

LEAD MAGNET TIPS

Your email subscriber list is the foundation of your author platform, whether you plan to publish traditionally with a royalty-paying publisher or whether you plan to self-publish. In the marketing world, email subscribers equal sales. But subscribers are so much more than sales! They're people, uniquely created individuals, with needs, desires, hopes, and dreams.

If you believe God has given you a message or story to share with others, then your subscribers are the people you'll share that message with first—they're the ones who will experience God through the gifts and talents He's given you.

View Your Writing as a Ministry

Are sales important? Yes. You must sustain the ministry God's called you to lead. You may not consider your writing a ministry. You may not consider yourself a ministry leader. But each of us, as a follower of Jesus, represents Him and the Good News He offers. Whether our writing includes the message of salvation or not, whether we ever mention the name of Jesus, whether we write for the Christian or general marketplace, every word we write is an opportunity to point others to God. Sales sustain our ministries. More importantly, sales mean others are investing in and reading the message or story God has entrusted to us.

Ensure Your Lead Magnet Offers Value

To get our writing into the hands of readers, we can use proven methods. Offering a valuable resource in exchange for an email address is a proven method for growing an email list. The key is the value the resource offers. Just because you're offering a resource for free doesn't mean you can just give away anything—the resource must meet a need or fulfill a desire of the people you want to draw to your list. The resource you create will, in

most cases, serve as an initial introduction to you and your work. It needs to make a strong impression. If you write nonfiction, your lead magnet should directly relate to your topic or message and in some way address or solve a problem. My client and friend Jillian Woods creates resources for women tangled in toxic relationships. Through her website, Jillian offers subscribers a guide titled *5-Step Toxic Relationship Reset*. The guide, a pdf, can be immediately downloaded following the subscription process.

If you write Bible studies or devotionals, you might offer subscribers a week's worth of daily readings— again, a downloadable pdf.

Multi-published nonfiction author and speaker Michele Cushatt offers subscribers access to her Premium Resources, containing Scripture cards and lists of Scripture, email and video series, and even a personal manifesto, all related to topics of books she's written.

Your lead magnets will grow as your writing ministry grows.

Fulfill Your Readers' Desire

Whereas authors of nonfiction can establish a clear link between their topic and lead magnet, fiction authors, especially debut authors, often struggle to find that link.

Most fiction readers desire to lose themselves in a good story for a few hours at a time. They love to get swept into an inspiring setting or to fall in love with a charming character. They're seeking adventure or romance and may even want a gritty story that helps them navigate difficult issues in their lives.

Fiction meets readers' desire for respite, enjoyment, escape, and wisdom, gleaned from the characters' lives and story arc.

Fiction readers want stories.

A short story or a prequel to a novel in progress or already written is a great lead magnet for fiction readers. Or how about a series of short stories? Or

maybe a collection of short stories written by authors who write in your genre? Partnerships are wonderful, especially when creating great lead magnets.

If you're multi-published, you might offer your first book as a lead magnet. Or if you've written a series, you might offer the first book in your series. If you've done your job well and written an engaging series, the free book you offer will lead to increased sales of the other books in the series.

Repurpose Your Work

Plan ahead to create resources you can repurpose. It's clear when you visit Michele Cushatt's website and subscribe to her list that the Premium Resources she offers subscribers has grown with her ministry. Rather than offer one lead magnet, she's bundled individual resources likely linked to specific book releases. She's repurposed her efforts.

For book 2 of my Mendocino Village Series, I, along with my friend Marci Seither—writer, cook, baker, and food photographer extraordinaire—created a series of recipes from my fictional café. (A valuable partnership with another writer!) I created a pdf that included recipes with photos and offered it as a preorder incentive.

Now that the book has released, I'll use the recipes as an additional lead magnet for subscribers. Not only that, but I used the same recipes and photos for printed cards I gave to members of the launch team, and I'm now in the process of adding the recipe cards to my website as a product to sell. The recipe cards make a nice gift when given with one or both books in the series.

Reserve your mental, physical, and creative energy by creating resources you can repurpose.

Focus on the Benefits of Your Lead Magnet

Offering subscribers valuable lead magnets that can also serve multiple purposes will

- Lead to book sales
- Sustain your writing ministry
- Deliver your message or story to readers
- Meet readers' needs
- Meet readers' desires
- Give you a resource you can repurpose