



EPISODE 42

*What Platform Should You  
Focus on to Rapid Release?*

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his episode of the author revolution podcast is sponsored by the Windhaven Witches. Nestled in the woods of windhaven Massachusetts, Blackwood Manor waits to unleash a dark and deadly legacy. When Autumn Blackwoods shows up at Windhaven Academy she hopes to find out what dormant power she possesses in order to have been accepted to the elite supernatural school. Instead, an accident brings her face to face with a deadly legacy that could either save or doom them all. Fans of Kelly Armstrong, Joe Hill, and Jennifer Armentrout will love this supernatural ghost series. Head over to your favorite bookstore site now to preorder the hunting first book, Secret Legacy, available September 15 2020.

Welcome back to another episode of the Author Revolution Podcast. I'm Carissa Andrews, international bestselling author and CEO of Author Revolution - the author's source for all things rapid releasing.

When you write a book, chances are, you want people to enjoy it. Ideally, lots and lots of people. Rapid releasing, when done right, allows you to get your books in front of the holy grail of readers - the voracious ones.

You know, the peeps who want to do nothing but read and can consume books in a matter of hours, not days or weeks.



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Yeah, those ones.

So, the first question you need to ask yourself when you're deciding which platform to go with is this: where do those voracious readers...read?

While it's true that traditional readers – the ones who buy the big name, NYT bestsellers, etc. are probably buying books on Barnes and Noble, they probably aren't the readers you're really hoping to tap into. At least, not unless you're list-aiming or trying to expand your readership out wide. And let me tell you from experience, going wide means having advertising dollars to back the play.

At this point, you may have guessed it. When you rapid release a series, your idea platform is going to be Amazon.

I know you're shocked, right? I can hear your collaborative gasp from here.

So, here's the thing. When you're first starting out, most of the time funds and frankly time, are limited. You want to pick the racehorse with the best chance of winning – which is most definitely Amazon. However, this doesn't have to be the be-all, end-all. For those of you out there who are thinking, but I want to be WIDE. I want as many readers as possible to get my books, hear me out.

You can have the best of both worlds, but you have to start where you're at. When you go with Amazon exclusively, and sign up for KDP Select, you are effectively putting your books into their Kindle Unlimited program. For those of you out there who are super new at this publishing game, that's where your uber readers hang out. They pay roughly \$12 a month for unlimited reading access to the titles found in the Kindle Unlimited library.

But fear not, you get paid for page reads. So if your book is good, and captures their attention, they'll read and keep reading until the whole series is done.

For those who REALLY love your book, sometimes they even go ahead and buy the books. Why? Because you can only have 10 KU books in your kindle at a time. Once you hit that limit, it's adios books... and let's face it, these are book hoarder people. Plus, there's no guarantee that your books will be in KU forever. You only sign your exclusivity rights for 90 days at a time.

There are, of course, exceptions to the go with Amazon rule. If you're list-aiming and rapid releasing, you can't put all of your books in KU and hope for the best. I can tell you right now, you won't make the list. The USAT and NYT bestseller lists both require your book to be wide and sell across multiple platforms. So, with this in mind, you want whatever title you're list-aiming with to be available wide. But the rest of the series can be all in KU, if that's the ultimate plan for it once the list-aim week is over.

For instance, that's what I'm doing with the Windhaven Witches. I plan to pull Secret Legacy from being widely distributed on September 21st and putting it in KU. But I have to get past the list-run before I can do that. However, the remaining 3 titles are all available in KU already. Hypothetically, this could hurt my chances of getting enough sales on BN or Apple, since the other books aren't going to be for sale there, but I'm willing to take the risk.

I won't know until mid-September. But one thing I do know is, the majority of my readers are on Amazon and the majority of the readers who will follow through with the rest of the series will be on Amazon, too.

Now, with all of that being said, keep in mind that as an indie author, you always have the final say. You don't have to go Amazon or go bust forever. You could choose to stay with KU for a couple of months or years, as you build up your backlist. Then, when older books start to dwindle back with page reads, you can always move them over into the wide category, while you let your newer books and series do the KU heavy lifting. Once I see what both the Windhaven Witches do and Diana Hawthorne's series does in 2021, I plan on pulling the Pendomus Chronicles from KU again and hammering on my wide readers to increase my branding there.

Remember though... going wide means having a marketing plan and budget. Just moving them over won't help you at all. As of the recording of this podcast, none of the other bookseller sites know how to move books quite as well as Amazon. That means it's harder to get your books seen on the other platforms. Apple and Barnes & Noble, for instance, don't even have native ad platforms to be able to promote your books. It all has to be done other ways - through Facebook ads, BookBub ads, or getting creative in other ways.

Why would authors ever go wide if it's so hard to sell books? Eggs in baskets, my friends. I'm a bit dubious about being reliant on one company too much. I've seen it too often - whether it's with a company you've worked for your whole life, or an investment you make... whatever it is, you want to know you're books are safe and your royalties that you've worked so hard for are secure. There have been authors out there who have lost all their preorders for a list-aim book, or had page reads stripped because Amazon thinks they got "too many" and were gaming the system. All of those things means that unilaterally, Amazon can take away money from you and call it fair.

Now, I don't say that to scare you because it doesn't happen often. But it does happen.



And the way you protect yourself is by making sure you're not 100% reliant on Amazon for too long. The good news is, as rapid release authors, it's a lot easier for us.

The second reason, in my opinion, the opportunity to get a BookBub Featured deal. If you remember from my podcast episode #14 where I talked about the results from my BB deal, I pulled the Pendomus Chronicles out last year so I could try to get a Featured Deal with Pendomus. It took all year, but I finally got one! However, it did a number on my royalties in the meantime because I didn't have the funds to seriously push ads to the wide networks. Looking back at things now, I wish I would have had it because it would have helped my Windhaven Witches reach on those platforms. But that's all part and parcel to testing and learning, right?

Alright, let's take this discussion online. Hop over to the Author Revolution Facebook Group and let me know if you're ready to take on the beast that is Amazon? Have you already started your editorial calendar for 2021, so you know what you're writing and publishing next? Let's talk about it all.

As a reminder, if you'd like to download the transcript from today's episode or check out the links to any of the items we discussed today, like the link to episode 14, head over to [authorrevolution.org/42](http://authorrevolution.org/42).

A final reminder: this podcast episode is sponsored by the Windhaven Witches. The Windhaven Witches is a rapid release series that will be coming at you, starting September 15th. If you're a fan of the supernatural, mysteries, and mythologies, this is the series for you. Secret Legacy, Book 1, is only 99¢ wherever books are sold – ebook form, of course. In addition, 50% of the royalties from that book are being donated to the American Cancer Society. Head over to Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or Apple iBooks today to preorder your copy.

Alright my writerly friend, until next time... Go forth and start your author revolution.



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