

**Topic:** Common sense podcasting & self-publishing strategies

**Guests:** April Hamilton ([@indieauthor](#)) & Seth Harwood ([@sethharwood](#))

**Date:** October 23, 2009 / 1:00pm - 2:00pm CST

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[Jump to the beginning...](#)



[DebraMarrs](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) Thx for excellent input today. Look 4ward to learning more on your site <http://is.gd/4y1kL#platformchat>



[journalwriter7](#) Thanks to [@thewritermama](#) and [@merylevans](#) for a terrific [#platformchat](#) and to [@sethharwood](#) and [@AprilLHamilton](#) for their advice.



[AprilLHamilton](#) [@thewritermama](#) The rollercoaster ride begins, eh? ;) [#platformchat](#)



[alexandermcnabb](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) I'd love to know what you all thought you were doing. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) And, I think this bumpy little chat is a wrap! :) [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) Thank you and congrats again on your book deal! :) [#platformchat](#)



[DebraMarrs](#) [@sethhoward](#) Thanks so much 4 ur super savvy tips today. Look forward 2 learning more on your site <http://www.sethhoward.com> [#platformchat](#)



[merylevans](#) [@jennifertribe](#) Just watch [@thewritermama](#) and [@merylkevans](#) -- we announce it early and often. :) [#platformchat](#)



[journalwriter7](#) Thanks, all, for such valuable info and advice. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@KatMeyer](#) Thanks for coming, Kat! [#platformchat](#)

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[thewritermama](#) [@AnnaZiska](#) Oh, shucks, thanks. :) [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Thanks to everyone for attending, & esp. to [@thewritermama](#) & [@merylkevans](#) for running the show! [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@jennifertribe](#) No. I always announce the date, though. We are once per month. Mid-month in Nov. due to the holiday. [#platformchat](#)



[merylevans](#) [@jennifertribe](#) No. It varies as it depends on our guests' schedules. [#platformchat](#)



[KatMeyer](#) ditto! RT [@Mer\\_Blackwood](#): Very helpful, [@sethharwood](#) and [@AprilLHamilton](#). Thanks! [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [#platformchat](#) feedback welcome. Please send yours to [christinakatz@earthlink.net](mailto:christinakatz@earthlink.net) or DM. [#platformchat](#)



[Mer\\_Blackwood](#) Very helpful, [@sethharwood](#) and [@AprilLHamilton](#). Thanks! [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) You can find my novel JACK WAKES UP out now wherever books are sold. <http://sethharwood.com/jack> [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) [@DebraMarrs](#) Thanks! =') [#platformchat](#)



[jennifertribe](#) [@thewritermama](#) Is [#platformchat](#) always 4th Friday of the month?



[thewritermama](#) [@merylevans](#) Thanks so much for retweeting and keeping the ship sailing. :) [#platformchat](#)



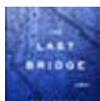
[AnnaZiska](#) [@thewritermama](#) I just put your book on my wish list. ;o) [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Thanks to everybody for attending! Sorry about the tech diff. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@QOfTheDayBook](#) Hey, thanks for coming, All! [#platformchat](#)



[tericoyne](#) Thanks! Great info [#platformchat](#) [#platformchat](#)



[DebraMarrs](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) Congrats on your [@WritersDigest](#) books announcement. Look forward to recommending the updated vers. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) And I'm working on revisions for JACK PALMS2: This is Life. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Thanks for coming to [#platformchat](#). Come on back next month more great tips on how to build your platform. Guests TBA. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Subscribe to my e-zines (3), read my blogs (4), or my books (2) & contact me to speak. More @ <http://christinakatz.com>. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) I'm Christina Katz, host of [#platformchat](#). I wrote Get Known Before the Book Deal & Writer Mama for Writer's Digest. [#platformchat](#)



[QOfTheDayBook](#) Thanks to all of you. That was excellent! [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Teaching Author Boot Camp with [@scottsigler](#). [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Get or stay Internet-savvy by following [@merylkevans'](#) blog: <http://www.meryl.net/section/blog/#platformchat>



