



EPISODE 27

*Co-Authors & Ghostwriters:  
Collaborations for Rapid Releasing*

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Hi there, guys! Welcome to a new 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.

Here we are - a brand new week and the very last in April 2020. The weather here in Minnesota is finally starting to get nice out. It's been in the 60's for the most part and even edging up into the 70's. For those of you unfamiliar with our area—that's a blessed relief and brings so much joy every year—not just when we're in a global pandemic and self-quarantining. People are out walking, running, riding bikes... we've been out raking the yard, which would have been finished today, had it not been for the thunderstorm rolling through. In so many ways, it's bliss. However, it does make it darn hard to concentrate on anything but wanting to get outside! HA! But alas, I have a series to finish up and Soul Legacy, Book 2 of the Windhaven Witches will be wrapping up this week.

Which brings us around to rapid releasing, obviously. Today I want to talk about an aspect of rapid releasing that I know for a fact not all of you have considered. Even if you're already working with a rapid release strategy... And that's collaborations.

This can be done in a number of ways, which we'll discuss in a minute. But to start you off, the who main ways to collaborate on a rapid release series is by either co-authoring or hiring a ghostwriter.



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Collaborations, no matter which option you take, can provide a faster path to author breakthroughs. In many ways, it can be a starting point for relatively unknown writers to get seen and liked, especially when they are teamed up with someone who's already made a name for themselves. In addition, it can increase the velocity of your writing and publishing endeavors...which is the whole purpose of rapid releasing, right?

So, at this point you might be thinking – well, geez, Carissa... this sounds great! Where do I sign up? Not quite so fast...collaborations do come with a caveat and one that should not be taken lightly. As you enter in any kind of collaborative effort – whether it be with one person or twelve, you need to ask yourself: Can I work with this person for a long period of time? Maybe even decades? (Of course, that all depends on if a series is really working and you want to keep running with it.)

If your answer to that question is: I have no idea, I just met them... OR They're a close friend, of course I can live with them... HOLD UP.

Do not, I repeat, do NOT jump into a business arrangement with them until you have some basics sorted out. First of all, for the love of all that's holy, find out if your work styles are compatible before you go full steam ahead. There's nothing worse than being the one person in the partnership that's got the chops, then has to carry the other person anyway. It doesn't work in romantic partnerships and it sure as hell won't work in a creative endeavor like a shared series, either. So, take heed.

If you just met the person, or if they're a friend and you're not sure about their work ethic, why not turn it into a fun lesson in self-discovery?

It's better than having to say something like, "Gee, I don't know about you. What's your work ethic like?" You'll either get some indignance back. Or a few tall tales that don't correlate to the truth anyway.



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Instead, why not hop into a personality test site like 16Personalities together and see what personality you each have. Their test is based off the Myers-Briggs assessment and it's free to take. In it, you'll learn a lot about the way you operate and the types of people you work best with. Same goes for your potential collaborator. These types of tests are way harder to doctor, so you can breathe a little easier knowing they're pretty accurate on the reflection of yourself and the other person.

But here's the thing... if you already know this person because they are a friend... but you also know they don't have the best track record for following through... cut your losses and run the other way, my friend. No, not on the friendship. Just the collaboration. Here's why: Those same tendencies that bug you now as a friend will be magnified the moment you start working together. If they're not punctual, can't meet deadlines, and expect you to poke and prod them along, that's no fun. You'll resent them for being put in that position and eventually, they'll resent you for being so bossy. This, in turn, can not only end the collaborative partnership—but your friendship too. Trust me, it's not worth the risk.

Your friend can be one of the most incredibly creative minds you know, but if you can't work together, it will end disastrously.

Now, that being said, I will mention there are some collaborative partnerships with friends that can work, even if your friend isn't as deadline driven as you are. And we'll talk about those in a second.

But first, I really want you to take to heart what I'm saying about finding a collaborative partner, whether it be a co-author or a ghostwriter, who makes the job of writing fun... who makes it a joy. That's what writing is all about, isn't it? Having fun? Maybe throw a little self-reflection in there? A little surprise? (But the good kind!) My hope for you, now and always, is that rapid releasing becomes a part of your strategy, but never to the detriment of your joy. Okay?



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Okay, so let's say you have an accord. You and your new cohort have decided to move forward and give this thing a go. Now what? Well, the first thing you want to do is treat it like a business arrangement so neither one of you feel like you're doing more of the work or getting the shaft. Treating it like the business arrangement it is will help you to lay the foundation for responsibilities, timelines, expenses, reimbursements, and even lay out what you'll do if things take off BIG TIME, or fail miserably.

