

OWI'S LITTLE BLACK BOOK

Marketing Your Queer Fiction

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Foreword

For the last three years, we've done blog tours for authors at OtherWorldsInk.com. We also run a number of other websites for the LGBTQ+ writing and reading community - QueerSciFi.com, QueeRomanceInk.com, and Scott's own site, JScottCoatsworth.com.

Over the years, we've picked up a few things - terms, marketing ideas, and other helpful tips for marketing queer fiction. We've collected some of them here for your use.

Marketing a new book can be difficult, but with a little help, you can level up your efforts and maybe even sell a few more books.

We hope you find this guide handy!

ONE

40 Tips For New Writers

IF YOU ARE JUST GETTING STARTED, HERE are some tips from our author friends for you as a new author. These were compiled from members of the Queer Sci Fi site, and have been helpful to many new writers:

1) Start a Mailing List: But don't do what I did and wait for it to grow organically. WORK on that puppy! PROMOTE it! Try joining some Prolific Works giveaways, or our own QueerRomance Ink and Queer Sci Fi packs to get new readers for your list. And take a clipboard to any con you attend. Just be clear on what you need to do for any new mailing list sign up—get their express permission, and never force them to say yes for a free book or prize.

2) Making The Book is the Easy Part: Getting people to actually find and read the book, not so much. Be prepared for a lot of work once the book is in the pipeline and after it comes out, even if you have a publisher.

3) The Mid-Story Slump Is Normal: Slumps in the middle of the manuscript are normal and the only way to get through it is to literally power through it. When I also start to second-guess myself (and my sanity), I just sit and tell myself to write one more sentence, just one. It works because before I know it I have a paragraph, then a page. After a couple days or so, the slump recedes. But it is very real.

4) Promote a Little Every Day: Promoting is a lot easier when one does a little bit every day. Set up a plan to do a few postings each day to any social media you are on. Plan a regular blogging schedule, whether it's daily, weekly, etc. And reach out to other people in your own niche.

5) Keep a Strict Writing Schedule: Again, the secret is in your consistency. Have 15 minutes to write? Then try to write for 15 minutes EVERY DAY. An hour? Even better. Tend to get lost in your writing? Your schedule will help you remember the important self-care stuff like eating.

6) Write What You Love: Write what you love, or your life will be hellish. You can try to catch trends, but usually you'll be the last one to the party. But if you write what you enjoy, that will show in your writing and get you new readers.

7) Be Wary of Long Multi-Book Contracts: One of our writers originally wrote a short story for an anthology, which ended up morphing into a series. She was scared that if a publisher didn't commit to the whole series, she'd find herself in the position of publishing the first book in a series and then not finding anyone willing to publish the rest. The publisher was very happy to get a four-book commitment, which turned into an eight book one at another publisher, and the author got stuck in one universe for a very, very long time.

8) Tackle One Genre at a Time: Establish yourself in one genre before jumping on others—it helps your loyal readers to know what you write and to buy each new book you publish.

9) Check the Publisher's Catalog: Consider very carefully before contracting with a publisher that publishes very few other books similar to yours. If they don't sell your genre, how are they going to market and sell your book?

10) Don't "Write What You Know": It's not "write what you know". It's "learn about what you want to write, and respect the communities you write about." We're big proponents of writers writing whatever moves them, but we're also fans of respect for other cultures and people.

11) Everyone Hates Novellas: Everyone who reads your novella, even those who bought it knowing full well that it was a

novella and not a novel, will criticize you for not making it longer. Take this as a compliment. They liked your writing and want more. And as our friend Stephen del Mar says: "Oh, they bitch if it's long too."

12) Do NOT Read Your Goodreads Reviews: Never, ever, ever read your Goodreads reviews. If you do, have a friend (preferably someone who knows what a wonderful writer you are) close at hand. Some writers ask that friend to glance over reviews, alert them to 4/5 star ones and summarize lower ones if there is anything useful.

13) Do Not Eat at Your Desk: If you do, you will not only gain weight but have crumbs in your keyboard. Get up, walk around, take the dog for a walk, and let the dialogue flow. Eat a snack. Then come back to your clean keyboard and write some more. I make an exception for dark chocolate.

14) Wear Your Reading Glasses: Don't ever forget to wear your reading glasses while you're at the keyboard! You may think you can do without them, just that one time, and walk away with a headache that'll last days. Despite promises that you'll never make that mistake again, you will and not even two weeks later. Post-it note that to your keyboard!"

15) Rejection is Just Rejection: Rejection doesn't mean your writing sucks. It doesn't mean your book is bad. All it means is you need to find the right publisher/agent.

