

EPISODE 67

What Does it Take to Make Consistent Author Income?

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Welcome back to the Author Revolution Podcast. Wow, guys, this has been a crazy week. Last week I mentioned that I had started my six-week writing sprint. Things started off great, and I had high hopes and plans to reach my 10,000 word count goal for Amends.

And while that didn't quite happen, there are actually some pretty good reasons once I go beyond ordinary excuses, at least as far as I'm concerned. Now, before I tell you what those are, I will say that I reached the 7000-word count mark. So it's not like I am super far off, but I still didn't hit my goal.

So if you remember what I said last week, sometimes life happens and you have to keep on trucking with the plan, even if it didn't work out exactly the way you thought it would. It's like working out and eating, right? You don't throw in the towel just because you had a bad day and eat an entire bag of potato chips or didn't work out for three days. Not that I've ever done either of those things, but you get the point right. HA! You start back a day one and then just keep moving forward.

So here's what happened this past week. I started with a new client. We needed to do some brainstorming to come up with an entire redesign and restructure of their branding and website. Now it was something that I knew would be coming. I just didn't know when. And this whole thing is kind of a big process, right? And as you can imagine, a rebound takes, you know, brainpower. And it involves a lot of, you know, comparison and contrasting and trying to put things together.



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And that whole process takes time away from my other projects. Now, while that's kind of a good thing in some respects because obviously, they're paying me to do this in others, it means, you know, projects. I want to get to have to get put on the back burner a little bit, especially when other things happen.

Here's some of the other craziness that happened this past week. On Saturday I've been writing, trying to get all of my words in, and my 11-year-old Macbook pro decided to die. Okay, well, as it turns out, it's not 100% dead, but it certainly isn't happy. I haven't used it for a while because I haven't been writing. It's something that I usually write in and go someplace other than my normal office, because I feel more creative elsewhere in the house anyway and sometimes outside, but not when it's the temperatures we're talking about very soon here. But it died because I was doing updates on it. And the updates turned this entire computer into molasses.

Like, literally, I would open Scrivener and I would get that spinning ball of death. I'd get like two words. The whole thing would crash, freeze and not work. So the computer, as I found out it's still working. It just doesn't like Scrivener. At the moment. I'm hoping there's going to be some sort of bug fix. But regardless, for all intents and purposes, it's pretty much dead to me right now. So I'm having to use my work, Mac. So it's an iMac to right, which is not so terrible. But at the same time, I miss my laptop and being able to go other places in my house. So that's one thing that happened then, here in Minnesota, we've reached the epicenter of the uber chill, for whatever reason. Always in February it gets super cold. So this week we are in negative 20 something degrees Fahrenheit, with wind chills up to negative 40 degrees on some days. Not everyday, but many days so What ended up happening is the first day we had the super below zero. I wake up to no water in my house. This was Sunday.

And so now we're thinking Okay. What happened? Is it our pipes? Is it our well? Is it the well tank? There's so many moving parts to this whole concept, and we're trying to figure out what had happened. So we're sitting here at day three of no water with six people in my house. And needless to say, I have been stressed like crazy. So there are days that have happened here where I was either trying to update my computer and get it working or freaking out with my husband trying to figure out why there's no water in my house and how to get water into the house. And we've had to make Costco trips and runs to our neighbors houses. And my parents came up with insulation and more jugs of water and oh my gosh, guys, it's been it's been an absolute cluster, right?

Needless to say, 7000 words, in my opinion at this point, is actually kind of more of a win, considering how crazy and how stressed out. We've all been so there is all that. But like I said, what I want you to take away from all this craziness is that this is life. This is what happens to all of us. It's not just me. It's not just you. This sort of thing will derail anything and everything if we let it. And obviously we're not gonna let it right.

So let's bring all this back around. This is what I want to talk about today. What does it take to make consistent author income now? This past week, I was really thinking a lot about this because it's obviously one of the core curriculum to what it is. I want to teach everyone in my courses and what I want to teach you guys. What do we have to do to create consistent author income?

So I've done a lot of research checking into other authors who are really killing it in their own spaces. I've checked out Chris Fox and some of the stuff that he's done because he is an incredible source of information as well, and it always keeps coming back around to that whole concept that if We want to be making consistent author income. You have to have to be publishing frequently honestly, like we've said before in the past, in order to be making that impactful income, we need to have 22 to 28 books in our backlist before we can even really gain a lot of traction and be able to advertise and leverage our advertising effectively.

So now when I say making consistent author income, there's actually three pillars to this. It's publishing frequently, promoting your backlist regularly. And that means having sales and actual promotions and obviously paid advertising, which are different from promotions. Because you want to be advertising cost per click ads all the time. You don't want to just do it when there's a promotion or when there's a sale going on with your book.

So when you're publishing frequently, you're putting out there into the market space, this idea that you're publishing and you're in this game to be a consistent author. Your readers get to know your frequency. They get to know and like your books, they know they like your style. And so every book that comes out it not only boost you up in the rankings and boost those books into the rankings. But it allows new readers to come into your world and then filtered through the backlist that you have started to acquire. Now, from my past experience, I can say, you know, with having 13 books in my backlist so far and working on the next ones and knowing what I'm doing in the future, I am making way more money now than I was when I only had the one series when I only had the Pendoris Chronicles. However, it's still not a super ton. It's not like it's paying my entire mortgage or anything like that. It's nothing to sneeze at. Don't get me wrong, but it's not where I want to grow it to be just yet. So when we published frequently and we're doing it consistently and we're doing it methodically were far more likely to be able to get our books out there.

And I was listening to one of Chris boxes YouTube videos, actually about how he was promoting his next Siri's what you know, I think it was in 2017, actually is with the video is watching, and he was showing how for him if he didn't promote his new book or if he didn't publish a new book. He had to be out there hammering his advertising because otherwise his books would start to do the backslide, which they always do. You run off that cliff.

