48 Pages to Freedom

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I'm very inspired by the success of this author. He was working a minimum-wage job when he decided to launch a short book. The wave of success that hit him was overwhelming. He couldn't believe it was happening.

But it was happening. It was real. He then began to study how he had achieved this massive success. He realized that he had taken steps that pretty much guaranteed his success. And I am here to tell you something very important:

His strategies get more powerful every day

Day by day, these methods get even more powerful. People's attention spans are shrinking constantly. People are busier than ever. They desire short books that get right to the point. Like a quick snack that they can grab and eat on the run. The Twitter Culture has taken over completely. And we will use that to our advantage.

He is currently using these same techniques for his latest books and he is hitting home run after home run, launch after launch. I always recommend you follow up a successful book with a second book in the series. Book series are where the real royalties are. This is exactly what he is doing.

First, let's look at how he concentrated his ideas down into a very short book. And then we'll take a look at the book itself. And his yacht. :-)

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1 - Short Books WIN

Short books can be far more powerful than longer works. Why? Because they are concentrated and potent. There's no fluff. Just the most dramatic and powerful stuff that the author can give you. Our mission is to overwhelm the reader with intensity.

Your Elevator Pitch

This is your Elevator Pitch. You have 30 seconds to hook us on your idea, on your story. You have 30 seconds to convince us to buy your book. You must make every effort to win us over.

If you can't win us over in thirty seconds, what makes us think you can win us over in 5 minutes? What about 20 minutes? Won't you just be burning people's time up? Won't you just be boring them?

We have to capture people in the fewest words possible. We have to go for full intensity immediately. We have to aim for the bullseye. Here's one of my favorite examples:

Could you murder your wife to save your daughter?

Her Last Tomorrow

How's that for intensity? Does that make you pause? Does that start you thinking? Does that shock you a little? This is exactly the intense and dramatic type of thinking we need to use.

So let's start by focusing on the heart and soul of your book. What is the core of your book? Tell us in the fewest words possible. Write it down. Read it out loud. Now re-write it. Make it shorter, make it tighter, make it more powerful.

For fiction: Describe your story in one paragraph. This will help you boil down your story into the fewest words possible. We want to deliver just the core of your story.

What makes your story great? What is the heart and soul of your book? What's dynamic and exciting about your story? Can you tell us in one sentence? Write that sentence down. Then brainstorm and write that sentence again.

For non-fiction: What is your problem-solving idea? Boil it down to just the necessary core. The necessary steps so that the reader can implement your idea. Now deliver the core to your readers. No fluff. Nothing extra.

For non-fiction: What makes your solution great? Is it faster than other solutions? More effective? Less painful? Write it down in one sentence. Does that sentence sound powerful? Will that sentence hook people? If not, brainstorm some more. Then re-write that sentence.

Your elevator pitch will become the template for writing your book. Use it as your guide to keep the intensity throughout your book. Use it to remind yourself to use the fewest words possible. Keep the momentum going. Keep the intensity going.

Now let's take a look at his very intense 48-page book. From the book description, to the book sample, to the very last page he kept the intensity extremely high. Here's the book:

Wool

The book is now free, you should definitely grab a copy for yourself. I will go over exactly how you should price your short book a little later in this guide.

By using these techniques, Hugh achieved an explosive success. His book climbed the charts quickly, and then Amazon's Recommendation Engine latched onto it. Here's what happened next:

By that summer, he was selling 20,000–30,000 digital copies of his book a month ... and making a monthly salary of \$150,000 from e-book sales alone. He quit his day job.

https://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/how-hugh-howey-turned-his-self-published-story-wool-into-a-success-a-book-deal



The amazing thing about his success is that he really didn't know how he achieved it. He considered Wool a "little throwaway story." He had to backtrack and piece together what he did to make this happen:

http://www.hughhowey.com/the-story-of-my-middling-success/

He uses almost all of these techniques on his current books. These methods are more relevant and powerful than ever. Especially for your breakout success before you've gained a fanbase.

Let's go over exactly how he achieved this success step-by-step. His techniques are simple. And they cost absolutely nothing. His strategy is perfect for anyone wanting a breakout success.

2 - Kindle Is King

Launch on Kindle first. Forget about the paperback version for now. Readers of short content prefer Kindle books over paper books. They want things NOW. They don't want to wait. They want to start devouring your book immediately.

