

# Marketing, Money & Motivation

by MV Ellis

*With a twenty-year career spanning advertising, marketing, social media, and life coaching, MV brings a unique skillset to the business of being an author.*



## 1000 ways to make a living as an author

**How making a living from your books can be more achievable than you think.**

Okay, I apologise straight out the gate, as this headline is a bit of a misnomer. I'm not going to provide one thousand ways, but three. It's five hundred words, give me a break here, people. Stay with me though, as those one thousand ways are real...

In 2008 WIRED co-founder Kevin Kennedy published a short article entitled [1000 True Fans](#). The basic premise of the now often-referenced piece, was that as creators, the key to making a living – note, we're talking about a living, not a fortune – from our artistic endeavors was as simple as cultivating one thousand true fans who were willing to spend at least \$100 per year on our work, which translates to a \$100,000 income. That's it. No need to make bestseller lists or become a famous household name.

When the article (which has since

been updated) was written, KDP was in its infancy, the social media landscape was very different from today's, and crowdfunding wasn't a thing. More than a decade on, and in this changed landscape – post Instagram, Tik-Tok, and Patreon – the axiom, in my opinion, has never been truer.

That's not to say that cultivating these superfans in today's market is easy. It's not. Nor is it quick. People don't readily give over their money or time, unless they

perceive true value in doing so. So if it's a get-rich-quick scheme you're after, this isn't it. However, if you're looking for a long-term career-building strategy, it definitely has merit.

Here are three ways you can build your superfan base from the comfort of your computer.

### Be Yourself

Talk to people. One of the huge advantages of social media is the opportunity to connect and build relationships with people far and wide. Although this often goes against the introverted nature of many authors, the beauty is that you can control your online interactions in ways that aren't possible in face-to-face encounters. You decide

when, where and how you interact. And you don't even need to wear pants while you do!

### Show Yourself

Give people a behind-the-scenes glimpse of your author world, and how you do what you do. Again, you control what this looks like, and it can vary wildly from sharing daily word-counts, to telling the background story to how a character or storyline came to be.

Some authors share scenes as they write, while others share their research—character profiles or location research, while others let fans guide the direction of the story.

### Share Yourself

Figuratively. Obvs. Whether it's a freebie book or sampler to newsletter subscribers, sneak peeks, polls, live videos, exclusive excerpts or deleted scenes for your reader's group, or exclusive videos, book dedications and the ability to name characters for Patreon patrons, your superfans need to feel and be rewarded for their loyalty.

These suggestions take time, effort and commitment, but do the hard yards well, and you could have the type of fans who, like those of one bestselling author I'm aware of, will collect your books in languages they don't speak, just to

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