people coming to the website after they were



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

linked from the book, and they can't figure out how to buy the book or how to send you an email.

Or, if someone heard about your book and thinks you might be good for a conference, but they can't figure out how to hire you to speak. So don't get fancy. A lot of times people will come up fancy words for something, instead of just saying, "Buy it here. Hire me."

You want it very clear. Just think about how you surf the web. People might be drinking a coffee, watching TV, watching their kids. They aren't paying 100% attention. They're probably not even paying 50% attention to what they're doing. So you want to make it very clear what's going on.

**Debbie:** Tim, you said something that just crystallized for me as you were speaking. It's absolutely essential to make it clear on your website what the connection is between your book and your business, meaning between your book and hiring you. Connect the dots for the reader or visitor to your site.

I even know for myself that it's really easy to forget to do this. "Well, the reader will see that I have a book about marketing to small businesses. So, they'll know they should hire me to do a marketing audit for a small business." The answer is no, they might not know that. It might not be clear.

So if you think of it in those terms, help them dot the connections, because for most business authors, the point is to get something, a goal, or to get more business.

**Tim:** I really can't stress that idea of being clear more. I would say a large majority of websites out there for authors are not clear about what they want people to do. Their books are hidden. Their call to action is hidden. A lot of time it's a combination of being scared of marketing yourself or pushing too hard, and just not knowing.

So a couple ways to make sure you're doing that, you can do some user testing. You can do it on your own by asking some colleagues or friends that may not have heard what you're working on. Send them the website and ask them, "Were you able to find the book? What do you think you should do when you go to this website? If you wanted to hire me to speak, where would you click?"

Have them do that. A website that's great for this is called UserTesting.com. It costs some money, but it's really neat. It allows you to submit your website along with some questions, like what I just said. "How would you do this? Do I have anything for sale? If I do, what is it?" It records people actually visiting your



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

website, answering your questions, and hearing them talk through as they browse your website. You will be astonished at the things that people can't figure out, the things that people can't find.

**Debbie:** That's an interesting idea. It's making me think that the book is a great excuse to reevaluate what you're doing online with your site, in terms of getting business and showcasing your business. Publishing a book is a great way to reinvent what your online presence is, and what you're trying to get out of it. That's very interesting.

And it's funny, sometimes these things are so obvious. They stare us in the face and it's easy to not get it in a way that makes sense to visitors. Did you want to talk about that more, or could we talk about “growing your tribe?” I think people who don't have a big presence on Facebook or Twitter are wondering about that.

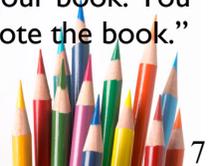
**Tim:** We can move on. I believe I covered everything there. When it comes to anything with marketing or your website or even writing the book, the overarching idea is that you are trying to be relentlessly helpful. If you haven't heard of **Kathy Sierra**, you should really look her up. I'll send you a video. (Here's the link: <http://www.toccon.com/toc2011/public/schedule/detail/18459>) She talks about the publishing world.

She talks a lot about if you are writing a book that is *relentlessly helpful*, that is the number one thing you should do, and that is the number one thing you can do for marketing as well. When we look at things like Twitter, Facebook, your website, or email marketing, you want to focus first on, “How can I be most helpful to the people that are going to read my book, hire me, read my blog,” and focus on that 100%.

All of these other things are just tools to do that. What you find is that as long as you are being relentlessly helpful, you can get away with marketing. You won't come across as being “too salesy.” So focusing on that first is the number one way you're going to build your tribe. The other thing that you want to focus on is making sure that there are no dead ends when it comes to your marketing.

This is one of the things I see a lot. I was talking to an author yesterday, and he was telling me, “I have people that email me all the time that say, 'I read your book, and I bought three copies for friends.’” and I said, “What do you tell them to do after that?” and he says, “I don't know, I just say thank you.”

And I'm like, “You have this huge fan that is already promoting your book. You need to have something in place to help them continue to promote the book.”