Ebooks are a bigger revolution than we realize. People can buy ebooks directly on their phones and start reading immediately. Ebooks have changed the way people buy and consume books.

People are reading ebooks on planes, on trains, on busses, and in waiting rooms all across the world. They are reading at work while on break, and they are reading at work while not on break!

Because of the Kindle App we can read on any device we wish, anywhere on the planet we find ourselves. People are getting exactly what they want, immediately.

And short ebooks are perfect for people on the move. Bite-sized content works best for people who are reading between other activities. Short books don't seem so overwhelming. And people get a sense of accomplishment when they finish a book completely.

This trend of short content being consumed by people on the run is only going to increase. It gets more intense day by day. Attention spans shrink. Free time shrinks. And the daily pressures on people increase.

Why shouldn't it be YOUR book that they are buying and reading? It should be! Our books are an escape for people. Our books help people solve their problems. Our books are important to people.

So let's make sure we cut out all the fluff in our short books and make them even shorter. Let's think like a guy who has a twenty-minute

commute and wants to get lost in a book. He doesn't want fluff and puff, he wants intensity. And he wants us to get right to the point.

This is exactly what Hugh did. There is pretty much ZERO fluff in Wool. The book doesn't have a dedication page. It doesn't have a Table of Contents, it doesn't even have a copyright notice! (I do recommend you include a copyright notice.)

A short book doesn't absolutely need a Table of Contents. And if there's any special notes you want to include, I recommend you put all that in the back of the book. Let's not get in the way of the reader.

The 'Look Inside' feature on Amazon usually jumps automatically to the book's first chapter, but not always. And not consistently on every device. So it's important to cut 'Front Matter' down to the absolute minimum.

What Hugh did was hit people with the first sentence of his book immediately. As soon as they click 'Look Inside', he hooks them. We will talk more about how he did this later in the training. But let's learn from Hugh and cut all the fat out of our books.

The Basics of Kindle Publishing:

https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G200635650

Guidelines to keep you out of trouble:

https://kdp.amazon.com/en US/help/topic/G200672390

Great search engine for free images:

https://www.everypixel.com/free

My favorite image source:

https://www.shutterstock.com/home

Fiverr formatters

https://www.fiverr.com/gigs/kindle-formatting

Fiverr cover design:

https://www.fiverr.com/gigs/design-book-cover

3 - Bestseller Piggyback Method

With this method you will be able to x-ray the Browse Categories of any bestselling book, and use those Browse Categories to boost your own book. You will be able to look inside Amazon's Book Recommendation Engine, and use it to your advantage.

Hugh's book initially got a big boost from the bestselling book 'The Hunger Games'. Both books are considered Apocalyptic Dystopia. And both books shared a few of the same Browse Categories.

That's why Amazon's Book Recommendation Engine connected Hugh's book to The Hunger Games. This pulled his book 'Wool' all the way up the charts. Hugh's book 'piggybacked' on the success and sales of The Hunger Games.

What is a Browse Category?

A Browse Category is similar to a book genre or a niche. It's like a bucket with the same type of books in it. Browse Categories are formatted as strings or paths, like this:

Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Science Fiction, Fantasy & Scary Stories > Science Fiction > Dystopian

Did you notice the Browse Categories get more specific each step of the way? The path starts with a very broad category: Kindle Store. It then drills down and gets more and more specific until it ends with the Dystopian Browse Category.

We are going to pick a target book, a bestseller, that's in the same genre as your book. Let's say your book is an Apocalyptic Dystopian novel. You want to piggyback on The Hunger Games. First, you go to the Kindle Store. And find the Kindle version of the book:



Scroll down to Product Details:

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported [™]

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled [™]

Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #332 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store)

#1 in Children's Dystopian Sci-Fi Books

#1 in Teen & Young Adult Fiction about Self-Esteem

#1 in Children's Dystopian Fiction Books

Would you like to tell us about a lower price?

You will see up to three Bestseller Categories that the book is ranking in. Click on one of these to be taken to the actual Browse Category Path:



To the left of the page you can see the Browse Category Path. When you write the path out, it will look like this:

Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Science Fiction, Fantasy & Scary Stories > Science Fiction > Dystopian

Notice that the Dystopian sub-niche is in a stack of other sub-niches. It looks like this:

Action & Adventure Aliens Dystopian Steampunk Time Travel

Now ask yourself: Which one of these sub-niches connects your book to the target book? We know that the target book has Action & Adventure elements in it. If your book has these same elements, copy the Action & Adventure Browse Path, like this:

Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Science Fiction, Fantasy & Scary Stories > Science Fiction > Action & Adventure

This is how you connect your book to a best-selling book. Next, you are going to be submitting these to Author Central so that they can put your book in these Browse Categories. You are allowed up to 10 Browse Categories.

