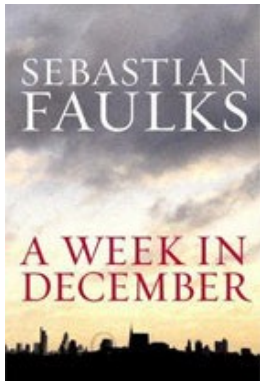


**Welcome to the February Ezine edition for
“The Creative Penn”!**



Your monthly dose of **information** and **inspiration** on Writing, Publishing options, Sales and Promotion... for your book. Please do email me joanna@TheCreativePenn.com with suggestions for any topics you would like me to cover in this ezine—or on the blog itself.



Writing Characters: The Hero and The Villain

I am writing a thriller novel this year and so there are a lot more articles about writing on the blog. I hope you find them useful as it is good to share details as we all progress with our books.

This month, we get into characters.

The brilliant Sebastian Faulks' book “A Week in December” is a character driven plot. There are 8 key points we can learn from this book.

- 1) **Use extreme detail.** The book takes place over 1 week in the lives of 7 characters, each of whom are portrayed in incredible detail in terms of their appearance, what they like, where they live and how they interact with other people. There is also a lot of back story and internal narrative, where the characters inner lives are explored. This is not “show, don't tell”, but it works nonetheless. The description of the 16 year old druggie Finbar's bedroom is perfect (Faulks does have teens!) .

[Click here for the full post with 7 more tips for character based writing.](#)

Making Your Villain Three-Dimensional

Novelist [K.M. Weiland](#) has a [great video this month](#) on why the Devil makes a boring bad guy. This theme is explored more as we delve into [how to flesh out the villain of your story](#) so s/he is not just pure evil. Bad guys need to have back story so the reader understands motive. People are generally not bad just because they are. Explore the reasons why in your text. [More tips for 3D villains here.](#)



Image: [Flickr CC Arunjrk](#)

How to Write About A Real Location If You Haven't Been There

This post was sparked by a question from a reader of the blog, and also created a flurry of comments. It is obviously a common problem!

If you can't physically visit yourself, then try Google Maps, Google Earth, guidebooks, online travel sites, interviews with people who have been there and surfing Flickr or other photo sites for images. [More tips and comments at the main post here.](#)

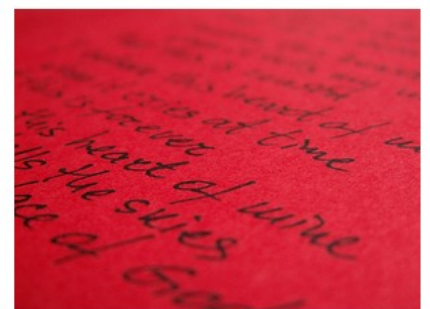


**Guest Post from Romance Writer, Dean Mayes:
How to Be A Man in the Romance Market**

Guest posts provide a brilliant new point of view to the blog, and this post is fantastic. If you want to write romance, Dean has some great tips from a guy's point of view—including watching the entire movie of “The Notebook” (sob!) .

[You can read the post here.](#)

Image: [Flickr CC Ildalina](#)



How to Launch a Book with No Traditional Media Like Seth Godin

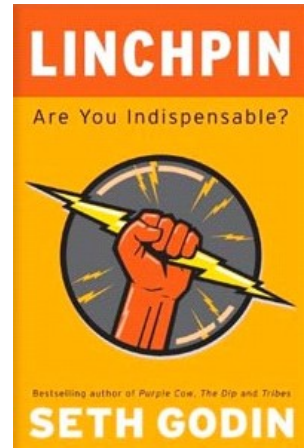
Seth Godin is a marketing guru and thought leader. He has also published over 20 books and is fully supported by a huge publisher. **So why did he avoid all traditional media for his book launch? And what can you learn from it?**

Here is [Seth's launch page](#) with the blog posts, podcasts and videos he did.

There are 6 things you can learn from Seth's launch.

- 1) **Target the bloggers**, in your niche and outside of it—what spin can you put on your book that will make it relevant to a number of blogs?

[Read the full post here with all the lessons learned.](#)



Welcome to
SIMONANDSCHUSTER.BIZ

The source for corporate information and B2B resources for Booksellers, Media, Authors, Partners, Vendors, and more...

Publisher Simon & Schuster Says Authors Should Blog and Social Network

It seems the mainstream publishers have now embraced what indie authors already know—we have to take responsibility to build our own platforms online. If you want to get the notice of publishers and readers, blogs and social networking are a brilliant way to do it!

[Click here for the Simon & Shuster Author Tools Online page.](#)

The tools they give are not the best or most effective for authors, so [here is a list of links for you](#) that offer more tools and tips for brilliant blogging, social networking, and videos. It includes how I setup my own blog as well as external links.



Podcasts: (not many this month as I was on hols!). Remember that podcasts are just audio files distributed on the internet. You can listen online or download to a PC or player. You can also [Subscribe on iTunes here.](#)

- [EBooks Q&A with Joshua Tallent](#), from EBookArchitects.com
- [Beat Procrastination with Rajeev Dewan](#), Peak Performance Coach
- [Book Marketing and Promotion](#), Your Questions Answered by Joanna Penn

BALI, Oct 1-6 2010 Writer's Retreat in Ubud

Learn how to **write, publish and promote your book** over 4 days of teaching and 5 nights at the gorgeous KumaraSakti resort in Ubud, Bali where Elizabeth Gilbert wrote "Eat, Pray, Love".

[Click here for all the details.](#)

Limited to 20 people, booking available now.

The teaching will be **intense, practical and hands on** and you will learn so much, but there will also be ample time for **massage, yoga, Balinese cultural tours and fantastic food.**



Until next month then! All the best in your writing—and please do contact me with any suggestions!

Joanna