We've talked about the Amazon 30 60 and 90 day cliffs, and you'd see the spikes whenever he promoted and whenever he published his books and he could tell you exactly which one was which, right? So when you look at someone who has as many books in his backlist as as he does and you're going Okay, so he's making consistent income because of the fact that he's publishing his books pretty frequently now, and on top of it, he's planning his promotions, and on top of that, he's planning his advertising. This is an ecosystem that gets put into place, right, and it makes everything start to jive and gel together to the point where people are consistently seeing your name there consistently seeing your books there, consistently seeing advertising or promotions happen around your books.

Remember, there's a that marketing concept where most people do not buy on the first time they see something they buy after like the seventh time they've seen your name or the seventh time they've seen your book or the seventh time they've they've been touched by you in some way or shape or form, not in a dirty wait. You get what I'm saying, right?

So you have to remember, when you are not actively publishing a new release, you have to be promoting and advertising your backlist all the time to be able to pull in. People who are interested in your books who are interested in the types of things that you're writing about and to be able to build your author platform.

Now, one of the things I do want to recommend when it comes to advertising and promotions is really finding, you know, three or four good sites that you know you can reach out to and who are going to help you promote a book when it's on sale. So in my world, because I am a fantasy and science fiction author, I reach out to places like E n T. E-reader News Today. I reach out to BookBub, but they're hard to get. I reach out to Fussy Librarian. I reach out to Book Barbarian, BookSends, and Bargain Booksy. See, those are the main ones that I'll reach out to to say, "Okay, I've got a promotion happening on Pendomus's, and I want you guys to promote it."

Typically, I would very rarely run into a problem where they say, No, sorry, we can't help you with this particular promotion. So the goal, though, is always to reach out within four weeks before the promotion when possible, because most of the time that's the window that they're looking for. They want four weeks in advance, plan things out, plan out your promotions to be happening in the months when you are not actively releasing something, then you plan out your advertising. How much are you willing to spend? What is your place of advertisement going to be? Is it gonna be Amazon ads? Is gonna be Facebook ads, is going to be Book, Bub ads?

If you are running solely books on Amazon, you're in their KDP program. You're gonna want to be doing advertising on Lee through Amazon, at least in the very beginning. Learn how to use those ads effectively so that their profitable and I'm telling you this from experience, because I feel kind of a little embarrassed to tell you this, but it's actually taken me a long time to make Amazon ads truly profitable for me. I've been using Amazon ads for probably about five years now, but I've never really dug into the granular nitty gritty of trying to figure out how to make them profitable, which should make sense. It should have been something that was high on my priority list, but it wasn't. And so that's something I really kind of nailed down and got my head wrapped around this past six months or so.

If you haven't checked out Brian Cohen's Amazon Ads school, I do recommend it. I've been taking the course. I have done his ad challenges in the past, and I'm actually doing the second generation and third generation ads, which makes a huge difference.

If you're looking to make that long term and sustainable, consistent author income, I want you to look at what you're doing right now. What kinds of goals are you setting for yourself? What kinds of advertising are you doing with your books so far?

If you're telling me hey Carissa. I'm brand new. I have only one book or I haven't published any books yet. I need you to hear me right now that you are not failing. You are not in the minority if you have really struggled with getting an author income that is sustainable and makes you feel like you're making huge progress because it actually takes time. I have been publishing in this Indian author market space for almost 10 years. And in that time frame, it's really taken me these last three years or so to start really seeing movement in my author career in my author income in the way the market space sees me and views me and the people who I'm associated with. So so don't expect miracles right off the bat. Don't expect to make huge money right away. And honestly, I've said this before. I don't know that it's actually a good thing to get instant success or instant fame because it doesn't lay the foundation you're going to need in order to be consistent and create a sustainable author career. And that's what we're all going for here. We want to have that consistent, sustainable author career that can take us from now until we die.

We want to be like Sue Grafton, who was is in the middle of her last book before she finally passed. I want it to be that kind of author, and I think maybe you do, too. Food for thought.

I want you to be thinking about What are your goals coming up this year? How are you going to approach your publishing goals To be more consistent with publishing frequently? How are you going to be promoting your backlist? How are you gonna be advertising that backlist? And you can promote your pre-order books too. But I will tell you right now, they're not as effective as books that are already out.

So, guys, there you have it for this week. My head is totally wrapped around all the craziness happening in my house. So hopefully this episode was helpful for you, and it gives you a little bit of insight into, you know, the fact that all authors every single one of us, we struggle. Sometimes we're having family issues or water issues, or goodness knows what else that'll come up. And we just have to keep moving forward.



We just have to keep remembering that our goal, if we want to have that consistent author income, is to publish frequently. And you know, like what I always say, we want to publish at least four books a year, and we're promoting what we worked on we're celebrating the things that we did.

If you have questions about anything that we've talked about here today, like how to publish more frequently how to promote your backlist better, How to advertise? Definitely reach out into the Author Revolution Facebook Group. It's free and it's open to everybody. We could have a conversation about it. This whole indie author game is something that we're all playing and we're all in it together. So if you want to really connect with your tribe and be able to work alongside your fellow authors, go ahead and leave your comments or your question inside the group, and we will go ahead and answer it.

All right, so as always, if you like to download the transcript from this episode, head over to today's show notes at authorrevolution.org/67. All right, my writerly friend, I don't know about you, but I am going to [robably be helping my husband figure out our water situation today. And with a little bit of luck, maybe I'll even get some time to write. Cross your fingers and pray for me, would you?

That's it for this week. I want you to go forth and start your author revolution.



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