Continue the process of collecting Browse Paths. Go back to the product page of the target book and click on the other Bestseller Categories to find their Browse Paths. You can target more than one bestseller. Remember, our goal is finding Browse Categories in these books that relate to our book.

You can also go right to a list of all Kindle Browse Categories and brainstorm your connection to the target book. Follow this link:

https://www.amazon.com/Kindle-eBooks/b?ie=UTF8&node=154606011

Now scroll down and look to the left of the page to see all the Browse Categories:



Recommend



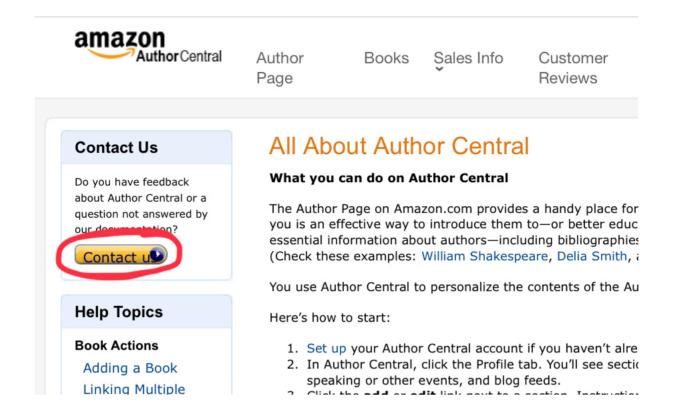
New Releas



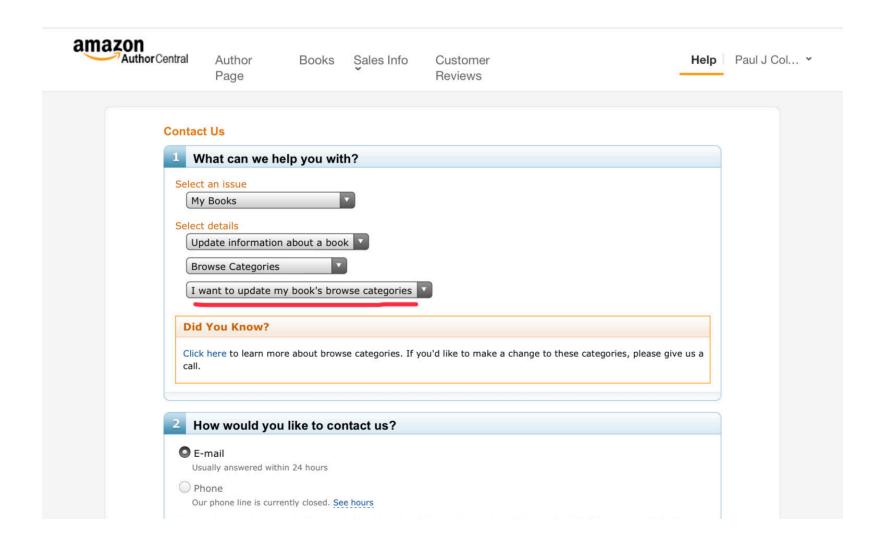
Finally, contact Author Central and have them add your Kindle book to all these categories:

https://authorcentral.amazon.com/gp/help?ie=UTF8&pn=irid12991549

Click on Contact Us:



And then use the pull-down menus to select *I want to update my book's browse categories*. Like this:



If you are outside the US, you must use email to contact Author Central. But don't worry, email support is extremely fast. You have now officially linked your book to a best-selling book. Remember, you can target more than one bestseller. And make sure you use all 10 Browse Categories that Amazon allows you.

4 - Optimum Pricing Strategies

There are two things that are critical when deciding how to price your book:

A) Pricing your book at the optimum price

B) Knowing when to adjust the price when conditions change

Authors make two major mistakes: They set the wrong price. Or they set the right price at the wrong time.

The optimum price for your book will change depending on demand. It will also change as you get closer to launching the second book in your series.

