

Daniel Hall Presents



Episode 122

**How to Go from Writer to Financially
Successful Author**

with Amy Collins

Welcome to this episode of the Real Fast Results podcast! Amy Collins is today's special guest. She has just recently collaborated on a brand-new book called [Write and Grow Rich](#). It is now available for a special pre-launch price of just \$0.99. A total of 24 highly-regarded, very successful authors have contributed a chapter to this book. If you would like to learn the best ways to use your skill of writing to generate vast amounts of income, visit RealFastResults.com/wagr to purchase a copy of the book. There is a great bonus package that you'll receive with your purchase as well, but in order to gain access to that and the special price for the book you'll need to act fast!

Amy is going to cover some of these tactics during this episode. She is one of the very best people to explain this because she has already helped a number of authors go from being struggling writers to becoming financially successful authors, some even becoming superstars in their field. Amy has worked with Daniel Hall on many occasions, and they currently have a program called Real Fast Library Marketing (RealFastLibraryMarketing.com), which helps authors get their books into libraries. They also have another program called Real Fast Indie Book Marketing (RealFastIndieBookMarketing.com), and this program helps authors to get their books into indie bookstores and other brick and mortar retailers. Please welcome Amy to the show...

**Promise: An Explanation of what Separates
an Author from a Successful Author**

Thanks for having me. I've been thinking about this promise. **Today, I'm going to give you specific activities that successful authors practice and less successful authors don't.** I'm going to give you a list, and an explanation, of what separates an author from a successful author. There are a lot of writers out there, and there are a lot of authors, but if you want to know the actual tasks that will allow you to go from being a writer, to an author, to a successful author, I'm going to give you specific things you can do.

Step 1 - Immerse Yourself in Authors from Your Same Genre

The biggest thing... The easiest, fastest, biggest thing that any author can do to get closer to becoming a successful author is to completely immerse themselves in other writers in their genre or in their area of expertise. **Daniel has written a number of books about marketing and a number of books about writing, so I would suggest to him that he should spend time each day reading other books about marketing and writing, getting on all of the bestseller lists on Amazon, and USA Today, and all of the other bestseller lists.**

Find out who the big names are in your genre, and do not rest on your laurels. Once you find those names, do not assume those names will be the same three weeks from now. New names are popping up all the time. So, the number one thing... This is the first thing that you guys all need to do, whether you've written a romance novel, a western, whether you've written a book about how to cure yourself from future heart attacks, whatever it is, you need to immerse yourself in your topic and in the books about your topic. Do not assume that you know who the best sellers are.

It's so easy, in this day and age, to find out who the bestsellers are and to read some of their writings. You should be out there every day, doing that. It is the bare minimum, and it is the first thing that you need to do.

Why Should I Do This?

Let's say that you've written a book about heart health. There are already readers out there who are interested in this topic, and they are already reading books on this topic. **The easiest and fastest way to find your readers is to find out what authors you're sharing those readers with.** If you've written a Highland/Scotland romance, there are already people out there who are interested in that particular genre. There are millions and millions of readers, and you don't know who they are, where they are, and what they are doing. **The fastest way to find them is to find out what they are reading today.**

If you know who your readers are, that's great. Most authors don't. Most authors, before they become successful, have to admit to themselves that they have not done the market research they need to. And, there's no shame in that. I hadn't either. Until I discovered this, I wasn't doing the research that I needed to either. But, every day now, *every day*, I'm looking at Daniel Hall, at Jane Freedman, and at Joel Friedlander.

Every day I am looking at the writers that write to my audience. I'm finding out what they are blogging about, I'm seeing their new books, and I'm finding out where they rank on Amazon. I have now become an expert in my genre. Every author needs to do the same because that's how they can find their readers.

How Am I Supposed to Find My Readers This Way?

Getting to know and reading other books in your genre will make you a better author. Getting to know who the bestselling authors in your genre are, will allow you to find them online. **Go on Facebook. Go on Twitter. Go on Pinterest. Go on Goodreads.** All of these authors have their own websites and their own blogs. Their fans and their readers are connecting with them online. Find out who these readers are. Find out where they shop. How do you find these things out? You just read their pages. Just take a look at the comments. You will learn so much!