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

Same thing goes if you have an email list. Most people throw up an email list, and when people sign up, you don't hear from them again for 6 months. The names are sitting there.

You want to make sure that people have taken the steps to actually sign up for your email list. Are they going into something that will continue to market to them, and invite them to go deeper? If someone starts following you on Twitter, how are you engaging with them?

Are you constantly giving them ways to go deeper into what you're doing? So looking at all of these things working together – there should be no dead end to your marketing where people can't go any further. Alan Weiss who has written a ton of books, he talks about this thing called the accelerant curve. And again, if we're talking about business books, this is very applicable.

**Alan Weiss's Accelerant Curve:** <http://www.contrarianconsulting.com/the-accelerant-curve-episode-47/>

People should be able to interact with you on all price scales. From free – blog, twitter, email lists – to ten or twenty dollars, which would be your book, to all the way up to hiring you for the day, and everywhere in between. Basically, everything should be supporting everything.

If you want your book to turn into a consulting client – have you actually thought through the process of what it is going to take for someone to buy the book, and then become a consulting client? If you think through that process and make sure there's actually a road map for them to follow, then it's going to be much more successful.

We're talking about building a tribe, and one of the most important things when it comes to building a tribe is communication and always giving people something to do next.

**Debbie:** I just love the way you're talking about that. It's funny, because I know exactly what you mean. As you're speaking, I can just picture these dead ends in my marketing and it's giving me the shivers because I know it can be better. How creative do you need to be? For example, you talked about thinking through the process of what happens between buying the book and them hiring you for consulting.

So if they buy the book from Amazon, you're not going to have their email. But if they email you afterward – because your email is really clear on your website –



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

and they say, “I loved your book!” You could ask them to post a review to Amazon. Although that can be tricky; a lot of people won't post a review.

You could offer them a free 30-minute consultation. “Click here and sign up.” What are some other ideas? How creative do you have to get in order to lure them in a very relentlessly helpful and not “salesy” way?

**Tim:** This always goes back to your goal. One of the first things I would ask is what I ask any author, “What's your goal with the book?” The same author I was talking to yesterday – he doesn't need the money from selling this book, and he's not really interested in speaking much more than he is.

So, why does he want to sell more books? He said, “Because the more my book gets out there, the cooler my life is. In fact, I just got back from shooting machine guns in Vegas with a bunch of people who wanted me to speak to their salesmen.”

So his goal is to sell more books so his life can be cooler. So it's always coming back to your goal. If you're looking for more clients and someone emails you about how much they love the book and the insight, I would offer to get on the phone with them, and just talk to them for 20 minutes.

Say, “I'd like to hear more about the book, and what you're working on.” I guarantee you that a lot of those will turn into clients. If you're looking to just sell lots of copies of the book, if someone emails you that they like the book, you should email them something that they can send to 6 people for free.

Just say, “Here's a portion of my book. It's more than you can download anywhere else, it's not just the introduction. It's the introduction and the first two chapters. I don't send this out to many people, but I would love for you to take a look. If you love the book, feel free to send it to whoever you want.”

In that PDF that you send, there's links at the end of it to buy the book. So you give them a next step. You mentioned that you don't have their email address when they buy from Amazon, but somewhere in your book you should be inviting them to contact you. “I'd love to hear how you like the book. Here's my email address, email me!”

Even authors like Dan Pink invites readers to email him on each of his books. This isn't just for people like us, who are going to be fighting to sell a few hundred copies. This is the way that you connect with readers. From there, you can do whatever you want. You can show them the next path.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

For me, if someone contacted me and they weren't right to be a client, I would invite them to join my email list. Then they'll get lots of content, and I'll have them in a funnel where I can eventually sell something else to them. Keeping that end goal in mind, get creative.

The important is that you fill in that gap for people. They're not going to automatically do things, but if you invite them to do things, then they will.