When you launch your book, price it at 99 cents. This makes it so you can get verified reviews. Having at least a few reviews is important for your book's momentum. You really only need two or three reviews to start the ball rolling.

You are allowed to ask family and friends to review your book. There has been some controversy and misunderstanding about this in the past, but let's go directly to Amazon about this:

Q: Do you remove reviews posted by friends and family?

A: Simply being friends or liked on a social media site will not get a review removed.

https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G202101910

I recommend you ask your friends and family 'in real life' for reviews. I also recommend you ask your Facebook and Twitter friends for reviews. And don't forget friends you can only reach via email.

You can also use Facebook Groups for reviews. But make sure you don't 'swap' reviews. You will write a review for one author in the group, and a different author in the group will write a review for your book. Here's a Facebook Group dedicated to reviewing books:

Get Amazon and Barnes & Noble Book Reviews

https://www.facebook.com/groups/329297977202165/

You can also search Facebook for more book review groups with these keywords: get book reviews. Then go to the top of the page and select 'Groups'.

Goodreads is also a great resource for getting book reviews. Again, make sure you avoid reciprocal reviews. Here's a great group to be a part of on Goodreads:

https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/78683-review-group

Now that you have three or four reviews, should you raise the price of your book or go perma-free? That is a judgment call based on two things:

A) Is there strong demand for your book?

B) Have you published Book 2 yet?

IMPORTANT: Always create series of books! Especially when people love your first book. I have seen authors hit the lottery with their first book, and then decide to change genres and write a completely unrelated book. It usually does not go well.

Let's say you just have the one book, you haven't started on your second book in the series yet. How high is the demand for your book? Are people on fire for your book?

If there is strong demand, go ahead and raise the price to \$2.99. Keep watching your sales and see if they stay strong. If they stay strong, raise your price to \$4.99.

If there is a significant drop in your sales, you can always lower the price. You are experimenting with your price in order to find the optimal price. Don't worry about adjusting your price upward, you can always lower it again.

Finding the optimum price for for your book will also help you price the second book in your series. You will know exactly what people are willing to pay. And that will be the price of Book 2.

While you are writing Book 2 in your series, you have three options:

- A) Make Book 1 perma-free to collect more email addresses of your fans
- B) Leave the price of Book 1 at 99 cents and keep collecting verified reviews
- C) If there is strong demand, raise the price of Book 1 to the maximum/ optimum price

IMPORTANT: With all three options, you are always collecting email addresses. Always have a link at the beginning of your book with something that fans of your book will want. Always gather and then connect with fans.

When Hugh was ready to launch Book 2, he made 'Wool' perma-free. And that caused 'Wool' to go supernova and feed thousands of fans to his second book.

5 - Dangerous Book Description

Hugh does the opposite of what most authors do in their Book Descriptions: He under-explains. He truly believes that 'Less is more'. And much less is much more.

He uses 'mystery' to hook you in. He only gives you a broken piece of the story so that your mind naturally craves the other piece that he left out. It's like handing someone half of a one-hundred dollar bill.

Your mind craves completion, your mind wants a solution. This is how he sets up a tension inside you. He does this multiple times in very few words.

But he doesn't just use mystery to hook us: He uses a combination of mystery, danger, and fear. He does all this in the fewest words possible:

"Thousands of them have lived underground. They've lived there so long, there are only legends about people living anywhere else. Such a life requires rules. Strict rules. There are things that must not be discussed. Like going outside. Never mention you might like going outside.

Or you'll get what you wish for."

Do you see how much tension he builds up inside you with very few words? Every word here is designed to hook you. Let's break it down line by line:

Thousands of them have lived underground.

What does 'them' refer to? Who are they? What are they?

They've lived there so long, there are only legends about people living anywhere else.

'Legends' means mystery. Legends of what? Of whom?

Such a life requires rules.

Now he sows fear.

Strict rules.

He ramps up the fear. This is a two-word sentence. It reads like a command, or an order.

There are things that must not be discussed.

He adds danger to the fear. This sounds like law. This is a direct command. There is always a penalty for breaking the law, in every society.

Like going outside.

What is outside? What is waiting for them? Why haven't they gone outside? All of this adds even more mystery.

Never mention you might like going outside.

Fear, danger, and mystery. You can destroy your life with an offhand remark about the outside world. This reads like advice from a friend who's trying to keep you from getting hurt or killed.