[DebraMarrs](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) Thx for your responses. I agree the [#s](#) to \$\$ crunch is key. Great advice! [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Am also launching something new - Vault University, 4 mo'ly lessons in self-pub in all formats + author platform/book promo [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) I'm getting back into a new season of CrimeWAV podcasts. Podcasting at [sethharwood.com](http://sethharwood.com) about publishing too. [#platformchat](#)



[merylevans](#) FYI: Tumblr.com is also an up 'n comer for blogging that looks easy to use. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Learn more about April L. Hamilton at <http://www.publetariat.com/> & <http://www.aprillhamilton.com/#platformchat>



[thewritermama](#) Learn more about Seth Harwood and Jack Wakes Up at: <http://sethharwood.com/> & <http://authorbootcamp.com.#platformchat>



[AprilLHamilton](#) For me, I guess it will be working on that revised/updated edition of The IndieAuthor Guide. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood @thewritermama](#) Well, that's not true. But I think Blogger makes it real easy to start (for total newbie)[#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood @thewritermama](#) They're all the same. Any will work. [#platformchat](#)

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[merylevans @thewritermama](#) Good question... among a few other similar sites, too. Typepad is not free, for one thing. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) 5 Min left: Time to start wrapp



[thewritermama](#) 5 Min left: Time to start wrapping up [#platformchat](#). Thank you for coming, Seth & April. What's coming up next for you?[#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton @Debramarrs](#) 2nd biggest mistake is not crunching the numbers - not knowing how to calc earnings/break-even point on a book [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama @sethharwood](#) Wonder what you like about Blogger vs. Typepad or Wordpress? [#platformchat](#)



[Livingbypypen](#) My first chat, it's been great, thanks.[#platformchat](#)

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[sethharwood](#) [@tericoyne](#) It's the truth. Just do what you can do. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Your blog-readers want content. See earlier: give them best content: your book! [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) bye, [@jjaderhold](#), & thanks for attending![#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@jjaderhold](#) Welcome! :) [#platformchat](#)



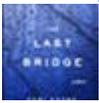
[sethharwood](#) [@Livingbypypen](#) Make your blog your website. Use blogger bc it's easy. Blog your podcast episodes. [#platformchat](#) 11 minutes ago from [web](#)



[jjaderhold](#) Have to go :( Thnx [@sethharwood](#) [@AprilHamilton](#) [@merylevans](#) [@thewritersmama](#) for the info packed chat![#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) [@DebraMarrs](#) ..& what ur doing, why should anyone else? [#platformchat](#)



[tericoyne](#) [@sethharwood](#) Like the real answer - Thanks [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Five more minutes for questions! Ask now or approach our guests after the chat, plz. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) [@DebraMarrs](#) If U feel like what ur doing is 2nd best, U give urself permission 2 fail. If U don't believe in urself..[#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) [@DebraMarrs](#) Having an inferiority complex, not viewing self-pub as the smart, strategic move it actually can be.[#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@thewritermama](#) I think it's the same for fiction/non-fic. You have a good book? Get it out to folks! Read it to 'em. [#platformchat](#)



[Livingbypypen](#) Newbie speaking here, but where do you put your podcast, on website and/or blog? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@tericoyne](#) You have to ask your agent. (short answer). Real answer: just go ahead and do it. [#platformchat](#)



[DebraMarrs](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) In your exper. w indie authors, what is [#1](#) hurdle they face? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@merylevans](#) You can make it work for you. It's your enthusiasm that'll shine through. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) You also want content to put on the web consistently. Audiobooks give you lots of content/episodes. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Audiobook is best content because: 1) it's digestible (listen anytime) 2) it's your BOOK, the writing you worked hardest on. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@merylevans](#) Good question! [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) As a reader I LOVE audiobooks - wish I could 'read' all novels that way. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) On the topic of fears, Seth, do you think your advice would change with fiction vs. nonfiction? Curious what you think... [#platformchat](#)



