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Be Our Guest ... Blogger, That Is

I was Instant Messaging with a writer-friend the other day while she was working on a blog post – and she wasn't enjoying it. At all.

MY FRIEND: I'm a fiction writer, not a non-fiction writer.

ME: (Silence.)

MY FRIEND: And I bet that didn't hold water, did it?

ME: (Smiling to myself). There's a blog post ...

And here it is.

If you're a published novelist, you're also marketing your novel. It comes with the job description.

The truth is, marketing yourself always came with the job of being a writer, whether you write fiction or nonfiction. But the explosion of social media and the changing world of publishing increased the demand to be involved in marketing your books.

One of the best ways to market your book – especially when it's just-released? Take advantage of guest blog posts. Here are some tips from this former-nonfiction-author-now-novelist on how to take advantage of guest blogger opportunities:

1. Brainstorm possible posts months before your book releases. I started receiving requests for guest blog posts three months before my latest novel, *Things I Never Told*, released this past May. My media package included suggested topics for interviews and blog posts – the ones that I'd developed in advance.

2. Go back to your book's themes for possible topics. *Things I Never Told You* deals with sisters, secrets, delayed grief, breast cancer, and anxiety. All of these themes can be expanded to become blog post topics. **EXAMPLES:** I

wrote requested posts on “Choosing Not to Bury Family Secrets” and “The Danger of Burying Family Secrets,” as well as “3 Reasons Why Sister Relationships are So Complicated” and “The Push-Pull of Sister Relationships.”

3. Keep Track of Requests. I use Evernote to keep track of my publicity requests. The truth is, both my virtual assistant (VA) makes sure I don’t miss a deadline, as well as my publisher’s marketing team. But I keep my own file, where I list the topic requested, the word count limit, and a link to the blog, so I can get a feel for the blog before I write the post. I also note what kind of bio they want (long or short) and if they want a pro photo, a book cover image, and if I’m doing a book giveaway. I also mark the deadline on my calendar – and schedule a reminder a week before the post is due.

4. Be a friendly guest blogger. When my post goes live, I interact with anyone who comments. Also, I share about the post on social media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram. Sometimes the blog owner provides a link or tweet, and sometimes I make my own. I also have my Dream Team, a.k.a. street team, share about the post on social media.

Think about the novel you’re writing or that’s going to be released in coming months. What are some possible topics for guest blog posts?