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IP FEATURE

Virtual Book Tours versus Live Book Tours

by *Yvonne Wu, Virtual Author's Assistant*

Are you tired of packing, taking time off work, and carrying boxes of books? Do you feel that your books are not *really* getting out there? Then a Virtual Book Tour may be for you.

Virtual Book Tours can be done with, or as an alternative to, live book events. A Virtual Book Tour is an advertisement of online book events.

The author stops at a given number of websites, podcasts, and blogs, in a given amount of time, usually about a month, the same as they would do at bookstores during a real world tour. At these stops, the author may be interviewed, have their book reviewed, be a guest blogger, or have a guest post. The author may appear on radio shows or on podcasts, where the book will be read, discussed and recommended.

Here are some reasons to consider participating in a virtual book tour:

Increase your market share. Your book will be appearing all over the Internet, without you ever even leaving your home. And best of all, your exposure can be national and even global.

Build business partnerships. The exposure and relationships you build could provide you with further publicity – now and later on.

Know your readers. Be prepared to grow your mailing list. Answer comments and interact.

Create awareness. Through successful marketing of your tour, new readers will take an interest in your book and the message you are sending.

Gather reviews. You can collect and post positive reviews on your website and media kit.

Now, what? You need to line up all of the interested bloggers, podcasters and website owners who'll be willing to host you. The main thing you need to consider is whether these blogs

Committed, Organized, but Right at Home



In her article, [What is a Virtual Book Tour?](#), Dorothy Thompson, CEO/Founder of Pump Up Your Book public relations agency, says, "Setting up your own virtual book tour takes commitment and you need to be very organized, but once it gets going, you'll enjoy the tour."

Here are a few questions and answers about Virtual Book Tours from the article:

How long should my tour be?

I've seen tours last for an entire month, but that's entirely up to you. It depends on how much time you want to devote to it. I chose a month-long tour, and it's turning out to be quite successful.

Why should anyone want to do this? Should I offer incentives?

Sure, incentives really work. I offered a copy of my eBook in exchange for a review, but you have to be very careful with this. If the blog or website has low traffic, it may not be economical to do. When this happens, offer them a sampler of the eBook so at least they know what it's about.

How are sales after something like this?

The thing is, a virtual book tour is just like any other book tour. Yes, the goal is to make sales, but that will happen. What you will want to do with this is get your selling page on as many blogs and websites as possible so the search engines will link up to you. Long after your tour is over, you'll find people visiting your site, and buying your books (or eBooks).

Why can't I just comment in people's blogs about my books instead of going through

and sites can generate enough traffic. When choosing hosts, pay attention to the page rank and popularity of the site. Use keywords when you are using search engines to search for potential sites. Is the audience interested in your topic? Always have a well-constructed media kit available to show perspective bloggers and website owners.

Remember to have your background work done, and be sure your book is readily available for purchase through links back to your book's sales page on your website and through Amazon.com or BN.com. Contests also attract buyers.

Many Authors that I have spoken with have told me that they like a Virtual Book Tour because it is less expensive and less time-consuming. Ironically, the Virtual Tour is also typically longer-lasting. Many times interviews and other content will remain posted for months.

Some authors do prefer "live" book tours, because they enjoy seeing the audience's reaction -- and some folks even love the travel involved! Some also feel that live book tours attract a different type of audience -- individuals who may not use the Internet regularly to make purchases.

Conversely, many authors would rather not travel, and many don't have the public speaking expertise or the gregarious personality it takes to make a good showing "out there."

It's all about deciding which is most appropriate for you, and which best fits your style. When the time comes, which will you choose, the Live Book Tour or the Virtual Book Tour?

* * * * *



Yvonne Wu is a Virtual Author's Assistant. One way you can ensure powerful participation in the media is to erase the fear of promotion by having the tools that will help you promote yourself globally. To learn more about her services visit: theyppublishing.com.

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all that?

Because you'll come off as spam. No one wants to go to their comment section and see someone else promoting their books. The virtual book tour may require more effort, but people will see how much effort you are putting into this. Leaving your book information in the comment sections of blogs is a big no-no, and opens you up to being condemned from ever posting there again. Not only that, but a virtual book tour is so much more personable, and gives you a chance to answer questions that others might have questions about.



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