16) You Are Your Idea's Slave: Once an idea has formed and needs to come out, you are its slave. Give in to it; otherwise it will never leave you in peace.

17) Read the Contract!: Always read your contract thoroughly, even if it is with a publisher you have already published with and it looks the same. I failed to spot a country jurisdiction change once and now I read them thoroughly and check EVERYTHING repeatedly before I sign... no matter who it is with.

18) You Need a Website and a Brand: Get a website, get branded (logo, author photo, tagline), get your stuff up there, and keep it current.

19) Publish When You Are Ready: Don't let pressures from readers, finances or your mother push you to upload until you are

absolutely ready. Your book should be as perfect as you can make it (within reason) before you push that button.

20) Hire An Editor/Get Some Beta Readers If You Self

Pub: Your manuscript will have errors, errors you can't see because you are too close to it. Spend the money to get it edited, no matter how well-written your friends say it is. And similarly, a good beta (or three) can save you loads of aggravation down the road, helping you catch plot issues, sensitivity issues, and all kinds of other stuff you'd miss by yourself, especially if that beta is well-versed in your story's topic or culture.

21) It's Mostly Luck: The business of publishing and selling your work is not a level playing field. Luck is a huge part of it. Below average books can become bestsellers and excellent books can disappear into obscurity. The cream does not necessarily rise to the top, and the feelings of resentment over that can eat you alive. The best antidote is to make connections, keep learning, and put out the best work you can. Then find some four leaf clovers. ;)

22) Watch Your Bottom Line:

Don't spend more money on a book than you will earn on it! This is easy to do, with editing, cover art, proofing and advertising all eat up pennies. Do what you can yourself (what you are good at). Optimize your print book to bring per copy costs down. And always be aware of what it's costing you. Unless you are a millionaire, in which case, as you were.

23) Don't Work in a Vacuum: If you're having trouble getting accepted, even by small publishers, there are most likely reasons. Get help. Reach out. Don't think you can figure everything out on your own. There are so many other writers out there willing to lend you a hand. Search for a local writing group (queer or otherwise). Join online groups like Queer Sci Fi and QueerRomance Ink. Find your writing community.

24) Too Good to Be True?: If a publisher approaches you and gushes about your work and wants to sign you, and then has a contract that's better than anything else out there? Run. If it looks too good to be true, it most assuredly is.

25) Take a Break: Always take breaks. And make sure your breaks do not involve more electronic screens—get out into your

garden, if you have one, or take a walk, or ride your bike to your favorite local coffee shop! Your eyes and mind will thank you.

26) Read it Out Loud: Read your writing out loud—it's a great way to catch errors your brain might miss otherwise, and to see where your phrasing is convoluted or confusing.

27) Never Respond to Reader Reviews: It will be incredibly tempting to respond to reviews, but for the sake of your sanity, *don't*. It's a rabbit hole you do not want to fall into, full of strange and dangerous things with teeth.

28) It's Like Homework—For the Rest of Your Life: You *will** feel like you have homework due for the rest of your life. You'll never be entirely satisfied with your work. You'll feel simultaneously like you want to quit writing and like you're utterly incapable of quitting. But if you're a writer, you probably already knew all of that.

29) Ignore Your Inner Critic: Don't let your own self-doubt keep you from promoting your work. We all have one. There's a name for this—it's called Imposter Syndrome, and every writer worth their salt has gone through it. Don't let it stop you from writing—instead, let it keep you humble, always learning more about your craft.

30) Finish What You Start: Learn discipline and time management—and finish what you start! Many writers give up when the going gets hard. But if you want it badly enough, stick with it.

31) Make Friends in Your Genre: Make friends with other authors who write in the same genre and cross-promote. These folks are great for commiseration, fleshing out ideas, and cross-promoting each other's works.

32) You're Probably Blocked for a Reason: When the words won't flow, it might be that your subconscious is trying to tell you there's one more thing you need to figure out about your story before you can write it all down. It's not a horrible thing if you take a little longer to think about a book before you write it.

33) Enjoy the Ride: Being a writer is a job like no other. We open our laptops or pull out our notebooks and dive headfirst into worlds no one else even knows exist. Celebrate it. Revel in it. And savor every compliment and good review you get.

A few more tips:

- Deadlines can suck the fun out of writing.
- Edits and blurbs could make you scream.
- You won't become instantly rich.
- Promote your brand, not just new books.
- Make lots of friends on Facebook to help you.
- Do contests, try new things, and innovate.
- Above all else support other authors and the community.