[tericoyne](#) [@sethharwood](#) audio rights were sold w/my novel wondering if that is conflict w/me doing podcast [#platformchat](#)



[merylevans](#) [@sethharwood](#) What if you have imperfect speech, an unusual accent, a difficult accent? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@Livingbypypen](#) Yes. Read it yourself and create your own digital audiobook, serialized. I think it's the best content. [#platformchat](#)

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[AprilHamilton](#) [@livingbypypen](#) Podcasting is 1 way to record your book, release self-pubbed audiobook editions. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) writers aren't who you want to attract. You want your platform to attract readers. So give out/read them your book! [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@DebraMarrs](#) I read from my work. You'll never attract as many writer-types as you need to sell a book. And they're... [#platformchat](#)



[Livingbypypen](#) Recording your book? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) two things not to fear with getting your work out: piracy and losing any rights. Even rights you can sell. [#platformchat](#)



[DebraMarrs](#) [@robertleebrewer](#) You did! We are an awesome bunch. Glad to have you join us [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@tericoyne](#) audiobook rights don't carry much value sometimes. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) [@Kathrynclang](#) Depends on publisher & type of book; if ur in the 100's u've got a good start, in the 1,000's is an easier sell [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@Kathrynclang](#) Get 50. Get 100. Get 1000. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Feel free to ask question of [@sethharwood](#) or [@aprillhamilton](#) / [@indieauthor](#)...we've got 15 more minutes for Q&A. [#platformchat](#)



[robertleebrewer](#) Check out the chat going on at [#platformchat](#) right now. Feel like I accidentally walked into a super awesome room.



[DebraMarrs](#) Re: podcasting, do you do a mix of reading from your work and how-to writer info? Which has been more effective for platform? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@tericoyne](#) not necessarily. Most people see podcasts as separate. You can still sell audiobook rights. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) The goal is to find fans/listeners. This makes you feel like a "real writer" that feeling is invaluable. [#platformchat](#)



[Kathrynclang](#) [@AprilLHamilton](#) Yes - looking for a target I guess [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Agree w/ [@sethharwood](#) re: no set numbers to look for in platform - all fans are appreciated, right? ;) [#platformchat](#)



[hotspurOT](#) Here at the behest of [@sethharwood](#) [#platformchat](#)



[hotspurOT](#) It seems to work, but how is this any different from Twitter? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) [@Kathrynclang](#) there's no set numbers to look for. As soon as u find new fans & hear from them, it's awesome! [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) [@Kathrynclang](#) Do U mean how large a following do U need to impress a publisher? [#platformchat](#)



[tericoyne](#) [@sethharwood](#): what is impact of podcast on audio book rights? any? [#platformchat](#) [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) It's kind of funny to see [#platformchat](#) turn into a tweet train wreck...okay, not really. ;) [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) The goal is to build as large a verifiable audience as possible: Twitter followers, blog followers, etc. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Re-Q3. What are the tripping points with podcasting/self-publishing; what kind of choices lead to undesirable results? [#platformchat](#)

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[thewritermama](#) Seth, if you have more to say or need to retweet, just use Q1, Q2, etc. We'll get it. Coming next Q3 again...[#platformchat](#)



[Kathrynclang](#) What kind of numbers are we looking for with our platforms - what kind do you see? [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) But otherwise, the sky's the limit. Ask away![#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Plz do not ask our guests to analyze your particular platform. No can do in a short chat like this. Thanks![#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) 29 min: Time to open [#platformchat](#) up for Q&A. Direct general questions to both of our guests. Guests plz speak to the group. [#platformchat](#)



