

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.

Why being an author is like chatting around the watercooler

I saw a comment on a post recently about an author being too drained to market their books, but then being too disheartened to write if they had nobody to market their books to. And on the cycle goes.

I understand the feeling of having too many author balls to juggle, and not knowing which of the many competing parts of the writing and marketing process to focus one's energy on. I also know the feeling of seeming to be shouting into an abyss, unsure if anyone is hearing me on the other side.

However, during the course of a recent podcast, I was asked about the things I do that help me connect with (and hopefully find new) readers – all of which can help the abyss seem a little less vast.

At the moment I focus my community-building efforts on Facebook, for a combination of reasons – firstly, because I get most traction there, and secondly because I find it easiest and the most natural of all the options available. This is simply a matter

of personal preference, so other people may find different activities work better for them.

The main ways I communicate are through my Facebook profile, and my reader group. Though Facebook likes to push pages, I tend to find my efforts on my page get less of a response than they do on my profile.

I see my profile as just as much of a 'shopfront' as my page is, if not more so, given that it tends to work better in terms of interaction. That being the case, I treat it as a professional, but relaxed space, kind of like the watercooler in an office-based job.

It's a place I can hang out, have fun, and get to know my colleagues a little better, while they also get to know me. But it's still work, and at work we maintain a certain level of decorum, even in our down time. At least, that's the theory, anyway.

Similar to the watercooler, chat here is mostly of an informal, non work-related nature, but will inevitably stray back to work, from time-to-time. This is fine, but all work and no play makes for a boring colleague, so I try to keep a balance.

My group, however, is more like Friday night drinks at the pub. Or even more relaxed than that, like the Christmas party. It's a place

where jokes can be louder and ruder than at the watercooler, and there's an air of "what happens at the Christmas party, stays at the Christmas party".

The aim here is to build a stronger connection with readers, and reward them for their interaction, by letting them see more of the real MV, including behind-the-scenes of the writing process, and exclusive content that isn't available anywhere else.

But just like work, none of this is a one-way street. As much as I like the sound of my own voice, building rapport is about a dialogue, and helping readers feel part of something. Therefore, asking a question and interacting with the responses, much the same as I would in person, is a big focus of my group activity.

It's not always easy, but like all relationships, it takes work, commitment, and dedication, which slowly but surely should lead to results. Happy chatting!

*** 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.**