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TWO

How to Promo Your Book

SO YOUR BOOK WRITTEN, edited, and off to the distributors. What can you do to promo it so it actually sells?

Here are a few ideas.

1) Do a Blog/Review Tour: This is a mainstay of author promotions, mainly because it can be done on the cheap and can potentially reach lots of people. A blog tour usually begins when your book releases, and runs for a week or two, giving you exposure on a variety of blogs and social media sites. For more info on blog tours, go here:

<https://otherworldsink.com/blog-tour-faq/>

2) Do Social Media: People on Facebook, Twitter and the rest of the social media sites are soooo over blatant book promo. But there are still ways to promo yourself on social media without a backlash. Post on groups like Queer Sci Fi (Mondays) and QueerRomance Ink (Fridays) on their promo days. Find ways to be creative on social media, too. Instead of “buy my book”, offer extra content on your blog—character pictures, cover reveals, exclusive excerpts, deleted scenes—things that can help prime the pump for your story. On Facebook, only post to five groups at a time, and leave at least half an hour between postings. And use bit.ly with anchor links (add

#sometext at the end of your url before shortening it) to avoid Facebook jail and to be able to track your link click-through success.

3) Think Local: If your story has a local angle, why not promote it locally too? For *The River City Chronicles*, which is set in Sacramento, I had a bunch of teaser cards printed up, and Mark and I did a guerrilla marketing thing, riding our bikes and putting them up on bulletin boards at stores and cafes across town. I also contacted all the local papers, and several did a feature on me as a local author and on the series.

4) Choose Your Cons: While you will probably never get the money back that you spend on a con in additional book sales, they are great places to a) meet your fans, b) network with other authors, and c) learn how others in the book industry do what they do. You can see the QSF list of Cons here: <https://queerscifi.com/knowledge-base/lgbt-friendly-cons/>

5) Think Outside the Box: The thing that will most get peoples' attention for your book will be the thing they have never seen before. So be creative. Look at your work and think about how you could get it out there. Maybe some kind of unusual swag for the Con? A crazy contest? Or dropping 100 copies from an airplane? Okay, maybe the last one is a bit over the top. But put your author mind to work and come up with something sublime.

THREE

Writing Unique Content For A Blog Tour

ONE OF THE things that comes with being an author is promoting your work, often for a blog tour. A new release comes out, and you have to tell the world about it, so hopefully a few folks will want to give it a try.

Never mind that you've just read the bloody thing seventeen times in rough drafts and edits, and would sooner roll around in a bathtub full of fire ants than have to think about it or write about it again. If you plan to do some kind of blog tour, you're going to need to write some promotional blog posts.

So... what do you write about?

Here are a few things to try:

1) #ThrowbackThursday: People get a kick out of old photos of you, when you were still naive enough to believe that writing would bring you riches and fame. So dig into your old photo box or album, and pull out some *blog tour gold*. If it somehow ties into the theme or genre of your book, even better.

2) Choose a Unique Excerpt: Choose an excerpt from your story that is early on in the story, so it doesn't give too much away, and highlights an exciting or emotional moment that will leave

readers wanting more. We recommend 500-1500 words for each of these.

3) Inspired By: Pick a part of your plot or a character that has a story tied to it—the bike ride you were on when the inspiration for that scene hit you. The thing your long-suffering spouse or precocious child said that made that scene click. The torrent of emotions that went into creating the scene in the first place. Give the audience a little *behind the scenes dirt*. They love that kinda thing.

4) Create a Playlist: Were there particular songs that helped you write the book? Or songs that fit certain scenes or moods of the story? Put together a playlist of these songs and share how and why they fit. Help the audience *feel your pain*. Or joy.

5) The Ficlet: Have any deleted scenes? These are great for sharing. “I wrote this scene and loved it, but then I cut it because it turns out my MC was wasn’t a Navy Seal after all.” Alternately, write a flash fiction story (also called a ficlet) (100-1,000 words) about one of the characters that reveals a little more about them. These are fun and *add value* to the story.

6) The Research: Did you go on a field trip to research the story? Use any special resources online? For “Through the Veil”, we took a trip to San Francisco with the honey to see what a thirty-foot rise in sea level would do to the city. It added a lot of richness and depth to the story that wouldn’t have been possible otherwise. Another great way to *pull back the curtain*.

7) The Evolving Cover: Did you have a great *back and forth* with your cover artist? If so, ask them if you can share it. Show the versions as they evolved, and explain the steps behind the various decisions, and any symbolism hidden in the final cover. I love doing these because they show a part of the process most folks never get to see.

