



**MARKETING WORKBOOK
FOR INDEPENDENT WRITERS**

Presented to the Subscribers of A Muse Bouche Review

www.ambreview.com

By: The Contributing Authors of A Muse Bouche Review

This workbook has been created in a monochrome format for easier printing.

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INTRODUCTION

The Vegas odds are that you are an independent writer. A lot of independent writers have an aversion to the dreaded “M” word: marketing. For a lot of us, there is a dream of being signed to a big traditional publisher who is going to put the full-force of their marketing department behind your work — we sincerely hope that happens for you. In the meantime, it's important to take the reins on your independent writing career and understand that you are your own marketing department.

A Muse Bouche Review is dedicated to creating engaging content for writers and readers alike. That's why we've put this workbook together, to create value in our relationship with you. You've shown your support with your subscription, and we wanted to thank you with our collective knowledge on marketing for independent writers.

Let's take a second to manage a few expectations. This workbook is designed to help you engineer a marketing campaign and strategy for your writing career, and isn't a guarantee that your campaign will be successful. In order for that to happen, it will take a lot of work and dedication on your part. We've created a few tools for you to make some of the leg work a little easier. Truly, there is no substitute for hard work and effort, we're just trying to make your work more targeted and precise, and maybe have a little fun along the way.

We believe a lot in you, and your career. We want to see you be successful as much as we want to see ourselves attain success. The creative arts is not an industry with winners and losers — we can all be winners, and enjoy each others' successes. That's why we've created this resource for you.

Good luck, and go get 'em!

Sincerely,
-A Muse Bouche Review Contributors

IDENTIFYING YOUR TARGET MARKET

As an independent author, you want to sell books. Ideally, you'd like to sell a lot of books. It's a fundamental truth that not everyone is going to like the book you've written. Some people will, but not everyone has the same taste, and there will be people that will not like what you've written. When it's time to get word out about your work, you want to focus on telling the people who *will* buy your work, and not waste resources on people who won't be interested. That lot of people who will buy your work is your Target Market.

You want to know everything about your target market as possible. You want to know who they are, what age they are, where they shop, even what their friends like. Once you have that knowledge, then you know how to get your message in front of them. This information is surprisingly easy to obtain — all you have to do is ask!

The process of obtaining this information is Market Research. If you have a [Google account](#), then you've already been provided one of the most powerful marketing tools you can ask for: [Google Forms](#). You put together a form, ask the right questions, and distribute it for completion. One of the things we like most about Google Forms is that it tabulates the results for you in an easy-to-read format to get the answers you are looking for. The depth of your market research can be as general, or as specific, as you like. You would be best served to find somewhere in the middle (that leans more towards specific).

Obtaining the responses can be as formal, or as informal as you like. You can post polls on Twitter, ask the question on Facebook, or print your survey on paper, and tabulate the results by hand. We're going to talk in a future chapter about creating a poster for one of your releases, you can also create a poster for your research and post it at the library, or other places where readers congregate.

For an independent writer, you will want to know the following information:

- **Their geographic location** - *there may be regional differences and nuances to how you approach your marketing activity.*
- **What genres they read** - *knowing what other kinds of books they read may help you with crossover genre work, or find elements of other genres that would make your work more attractive to that reader.*
- **How often they read** - *this will help gauge how intense your readership consumes books, and establish a timeline on how often you should be releasing work.*

- **The general median income** - *don't ask for a specific number, but ask for a range — \$30,000 to \$49,000 Per Year for example. This information is going to help develop a profile of the reader. It wouldn't hurt to know what industry they work in, or their education level as well.*
- **Where they shop** - *brick and mortar stores? Online only? Do they borrow books from libraries? Authors do get royalties when their works are in libraries.*
- **How much they spend on recreation** - *recreational and disposable income is finite in most cases. If you find out how much they generally make, you want to know how much of it they spend on discretionary expenses like recreation.*
- **What recreation they spend money on** - *books are viewed as discretionary spending to a lot of folks. You want to know what you are competing with, like amusement parks, or streaming subscriptions.*
- **How often they spend it**
- **How do they interact with Authors they like** - *do they Tweet them? Comment on their Instagram posts?*

You want to identify as many patterns and correlations as possible. If a lot of your readers are telling you that they live in Missouri, work in Biological Sciences, and read Science Fiction, you may be missing a demographic of other Biological Scientists in Missouri.

#ProTip: Do not assume that everyone who completes your survey is a reader. Some people just enjoy talking about themselves. One of your first questions should answer the question “Is this person a reader?” (without being rude, of course). If that answer is *no*, throw that survey out, the rest of the information on it will not help you.

