

HANDOUT FOR PUBLISHING 101 BONUS

Beyond the Book: Blogging and Newsletters

BLOGS:

- **How do you start a blog?**

Decide why you want to start a blog. What is its purpose? Will it have a specific theme? Then decide where it will be hosted.

Options: on your own website; on a platform like Medium or Substack

- **How long is a blog?**

As long as you want it to be, but the general consensus is shorter is better. I usually go for about 500 - 750 words. Now and then I'll do one that's a bit longer.

- **What do you say on a blog?**

Think about your audience. What do they want to hear? We've talked about that a bit here – they want to know who you are, the person behind the work, where you live, what your process in writing is like, etc. Pix help. I always include a picture with my devotionals.

- **What does a blog do?**

It helps your audience get to know you and your work. It can help you clarify your thoughts as you write. You can poll your readers to find out what they are wanting to see/hear from you. You can ask questions about your WIP to give direction for that work. It's a good idea to always point your audience to signup for your newsletter, if you have one.

- **How often should you post?**

It's up to you. The key is to be as consistent as possible.

Start with a once or twice a month – see how that works for you and adjust accordingly. More frequently for book launches or fundraising campaigns.

NEWSLETTERS:

Different in tone from a blog – the purpose is to inform your audience about what you are up to – progress on your WIP, speaking engagements, awards, etc.

There are many options for where to have it hosted – Mailchimp, Mailer Lite, etc.

- It has been recommended that you include the same arrangement of segments, so the readers know what to expect, but you can also toss something unusual in for variety.
- For instance, I include 4 or 5 segments – What's Up or Down; Links to articles & videos/Quotes of interest; Upcoming events; Promos for friends, or books/workshops I think are of value, etc. and I end with a segment called Livy's life, with a picture of our Burnedoodle.
- Newsletters are also a good place to have polls and to enter into a discussion with your audience.
- It's a good idea to include a CTA (Call to Action), usually at the end of the newsletter.