8) The Interview: Many bloggers have a standard list of questions that they will send you upon request. These can be fun, and you don’t have to think as much as when you write a post from scratch. But you can also do your own interview! Come up with five to ten questions, and then answer them yourself. I usually try to include a few writing process questions, a couple zingers that let you post fun and insightful answers (“tell me one thing hardly anyone

knows about you” is one of my favorites), and a “what are you working on now” question. Have fun with it, and the audience will have fun too.

8) Behind the Scenes—Writing: Take your audience on a little tour of how you came up with the story, or how it evolved—this can include an example of your first draft vs. your final draft of a particular paragraph, some insight that changed the story, or how a character evolved from draft to draft. Again, have a little fun with it.

9) Who Would Play My Characters in a Movie?: Let your imagination run wild. Choose your top two or three characters and find a movie star to fill each role. Fantasize a little about it. And who knows? Maybe one of your stars will read your post and want to do the move, and you’ll be plucked from relative obscurity to achieve the JK Rowling status you so richly deserve. One can dream!

HERE ARE some other ideas for guest post topics. You can also take one of the interview questions and expand that into a full post.

- What inspired you.
- Interview with one of your characters.
- Evolution of the story.
- Evolution of the character.
- Research that went into your story.
- Who would play your characters in a film?.
- Deleted scenes.
- 20 random things about a character.

FOUR

Author Interview Questions

ANOTHER GREAT SOURCE for blog tour content is the author interview. It's a pull-back-the-curtains thing that lets your readers (and potential readers) get to know you a little better.

Here's our list of suggested interview questions for creating blog tour content. We suggest taking five or six of these at a time, from the various lists, and making a unique guest post out of them. We suggest you include this one at the end of each interview:

What are you working on now, and when can we expect it?

Here are the rest of the questions. Feel free to modify them or add your own.

Writing Questions:

- When did you know you wanted to write, and when did you discover that you were good at it?
- If you could sit down with one other writer, living or dead, who would you choose, and what would you ask them?
- How would you describe your writing style/genre?
- What was your first published work? Tell me a little about it.
- What's the weirdest thing you've ever done in the name of research?

- Have you ever taken a trip to research a story? Tell me about it.
- What is your writing Kryptonite?
- What do you do when you get writer's block?
- Do you use a pseudonym? If so, why? If not, why not?
- If you could tell your younger writing self anything, what would it be?
- Do you ever base your characters on real people? If so, what are the pitfalls you've run into doing so?
- How long do you write each day?
- Do you reward yourself for writing, or punish yourself for failing to do so? How?
- Do you read your book reviews? How do you deal with bad or good ones?
- How long on average does it take you to write a book?
- What do you do if you get a brilliant idea at a bad time?
- Why did you choose to write in your particular field or genre? If you write more than one, how do you balance them?
- How long have you been writing?
- Are there underrepresented groups or ideas featured in your book? If so, discuss them.
- Are you a full-time or part-time writer? How does that affect your writing?
- Are you a plotter (someone who plans out the storyline in advance) or a pantsier (someone who writes by the seat of their pants)?
- Do your books spring to life from a character first or an idea?
- How did you deal with rejection letters?
- How long does it take you to write the first draft?
- What is the most heartfelt thing a reader has said to you?
- What tools do you feel are must-haves for writers?
- What was one of the most surprising things you've learned in writing your books?
- Where do you like to write?
- What are your favorite parts of publishing?

- What are your least favorite parts of publishing?
- What advice do you wish you'd had before releasing your first story?
- If you had a grant to write any book you wanted as a freebie without worrying about sales, what kind of story would you like to tell?
- How do you approach covers for your indie stories?
- What was the most valuable piece of advice you've had from an editor?
- Name the book you like most among all you've written and tell us why.
- How do you combine all the different worlds of your life in your works?
- What's the funniest or creepiest thing you've come across while researching for one of your stories?

This Book:

- How did you choose the topic for this book?
- Tell us something we don't know about your heroes. What makes them tick?
- What were your goals and intentions in this book, and how well do you feel you achieved them?
- What was the hardest part of writing this book?
- Who did your cover, and what was the design process like?
- Tell us one thing about your characters that we don't learn from the book, the secret in their past.
- What question do you wish that someone would ask about your book, but nobody has? Write it out here, then answer it.
- What character gave you fits and fought against you? Did that character cause trouble because you weren't listening and missed something important about them?
- What inspired you to write this particular story? What were the challenges in bringing it to life?

- What secondary character would you like to explore more? Tell me about him or her.
- Who has been your favorite character to write and why?
- What was the weirdest thing you had to Google for your story?
- Let's talk to your characters for a minute—what's it like to work for such a demanding writer?
- Character: what's your core motivation in this book?
- Character: are you happy with where your writer left you at the end? (don't give us any spoilers).