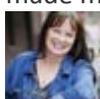
[sethharwood](#) It's helped me immensely. It's enabled me to keep writing and that's the biggest thing there is.[#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) You can also watch a short video of me explaining podcasting here:  
<http://bit.ly/wgNJQ> [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Rediscovering the joy I once had in writing & helping others 2 do likewise has made me much happier/more fulfilled[#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Ah, thanks, Seth. I was wondering what kind of mic to get. :) [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) I don't mind cuz I feel the nonfic stuff I'm doing is having a greater impact than my novels ever would have[#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Started out as a novelist, but now primarily known for nonfic. I try 2 keep up my fic chops w/ [#fridayflash#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Start podcasting: get a Zoom H2 digital mic, make sure your book is good, and start recording. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Q7. How has all you've experienced with book writing & promoting changed you and your writing career? [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Self-Publishing Review (<http://bit.ly/41Yq6r> ), Publetariat (<http://bit.ly/3kSmlz> ) & Open Pub Guide (<http://bit.ly/qtUIY> ) [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) 4 more terrific, free resources & current info/commentary on self-pub bookmark The Creative Penn (<http://bit.ly/19MXZp> ).. [#platformchat](#)

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[AprilLHamilton](#) The entire IndieAuthor Guide's available 4 free viewing on my website 4 a limited time, so start there <http://bit.ly/23S1Y> [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Q5 podcasting has worked best for me. Bar none. You want to give people your fiction. Give it to them as audio. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Q6. Seth, can you share tips on how to start podcasting? April, can you share beginner self-publishing tips? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) There's too much in publishing that we can't control as authors. What we can control is the quality of the book. Spend time on revision. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Also highly recommend making free excerpts of ur work available online – free previews sell books [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) ..respond 2 listings unless it's truly a fit 4 U/ur book, otherwise u'll get kicked off the list [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Yes, things are changing in publishing, but one fact remains: you must make your book good. Wait until it is. Revise. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Sign up for the free HARO email newsletter - reporters seeking sources 4 their stories <http://bit.ly/42fy0H> but don't.. [#platformchat](#)

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[AprilHamilton](#) ..mention ur book/u're an author unless relevant 2 the discussion. Those who follow ur URL will discover ur work [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Lots of my author website & blog traffic comes from comments I've left on others' blogs & articles—but don't.. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) The book always has to come first. You have to have a finished book that you know is good and solid before putting it out. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Q5. Which three promotional strategies have worked best for you as authors? Tell us a bit about each. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Needed many books out to build an audience and have fans. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) building an audience with my fiction. The great part of all this was interacting with them. In the old ways, you needed... [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Podcasting helped me by letting me go around some of the traditional gatekeepers. I went straight to bldg an... [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) No easier or cheaper way to connect with a global audience of readers, peers and industry people [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Things didn't start happening 4 me till I had a web presence & started using social media [#platformchat](#) 13 minutes ago from [TweetChat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Author platform was an unknown term when I first self-pubbed, but if I were beginning 2day I'd start w/ platform [#platformchat](#) 13 minutes ago from [TweetChat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Thanks! [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Q4. With podcasting/self-publishing, which comes first, the book or the marketing platform? What steps did you take? [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@AprilHamilton](#) Congratulations, April! Thanks for announcing yr deal on [#platformchat](#)!!!



[AprilHamilton](#) Met an author who's going 2 lose \$100K on her book & has no idea it's happening; didn't crunch the numbers [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Self-pub isn't hard if u know what ur doing, but it's easy/common 2 make book-breaking errors if you don't [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) ..cases. Subsidy pub'rs req. authors 2 sign over some or all publication rights, often req. min book order too [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) ..& calc the break-even point on every book. I also advise against working with a subsidy publisher in most.. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Not crunching the numbers – authorship = a biz & it's critical 4 self-pubbers 2 track expenses, compare costs.. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) w/ Writer's Digest Books on pub of revised/updated IndieAuthor Guide for 2010; self-pub was the key 2 all. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) which led 2 making lots of great connections w/ authors & publishers. Just confirmed 2day I'll B working.. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Q3. What are the tripping points with podcasting/self-publishing; what kind of choices lead to undesirable results? [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) Self-pub led me 2 write The IndieAuthor Guide, which led 2 speaking opportunities, which led 2 me founding Publetariat.com. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilHamilton](#) I'd pretty much given up on my authorial dreams B4 giving self-pub a try, but now I feel totally empowered/inspired [#platformchat](#)

