



EPISODE 26

Rapid Releasing: What's Timing Got to Do With It?

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Hello again and welcome to another episode of the Author Revolution Podcast. I'm your host, international bestselling indie author, Carissa Andrews and CEO of Author Revolution, the author's source for all things rapid releasing.

This week has been kind of a blur guys. Every time I think I'm going to get ahead when my two oldest kids go back to their dad's house, I'm always surprised when I seem to get LESS done. It was also my daughter's 11th birthday, so we're in the process of figuring out how to get her a leopard gecko as her present and let me tell you, this is not easy, my friends. I feel like I'm working out some sort of shady, back alley drug deal or something. No, not that I've ever done one, but I've seen plenty movies where they do! HA! Okay, I'm sure in actuality, they probably meet in a far less public place and then go on their merry ways... but regardless. I'm having to go to the back door of the pet store to make the exchange, so that's how I feel.

So, what's really stopped me from being as productive as I would have liked? I've fallen into the rabbit hole of advertising, my friend. Now that we're coming to the end of April, I have to start ramping up my advertising spend on my rapid release series, the Windhaven Witches and my backlist titles. See, it's been two months since my last title was launched, which means I only have 30 more days of organic traffic. More on that in a moment. Now, I've been doing advertising for a long time, both Amazon and Facebook (with a little BookBub sprinkled in there). But now I'm actually getting serious about understanding how to scale up effectively. Whew, let me tell you, it's a harrowing experience. Fun, but harrowing. And when I have more data, it's definitely something I'll share more with you. Especially as I work on that section in the Rapid Release Roadmap course.



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Speaking of rapid releasing, I think it's time we talk a little bit more about it, don't you think? And in specific, what's timing got to do with it? Before we get started on this, however, I do want to mention that we've already talked about the different Rapid Release strategies, which includes launch timing, so this is not going to be the same. For those of you who are interested in those Rapid Release strategies, check out Episode 6 by going to www.authorrevolution.org/6.

So, if we aren't rehashing that, what kind of timing are we talking about? I'm so glad you asked. We're gonna go over special considerations and recommendations for Rapid Release timing. There are actually a lot of other things you can take into account—and likely should. So, are you ready?

Great, let's get started.

So, first off, when it comes to planning out your editorial calendar for the year, there are a few things you should be thinking about when planning your release strategy. Before we get started, I want you to think about what you believe your ideal strategy is right now and write it down. At the very least, make sure it's clear in your mind. When we get to the end of this podcast episode, I want to know if your mind changed at all. Deal?

Okay, so the first consideration when it comes to timing is the organic reach you can attain with your launch.

NEW RELEASE CHARTS

When you release a book, it has the opportunity to sit what Amazon calls their New Release Bestseller Charts. These are bestsellers broken out by genre, but in specific, they break out the ones that are hot new releases. Have you ever seen a book – maybe even your own – that has one of those beautiful orange tags on it? If you look real close, they will either say #1 Bestseller in...genre or they will say #1 Hot New Release in ... genre.

In order to be on the New Release Bestseller Charts, your book has to be 90 days old or less. In fact, Amazon's algorithms have programming that's been affectionately dubbed, "the 90-day cliff." What that really means is that after 90 days, Amazon's programming will start to lose favor in your book so it can move on to newer releases that are more likely to capture the attention of readers looking for new books.

But more than that, your new title will likely see other mini-cliffs at the 30-day and 60-day mark, as well. The biggest flurry of activity you'll see from Amazon is during the first 30 days. That's when Amazon promotes the new title to see if it gains traction with readers. If it does, the algorithms increase its visibility. If it doesn't then, down the cliff it begins to slide. From day 31-60, they still send out your book to people they think would like it, but with less frequency, and so on, until that 90-day cliff consumes it and drags it into the darkness. Or, unless you start advertising to it, anyway.

GOAL SETTING

The next consideration is one I'm working on this year. I'm rapid releasing a series, but I'm also trying to hit a bestseller list or two. In order to make the most of this, you'll want to do some research into your genre to find out what times of the year are most competitive and which ones have a little more opportunity. Originally, I was planning on launching the Windhaven Witches series in August, but after careful consideration of timing, as well as the upcoming fall season, I decided to go with a September launch for book 1.