Personal Questions:

- As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- If you had the opportunity to live one year of your life over again, which year would you choose, and why?
- Tell me one thing hardly anyone knows about you.
- Tell me about a unique or quirky habit of yours.
- Were you a voracious reader as a child?
- What pets are currently on your keyboard, and what are their names? Pictures?
- What's your writing process?
- What was the first book that made you cry?
- What other artistic pursuits (if any) do you indulge in apart from writing?
- What are some day jobs that you have held? If any of them impacted your writing, share an example.
- We know what you like to write, but what do you like to read in your free time, and why?
- What qualities do you and your characters share? How much are you like them, or how different are they from you?

Fun Questions:

- Describe yourself using... (choose one: a food, a book, a song, a movie, an animal, a drink, a place etc)

- Do you have any strange writing habits or superstitions?
- If you could create a new holiday, what would it be?
- If you were stuck on a desert island all alone with only three things, what would they be?
- What action would your name be if it were a verb?
- What fantasy realm would you choose to live in and why?
- What fictional speculative fiction character would you like to spend an evening with, and why?
- Which of your own characters would you Kill? Fuck? Marry? And why?
- Would you visit the future or the past, and why?
- How does the world end?
- Star Trek or Star Wars? Why?
- What meds are you supposed to be taking?
- What's your drink of choice?
- What's in your fridge right now?
- What food(s) fuel your writing?

FIVE

Preparing for a Successful Con

PLANNING TO ATTEND A CON? These are great places to meet readers and show off your books, and while you will probably never make your money back in book sales, they are also fantastic for expanding your reader base. Here are a few tips:

1) Book Your Hotel Early: Most of these cons offer a discounted hotel rate, but these often have limited availability. Book early to have the best shot at these low rates—otherwise it’s going to cost you.

2) Pin Down Your Swag: You want to give something away to your readers when they stop by to see your smiling face. But we can’t all be as cool as Angel Martinez and her anti-gravity cows. So consider bookmarks, or buttons, or something else with a “permanent” feel that people will want to keep, and will associate with you.

3) Get Your Table Art: If you’re going to have a table, you need to have something that shows folks who you are and what you do. Runners, vertical signs, and table signage are all pluses to give you a more professional look, and can be re-used going forward for other cons.

4) Pin Down Your Con Schedule: There are always great things to do at these cons—dances and dinners and games and the like—as soon as the schedule is published go over it and figure out

where you need to be each hour, and find someone to cover your table when you can't be there.

5) Get Your Books in a Row: Which books will you take to sell at the con? How many are you likely to sell? Talk to other authors who have attended the con before to get an idea of how many copies you should take, and then figure out how to get them there. You can usually ship to the host facility, but then you run the risk of your stuff getting lost in the pile. If you know anyone who lives in the area, see if they would be willing to take delivery for you.

6) Listen to Your Middle of the Night Voices: If you are like me, you get some of your best ideas in the middle of the night, when your writer brain wakes you up and tells you things that just couldn't wait until morning. For me, this applies to cons too. When this happens, get up and write down the ideas so a) you won't forget them, and b) your writer brain will shut the hell up and let you sleep.

7) Be Ready for the Emergencies: There *will be* unexpected twists and turns and crises and emergencies at some point during the process—most likely the day before you head out to the con, or at the exact moment when you arrive. You can't plan for every possible contingency, but you can be ready to roll with things when they take a turn for the ridiculous, terrifying or ugly. Remember, this too shall pass. I recommend dark chocolate therapy.

8) Attend the Initiation: Many cons have initiations (and sometimes mentor programs) for first-timers. This is a great way to learn the ropes and get more out of the con, as well as diminishing your own worries and fears.

9) Plan to Have a Good Time: When all is said and done, you're gonna have a great time—you are going to a con with a bunch of friends and potential friends—people like you who do what you do or read it. So take a deep breath, relax, and enjoy yourself.

Working the Con

WE'VE LEARNED a few things doing cons and other local events. Here are our tips for getting the most out of them, especially in your interactions with your booth/table visitors.

1) Bring Lots of Books: If your table has just a few individual books, folks are generally less likely to stop by to see what you offer. I bring 5-10 copies of each title and stack 'em high to attract folks. I also keep extra stock under the table to refill as needed. I have also recently ordered a fold-flat book rack to give the books more visibility and height.