You've learned what the #1 thing an author can do to become successful. You know what #2 is? It's "learn about your industry". If you want to be a successful author, whether you have self-published or someone else published you, then you have to learn everything you can about the publishing industry. How can you say that you know everything you need to about your industry if you don't know what your readers are reading?

Step 2 - Take Part in Your Industry

Yes. It starts with basic market research. People will say, "Well, yeah, I know that," but here's the difference. **Writers and authors know that market research and connecting to their readers is necessary, but successful authors actually do it.** Here's another specific tool. I promise you that everyone listening does not want to do this. Nobody within the sound of my voice wants to go to the USA Today Bestseller List every two weeks and see who is new. Nobody wants to get on Facebook, and they certainly don't want to spend time connecting with all of these people. **None of you want to do it, but do you want to know what successful authors do? They do it anyway.**

That is my other bit of advice. **Successful authors do not pay attention to how they feel; they pay attention to their goals.** Guys, do it anyway. I know you don't want to but do it anyway. Too many authors think that success can happen in a vacuum, and it can't. Truly successful authors become part of the publishing community and part of the business community. They connect.

You know, if you are an introvert, and you don't want to connect with people, I totally get that. I'm not an introvert, but I'm really lazy. I mean, *really lazy*. I don't want to connect anymore than the rest of you do, but the fact is that I force myself and I do it anyway because that is how you become successful. You do it as part of a community. I'm sorry, but one antelope does not make it to the watering hole all by itself. That's not how it works. You have to be in a herd, and if you don't have a herd, I'm suggesting that you spend 15-20 minutes a day finding your herd.

Step 3 - Interact with Authors and Readers in your Genre

Okay, there are a couple of steps. I told you that I would give you specific steps, so here are some. **After you spend some time learning about your genre, the other authors in your field, and your audience, then it's time for you to start interacting with these authors and start interacting with these readers.** I want you to imagine that you are at a cocktail party. There are two ways that you can walk into that party. You can walk in like the world's biggest bore and idiot, and you can start talking about yourself, "blah, blah, blah"... Or, you can walk in and ask people about themselves. You could try to be helpful. You can try to be entertaining.

Maybe you can share some articles. How do you know what articles to share? It's because you're spending 20 minutes a day, and that's all I'm talking about... You're spending 20 minutes a day online to see what sort of things these authors are interested in. Get to know them. Connect with them. Then, after people know you're not a jerk... How lovely would it be if the best selling author in your genre and you were connected on Facebook and you've had a lot of interactions? When your next book comes out, how easy, then, would it be for you to ask that author to give you a testimony or an endorsement?

How much easier do you suppose it would be for the bestselling author in your genre to say "yes" if they know you and have been talking to you for five months online, versus if you had come out of the blue and sent them a blind email? **Growing your readership and growing your publishing program is a lifetime commitment, but it starts by getting to know your community.**

Actually, this weekend I was talking to a memoirist. She had written a wonderful memoir. She's a good writer, but I asked her who the big books were in her genre, and she said, "*Eat Pray Love*". That's great, but do you know how old *Eat Pray Love* is? I mean, I've got nieces and nephews who are starting high school that weren't around when that book came out. Guys, come on! **What are the big books now?** I mean *Eat Pray Love* is great. Don't get me wrong, but guys, you've got to pay attention to what's happening today.

Step 4 - Successful Authors are Always Writing

After you start to build your readership, the next bit of advice is... **Successful authors are always writing their next book. Successful authors never, ever stop putting out content.** If you are the kind of author that says to themselves, "Well, I don't think I have another book in me," that's okay. I don't believe you, but I'll give you that one. I want you to write white papers. I want you to submit your content to ProQuest and to other publishing companies. If

you are a fiction writer, I want you to submit to the fiction apps, like Wattpad and Hooper. I want you guys putting content out every week.

Blogs are great. That's wonderful if you blog, and I think you should blog, but you know what you should do instead as well? **I want you to go to magazines and other blogs, and I want you to offer to write guest post articles.** Writers are writing their next book, and if you don't think you have another book in you, then I would argue that perhaps you do not have what it takes to be a successful author. That's because successful authors do not become successful on one book.

