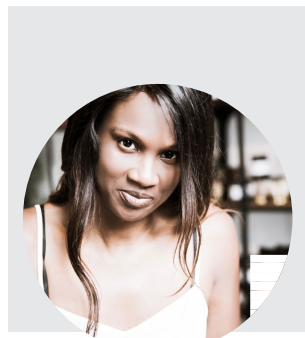


# Marketing, Money & Motivation

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.**



## Write in the fast lane.

### Eight other strategies I employ to write a book a month.

In July's month's column I talked about how writing sprints help me write a book a month. That article elicited such a positive response that it got me thinking about the other tools in my writerly toolbox that have helped me crank through the words this year, and not only write, but also *publish* a book every month.

#### Plan

This should get a rise out of those who read the previous article, because I explicitly stated that I'm not a planner when it comes to my writing, in the sense that I don't (or more accurately, *can't*) plot. However, in order to be able to knock out the requisite words to hit my monthly targets, I need to plan in other areas of my work in order to ensure that I have the time and space to write, and so that the books actually make it to publication. This, I can do.

#### Free My Mind...

....and my To-Do list. I've found that if I have outstanding admin tasks hanging over my head when I'm writing, it makes concentrating more difficult, if not, impossible. Therefore, I try to sit down to write unencumbered by niggly tasks that may pull my focus, or distract me while I work (or try to).

#### Team MV

A lean writing and publishing schedule means a lean *everything* schedule, and this is only possible for me with a solid team in place – promo company, cover designer, editor, proofreader – on whom I can rely to make magic happen in accordance with my tight timings. I'll be honest, I've had to kiss a few frogs to get to this point, but that's understandable.



It's also advisable to have a plan B (and beyond) in place, in case the unexpected should happen, and the A team is unavailable for whatever reason. Earlier this year, my editor was unfortunate enough to contract COVID-19,

and sadly became quite ill as a result. I obviously expected and understood that this meant that my planned edit would not go ahead, and sent my best wishes. Her symptoms progressed to the point where she was hospitalized, so imagine my surprise when I received an email containing my MS, with the latest round of edits completed. She'd taken her laptop with her to the ER, and completed my edit while she waited for treatment. I would of course never expect anyone to do this, though I was incredibly grateful that she did. However, it reinforced the need to have a more robust solution for times like those. Off I go to kiss more frogs...

#### Take a break

Although my schedule is pretty jam-packed, I do try to ensure that I take some writing-free days every month, especially between books. I've found that at the end of an intense period of writing to complete a book, I can feel quite tired and drained. A few days between books therefore serves as a good palate cleanser, and allows me some time to recharge my batteries.

#### Unlock my creative brain

Similar to the point above, cranking out the words can sometimes make me feel as though the creative well has, or will run dry, so I find it both necessary and beneficial to feed my creativity in other ways.

As a visual thinker, for me, TV is a great way to relax and unwind, and consuming storytelling in a visual medium (and yes, as an occupational hazard, deconstructing the devices and techniques at play) helps to add fuel to my creative tank for when I need to get back to writing. An added bonus is that I get a quick TV binge in, and have some clue what people are talking about when they refer to TV shows on social media!

#### If it ain't broke...still try to fix it

I'm always looking for new ways to improve or streamline my writing process. I want to work smarter, not harder, which means I don't consider that process a case of 'set and forget'. It's a constantly evolving beast, and I'm prepared to change things up to get results. To that end, I will confess, that I'm somewhat promiscuous when it comes to writing software, and

have experimented with quite a number of programs in my time. At the moment I'm favouring a simple, no 'bells and whistles' program that writes in markup (i.e. no visible formatting until the document is exported). Somehow, without all the complexities of some other programs, when I sit down to write, the focus is...well... writing rather than fiddling with the functionality. One thing it does have, however, is an inbuilt sprint-timer, which, in my humble opinion, is worth its weight in gold.

#### When everyone else zigs, zag

I've taken the no frills approach one step further after researching whether font choice can affect creativity and productivity. There is some (admittedly anecdotal) suggestion that the simplicity of the much-ridiculed, humble Comic Sans could somehow help boost writing performance.

Never one to say never, I gave it a try, and though I can't specifically attribute an improvement in writing speeds, it certainly hasn't slowed me down. Not only that,

but I feel that writing in a font so alien to me helps with error checking when exporting to my regular font (Times New Roman). What can I say? The truth is, that for some (possibly completely illogical) reason, I just kind of like it, so I've stuck with it.

#### Tidy office, tidy mind

It's a cliché, but they exist for a reason. I recently shared a photo of my newly decorated office space, which is mostly white, pretty (at least to my tastes), and quite sparse by some standards. For me, it's the ideal space to write in, and though it's not always spotless, I try to keep it as close to tidy as possible, as I find that an absence of clutter in my physical surroundings helps fuel my creative brain.

**MV Ellis doesn't just write romance, she lives it. She followed her heart halfway around the world to be with a man she sat next to on a wild 36-hour bus journey across sultry Brazil.**

**Visit MVEllis.com to learn more. ♥**

## CONTEST CALENDAR 2020

Contest	Opens 1700 AEST	Closes 1700 AEST
Ripping Start	Monday 7 September 2020	Monday 29 September 2020
The Sapphire Award	Monday 14 September 2020	Monday 5 October 2020
Publishing Basics	Monday 5 October 2020	Monday 26 October 2020
The Emerald Award	Monday 26 October 2020	Monday 16 November 2020
The RuBY Awards	Monday 14 December 2020	Monday 18 January 2021
Spicy Bites	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 25 January 2021
Sweet Treats	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 25th January 2021
First Kiss	Monday 8 February 2021	Monday 1 March 2021
The Valerie Parv Award	Monday 5 April 2021	Monday 26 April 2021