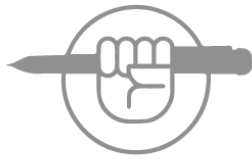
Once you've come to an agreement, and even signed a business contract, now is the time to get down to business and do the work. It might take time to develop your best strategy for working together, but my biggest advice in this area is to make sure you lean on each other's strengths. If one of you is better at brainstorming the concepts and the other is better at getting words on the page, make note of it. If one of you is better with numbers, while the other person is better at social media, take advantage of that.

So, in my experience, there are roughly six ways you can collaborate on a series...

The first one is through total collaboration. Open a google doc and go to town at the same time. Ordinarily, I recommend Scrivener, but in this case, I'd make an exception. You can also use the chat function in Google Docs or open Slack to talk back and forth, but don't let the discussion derail your progress. The goal here is to build with each other to make the chapters the best they can possibly be.

The second way to collaborate is one author outlines while the other author writes. This can be a huge time saver, especially if one author brainstorms creative plot lines and world-builds better than the other. This one is a good case where working with a friend who is a little less regimented might still work. So, if partnering with that BFF is still on your agenda, but you're concerned about whether or not they can keep up, maybe ask them to do the outlining, while you do the writing. That way, they could hypothetically get ahead of your writing schedule and have the outlines created before you ever get there.





Third, each of you can take different Points of View. If meshing up your writing styles is hard, why not separate them all together and make use of the difference? Map out your story so you know what's happening in each chapter before you start and allow each person to take on a different character's perspective. The story will feel more authentic and there'll be no problem with the voice all sounding the same.

Fourth, you can write to your scene strengths. I don't know about you, but writing action and fight scenes is not my forte. It's not that I can't do it, I obviously do, but they slow me down as I try to describe what I'm seeing in my head. Where, if I put my characters in an awkward situation or write a their internal thoughts about how something is making them feel - I'm there. I can write that thing out in minutes. Trust me, whatever your strengths are, your partner will have their own. Leverage each other's scene strengths, then collaborate on any of the blurry edges.

So, number five - halvesies. This one is interesting to me and I'm not sure how it would work, personally, unless both authors are in communication the whole time. Basically, each author takes a half of the book and writes it out. Then, you go back and blend it together, filling any plot holes or inconsistencies. I think in order to do this well, you'd have to have a very strong outline and be reading each other's work consistently.

Finally, the last is to have someone ghostwrite for you. This works really well if you're slow at writing, or lack the time to get books written and released as fast as you want. Any other authors out there with a bunch of kids? When you hire a ghostwriter, they don't want the notoriety, they just want to know they'll be paid. So, if you have the cash to pay a ghostwriter up front and it will help you to manage your backlist, this might be worthy of consideration. When you hire them, you dictate the story, have them write it, and you can either leave it as is—or make your own tweaks to it before sending it off for editing and publication.



Now, remember, the creative process of writing a co-authored book or series isn't the end of it. There's a lot of other things to take into consideration—just as you would if you were writing the book solo. You'll need to agree on things like covers and what platforms to publish on. Not to mention ads and other marketing and financial splits.

While there are plenty of bonuses to collaborations through co-authoring and hiring a ghostwriter, there truly are a lot of potential hang-ups, too. I want you to think about things and be sure to give everything careful consideration before diving straight in. Deal?

Well, that wraps up this week's talk on collaborations in light of rapid releasing. I hope it's given you some food for thought about whether you want to take on a co-author or ghostwriter in the coming year or two. Join me again next week when we talk about finding your ideal reader. They are the alicorn of the author world, my friend. But we'll hunt them down.

Don't forget, you can always head over to the show notes at [authorrevolution.org/27](http://authorrevolution.org/27) to get more information on what we talked about today. Also, this is our last final week of being able to get in on the beta test of Rapid Release Roadmap for just \$97. After May 1, the deal goes away and will be gone again until the next time I launch—which will be at a higher price. I do cover all sorts of things from our rapid release strategies to yes, even co-authoring and ghostwriting. But so much more.

One final thought... I want to express to you how truly grateful I am that you've been joining me on this journey. Author Revolution LLC has been around officially since January 2019, but I've been teaching and helping authors grow and expand since 2010. It is truly a gift to be able to not only write my stories—but to help you as you write yours. So, thank you.

Alright, until next time... Go forth and be awesome.



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