Your research should pare down the entire population of Planet Earth to the core essence of your readership. Your research should qualify your Target Market as such:

Everyone > People Who Read > People Who Read In My Language > People Who Buy Books > People Who Buy Books From Independent Authors > People Who Buy Books From Independent Authors In My Genre > People Who Buy Books From Me.

That's a very broad look at your target market: People who buy books in your genre.

The rest of your Market Research is going to tell you how to reach those people. Do they have Good Reads accounts? Are they on social media? Which social media platforms? Do they shop online? What websites? Etc.

#ProTip: *Your last questions should be about their personal details like income, or age. The questions may seem intrusive and if they appear early in your questionnaire, they may just not complete the questionnaire. If the questions are towards the end, they've already committed some of their valuable time to completing the survey and are more likely to complete it.*

#ProTip: *At the end of the survey, ask for their email address and if they'd like to be added to your mailing list – we'll get into mailing lists later, but this is a crucial question, and you'll be glad you asked it later.*

On the next page is a worksheet to help you identify your Target Market. Print it out, fill it out, and keep it handy. This information is going to be important later.

#ProTip: *If you are a multi-genre author, your first book's target market may differ from your next book's target market. Always be aware of who your audience is and how to reach them.*

When your research is complete, you'll have a good idea of who your readers are, and how they see themselves. If they are on Facebook, but not Twitter or Instagram, would it make sense to buy ads on Twitter?

TARGET MARKET WORKSHEET

Author: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

What geographic location(s) is/are my target buyers located in? (<i>Country, Province, State, County, City, etc.</i>)	
What is their income range?	
Are there any other details about who they are that are important?	

TASTES AND PREFERENCES

What genres do they read?	
What are their other hobbies & recreation activities?	
Where do they read? (The park? A library? Book store? Other?)	
How do they find out about new releases, or get recommendations for books they want to read?	

SOCIAL PROFILE

What social media platforms do they belong to?	
Do they prefer to be emailed or texted?	
Did they subscribe to the mailing list?	

POSITIONING STATEMENT, MISSION STATEMENTS, & GOALS, OH MY!

So now we know who we are trying to reach with news to buy your book, now we need to talk about how we present ourselves to them. This posturing is known as Positioning, or your public image.

One of the most important actions you can take is to drop the word “aspiring” from the way you describe yourself. Do your fingers dance across the keyboard and words appear in an order to convey an idea? You are a writer and there is nothing aspiring about it. Serious buyers don’t want to pick up a book from an aspiring writer, they want to buy a book from a serious writer who has honed their craft, and is confident enough to tell them the book is a great effort at telling the greatest story possible. Whether or not they believe that is another matter entirely.

Positioning is the first step at developing your brand, which is crucial. Think about Stephen King, the name alone is a brand. When you pick up a Stephen King novel, you have an idea of what kind of story you are going to get. As a writer, you are no different. You will have an identifier, and your positioning strategy will help determine what that identifier is.

In this chapter, we are going to develop a few things:

1. Your Vision Statement
2. Your Mission Statement
3. Your Positioning Statement
4. Your Tagline

Those statements are for your author branding. Your book releases will have different parts of their marketing campaign, but those campaigns are going to rely on your author branding, and will not be successful unless your book campaign is harmonious with your author branding.

Let’s talk about what each of those statements are:

A **Vision Statement** is for you, and you alone. It’s a statement to document what your intentions are as a writer. It should be clear and in an inspirational tone. For example: *“I write*

books and stories that make people feel like they can love again and recapture the magic of the first kiss.”

That is a vision of writing books that are free from tether of expectation. The best way to think about it is: *what kind of stories would I write if I were already guaranteed success?* The answer you come up with is the answer to your vision statement.

A **Mission Statement** is a declaration of how you will achieve the goals set in your Vision Statement. This is also an internal statement, meant for you ...mostly. While businesses will disclose their Mission Statements, we have yet to come across a writer who has. Make no bones about it: your independent writing career is a business. You produce content for consumption, and you expect financial consideration in exchange for the distribution of your content. we can't think of a more clear example of business.

A Mission Statement for an author might read as such:

“I am a Science Fiction author who sets out to create the most engaging, original stories that both gives the reader a sense of adventure, and implements original concepts. I study the genre of Science Fiction faithfully, to learn what is the essence of desirable Sci-Fi, and to find opportunities to craft stories that haven't been told before. I stay in touch with Sci-Fi communities, to relate to my readers, and to stay engaged with a genre that we love.”

