Launch List

This is the Sami Valentine handy dandy guide to launching. Standard disclaimer: I am a new kid on the block who is still seeing what works. My book launches in 3 days and this is what I have done to prepare for a three month rapid release of the first 3 books of a 6 book Urban Fantasy series. I started 3-6 months before publishing. Scroll down for a list of resources.

Book

- [ ] Market Research
- [ ] Blurb
- [ ] Cover
- [ ] Front and Back Matter with links to website/newsletter
- [ ] Keywords & categories
- [ ] Format book & QA
- [ ] Set up book on Amazon
- [ ] All the book things
- [ ] Write a reader magnet to collect emails in promos
- [ ] Write an exclusive epilogue to book 1 for a CTA to organic subscribers

Brand Elements

- [ ] Write Bio (100-200 words)
- [ ] Pick Headshot
- [ ] Pick color scheme for graphics and visuals (ex. black, pink, white)
- [ ] Pick 4 main topics to post about (ex. urban fantasy, travel, fandom, history)
- [ ] Plot a rough release schedule
- [ ] Pick a project management tool (Notion, Evernote, or a paper notebook)
- [ ] Create simple media kit (Put together Book cover, blurb, buy links, headshot, bio, and contact information)
  http://samivalentine.com/media-kit/

Networking

- [ ] Join writer's groups like 20Booksto50k, Create if Writing, the Writing Gals, and Guerrilla Publishing
- [ ] Seek out your tribe
- [ ] Go to a writer's conference like 20Books Vegas
- [ ] Find other authors in your genre who are 1-3 steps ahead to mingle, cross-promote, and be friendly with.
- [ ] Find a mentor
- [ ] Give back to the community (host promos, create a pinterest board, etc)

Platform

- [ ] Facebook Page

- ☐ Instagram Profile
- ☐ Pinterest Board

    https://www.pinterest.com/samivalentinewrites/urban-fantasy-must-read-books/
- ☐ Bookbub
- ☐ GoodReads
- ☐ Amazon Author Central
- ☐ Website (one pager is fine)
- ☐ Goodie Link (optional page with book links and promos for Pinterest and Instagram bios)

    http://samivalentine.com/goodies/
- ☐ Book cave
- ☐ Awesomegang

Advertising

- ☐ Set up FB pixel
- ☐ Put pixel on website
- ☐ Put pixel on StoryOrigin and Bookfunnel account
- ☐ Decide when you will explore ads

List Building

- ☐ Sign up to Mailerlite
- ☐ Write 4 email sequence:
    - ☐ confirmation email,
    - ☐ introduction to the book world email,
    - ☐ intro to the author email,
    - ☐ ask to join ARC team email.
- ☐ Set up reader magnet
    - ☐ StoryOrigin (Best UX & Free)
    - ☐ Bookfunnel (Great paid features)
    - ☐ Prolific Works (good for testing covers since you see how yours ranks in a giveaway)
- ☐ Join group promos in your genre. The more specific the better.
- ☐ Create mailing schedule (alternate between emails about personal life, the books, and interested related content with promos at the bottom)
- ☐ Instabooks or AuthorXP list builder

    https://www.fiverr.com/instabooks

    https://authorsxp.com/
- ☐ Use social media posts, story excerpts, personal anecdotes, and promos to make up content of newsletter

    https://preview.mailerlite.com/o3t0f6

    https://preview.mailerlite.com/p7f7p4

ARC Readers

- ☐ Set up ARC copy on Booksprout

- [ ] Set up ARC copy on Storyorigin
- [ ] Add calls to get ARCs to the end of reader magnet
- [ ] Add link to ARC copies in newsletter

  https://preview.mailerlite.com/w8e4n7
- [ ] Post call for ARC copies in reader groups
- [ ] Schedule calls for ARC readers on social media
- [ ] Stop calls for ARCs 5-2 weeks before launch and switch to promoting preorders
- [ ] Anticipate 1 review per 10 ARC readers so scale your ARC team accordingly

Content

- [ ] Buffer/Planoly/Hootsuite for scheduling content
- [ ] Zapier Instagam to FB
- [ ] Zapier website blog posts to FB
- [ ] Set up the RSS blog feed on your Amazon and Goodreads
- [ ] Schedule promos/giveaways
- [ ] Use FB/social media posts to increase dialogue with fans (ask about favorite characters, ask what stories that they want you to write, etc)
- [ ] Post about your pets

Newsletter Swaps

- [ ] Create Google form to collect info

  https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc59otaE_SDRY-1Z9fVuS2aqZjW9xYrfZvDh6ipX_2fPoGA8w/viewform
- [ ] Post in genre-specific author group for swaps
- [ ] Stay organized with spreadsheet
- [ ] Create group promos on StoryOrigin/Bookfunnel/Prolific Works and track stats
- [ ] Identify top sharers and reach out to do a personal swap. Prioritize sharing theirs first to collect the IOU for your launch dates

Launch Week

- [ ] Update reader magnet with new buy now links
- [ ] Update email squence
- [ ] Change phrasing/links on website from preorders to buy now
- [ ] Write a thank you message to post in mailing list and social media
- [ ] Schedule email blast for the day and social media posts throughout the week
- [ ] Ask ARC readers to add the book to their goodreads lists or share on social media
- [ ] Add a link to an exclusive epilogue in the end of the book to collect organic emails and segment them in your mailing list provider
- [ ] Update the book file and upload

Suggested Resources

I have been studying self publishing on and off for years, but the teacher that really brought it all together for me was Derek Murphy with his Guerrilla Publishing Course and Castle Writing Retreat.

- Newsletter Ninja: this is a quick guide to crafting a newsletter that people want to read. https://www.amazon.com/Newsletter-Ninja-Become-Author-Mailing-ebook/dp/B07C6J8HP9

- Confused about using social media for authors, check out this article: https://kindlepreneur.com/social-media-for-writers/

- Guerrilla Publishing by Creativindie.com has a useful guide on DIY marketing: https://www.facebook.com/groups/guerrillapublishing/

- 20Booksto50k has a golden list of must-read articles in its pinned posts: https://www.facebook.com/groups/20Booksto50k/

- Promoting a book on Instagram: 15 author examples https://insights.bookbub.com/authors-running-fantastic-book-promotions-on-instagram/

- Twitter mistakes too many authors make: https://insights.bookbub.com/authors-running-fantastic-book-promotions-on-instagram/

- Hootsuite's guide to Instagram: https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-hashtags/

- My mini case study on how to get your first mailing list subscribers: http://samivalentine.com/2019/09/05/getting-your-first-mailing-list-subscribers/