**Debbie:** Tim, talk a little bit more about free content that's based on the book to get people in to your clutches, but in a relentlessly helpful way. For example, if someone sent an email, you could reply to them and say, "Here's a special PDF extract." Perhaps maybe you have several different PDF versions of your book? PDF versus .Mobi or ePub, so that you can use them in different ways?

Of course, they're going to look totally different. They could be designed or have lots of color, they could all very clearly state how to get in touch with you and how to work with you. Does that make sense? Because people do ask me that, and I think it's a very legitimate question. "Why do I need to do this as a Kindle eBook that's digital? Why don't I just make a PDF?" Can you do both? Can you have them play off each other?

**Tim:** The answer to everything is, "It depends." I know that I've hammered this point, but it always comes back to your goals. There is a difference between having your book available on Amazon as Kindle downloads or as a print book, that is different than just having a PDF for sale on your website.

You published a book. We know the technology and details are not that different, but the outside appearance of that are two different things. When you're talking about free content, it just depends. I'm working with one author now who is putting together a series of videos that we're going to give away to people that pre-order the book.

Really simple, set up a camera, and he does a series of videos. It will probably be a total of 30-45 minutes worth of content, and we're going to make that available to people that pre-order the book. The problem nowadays is not being able to do something, it's figuring out what to do. So I would say, get creative. Try different things.

Again, constantly put yourself in the reader's shoes. What do you think they would want? A really great book on this topic of creating free content – podcasts, blogs, emails, newsletters, white papers, all this kind of stuff – there's a book called *Content Rules* by Ann Handley and C.C. Chapman. Ann Handley started MarketingProfs.com.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

*Content Rules:* <http://www.amazon.com/Content-Rules-Podcasts-Webinars-Customers/dp/0470648287>

**Debbie:** I'll add that book to our list.

**Tim:** But always make sure that everything you do is showing people to the next choice. One of the things that drives me crazy is that a lot of times my clients will request a portion of the book that we can give away on the website, from the publisher. They send me this file that is literally just that portion of the book.

There's no color to it. The cover's not embedded in it, and there is no call to action. I end up taking that and completely editing it myself, so that it has a full color cover when you open it, and the last page is the author's bio, blurbs from the book, and then how you can buy the book.

People are going to get to the end of that thing, and wonder how they can buy it. So always be thinking through, "When they're done with this, what do I have them do next?" That should be across all marketing platforms. When you're done giving a talk, how do they find out more? When they're done reading your book, what should they do next? When they've visited your website, what should they be doing next? That kind of thing.

**Debbie:** I actually want to reemphasize what you said about making your book available as a PDF versus publishing it on Kindle. This is the premise underlining Beta Author Boost, what makes you an author is to be able to say, "Go to my Amazon page: there's my book."

So in terms of this really strategic thinking, we should definitely do that, and have our Print-On-Demand printed version. But then in addition, there can be different forms and pieces of the book that are free content that you use to sell the book, and sell your other services, so you always have something to give out.

Tim, your comments are very interesting and very on point. Some of those in the program are still working on their book, and I think this is a great fresh thinking to infuse into them as they're writing the book. "Could I actually make these next five sections the basis of a workshop I would give?"

Rather than finishing the book, publishing it, and then saying, "I think I'm going to do a workshop based on the book." Then you go back and try to retrofit what's in the book. That's not something we talked about quite enough, but I think that's really good and clear thinking.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

Let's take a couple questions. Does anyone on the call want to ask Tim a question, or make any kind of remark based on what you've heard?

**Mazie:** This is Mazie, and I have a question. A lot of the things you talked about, Tim, some of the things I sort of knew and other things I just thought, "Yeah!" Is there any book or anything where I can get an idea of all the possibilities that are out there, so that as I'm writing my book I can make a better determination of which of those things I might want to be using?

**Tim:** There are several books out there. I would say that there is no one book that encapsulates it all. Let me give some recommendations. If you're new to the understanding of tribes, you need to read *Tribes* by Seth Godin. It's very lean on how-to, but it really will shift your paradigm in what you think marketing is.