3) Be Visible: A table runner is great for advertising you or your group to the passing masses—and totally invisible if someone is standing in front of it. So invest in one of those vertical signs — VistaPrint regularly offers great discounts on these. It clearly, quickly and visibly explains who you are and what you do. Find a way to make your brand visible to all your passers-by.

3) Know What You Want: What's your objective at this event? Are you trying to sell books? Get folks onto your email list? Give away swag? Or maybe all three? Figure out your objective(s) in advance, and how you will accomplish them. When folks approach the booth, know what you want, and work through each of your goals methodically, and quite often you will accomplish two or all three.

4) Be Proactive: Few people will engage with you if you are sitting at the back of your booth. I am almost always standing during these events, and rarely leave the booth. If you are able to, stand behind your table and engage with people as they pass. If there are costumes at your event, comment on them as they walk by—this is a great way to pull attention to your booth and your books. Wave and smile and generally be a confident, cheerful, outgoing person (even if you usually aren't).

5) Have Your Elevator Pitches Ready: If you are in a multi-author group, know what each author offers and be ready to summarize it for your visitors. If it's just you at your booth or table, you can be a bit more specific and hi-light a few titles with your short pitch—"This is my Spaceman Meets Werewolf" book.

6) Find Out What They Like: One of the most potent things in your sales arsenal is "What do you like to read?" It lets them steer the conversation to what excites them and gives you an in if you have a title that matches their reading desires. Also a great place to pull out your elevator pitch. If what they want is not a match for any of your books, steer them to a friend—another author at the table, or someone else you know that writes what they like to read.

7) Front Price Your Books: Get some of those removable labels, and price your books on the front cover so it's really easy for booth visitors to see what their new book is going to cost them. At local festivals, prides and the like, I keep my pricing simple—a discounted flat price for all of my novellas and another for all of my novels. I don't make as much as I do at full cover price, but people appreciate the discount, I sell more, and ultimately I reach more readers.

8) Decide on Your Closing Pitch: Some folks like to go for the hard sell. "OK can I ring that up for you?" There's nothing wrong with that, but it's never been my style. I hang back and let them make the decision, but how you approach it is up to you. When you ring things up, put a bookmark or postcard in the book with more info about you and your books. If they like the one they bought, they may come back for more, and it's all about building your future readership.

9) Accomplish Your Other Objectives: Once the sale is

done, remind them of anything else on your objective list. “I hope you enjoy it. Oh, don’t forget to sign up for our email list so we can let you know when our next event is!” [flash bright smile here]. The more ways you can connect with them, the more likely they will become a loyal reader.

IF YOU'RE a typical introverted author like me, some of this stuff will give you nightmares. But don't think of it as making sales. Think of it as a chance to share what you love with a bunch of new people who are dying to become fans of a wonderful author - you! Many of the folks who will come by your booth are hungry for your kind of work – feed that hunger and make a new reader (and maybe friend) in the process.

It's a Start...

We hope this book has given you some great ideas you can implement in your own writing career, but there are a million other ways out there to market yourself and your books. We plan to periodically update this book with new ideas. Check out the glossaries at the end with helpful terms to get you up to speed.

Like What You Just Read?

At Other Worlds Ink “OWI,” we’ve been doing blog tours for three years. We know queer fiction marketing, and would be happy to help set up a tour for you and your book. If you want more information, please:

Check out our website

<https://www.otherworldsink.com>

Or contact us via email at

scott@otherworldsink.com.

Glossary: Community Terms

One of the first things to know when writing and marketing queer fiction are the terms for queer people (and characters). We asked members of the Queer Sci Fi (QSF) group to help us define many of the identity terms in the community.

Here's what we came up with.

Akoiromantic/Lithromantic: Somebody who is lithromantic can feel romantic attraction towards others and also enjoy being in romantic relationships but only in theory. They do not need the affection to be reciprocated, and as such do not usually feel compelled to seek out a relationship with someone they are interested in. Some lithromantics may also stop feeling their romantic attraction once in a relationship. Someone who identifies as lithromantic can be romance repulsed, romance indifferent / neutral / apathetic towards romance, or romance positive. Like with any romantic orientation, lithromantic individuals can have any sexual orientation.

Androsexual/Androphilic: primarily sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to some men, males, and/or masculinity.

Aromantic: Someone with no interest in or desire for romantic relationships.

Asexual: A spectrum of sexuality characterized by a lack of

sexual attraction to persons of any gender or sexuality. (See also: demisexual, graysexual)

BDSM: There isn't one accepted definition for BDSM. A very general definition might be that BDSM is a form of sexual expression that involves the willing and consensual exchange of power. Note that the definition is "sexual expression" and not just sexual activities. A lot of people who engage in BDSM talk about the fact that most of it happens in your mind, and often the sexual activities you can see are the least interesting aspect of the action." Also D/s, B/D and S/m.