If anyone tells me about *Gone with the Wind* or *To Kill a Mockingbird*, I will hunt you down. Those are two exceptions, and it was 100 years ago, guys. With those exceptions, the next thing a successful author has to do is to always be writing their next book.

I just want to reiterate what I'm saying here. **I'm saying that I know that market research is tiring, and you don't have time, but I want you to do it anyway.** I know that social media freaks you out. I'm really sorry about that. I need you to find these authors and connect with their readers anyway. I get it. I understand what it's like to have to ask for endorsements and reviews, and I know that this can be very unpleasant, but I need you to do it anyway. I need you to join communities and groups. I need you to get out of your house.

Don't just go to writer's conferences. I want you to pitch to the heads of the writer's conferences and tell them that you want to be on a panel. I want you to tell them that you want to give some of these talks. If you really, really can't stand up in public, I will give you a pass on that one. I won't say to do it anyway, but you better be writing guest blogs like your life depended on it. You need to be churning out content, and you need to be working on your next book. Even if you think that you don't have a book in you, I want you to storyboard it out and do it anyway.

Final Tips

After you've taken all of these steps, it's just rinse and repeat. As you write your new book, other bestselling authors will come about, and that's the cycle. Constantly stay on top of what's going on in your genre. I promise that the research I did a month ago, the top books in my genre... And, I write books on how to sell, market, and publish books on your own. I promise you that the big book, the books that were doing the best a month ago, are not the same books that are doing well now. There's too much going on out there.

There's Brian Cohan, and John Rhodes, and there's too many people out there that are putting great content out for me to rest on my laurels. Everything is changing. I don't care what kind of book you write, the same is true for you. Stay on top of it.

The one question that I wish I was asked more often would be how to go about getting the right opinions and the right feedback. Whom to ask? I'm always telling people that they shouldn't publish in a vacuum, and they shouldn't publish on their own, and they shouldn't market on their own, but who do you partner with?

I guess that would be the question that I wish people would ask me more, and the answer would be, **“When you need reviews, don’t ask your friends. When you need an editor, don’t ask your high school teacher or librarian. When you need feedback on a cover, don’t ask the people you work with. Go to the experts.”** One of the biggest mistakes that I see is that when people are building this community... Because, I want people to build a community. I want us all to get to the watering hole together... But, you need to stay focused on the experts and on the publishing industry.

Editors are professional, talented editors for a reason. They have a particular talent that they were born with, a skill that has been developed, and a level of experience that you just can’t replace. The same thing is true for cover designers. The same thing is true with interior designers. Don’t depend on your friends. Turn to the experts. You can get expert help for a small amount of money in this day and age, guys. Again, we are in a golden age.

But, I guess the one question that I wish I had been asked more often is, “Who do you turn to when you need help?” I would suggest that, with almost no exceptions, you do not turn to people you know. You do not turn to people outside of the industry who are friends. You don’t need their opinion. They are your friends. That’s their job, to be nice. It’s not their job to tell you what they think of your book. That is what an editor should be doing.

Also, always remember that successful authors use successful partners, and when it comes to truly successful publishing, there are steps. Don’t skip them. Don’t give them to your librarian aunt. Do it the right way, guys.

Connecting with Amy

Well, first of all, you should really pick up a copy of *Write and Grow Rich*. At this time, it is in pre-launch status, and you can get a very special deal. Just visit RealFastResults.com/wagr to grab the book and all of the great bonuses that come with it.

Now, I’ve talked a lot about market research and marketing activities. One of the things that I’ve mentioned once or twice is reviews and where you should go for them. **If you go to NewShelves.com/realfast, you can access a free download. This is a market research checklist that will help you make sure that you are going to all of the right places to find those bestselling books that you are curious about.**

If you want to know where to go and how to do this market research, I have actually created a downloadable PDF that gives you the links to exactly where to go. All you have to do is sign up for my newsletter, and you will get a PDF that actually walks you through the process. So, that’s NewShelves.com/realfast.

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As always, go make results happen!