Or you'll get what you wish for.

This is a reference to the old saying: "Be careful what you wish for, lest it come true!" This is again fear, danger, and mystery.

Do you notice he seems to be referring to self harm here? Who would ask to go outside if it's dangerous out there, or even deadly? He seems to be hinting at suicide. What would drive a person to ask for such a thing? More mystery, danger, and fear.

Also notice that Hugh's Book Description contains the absolute core of his story: There are people who have been living underground for hundreds of years. They don't know what the real world is like anymore. Or if it will kill them.

Anyone can learn to write great Book Descriptions from studying what Hugh did here. Hugh gives us a masterclass in how to get people to buy your book, in the fewest words possible.

You can certainly use Hugh's technique for the Book Description of a non-fiction book. Would you like to see a diet book that used FEAR to become a massive best-seller? Here you go:

How Not to Die

There's fear in the book's title, and there's fear all over the Book Description. Just check out a few samples from the Book Description to get your heart beating too fast:

...the only diet that can prevent and reverse many of the causes of disease-related death.

The vast majority of premature deaths can be prevented through simple changes in diet and lifestyle.

The fifteen leading causes of death claim the lives of 1.6 million Americans annually. This doesn't have to be the case.

...you will learn which foods to eat and which lifestyle changes to make to live longer.

Yes, this Book Description is filled with fear! Yikes. I might have to grab a copy. Who doesn't want to live longer? I think they've found a new customer.

6 - Solid and Real World

Hugh does something really clever that immediately hooks readers and causes them to never forget his characters: He gives his characters physical weight. He makes their bodies seem substantial.

He does the same thing for the world of the book. It is rusty, it is dusty, it is worn and used, it has physical weight, it really exists. It is a real place that you can't forget.

Hugh starts his book by punching the reader in the face. Which I highly recommend you do. :-) He definitely gets our attention with this first line:

The children were playing while Holston climbed to his death...

You notice he contrasts life with death, carefree with hopeless, the end of life with the beginning of life. This is a shot of espresso that wakes us up and inspires us to keep reading.

He then convinces you that Holston has a real physical body, he has weight, and he's really walking up those stairs:

Holston took his time, each step methodical and ponderous, as he wound his way around and around the spiral staircase, old boots ringing out on metal treads.

Next he convinces you that the world he invented for his characters is actually a real place. It's a lived-in place, it is worn, it is dusty, it is rusty:

The treads, like his father's boots, showed signs of wear. Paint clung to them in feeble chips, mostly in the corners and undersides, where they were safe. Traffic elsewhere on the staircase sent dust shivering off in small clouds. Holston could feel the vibrations in the railing, which was worn down to the gleaming metal.

Hugh has quickly established that his characters are real, and the world they inhabit is real. If we believe they are real, then we care about them. We worry about them. We want to see what happens next. And then he gives us this chilling line:

At the top of the spiral stairway, Holston's hand ran out of railing.

You see how quickly Hugh hooks the reader: He hooks the reader in the book sample. He hits you hard with a dramatic first line, and then he convinces you that his main character and the world he inhabits are absolutely real.

IMPORTANT: Hook the reader in the book sample!

I can't overstate this. Put your most powerful words first and make sure you get your hook in the reader's mouth. Don't delay. Make every effort to capture and hypnotize the reader immediately.

You can use Hugh's technique in non-fiction too. Let's say you are writing a diet book. You want to make the reader feel that this lifestyle change is really happening for them. So you write like this:

Picture yourself getting up in the morning. Your body feels different now, you have a new energy from head to toe. You put your feet on the floor and you feel like a warrior. You stand tall. Your body feels strong like a statue. You are made of brass. Nothing can harm you.

