



The Debutante Ball

How six debut authors partnered for National Publicity




Hey, Look At Me!


- Challenges to getting attention for your book
 - 172,000 titles each year
 - Bookstore reality- there is only so much shelf space
 - Readers prefer a known thing
 - Authors they've read
 - Authors/books recommended to them
 - Books/authors with high visibility (ie Oprah told them to read it)
 - How do you build word of mouth when no one knows who you are?



Doing the right thing at the right time



- What can the typical author expect from the publishing house?
- Authors have limited funds and experience for promotion
- Aren't I supposed to be writing? Who has time for all of this?



What is a Grog?

- A grog is a group blog.
 - Multiple members
 - Shared responsibility for site maintenance
 - Shared responsibility for content
 - Designed with the goal of increased readership/promotion



The History of the Debutante Ball

- Founder Kristy Kiernan
- Original deb class: Jennifer McMahon, Mia King, Tish Cohen, Anna David
- Passing of the Deb tiara



Examples of Grog

- Debutante Ball www.thedebutanteball.com
- The Writer's Group www.writersgroupblog.blogspot.com
- Good Girls Kill www.good-girls-kill.com
- Murderati www.murderati.typepad.com
- Rocket Girls www.rocketgirls.org/html/who.html
- Naked Authors www.nakedauthors.com
- Drunk Writer Talk www.drunkwritertalk.blogspot.com
- Jungle Red Writers www.jungleredwriters.com
- Penny Dreadful www.thegrublog.blogspot.com
- Killer Fiction www.killerfictionwriters.blogspot.com/



What are the benefits of a shared approach



- Helps you keep your ducks in a row
- Sanity checks
- Ability to share expertise
- Shared contacts/networking
- New material on a daily basis- but only requires weekly input of members
- Increased readership which then transfers to individual marketing effort
- Friendship and support



Set Up



- Is there a theme (mystery writers, debut authors etc)
- Member selection
- Technical requirements
- Format (how many posts per week? Topics?)
- Site management , who will handle what tasks

Ground Rules



- How are disputes handled?
- Minimum expectations for participation
- Is there a leader?
- Who keeps the group organized?
- How is change handled?
- Do we need to be friends?



Growing Readership



- Share knowledge on relevant sites (Backspace etc.)
- Post on your individual sites
- Press releases
- Keep up the energy, comment frequently, contests etc.
- Know why readers are coming to your site and give them what they want
- Create a community, get to know your regular readers, create a format for shared information- for example The Debs use a weekly "news flash" to share info

Guest Speakers



- One way to grow readership is to pull in guest speakers.
- Benefits of guest speakers
- The Debs have had the opportunity to work with:
 - John Grisham
 - Meg Cabot
 - Jodi Picolet
 - Katherine Center
 - Meg Tilly
 - And MANY More

Promotions that have worked



- Deb business cards
- Mentions in the press: Galley Cat, Writer's Digest, Quill and Quire, Canadian Bookseller's Magazine, Local TV/Radio
- Presentations/Literary festivals
- Shared Signings

Deb Class of 2008



- Jenny Gardiner- Sleeping with Ward Cleaver
- Eileen Cook- Unpredictable
- Lisa Daily - Fifteen Minutes of Shame
- Jess Riley- Driving Sideways
- Danielle Younge Ullman- Falling Under
- Gail Konop Baker- Cancer is a Bitch
- Hope to see you at the dance!!
www.thedebutanteball.com