A **Positioning Statement** is a declaration of how your work is going to meet the demands of your target market. All of the statements we've been talking about to this point have been about your brand as an author — the positioning statement is the first statement that can be implemented for your brand AND your individual works.

Finally, your **Tagline** is a slug that invokes a recall about your work in the memory of your readers. It should be catchy, and when your reader has discretionary funds to burn on books, should remind them of you first (in theory). Romance author Rowena Tisdale's tagline is “The Sultry Scribe.” It immediately invokes an image of a romance writer who is serious about her craft.

The next couple of pages are the worksheets you'll need to start developing these statements.

GOALS & AMBITIONS

Write down at least five of your writing goals. Make these goals specific, with measurable progress, and clear detail. Don't be afraid of your ambitions, be honest with yourself about what you want to achieve.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Now, for each one of your goals, chart actions you can take to achieve them:

Goal:	Actions To Achievement
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

VISION STATEMENT

Based on the goals and direction that you've outlined on the previous worksheet, draft your first Vision Statement in the space below:

Okay, now that we have an inspirational idea of what you are aiming to do, let's take a swing at your Mission Statement. In the space below, tell me how you are going to accomplish your objectives:

POSITIONING STATEMENT

Fill in the blanks:

My work is for the readers of _____, _____ delivers
(Genre) (Author/Book)
the specific brand of stories my readers are looking for, while delivering a unique brand of
_____. My stories aren't like others in my genre, my stories have
(Essential element of genre)
_____, because of _____.
(Your work's secret weapon) (Why you are excited for people to read your work)

TAGLINE

Now that you know how you are going to get where you are going, and how you do it differently than the other authors in your genre, use the space below to create a tagline that says it all about your unique brand of literature.

BRANDING

Everything we've done up to now has been finding out who is most likely to buy your work, and how to present yourself to them. The culmination of both are important aspects of your branding. In this chapter, we're going to bring it all home and make sure that your branding strategy is as complete as possible.

What is a brand? A brand is a specific concept or product produced by a specific person or entity. Your brand is your work, produced by you. Apple is a brand, Microsoft is a brand, Stephen King has a brand, so on and so on. Brand is crucial, as it is the umbrella reputation for everything you do. If your brand is weak, then the recall impression in the minds of potential buyers won't be a positive one — or at least not one that incites a purchase upon recall.

The good news is, you've already done half of the work. The tagline that we made in the previous chapter is half of the visible branding message for your work. **Author Name - Tagline** is a big part of it.

What are other components of your brand?

- Author portrait
- Logo (optional, but couldn't hurt)
- Uniformity
- Consistency

Let's break down the importance of these aspects, and how they factor in to your marketing strategy:

An **Author Portrait** is going to be your visual connection to your reader. Ultimately, the most organic repeat readers that you are going to cultivate are the ones who feel that your work personally resonates with them, and there is no better way to reinforce that personal connection than for them to know who you are, and be able to put a face to the source of the joy they get from reading your stories.

A **logo** is optional, but couldn't hurt. A logo can be as simple as the font you use for your name on your books, to a symbol, and a combination of both. Consider a simple logo to reinforce the immediate recall — when someone sees your logo, or something that reminds them of it, they think of you first.

Uniformity is a visual practice that a lot of readers don't realize they are being subjected to. Think of any series of books that you really like. We bet they look really nice when stacked in order across your bookshelf, and if another book in that series were to come out, you'd stop in your tracks to check it out, right? Everything we're talking about in your branding is meant to conjure immediate recall for your particular brand of writing.

It's not enough to be uniform, but a writer successfully marketing themselves must also be **consistent**. If you have cultivated an audience of readers that are salivating on Friday because you release your blogs on Saturday, then you have created urgency and desire to consume your product. Releasing your blog on Sunday when they expect it on Saturday is a good way to turn readers away from your marketing message, and you'll be losing captive audience by the fist-fulls.

For this chapter's exercise, we want you to fill out the following questions:

1. What is my tagline? _____
2. Do I use a specific font or face on my work? _____
3. If so, does it match across all of my work? _____
4. Am I uniform across all of my work in a visual aspect? _____
5. Do I deliver consistently? _____

If you answered "no" to any of the above questions, use the rest of the page to create a plan to correct anything that may be working against you. This is for your eyes only, so be as broad or as general as you need.

MARKETING MESSAGE

This is exciting, and we are excited for you! We're getting ready to put your brand out into the world and tell people what you're all about! We know who you are going to spread this good news to, we know where to reach them, and how loud we have to yell to get the point across ...but what are we telling them? Your **Marketing Message**.