If you're thinking about the marketing side of things, *The New Rule of Marketing and PR* by David Meerman Scott is a good place to start, because it opens up all of the possibilities that are out there for marketing. When we think about these systems of really good books that might seem a little counter intuitive, but if you read it with this in mind – it's called the *Referral Engine* by John Jantsch.

It's a great book. By the end of that, you will start having an understanding of how all of these things should beat each other. The book is for small business owners that want to create a system that keeps bringing in more referrals. That's similar to what you're doing as an author.

So reading that book and thinking about how your book fits into these systems is really important. *Content Rules* like I mentioned for coming up with content, and then there are some classics that if you haven't heard of, you should really read. *Permission Marketing*, by Seth Godin. *Influence: Psychology of Persuasion* by Robert Cialdini is a fantastic book.

If you haven't read the Chip and Dan Heath books, *Made to Stick* and *Switch*, you should definitely read those as well. There is no one book that I've seen that does a good job of talking about marketing. All of the ones specifically for authors mostly suck and are outdated.

We always want to be focused on the end game in mind, and looking at what has the biggest impact. What's bringing in the most book sales, these things. Don't get caught reading these books that are Facebook specific, or Twitter specific, or specific to a tool. It's like trying to learn to use a hammer really well, when you have no idea what you're trying to build.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

**Debbie:** That's really good advice, because there's so many books out there. Tim, I hate to ask this but you told me you're working on a book. Is it by chance on this topic, or is it on something else?

**Tim:** I'm working on a book, the manuscript is done and I'm getting feedback from initial people. I think it's been really good. I'm still about three months out, and it is on this topic. It's about how authors can correctly do marketing. So if you want to make sure that you know when it comes out, go to my website.

It's [OutThinkGroup.com](http://OutThinkGroup.com) and sign up for the newsletter. I'll start sending you stuff every week automatically, and I'll make sure you know when the book comes out.

**Debbie:** Tim, thank you. I've already given them your URL about three times, but I'll make that four and five times. Anyone else there want to ask a question?

**Hilary:** Yeah, my question is about what a book marketing plan actually looks like. You sort of talk around it, but didn't really talk about it. What does it look like? How do you think about what strategies to use? How do you make a marketing plan? How do you put measurable things in there? Or will that be in your book too?

**Debbie:** We did talk about a lot of that, but one of the things you and I talked about yesterday was using a litmus test, making a list of marketing strategies, which might include guest blogging, and then seeing what the results are. Then take those results, and applying them to what your business goal.

We didn't talk specifically about how to write down a marketing plan, but do you have an answer to that? Or do you want to talk about the litmus test?

**Tim:** Again, there is no blue print that is going to work for everybody, But how you think about the marketing plan – start with the end in mind, and then work backwards from there, of how you're going to get people to do certain things.

Let me give an example. Josh Kaufman wrote a book called *The Personal MBA* that came out at the beginning of last year. His goal with that book was obviously to sell a lot of copies, and he has sold about 65,000 copies of the book so far.

He did it with almost no traditional media, and he's traveled exactly one time to promote the book, so none of the traditional ways to promote the book. What he did was he thought long and hard about how he can move everyone that comes through his website to buy the book.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

The goal was that he wanted to sell as many copies of the book as possible. The framework was that he was going to do it all through his website and his email list. Then he was able to put those together in an interesting way that got to those goals.

He set up Evergreen Content, that would bring in new people to the website. He made sure that when people landed on the website, it was very clear that they should be buying the book, and/or signing up for the email list.

When they signed up for the email list, he had auto-responders that upsold the book. He began with the end in mind, and constraints of him not traveling and not doing a lot of traditional media. Then he put together a system that fit that, and got him towards his goal.