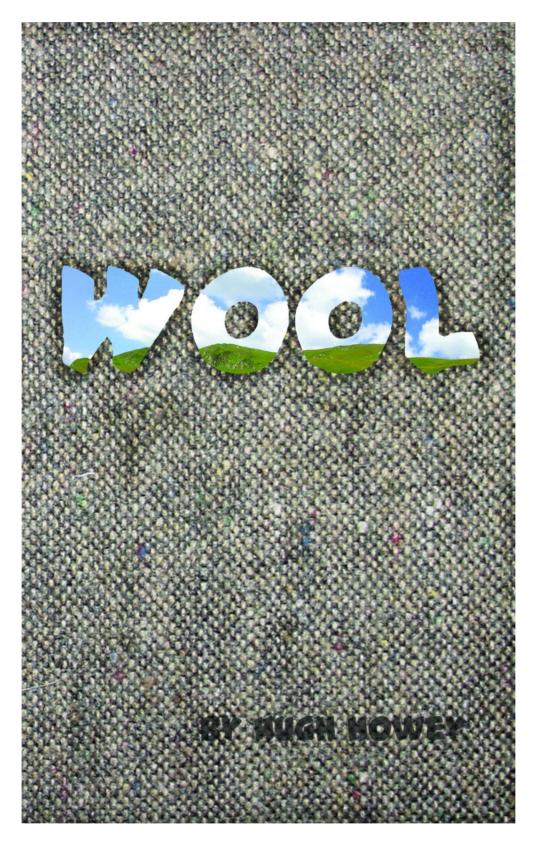
You are showing the reader that real change is actually happening. That they are real, this lifestyle change is real, and their success is real.

7 - Organic Book Covers

Hugh Howey doesn't just slap a book cover together, he takes the time to focus on making something unique and genuine. Something organic. Something that people don't expect.

When you first see the cover of Wool, you might think it's clunky or amateur. But it definitely captures your attention. You pause on it to take a closer look.

That's because he took the time to really think about what his book is trying to say, and what his book cover should say. The two are very much related.



His book cover illustrates the story inside the book. You'll notice that the entire cover is a piece of wool. That's the cloth that you are given when you decide to leave the silo. That's the cloth that you use to clean the camera lenses outside.

In a sense, Hugh is handing you the cloth. The entire cover is like a piece of wool. He's giving you the opportunity to leave the silo. But does the opportunity end in freedom, or death?

You'll also notice that the two O's in the word Wool have become portholes. You are now inside the silo, looking out at freedom and nature. But is it a lie?

This book cover was a big part of Hugh's success. At first look, it seems clunky. But it certainly captures you. Maybe Hugh was sending us a powerful, subliminal message with this cover?

When you create your cover, think deeply about the core of your book. What is most exciting about your book? What is most unique? What's the most dramatic thing about your book?

Now illustrate that on your book cover. Make every effort to send people the message inside your book by putting on your book cover. Think outside the box. Brainstorm. Get creative.

One way to get the ideas flowing is to use Yasiv. Yasiv will give you a bird's-eye view of the book covers in your chosen genre. Take a look at this satellite view:

Yasiv - Wool by Hugh Howey

IMPORTANT: You may have to perform the search a second time to see the data. Amazon recently changed their API, and the Yasiv team is currently updating.

Great search engine for free images:

https://www.everypixel.com/free

My favorite image source:

https://www.shutterstock.com/home

Fiverr formatters

https://www.fiverr.com/gigs/kindle-formatting

Fiverr cover design:

https://www.fiverr.com/gigs/design-book-cover

Training I Highly Recommend

When authors ask me for advice on how to sell books, these are the greats that I always refer them to. These are the proven winners: Effective, tested, and easy to implement.

Geoff Shaw

Pretty much anything by Geoff is great. He has a way of making everything very clear and simple. Plus, he's a great motivator. After listening to Geoff, you will get your butt in gear and your Butt In Chair (BIC)!

https://www.udemy.com/user/geoffshaw4/

One Page Publishing Profits

This is great stuff because it shows you that it's not about how much content you create, it's about creating the exact right content. This training proves that tiny content can be quite profitable. And it definitely inspired me to get involved with Etsy and sell micro-content at multiple online stores:

https://amyharrop.com/pages/1ppp-wp/

Breadcrumb Book Promotion

This is a brilliant free method by Bill Platt. It shows you that you don't need money to promote your book, you just need a little bit of hustle. Elbow grease still hasn't gone out of style:

http://professionalbookmarketing.com/breadcrumbs-method/

Godspeed to you! If you need any further guidance or help, you can always contact me:

paul@bookpumper.com

Paul I Coleman

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production, anticipated savings, business, contracts, commercial opportunities or goodwill.

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We will not be liable to you in respect of any special, indirect or consequential loss or damage.

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(9) Our details

In this disclaimer, "we" means (and "us" and "our" refer to) Paul Coleman trading as Bookpumper.com, which has its principal place of business at 219 East Mills Ave #1891, El Paso, Texas 79901.

PS: I love life! :-)