

1. Book Trailers - why authors should use them.

- Visual promo of your book that is another component in your marketing toolbox.
 - Book trailers should give viewers enough of a taste to draw them into your story and motivate them to read your book (similar to the way film trailers and television program promos make you want to watch certain shows).
 - Exposes your book to many more potential readers via the internet.
 - Book trailers can be created for any genre, fiction or non-fiction, poetry, how-to, memoirs...
- **Just be sure to target your trailer for your specific readership.

Book trailers were the big thing at one time, so popular that there were actually two different Book Trailer awards -

MOBY - started by Melville Press, a small indie publisher out of NYC. MOBY categories were like the Academy Awards and Razzies combined (winners chosen by staff).

TRAILIE - from the School Library Journal (winners chosen by a committee of librarians).

*** Both MOBY and TRAILIE awards are no longer being given out.

Some examples of style:

- Documentary style (looks like a doc).
- Author is featured (shows you talking about the book, why you wrote it, your hopes for it).
CAUTION - do not show a talking head the entire time. Add other images and use V/O. Don't overload with information.
- Humorous - be sure your book is also funny.
- Text and images set to music (no voice).
- Text and images with V/O.
- Animated (nice for children's books).
- Action
- Horror
- Mystery / thriller / noir

2. Basics - what makes a good B.T.? Why? Things to consider.

A good book trailer will catch the viewers' attention and give them just enough of an enticement to want to read the book. It should be engaging, entertaining, and in line with the tone of the book being promoted. It should be specific to one book - do not create one trailer for an entire series. Better to make one trailer per book and cross promote the others.

- Authentic - present your book and yourself in a genuine way.
- Emotional - make viewer feel something.
- Intimate - make viewer feel as if you are talking directly to them.
- Credible - do not misrepresent the nature of your book or yourself.

Do It Yourself or Hire someone to do it for you?

D.I.Y. Pros:

- You have complete control.
- Can make changes / updates if needed.

D.I.Y. Cons:

- Time consuming
- Learning curve

Professional Pros:

- You tell someone what you want and they do the work for you.
- Have access to a pool of materials and talent.

Professional Cons:

- Expense.
- Allows for a limited amount of changes / may take longer / will cost more.

DO —

- think visually - what do you see / hear?
- storyboard - even if it's stick figures ** TIP: Break your shots down into scenes.
- write a script (list what goes in each scene). TIP: Write 10 sentences about your book. Let that be the base to work with (you will cut it down). Average rule of thumb: 150 words = :60 seconds / 75 words = :30 seconds.
- base trailer on the premise, but do not give away the plot (you want to entice readers, get them interested in reading the book, not give it all away). **think of descriptions you see for films or television programs.
- begin strong / hook your viewer from the start and make it interesting enough to keep their interest
- display the cover of your book
- keep consistent with the tone of your book for all images and audio
- use good resolution images and audio (HD preferred)
- use the Ken Burns effect for still shots (motion - zoom in or out / pan & tilt - makes your still images come to life)
- be sure quote snippets are correct and that all text is spelled correctly - and keep it to a minimum
- include a call to action (author website or where to buy book) / limit the call to 1 or 2 things
- have end credits, especially for images and audio that require accreditation (it's nice to do anyway)

DO NOT —

- use still images or have a talking head for any length of time
- use poor quality image or audio

- use the wrong image or audio (avoid profanity in the trailer, keep it PG-13 so it can be shown in more places)
- have music or FX audio track be equal to or louder than a V/O or someone talking. If you have multiple sound tracks, make spoken words louder than anything else (lower the other tracks, but be sure to bring them up when V/O ends)
- have V/O match written words on screen (*will show an example where this isn't bad)
- use too many quirky or varied transitions. Let your images and sound do the job.
- get carried away / keep it simple and to the point
- make it too long (you'll lose your audience) Stick with 30 seconds - 2 minutes (max)
- stray from the tone of your book / keep trailer in line with what you are promoting
- settle for something that is okay, but not quite right

NOTE: Create the book trailer while you're waiting for the book to become available, but do not release the trailer until you have a book to sell / something they can buy now. **Release dates only work if you already have a large following - they also date your trailer.