Bisexual: A bi person has the capacity for romantic and/or sexual attraction to more than one gender.

Celibate: a person of any gender or sexual persuasion who chooses to not engage in sexual relationships for any reason.

Demisexual: Demisexual is a person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone.

Gay: A male who is attracted to members of his own sex.

Gender Dysphoria: Gender dysphoria: a condition where a person experiences discomfort or distress because there's a mismatch between their biological sex and gender identity.

Gender Fluid/Genderqueer: a person who does not identify as having a fixed gender. They may move among genders, always feel like a mix of genders, or identify more strongly at a given time with a specific gender.

Gender Non-Conforming: a gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary.

Gynesexual/Gynephilic: primarily sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to some women, females, and/or femininity.

Internalized Oppression: The fear and self-hate of one's own identity, that occurs for some individuals who have heard negative concepts about their identity throughout childhood.

Non-Binary: (NB/Enby): Someone who does not fit into a particular gender.

Non-Monogamy: an umbrella term for relationships that do

not restrict partners to a single other person for the exchange of love, sex, affection, and/or intimacy.

Pansexual: Someone who is sexually, romantically or emotionally attracted towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity.

Questioning: An individual who is unsure of and/or exploring their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

Sapiosexual: Someone who finds intelligence and the human mind to be the most sexually attractive feature.

Transgender: Transgender: is a broad term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be when they were born.

Trigender: One who identifies as having three different genders

Glossary: Marketing Terms

Now that you have a handle on LGBTQ community terms, it's time to get up to speed on publishing marketing terms:

ARC (Advance Review Copy): An almost-finished version of your book—usually created at the end of the editing process but sometime before the final book is released—to allow reviewers time to read it before the release date. ARCs are distributed to bloggers who elect to review your book. Bloggers understand that the ARC is not final and edits/changes may still be incorporated before the book is published, but the ARC is complete enough to allow bloggers to fairly review the work.

Banner: This is a small advertisement for your book, intended to be used for publicity on websites and blogs. Sizes vary widely.

Blog Tour: A blog tour is a tour set up for a book where information about the book (and sometimes a unique post) appears on a series of blogs over a short period of time, usually to build buzz for the title.

Blurb (Book): A book blurb is a short (usually 2-4 paragraphs), high level recap of the book that conveys the set-up and introduces the characters but does not give away any spoilers. The blurb usually appears in marketing materials, on sales websites, and on the back cover of the printed version of the book.

Blurb (Series): A series blurb is a synopsis (usually 2-4 paragraphs) of the entire book series.

Buy Links: The links to various retailers (like Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, etc) who will carry and sell your book. Buy links are included in the blogger's tour stop of your book for easy access for the reader to make a purchase while reading about your book.

Cover Reveal: An event to show off the cover of your new book, usually to help prime interest and garner pre-orders. We always suggest having your pre-order links up before doing a reveal so interested readers can order your book. Cover reveals can be on a single site (exclusive), or across a group of sites/blogs (non-exclusive). Some of the bigger venues require exclusivity.

Excerpt: (Exclusive/Non Exclusive): A non-exclusive excerpt is a selection from the book (of your choosing) that offers the reader a taste of the book without giving away too much. Non-exclusive excerpts are distributed to every blogger who signs up for your tour. It's non-exclusive because it will appear on multiple blogs across the web. An exclusive excerpt is a selection from the book that is distributed by request specifically to one individual blogger to use to promote your book during the tour.

Facebook Header: This is a special type of banner intended to be used at the top of a Facebook page. We currently make these 849 pixels wide by 315 high, but Facebook's standards periodically change.

Meme: A meme is like a banner, but generally has more text—a sentence-long excerpt from the book or a tagline or a good review. Memes are often square or squarish, and are basically a teaser or bite-sized morsel for your book, and usually include the book cover somewhere on the meme to help with book recognition.

Rafflecopter: An online platform used for creating giveaways. Depending on the level of the service you buy, you can require readers to tweet a message about your book, like you on Facebook, join your email list, and other marketing options. It's a great way to grow your email list with each book tour.

Reveal: See *Cover Reveal*.

Series: A series can either be a linked series (ie: you need to read all the books in order because the story and characters flow

from one to another) or a shared universe/loosely linked series, where all the books occur in the same “world,” but often focus on different sets of characters. In a shared universe series, there may still be certain characters who appear in multiple books, but each story can be read as a stand-alone.

