

Amazon Strategies for Beginner Writers Episode Questions:

1. With all the different places to sell books, why have you decided to focus exclusively on Amazon?

Amazon has over 75% of the eBook market, and over 50% of the paperback market. That means there are plenty of other places where books are being sold, but we need a dedicated marketing strategy for EACH of these retail channels to succeed on them, which can be very difficult for most authors to achieve. Instead, you can focus in on Amazon and by maintaining exclusive distribution of the eBook with Amazon, you gain access to additional marketing tools that can make a big difference.

2. What are the most important things to know about Amazon marketing?

Amazon only has two goals: sell books and make money. Once we understand that, we can get a grasp of how the algorithms work. They're going to show the products most likely to sell to that particular customer. So, we have two jobs in relation to that. 1) Help Amazon understand who our proper readers are and 2) convince them that if they show our book to these individuals, it will sell and make them money.

3. Are there any major milestones authors should try to hit after launching a book on Amazon?

There is too much made about specific numbers, especially fifty reviews. There is no evidence that Amazon gives preferential treatment to books who hit 50 reviews. That being said, more reviews are always better, because each shopper will have a different threshold for how many reviews they need to take a book seriously. My first goal is to hit 20, which will at least legitimize the book to the majority of shoppers, but that isn't a magic number.

What's more important is your first 50 sales. Once you hit 50 sales, you'll be included in the "also bought" system which is a huge driver of the Amazon algorithms and will help the book be discovered far more often. It's also important that these first 50 sales are to the RIGHT readers, who typically read in your genre. That's hard to accomplish for new authors, but it's so important.

4. How do authors "engage with the algorithms" to get their books selling on Amazon?

Remember our two goals from before? We need to convince Amazon of who our readers are. We accomplish this through a variety of ways, but the most important one is who is actually buying our book. They'll rely on this to determine who is reading your book. Once we do that, it's about consistent volume. Every sale we receive will boost us in the rankings and give us a better chance of gaining visibility, so sales beget sales. When sales are extremely slow, one of the best ways to put some wind in the sails is to give the eBook away for free or 99 cents, and

give away/sell as many books as possible within a 5-7 day period. You can usually ride the wave for a few months.

5. What types of books typically succeed on Amazon with the kind of marketing tactics you utilize? Do they need to be new books, or do they work for older books as well?

Any book can thrive on Amazon utilizing these tactics. It's important to remember that it is easier to break into more niche genres, but the ceiling is lower. More mainstream genres are harder to break into, but the potential for growth is unlimited. Certain aspects of marketing work better for different genres, but all of this can be utilized by any book. And the good news is that this ABSOLUTELY works for older books. Amazon does give you a bit of a honeymoon period for about three months after a book is launched, but too much importance is given to it. Even if your book is dead in the water, you can tackle one step at a time and completely revitalize sales.

Be sure to email Vincent with any amazon question and mention *Your Best Writing Life* in the subject line for \$100 off his coaching fee.