

## **Top Ten Tips to a Successful Virtual Book Tour**

by Karen L. Reddick

### **1) Create a Web page**

Set up a Web page specifically for the Virtual Book Tour (VBT). This is where you will send potential tour stop hosts so they can sign up to join your VBT. This site should also capture contact information and put it in your shopping cart system for future email promotions.

### **2) Create a book trailer**

Create a dynamic book trailer. Don't skimp on this step. This will be one of the main reasons people sign up for the book tour. A good book trailer acts along the lines of a movie trailer. It's your hook to draw people in; get them curious and have them asking for more.

### **3) Do your research**

Spend a lot of time carefully doing Internet research to find areas that fit your target market. (Are you writing about self-help, women's issues, business, a fantasy novel?). Search more than just blogging sites. Search for web radio, newsletters, article submissions, and social networking sites.

### **4) Create a killer pitch letter geared toward your target market**

Create a pitch letter, stating who you are, what you are doing, and add links to the Web site and the book trailer. Personalize the letter and specifically gear it toward your target audience, and make sure it doesn't sound canned or come off as a mass email.

### **5) Offer more than blogging**

Again, offer more than just blogging as a means for your tour stop hosts. Podcasts, Q&A sessions, live interviews, phone interviews, articles for newsletters, Internet radio interviews; all work, as well as blogs. The easier you can make it for your tour stop host, the better response you'll receive.

### **6) Create a tracking spreadsheet**

Create a spreadsheet including all the sites you've found, the contact information, when you contacted them, what you can offer that particular contact (i.e., will you blog for them, do a Q&A session, live interview, podcast?) and make a column for responses. Then use an online calendar (Outlook, Google, Yahoo all have calendars that will work just fine) to see who's doing what, when, and where.

### **7) Follow up at least four (4) times**

Once you have all these steps in place, you are ready to start contacting each person on your list along with their personal pitch letter. If you don't get a response right away, follow up (at least four times) with a different pitch letter each time. (It's not as necessary to personalize these follow up letters.) And, don't waste time with those that don't respond after the fourth

try. Move on to a new group of contacts. If you've written a good pitch letter, most of your responses will come in after the first or second try.

#### 8) **Start your own blog**

Post what's happening with your VBT in your blog. Add each tour stop date and plug the tour stop host's company, their Web site and their contact information.

#### 9) **Send Goodies**

Offer to send a copy of your book to your tour stop host along with other possible freebies, (i.e., a workbook, a report, an audio CD, etc.). And don't forget a thank you note.

#### 10) **Ask for referrals**

Ask your tour stop host for referrals of people they know that would benefit from your book. You'll find that if you offer quality content and are passionate and enthusiastic about your book then others will be too.

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