Now, for those of you who don't know, when you're launching for a bestseller list, both the New York Times and USAT Bestseller lists are counted from Monday to Sunday. Sometimes, preorder books get released the day before, so in order to make sure all of your preorders count for the week you're list-aiming, a Tuesday launch is best. This means any early releases will be counted on Monday, not Sunday of the week before. Otherwise, they're lost to your list-aim. Unless of course, you have enough sales to hit the list both weeks.

CAREER ACCELERATION IDEAL TIMING

When it comes to long-term career acceleration through Rapid Releasing, the ideal length between books, from all the info I've gathered is 4 weeks apart using the 4 All Around method. By doing this, it means always being in Amazon's coveted 30-day window, as well as the 60-day, and 90-day ones, too. All of this increases your exposure on the website, as well as in their newsletter recommendations.

Now, if you're saying Carissa—for the love, I'm not there yet. I totally get it. Start where you're at and work your way toward it. Remember, there are other methods of rapid releasing. However, if career acceleration is your goal, aim for the monthly release and if at all possible, you want to make sure you're no more than 3 months apart, in order to stay within the 90-day cliff.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Seasonal Timing – Are you writing a series with seasonal undertones? Say, a Valentine's Day story or one that might go well with Halloween, like my Windhaven Witches series? If that sounds like you, you might want to think about launching around the time of the holiday or season. Ideally, you want to have the launch happen 1- 1 ½ months prior to the holiday itself, because that's when people start getting into the holiday spirit. Regardless of which holiday it is. Think about it, when you walk into Menards on July 5th, what's the first thing you'll likely see? They're already planning for Labor Day and Back-to-School. Why? Because they know it's the next big thing people need to prep for. The same should go for you with your launches.

Provider Availability – Look, for those of you out there who are not jacks of all trades, you'll also want to think about provider availability and work your launch strategy out based on their schedule. Creating a calendar to work with your cover designer, editors, etc. might even simplify things for you and help you nail down a timeframe that may be ambiguous otherwise.

Ideally, you want your book cover done 2-6 months prior to launch so you can start building buzz for the new release with a cover reveal. If you're releasing on a consistent basis, like with the 4 All Around strategy, it might not be as necessary to have a big runway for the cover, especially once your audience gets used to your launches. If this is the case, maybe the month before might be enough. Play around with what works for you and any of the providers you work with.

Super Rapid Releasing - Some authors might hear the concept of rapid releasing and think that if they speed it up even more, say to a consistent bi-weekly or weekly launch, that they'll do even better. However, there is some evidence to prove to the contrary—at least when it comes to both Amazon and your sanity. For starters, releasing on such a rapid schedule can put a strain on not only you, as an author, but also your readers. It can become a bit overwhelming and if you find keeping up with that kind of consistency is too much, it can derail your entire schedule, and maybe even put you off writing. But more than that, remember when we talked about Amazon and its algorithms? If a new release drops off the cliff after 90 days, that means unless you plan on doing a book a week or biweekly for the foreseeable future, you're actually cutting your organic exposure short. For example, if you have a four-book series, like I do with the Windhaven Witches, and you launch them a week apart, instead of a month apart, your organic 'shelf life' for the series goes from 180 days down to 111. That's more than 2 months less exposure than if you had spread the launches out. Do you see what I'm saying?

Alright, guys, so those were my additional timing tips to consider when rapid releasing. So, tell me... now that we've gone through them, did your launch strategy stay the same? Or did you have to change course a bit? Leave me a comment over on the Author Revolution Facebook Page or in the Facebook group. I'd love to hear from you.

Don't forget that I hop on the page every Wednesday at 8am central time to chat about topics surrounding rapid release, writing, publishing, and so much more. So, I hope you'll join me.



If you're looking for links to anything we talked about today, like the rapid release strategy comparison episode, head over to authorrevolution.org/26. I'll have everything laid out for you there. Also, if you've been thinking about rapid releasing or wanting to figure out how all of this works, why not sign up to be one of the beta students for Rapid Release Roadmap? The first two modules are done and there are 8 all together. This amounts to over 45 lessons in total for just \$97. But if you want in on the ground floor of this course, you have to act fast. This offer is only available until the end of April 2020.

One last thing... Are you and I buds on your podcast platform? You know what I mean... Have you subscribed yet? If not, I would love for you to click the subscribe button now. That way, you'll never miss one of these value-packed episodes. Well, I hope you find them valuable, that's for sure. I want to be able to help you elevate your author career, as well as help you become a high-performing, high-earning indie author. We're in this together, my friend.

Alright, until next time...

Go forth and be awesome.



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