3. Examples of Book Trailers - The Good, The Bad, and What were they thinking?

***watch the book trailer videos - find links HERE *** What works? What doesn't?

4. Creating your own book trailer - and sites / resources to find the tools / info you need.

- Have a budget (whether it's DIY or you hire someone)
 - Buy the best quality images and audio you can afford
 - Know the copyright / creative commons use of your images and audio if you did not create them yourself (and keep all on file)
 - Have signed releases for talent, if you're shooting your own footage.
 - Have proper licensing / permissions in writing for original music.
 - Be sure you have the right equipment (lights, microphones, props...) if shooting your own footage.
- Do not do your own V/O (unless you have a fantastic speaking voice or you're talking about why you wrote the book) - check with local community theater and college drama departments to see if there are actors willing to do some narration (keep it brief - let the images do the work). You can also look for narrators at <http://www.fivver.com>
- Do not write off creating your own trailer - you may really enjoy the process once you know how it works

TIP: Visit one of the online editing sites on the Book Trailer Production Resources list. Sign up for a FREE account (or free trial) and play around with it to learn how it works. **Do not do this when you're ready to create your trailer. Do it prior, using available materials just to learn how to put it all together. When you're ready, you can then pay the membership fee to create your book trailer without a watermark (and longer running time, if need be).

NOTE: Membership fees for the online editing sites I have on the list are much cheaper than having a trailer made by a pro - well worth the cost, if you go that route, especially when you can save money with Creative Commons images and music.

5. How to. Putting it all together. How long should it be? What should go where?

FIRST STEP:

- Decide if you are going to create your own trailer or have someone else do it for you (see below for the latter).
- Give yourself a deadline. While the book is being printed, waiting for final edit, waiting for covers... you can start working on the trailer and have it ready for release when the book goes on sale. **Again, do not put out a trailer with a release date unless you have a large following. People will forget about it - and you'll date the book.
- Keep your Total Running Time (TRT) between 30 seconds and 2 minutes.

For D.I.Y.:

Pre Production

- Write a script, keep it simple and on point (think log lines and TV listings). Focus on several key points in the book without giving it all away. **Stay in sync with the tone of your book.
- Create your storyboard (this can be changed as needed until you are ready to go into production). What do you want to see where? Do you want a long / establishing shot? Close up? Action? What will you hear? Where will audio clips go? Where will text go (if any)? This is where you really visualize - and hear - your trailer.
- Create dedicated files for your images / video / voice / music / paperwork (releases, licensing info...) - keep everything you may want to use in these files, and be sure that the files can be easily found (put them on your desktop).
- Search for the right images, video clips, music, and FX (if any) that really make your book come alive for you. Do not settle for something close. **Searching can be fun - and tedious. Do not search if you're tired. Take a break if it's getting to be too much. This takes time, but is worth the effort. **You will have more material than you use - better to have more than not enough.

Production (1)

**If you're shooting your own footage or recording original music, do this prior to your edit. The edit would technically go into post, but for the purpose of this, I'm calling it Production 2.

Production (2)

- Start putting it all together. You should have a good idea of what will go where if you created a storyboard. Then it's a matter of making it all work.

*** Refer to list of editing software, all have instructions on how to do this.

Create your Finishing boards:

- Call to action - put where the book can be purchased and your website (or goodreads / Facebook / amazon author page...)
- End board with credits - include your author website URL here too - at the bottom of the screen.

- **PREVIEWS** - Have several people that you trust to give unbiased feedback preview your work just before final rendering.

Render when you have a copy you are satisfied with.

6. Going the professional route - is the payoff worth the output of \$ to have someone do it for you?

You may find creating your own book trailer overwhelming, or be too busy to try it. Whatever the reason, there are production companies that will create trailers for authors. This can get very expensive and the payoff may not be worth the output of your funds. I am not going to recommend a specific company (you can do a web search), but here is a list of things to keep in mind:

- Be very clear from the start that you want to have the rights to the entire trailer - everything that is used in it. Be sure music and images are royalty free - and that no additional costs will crop up down the line.
- What exactly you will get for your money?
- How many additional edits (changes) do you get?
- Is this a HD version?
- Will you get a file to download of completed trailer?
- Will you get a hard copy?
- If so, can you get additional hard copies to give away? If so, at what cost?
- Will you get final approval before final rendering?
- Will the company upload the trailer to a website that you specify?
- Will you have the capability to upload the trailer to additional sites?
- Does the company keep a copy of your project on file?
- If so, for how long?

7. I have the ultimate Book Trailer - now what do I do with it?

- YouTube
- Vimeo
- Your author website(s) - including Amazon, B&N, Goodreads, and other author sites (you should have them if you don't).

- Your publisher site (if applicable)
- Other author's website (be a guest blogger and ask if you can put a link to your trailer up).
- Other social media sites (Facebook - have an author page there; Twitter...)
- Digital newsletter you send out.
- Readers blogs.
- Included as part of a promotional kit or giveaway.
- Played at book signings / author talks.

**When uploading to various sites, be sure to take advantage of keywords / tags to help search engines find you. Try google keyword tool to see what people are searching for in books similar to yours. TIP: Watch out for keywords that might be misleading and bring in the wrong traffic.

Please contact me with any questions you have!

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