Shared Universe: See *Series*.

Standalone Book: A standalone book is a book that is complete in and of itself. It can also be part of a series, if it can be read without reading the other books.

Tour Company: A tour company (or blog tour company) is an agency that does all the work of setting up a book tour for you. Many blog tour companies can also help your book get reviews, and do cover reveals too.

Unique Post: A unique post is a written work that is supplied to one blogger for their exclusive use during the tour – this is often preferred for SEO (Search Engine Optimization) purposes. In other words, Google likes it when a blog post is unique. Examples of unique posts are an exclusive excerpt from your book, an interview with the author or a character(s), a guest post that you write with background or history of writing your book, creating characters, the setting, the tone of the book, your writing process, etc.

Glossary: Queer Tropes

Tropes can be very useful in marketing your book. Many readers gravitate to certain tropes, especially in romance, so knowing which ones apply to your work can help you market it to these folks.

Here's our list of queer tropes:

Accidental Baby: Someone has a baby no one knew about.

Alpha Heroes: The bad guy personified.

Alpha Male: The “alpha male” sweep-me-off-my-feet archetype.

Badass Heroine: Kicks ass while eating breakfast.

Best Friend's Sibling!: Finding love in an unexpected place.

Big Guy with Little Twink: Love the contrast.

Bodyguard/Guardian Angel: Someone to watch over me.

Electric Shock: Like a thunderbolt out of the blue...

Enemies to Lovers: I hate them. I love them. I hate them. I love them.

Fairy Tales Revisited: Once upon a time in a strip club...

Fated Mates: You knew you were the one for me. You just knew it.

Find Love and Come Out: I'll do it. For Johnny.

Forbidden Love: I can't. But I really wanna.

Forgiveness for Past Sins: So sorry I hurt you. It's okay. You are here now.

Friends to Lovers: I like them. I mean, I REALLY like them.

Fuck Buddies Become Lovers: The experienced one offers to teach the ropes to the virginal one. Love ensues.

Gay for You: I wasn't gay until I met you then *poof*. Note: controversial, esp. in the gay and bi communities.

Geek and Jock: Athlete looking for shy, bookish type.

Hero and the Great Quest: Righting an injustice while falling in love.

Hurt/Comfort: I am broken. Hold me.

I Love You But I'm Leaving Forever: I am so outta here.

I'm No Queer: In which the queer phobic character slowly reveals their queer side.

Insta-Dad Needs Husband: Romantic hero becomes an insta-dad after being orphaned and becoming responsible for his younger siblings. Oh and he's hot!

Love Button! aka Most Mind-Blowing Sex Ever: Where the reluctant, er, receiver of sex finds queer sex so good that they never want any other kind of sex again.

Magical Healing Genitals: Where sex cures all ailments.

Magical Straight Unicorn: A heteroflexible or bisexual character who suddenly realizes that their sexuality is broader than the heterosexual they thought it was.

Marriage of Convenience: I have to marry them. But I love you.

May/December: Silver foxes are hot!

Millionaire/Billionaire Step-Relation: Just a little kinky. With lots of cash.

OK Homo: Where there is no homophobia at all in the world.

Pretend Spouse: Where a character needs another character to pretend to be his spouse or partner for some reason, event, etc. Sexual attraction and love ensue.

Queerness Comes With the Uniform: Every cop, fireman, paramedic and soldier is queer and just waiting for the right guy to come along to show them the wonders of queer sex.

Redeemed by Love Drugs, Alcohol, other Addiction: Or sometimes just plain asshole.

Revenge Becomes Justice, Changed by Love: similar to Redeemed by...

Second Chances: Reunited, and it feels so good.

Smartass Twinks: The twinks smirk a lot, pull stupid pranks and are in general a pain in the ass, but these are considered to be endearing qualities to the bigger characters.

Star-Crossed Lovers: Romeo and Juliet/Julien without the dying.

Stolen Heir: This is one place secret babies come from.

Sudden Magical Sex Skills: In which a virgin performs perfectly in every sex act he attempts, including some acts commonly considered to be challenging and take practice.

Suddenly Magically Gay: Closely related to Gay for You, but a protagonist may perhaps look at more than one guy with a new sort of yearning.

Trapped Together: In an elevator, or a cabin, and it's oh so romantic...

Trickster Hero: Han Solo as the queer love interest.

Uncommunicative Masculinity: Male characters who are having sex and intimacy with queer characters and then denigrate “queer stuff” like discussing feelings and relationships.

Who Needs Health Insurance when You Have BDSM: AKA BDSM cures it ALL—related to Magical Healing Cock.