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[thewritermama](#) Q2. We are living in democratic times for writers. How has podcasting/self-publishing helped you prosper as a writer? [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) Lowest: waiting for agents to respond to my first manuscript and having to realize that no response means no today for some. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) interacting with fans of my fiction online that has been the most exciting part. So, finding my platform, I suppose. [#platformchat](#)



[sethharwood](#) The truth is, my highs in publishing happened even before the book came out. It was finding my audience and interacting ... [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) ..& coming 2 realize working w/ a mainstream publisher is truly optional in today's world. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Biggest high was seeing those 1st sales & positive reader reviews for the 1st novel I self-pubbed.. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) ..but didn't think comic fiction would sell. Depressing 2 hear what U love 2 write is a non-starter w/ publishers [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Lows - getting rejection letters from NY editors who all said they loved the book, loved my writing.. [#platformchat](#)



[AprilLHamilton](#) Lows - getting rejection letters from NY editors who all said they loved the book, loved my writing.. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Q1. Can you summarize yr publication highs/lows? What has it been like for you to be traditionally published/self-publish? [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) However, please feel free to retweet our guests' responses as much as you like! [#platformchat](#)

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[thewritermama](#) Now for 7 Qs (Q1, Q2, Q3...). Plz allow guests time to answer in several tweets. (Save ALL Qs for Q&A. We'll tell you when.) [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Our guests have tons of experience in podcasting and self-publishing respectively! We are here to learn. So let's get started. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@indieauthor](#) will chat with us under [@aprilhamilton](#) today but if you wish to follow her after the chat, use [@indieauthor](#). [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) She is founder and Editor in Chief of Publetariat, a premier online news hub & community for indie authors & small imprints. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) April L. Hamilton wrote The Indie Author Guide and is blogger, advocate and speaker for the indie author movement. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Which ultimately garnered a deal from Three Rivers Press. He also teaches writing at Stanford and City College of San Fran. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) You may have heard of Seth. He's the guy who used podcasting to garner a better book deal for his novel, Jack Wakes Up... [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) I had the pleasure of meeting both Seth ([@sethharwood](#)) and April ([@indieauthor](#)) at the Writer's Digest Conference 2009. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Intros: Our authors are traditionally-published novelist, Seth Harwood & self-published author, April L. Hamilton. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) And now get ready to meet our guests! :) [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Remember that everyone who is known today was once unknown. And then get to work on your platform! [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Are you an authority with influence? When you talk, do people listen? Can you back up the scope of your influence w/ numbers? [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) A platform-strong writer is one with influence. It's everything you DO with your expertise (write, teach, speak, etc). [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Not sure about the def. of platform? <http://bit.ly/xLnbw> Also Get Known Before the Book Deal from [@WritersDigest](#). [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [#platformchat](#) feedback: We love it. Please wait until the chat is over. Send to christinakatz@earthlink.net or DM. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Hey, Twitter seems to be working rather well today. Nice! [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Da rules: Listen to guests, then ask questions during Q&A. Avoid dominating, self-promotion, or hijacking chat. (Grrr...) [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) [@merylkevans](#) provides written transcript of chat afterwards to be posted to Get Known blog in PDF. <http://bit.ly/i2GDp> [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Format: Intros for 5, then ask 2 guests 7 questions in 25 min, then we have 25 min for Q&A & 5 minutes to wrap it all up. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) My co-moderator is [@merylkevans](#) & she is a social networking queen, as far as I'm concerned. You'll soon see for yourself. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Followed by a Q&A period where (almost) anything goes! [Meryl is the bouncer...] [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) I'm a teacher, speaker, and author, so this chat is more like an educational spotlight on our two expert guests than most. [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) That's why they call me [@thewritermama](#). :) [#platformchat](#)



[thewritermama](#) Welcome! I'm the host and one of the moderators, Christina Katz, author of Get Known Before the Book Deal & Writer Mama. [#platformchat](#)