GETTING THE MOST OUT OF FACEBOOK: NETWORKING & PROMO

**Be Aware:** By opening up your Facebook to other writers, readers, and industry professionals, what you share from your personal life is now viewable by all. Those photos of you drinking from a keg at New Years? Yep, on Facebook. That rant you posted with all the #@$$& in it? Yeah, that can be seen too. **Facebook is no longer your personal page to razz family or flirt with new friends or complain about life; these things are viewed by everyone in your circle and now become part of your professional image.**

**Beware:** All that stuff above? Well, **that goes for the people you associate with, too.** Do you want a friend's expletive rant showing up on YOUR wall, or your brother's drunken video to show up in YOUR news feed? If you have personal connections that might hurt your rep, take care to change your setting so their content never shows up in your feed, or remove them from your Social Networking Profile and create a 'Family and Friend Only' one.

**Be a Window:** Facebook more than anywhere else allows us to open the window to our personal side. This is where we learn that Writer friend X has a daughter graduating, and that Writer friend Y has posted pics of her new black lab puppy. The relationships you've built on Twitter and Blogs become “more intimate” on Facebook because of this personal layering. So be a window and share a bit of your world, your family, your life—whatever you're comfortable with. Let people get to know you a bit more.

**Outsmart Facebook:** When you want to socialize a bit, turn your news feed to 'most recent'. FB likes to choose what you see in your feed by showing you only the most popular posts by THEIR metrics. The ”most recent” setting allows you to keep up-to-date with what's happening as it happens.

**Be Open to Friend:ing** If your goal is to build writing contacts, then be open to friending other writers/authors/editors/agents on Facebook. NEVER spam people to gain contacts; instead, interact with them when they comment on friend's pages and in that way, you'll find other writers. Check out the 'Who you may know' section because often there will be people on FB that you know from other socials sites.

**Minimize Promo:** Just like Twitter and blogging, **promoting yourself aggressively on FB can be a death knell.** Be balanced in your updates and keep it more fun or interesting than promotional. Use a page to release updated information about yourself or your book to stay connected to fans and readers.

**Pages:** Creating a page for yourself as an author or for one of your books can be a great way to keep in touch with fans. People who are interested in your professional side can 'like' your page, providing you with a way to keep them up-to-date with your progress and book events. Be careful not to spam your page with link upon link of how to buy your book. Instead, add other links and updates that might also interest them—**news items that tie into an element of your book, large events where you are attending/presenting so you can invite people out to meet you, snippets of behind-the-scenes book stuff that average readers don't normally hear about.** Ask questions, try to engage your readers, and thank them for your support.

**Groups:** Groups can be another way to gather people interested in your book or yourself into one place where you can share updates and news. Or, you can participate in groups that target your audience or allow you to network with other professionals, spreading your reach. The same rules apply for groups as they do Twitter chats: **focus on how you can add to the group and what you can offer rather than**

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leaning too heavily on self-promotion. If the group is one you created, you can have a balance of both, but be aware that too many emails to all members can become tedious and cause people to hit delete rather than engage with you further.

**OVERALL:** Be fun, friendly, and genuine. Facebook is one of the best places to transform acquaintances into friends. Remember: you’re on a world stage, and never act in a way that you’ll regret later. You may feel passionate about heavy topics like religion and politics, but think before you post, making sure that what you want to say won’t alienate your Facebook contacts.
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