By simple definition, your Marketing Message is the concept that you want to communicate through your marketing platforms (we'll get into that in the next chapter). The most successful marketing message should be clear, concise, and easily understood.

As an author, or writer, there are going to be a few different marketing messages you will want to communicate:

1. About yourself as an author.
2. About a release you have coming up.
3. About an event you'll be involved in.

There could be more, but we're going to focus on those three right now.

It is crucial that your Marketing Message is uniform across all of your platforms and marketing vehicles. You want to be saying the same thing no matter where someone finds information about you. Your blog, or website, should express an identical thought as your Facebook page or your Pinterest Board.

Imagine seeing a website for John Q. Smith, Author. On John's website, it says that he is a fantasy author who writes in the vein of Tolkein. John's Facebook page says that he is a satirist who could be the next Kurt Vonnegut, and his Twitter account says that he's a humorist who writes screenplays. That's absolutely maddening, isn't it? I'm not saying that John can't be all of those things, but John needs to focus his message, or else he's going to turn people off to his work, and his readership is going to suffer.

I'm going to make this very simple. Your marketing message needs to answer three questions, in the most simple way possible:

1. When is your work available?
2. Where can your work be found?
3. How can someone give you money for your work?

Your Marketing Message should absolutely destroy any barriers to people giving you their money. “Well, I don’t know where to buy the Author’s book, I guess I’ll just forget about it.” You’ve worked really hard on your book, novel, story, poem, etc., and you should make it as easy as possible for people to give you money!

Let’s look at how this principle applies to your three different marketing messages:

As an author:

1. I’ll be launching my website on March 3rd.
2. You can visit at www.authorwebsite.com.
3. You want to buy my book? Here’s the link to the book on BookSeller.web, I also take PayPal.

About your release:

1. My book will be available on March 3rd.
2. My book will be available exclusively at BookSeller.Whatever.
3. BookSeller.Whatever takes all major credit cards, I also take PayPal.

About your event:

1. I’ll be doing a write-in at Authors Are Coffee Addicts Coffee Shop on March 3rd.
2. Authors Are Coffee Addicts Coffee Shop is located at 123 Main Street, Everytown, NY.
3. I will have copies of books for sale, I take PayPal. If you want coffee, the shop accepts all major credit cards.

By answering those three questions in your Marketing Message — which becomes body copy when you put it on a flyer or ad — you have eliminated barriers for people to purchase. They can’t ever come to you and say they didn’t know when the event was, or how they could buy your work.

So, let’s take a look at how John Q. Smith - Author’s web presence would look different if his Marketing Message were in sync:

John Q. Smith is a Fantasy Author, Satirist, & Humorist whose latest book “Tango With a Tiger” will be available on March 3rd! Visit AuthorWebsite.Com to Pre-Order!

We’ve answered when, where, and how to give money — it also looks like an author who has his house in order, as well!

MARKETING PLATFORMS

A lot of this information has been very intensive. We want you to take a victory sip of tea, or coffee, and pat yourself on the back!

By simple definition, a marketing platform is any place where you are given the opportunity to tell your target audience that you have work available for consumption. Marketing platforms can be as simple as bulletin boards at your library, or as complex as a television program dedicated solely to your writing.

You know what is also a marketing platform? Your social media accounts! As an independent author, you will want to create as many opportunities to be visible as possible, while maintaining the balance of being uniform and consistent.

Physical Platforms. Believe it or not, writers still market to their target market through physical media. Remember that survey we had you do, that will tell you if your target market is more accessible by digital, or electronic mediums. Samples of physical marketing vehicles:

- Your local newspaper (or a national one for that matter)
- A television ad
- A radio ad
- A billboard
- A handbill
- A flyer
- Community newsletters
- Ad space in programs for conferences & gatherings
- Signage at book fairs

#ProTip: *Keep track of what you are spending on your advertising, which platforms are bringing you the most sales, and which ones aren't performing at all. This will help focus your marketing dollars to the most effective avenues.*

Have you ever been walking down the street, and someone hands you a flyer to their band's first show? You have no idea what they sound like, and if they aren't on the radio, odds are it won't be amazing, but they still hand it to you with an expectation that you should go and they are confident you will enjoy yourself.

As ballsy as that sounds, you should apply the same principal to your writing. Tell people about it, with an expectation that they will enjoy themselves, and be confident in the result.

