

Five Tools to Share Your Story



STORY
CARTEL



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After the first lessons, you may be convinced it's important to share your story, but the next question is *how* do you share your story?

We will talk extensively about tools that will help you share your story, build your Cartel, and start your writing career in [Rule Six](#), but this lesson will give you a brief overview of five tools to help you share your story.



Do You Even Need Tools?

Imagine sitting around a campfire three thousand years ago. The hunt that day went well, and as you listen to the fire pop, you tell the story of how the world was created and how all the animals, including the ones you killed today, came to be. You can see faces around the fire, the children with their wide eyes, the older men, having heard the story hundreds of times, sleepy and satisfied after the hunt, but everyone listening to the story that brings meaning to all their lives.

Storytellers have existed since the beginning of humanity. Thousands of years ago, they didn't have the printing press or the Internet to share their story. Many cultures didn't even have the alphabet to write their stories down. Instead, storytellers had their imaginations, their voices, and a rapt audience.

You don't need tools to share your story. Tools may help spread your story further, but the truth is stories exist independent from technology. Regardless of whether we go to Mars or experience another stone age, we will always have Story.



The Three Essential Things You Need to Share Your Story

Your voice. Your imagination. And the most important: A will to share.

That's all you need to share your story. Do you want to share your story? If you do, then do it. Share. Nothing is stopping you except yourself and your expectations.

Below, we'll give some advice on how to use five tools to help you share your story, but never forget the most important tool you need to share your story is your own will to share.



A Quick Review of Five Story Sharing Tools

Ready to get sharing?

Here is a quick overview on five tools that will help you share your story further :



1. Blog

A [Self-Hosted WordPress blog](#) is, in my opinion, the single best tool a writer can have to share their story and build their Cartel. Still, blogs have their drawbacks, especially for fiction writers.

We will talk more about blogging in [Rule Six](#), but until then, here is a quick review of the benefits and detriments of blogging.

What Blogs are good at:

- Teaching and sharing *information* (For example, [Copyblogger](#), [Goins, Writer, Jane Friedman](#))
- Sharing non-fiction stories and articles under 1,000 words long. (For example, [The Bloggess](#), [Max Andrew Dubinsky](#), [Lena Roy](#))
- Building relationships with collaborators by sharing rants, news, or asking for favors. (Such as the fabulous [Amanda Palmer's blog](#)).
- Experiments in multi-media storytelling (Such as Max Dubinsky's [Dislocated](#))
- Can function as an author website. (For example, [Joanna Penn](#) uses a self-hosted WordPress blog as her author homepage)

Blogs are NOT as good at:

- Sharing longer, non-fiction stories
- Sharing fiction stories
- One way communication (In other words, most creative writing.
- Instead, blogs are for community conversations (like [Post Secret](#), [The Write Practice](#), [Tweetspeak](#))

For some reason, blogs are not positioned well to share fiction stories. I would love to be proven wrong on this, but I've never seen a large, single-author blog dedicated to fiction.

Should you have a blog? Yes! However, I suggest thinking of it as a support tool rather than your main focus.



2. Email Newsletter List

Email is the single best way to sell books online. Let me say that again: **email is *the best way to sell books online***. With a service like [Mailchimp](#), you can create email signup forms like this...

this form is just an example

Submit

...and place them on your website or blog. Then, you can send newsletters to your entire list when you have new books or articles or stories available.

What email newsletter lists are good at:

- Best for selling books
- Best for communicating with your collaborators

However, the drawback of email newsletter lists is that they're difficult to build on their own. You will probably need some kind of website where people can find your newsletter list, a blog, for example, an author website, or a Story Cartel page (more on Story Cartel in a second).

Also, the best way to get people to sign up for your email list is by giving something away for free, like a short story. See the course [Class In Session](#) for more on this.

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3. Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Google+)

Social media should be part of every writer's tool chest because social media can spread stories faster than any other tool. When I first started The Write Practice, over fifty percent of my traffic came from Facebook and Twitter. Without them, I wouldn't be speaking to you today.

What social media is good at:

- Sharing links to your blog posts, articles, news announcements
- Sharing interesting quotes
- Making new friends who like the same things you do
- Conversations with your Cartel
- Connecting with readers

Social media is a cocktail party, a stop by the water cooler, an idea forum. It's meant for quick shares. And don't worry if you're not outgoing. Social media was made by shy people for shy people.

What social media is not so good at:

- Sharing anything longer than a few sentences. Thus...
- Sharing your short story
- Sharing your novel
- Sharing your Memoir

But you *can* and *should* share links to your books often.



4. Self-Publishing (Amazon, KDP, Barnes & Noble, Smashwords, Createspace, Lightning Source)

If you're new to publishing, you might be intimidated by selling your story on Amazon or Barnes & Noble, but you shouldn't be. You can go from Word document to published on Kindle by tomorrow evening. With Amazon's KDP Select program, you could be giving away thousands of copies of your book the next day, massively multiplying your audience.

However, unless you get very lucky, it's difficult to become successful self-publishing if you don't have a well connected Cartel and a large blog, email list, or following on social media. The other tools are the foundation your self-publishing efforts rest on.

In other words, self-publishing is the *best* tool for sharing:

- Short stories
- Novel
- Longer non-fiction essays
- Books

But self-publishing is bad for:

- Creating your Cartel
- Building long-term relationships with readers
- **Anyone who doesn't already have a platform**

Why is self-publishing bad at building long-term relationships with your readers? Because when a reader purchases a book through Amazon, you don't have any way to connect with them. You don't get their email address. They aren't subscribed to your blog or newsletter. They don't follow you on Twitter or Facebook. Unless they reach out to you, they are strangers.

Cartel building is about turning strangers into friends and your friends into collaborators, people who actively help you spread your stories. Without a way to get in touch with your readers, preferably by email, you can't connect.



The Best Tool of All

We built Story Cartel because all of these tools have drawbacks for authors, and none of them combines them in a way that we were satisfied with.

Story Cartel takes the best elements from all of the tools we mentioned above: self-publishing, email newsletter lists, and social media.

What Story Cartel is good at:

- Sharing your story (and getting immediate feedback)
- Helping authors building their Cartels
- Turning strangers into collaborators
- Empowering your publishing to help you sell more books

What Story Cartel is bad at:

- Nothing. Of course, we're a little biased.

You can use Story Cartel to share your short stories, longer essays, novels, and non-fiction books. It was designed to help you easily share your story, increase the size of your audience, and turn your readers into collaborators.



Are you ready to share your story on Story Cartel?

Sharing your story on Story Cartel isn't hard, but it will take a little work. You'll need the following:

- eBook in major formats (PDF, Kindle, ePub)
- Book cover
- Book description (1-2 paragraphs)
- Author biography (1 paragraph)
- Links to your website and social media profiles (blog/author website, Facebook, Twitter, Goodreads, Amazon author page)

How do you get all of these components? We'll go into the details in [Rule Six](#). If you want, feel free to skip ahead.

If you're ready to launch your book on Story Cartel, you can [submit your book here!](#)