What I was talking about with litmus tests – 20 years ago, it was pretty simple to market a book and your publisher did most of it for you. But it's like, you come out with a book, do a book tour, get on the radio or TV a couple times, and then you go right back into your cave and start writing again.

Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on how you look at it, that's not how it is anymore. In fact, you have too many choices. There's too many things you can possibly do to promote your book. So as you think through all of these options and as you making your book marketing plan and start thinking through what you can do, you should have litmus tests in place that help you answer a question of whether or not you should do something.

For instance, one of my clients got invited to write for the Huffington Post, which is much easier than you may think. She was struggling with whether she should do it or not. I said that it's really simple: We do a couple posts on the Huffington Post, link it back to your website, and we try to get all those people to sign up for the email list.

We put that into our analytics, and we look and see if it works. If it works, keep doing it. If it doesn't work, stop doing it and try something new. So when you're looking at your marketing plan, don't get caught up thinking about how you're going to use Twitter or Facebook.

Don't assume that you're going to do any one thing. You start with your goal, and figure out what things to try, and try them. If they don't get you to your end goal, you throw them out and you try something new.



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

**Debbie:** Tim, I think that's very helpful. Hilary, we can talk about that a little bit next week. I think the fact that you're writing about content and that's your specialty, that's really cool. You probably have way more ideas than you realize.

**Hilary:** I have a ton of ideas. I have too many ideas. Exactly what Tim just said, there's a million things you could do, but what you can't do is do them all at the same time. Then it's just overwhelming. That's my biggest challenge now, how do I write this book that captures everything I know, and still write other things, and still actually do my work? That's my personal biggest challenge.

**Debbie:** You and many others. I think the answer of that is to be continued, and to looking some of your processes and methodologies and scheduling. Tim, were you going to say something?

**Tim:** That's a very common problem. One thing is to always be looking at what you're already producing. A lot of people are producing a lot of content that they don't even look at as possible uses. I think of these as DVD extras. If you look at a movie and when you get the DVD, it has all these special features.

A lot of times it's stuff that's already been created, whether it's cut scenes or interviews with the actors or directors. It was stuff that was either already created, or really easy to do, because everyone was there already.

So if you write a book, a lot of times you leave out a lot of stuff because you don't have room in the book or it doesn't make sense at the time. This is stuff you can use to build your platform. Same thing for if you do a talk somewhere, make sure it gets recorded and that's something you can release.

Look for creative ways to do everything. Then of course, the biggest thing that I see a lot of authors make mistakes with is just not having a good productivity plan that make it really easy to stay on task and get their stuff done. For me, the first two hours of my workday are dedicated to content creation. If someone interrupts that, they better be bleeding, otherwise I'm going to be upset.

I have time in my schedule that is locked out. Nobody is allowed to touch it. It's for content creation, and you find that the rest of your life falls into place. I have a lot of clients and I'm very busy, but I'm still able to get everything done if I put those things in first.

So having a plan in place to make sure that you get the most important things done first thing in the morning – authors have to have a very tight productivity plan in place because writing is hard and time consuming. Writing is sometimes



# BETA AUTHOR BOOST

the last thing you want to do. So you have to set yourself up so that it's really hard to fail.

**Debbie:** Tim, I couldn't agree more. That's what I was talking about earlier, "Put the gun to my head and make me do work." What is it? Hilary, we'll talk about it a little bit. Maybe it is the first two hours. Maybe it's the first hour. Maybe it's the last hour.

It's an excellent suggestion, and yet it's so simple and straightforward. To be continued. Tim, I think you touched on a couple things that have been so important that we have talked about during the program, and I hope we'll make everyone think much bigger about what their books are for and what it can lead to. We're always in Beta. With that, I think we should say goodbye. Tim, thank you so much for joining us. Thanks to everyone for listening today, I will be in touch. Thank you guys.

**Group:** Bye!

You can sign up for Tim Grahl's free e-newsletter series on how to build a tribe at <http://OutThinkGroup.com>

*This interview was recorded live on May 3, 2012.*