Electronic Platforms are a lot more common because of our social proclivities. Basic electronic platforms (and the list is changing every day):

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Youtube
- Instagram
- Blogger
- WordPress
- Many, many more

***#ProTip:** Hashtags are not just convenient, but necessary. Take the time to know what your market's preferred hashtags are, and use them accordingly.*

Physical Mediums. Remember the band we told you about, handing you the flyer? What's stopping you from doing the same thing? There are a lot of fantastic resources to create print media at little to no cost. You may also elect to hire a graphic designer to create print media for you, which is also great. You put into it what you think your work is worth, or deserving of. There are a lot of writers who are trying to make the biggest bang for the littlest buck, and that is okay too. As writers, we are creative people, and can be creative with limitations.

***#ProTip:** Cover reveals are an excellent, and organic way to spark early interest in your upcoming release. Consider using similar color schemes & font faces for your posters for print, or social media.*

***#ProTip:** Consider putting a handbill or flyer up on your local library bulletin board. The people there are already readers, and a segment of your target market by default.*

Business Cards or Postcards. This often gets overlooked, but I'd ask you to reconsider the concept again. Imagine being at a writing convention, or book sale, and you run into someone who is absolutely devouring the genre you write in. You get to talking, and you mention in casual conversation that you're a writer and have a release coming up. That person says they'd love to check it out, and you tell them to visit your website. What are the odds they are going to remember your website address? Break out a business card, directing them to a website that answers your barrier questions, and then they have a physical reminder to check out your work when they get a moment.

Electronic Mediums. This is pretty cut and dry. The same social media, and electronic methods that you use in your personal life often have business applications. Create a Twitter account for your writing, a Facebook business page, etc. Interact like you would normally with other people in your field, or people in your target market, and let those relationships build organically.

WARNING: We all have very strong opinions on things, and there are times when we really want those opinions to be heard because they mean so much to you. Please consider which hill is the appropriate one to die on. If you have something to say because one of your values as a person is being alienated, then speak your truth. Are you trying to speak in outrage because of an inconsequential matter (which may not seem inconsequential to you at all), you may want to reconsider displaying your rage. Ask yourself if your opinion would needlessly sour a potential reader to your work.

#ProTip: *Making a Twitter banner, or Facebook cover photo, that answers your barrier questions is a great way to get your marketing message in front of people without being salesy. It's a great opportunity to maximize your visibility.*

Website or Blog. This is not negotiable. Ever. If you're putting yourself out there as a writer, then you want to have samples of your work ready for consumption. One of the easiest ways to display your style, create a portfolio of sample work, and create opportunities to engage with your readers, is to create a blog. You also want information about yourself available so that potential readers can make a personal connection with you as a writer, and find out for themselves why you were the person to write the book they wanted to read.

It doesn't have to be a professional built website — blogging platforms like WordPress have excellent web hosting products that are free, or very affordable, including domain services. Wix is a great tool for creating a web presence, and they also have domain services.

Bookstagram, Booktube, and Bloggers. If you find yourself with a little more freedom in your marketing budget, consider getting copies of your work in the hands of people who review books. This is a good thing for two reasons:

1. They belong to your target market, and can easily identify the benefits of readers consuming your work.
2. They have an audience separate from yours, and their review could lead to advanced exposure to an even more broad audience.

Reviews are gold! Even if they aren't five-star, the reviewer will still hopefully speak of things they liked about your work, which may be a benefit for other readers. Even bad reviews have value, pointing out where your skill may need work or fortification.

#ProTip: *Do not bad-mouth a reviewer if you get a bad review. Reviews are an opportunity for readers to speak of their personal opinions on how they enjoyed your work, and calling someone out for a bad review does not do your image any favors.*

#ProTip: *Create your social media accounts and marketing platforms BEFORE your work is released. Creating organic relationships, and creating buzz is an arrow you can't fire twice. Create your accounts, talk about your work in a way that isn't abrasive, and get people excited about the big day!*

Think about this: you know what you want to say, you know who you want to say it to, and you now know how to get your voice into their ears!

As an independent author, you are a defacto business owner. You create a product for consumption, with expectation of consideration (payment). Marketing yourself, and your product is crucial to generate sales. People will not value your work unless you value it first. Your marketing efforts are telling them why they should value your work.

IN CLOSING

This workbook was created to add value to our relationship with our readers and subscribers. As thorough as we were, it's not the complete theory of marketing. Like writing, successful marketers will continue to learn and sharpen their skills. We're just hoping that we got you a little further along than you were before you started reading.

Please feel free to interact with us, ask us questions, that's how we grow. Iron sharpens iron, and we may have a question you can answer one day. That's how communities of writers grow.

Best of luck!

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