

—The RSP Cheat Sheet—

Ten Superstar Tools

My name is Simon Whistler and I've spent the last 2 years **interrogating** some of the biggest self-published authors on the planet (like Russell Blake, AG Riddle, Hugh Howey, CJ Lyons, Joanna Penn...) to find out how they became so darn successful.

This **short cheat-sheet** gives you the low down on some of the most often discussed and recommended tricks and tools.

So let's get started...

-
1. **Scrivener** – Paid (\$45 Mac / \$40 Windows) - Write better, write faster, publish faster.
Download: [Mac Version](#) / [Windows Version](#)



In first place, it's got to be a tool for writing itself. Even top authors sometimes don't make any progress with their books. When this happens they don't quit for the day, they write something else, they keep the words flowing.

If you are struggling to write that boring scene? Skip ahead to the action, and write it when you're feeling more motivated! Scrivener allows you to easily write any part of your book.

I started writing in Google Docs, and it was a game changer when I switched to Scrivener. Some previous guests who raved about the software: Holly Lisle, Alan Petersen, Matt Ahlshlager...

It also has a long free trial so you can try before you buy.

BONUS: [Learn Scrivener Fast](#). *Epic training on how to master this program. This is regarded as the industry standard training (recommend by people like Joanna Penn!). It goes way beyond the limited Scrivener help file. It's paid for, and while not strictly needed, it will help you get way more out of Scrivener.*

2. **MailChimp** - Free - Build a base of true fans.
Site: Mailchimp.com

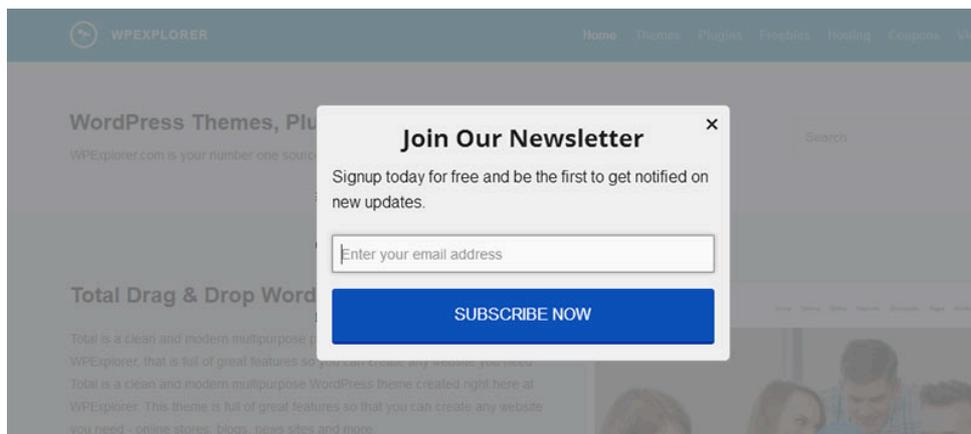


When you finish an ebook by a top self-publisher, what do you see? You see a link to their website, usually offering you something (free novel or novella etc). You MUST do this. An email list is the best way to communicate with your audience (and ultimately sell them your future books!).

These people are your best customers, and you should start communicating with them today. They will beta read them, they'll even do a bunch of marketing for you. Previous RSP guests such as Nick Stephenson and Mark Dawson have used mailing lists to enormous success, ensuring that every book launch is a roaring success.

HINT: *Because I think building a mailing list is something you should do as soon as possible, I'm shortly going to send you a video showing you the best (and easiest) way to get set up with MailChimp. All free.*

3. **AppSumo** - Free – Get people onto that all-important mailing list!
Site: <http://www.appsumo.com/list-builder/>



I'll get this out of the way first...
It's a pop-up, urgh...
But stick with me.

This tool has been more valuable for building my mailing list than any PAID SOFTWARE. I started using it and my email list conversions started skyrocketing! You need to have a Wordpress site to run this bit of kit, but if you do it takes about 5 minutes to get up and running.

I would also offer an incentive for anyone who enters their email address. Provide a free novella, or novel, and if you don't have one to give away, write one, email addresses are that valuable, and this is THE BEST way to capture them. You might even have got this report by entering your email address into mine ;).

If you browse the web for a while, you'll become familiar with the popup box appearing on various authors websites - it's probably this fantastic tool.

-
4. **Asana** - Free - Engineer your success.
Site: <http://asana.com>

The Asana logo consists of the word "asana" in a lowercase, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the text are three green dots arranged vertically.

Success is not luck or an accident. It's the constant application of the right effort towards a goal. You must write your goals down. You must then break down how you are going to achieve these goals. The breakout successes I have had on the show, don't ascribe their success to good fortune, they had a plan and they executed on it. Listen to Russell Blake's interview for more on this.

Asana is a tool that allows you to set up "projects" for example, "Novel A" and set deadlines for them. You do this by creating tasks, e.g. "Edit the book" and subtasks, e.g. "Browse KBoards for an editor."

At the very least you must write your goals down, but I would thoroughly recommend getting them into a project management tool like Asana. Oh, and it is really easy to use :).

Since bringing this up on the podcast, I've had a bunch of listeners email in telling me how useful this has been in actually getting their book written.

BONUS: [Read Getting Things Done](#) - The lessons in this book can easily be implemented through Asana.

-
5. **Write or Die** - Free and Paid - Get the first draft DONE.
Use and Download: <http://writeordie.com/>



This is another epic productivity tool that first came up when I interviewed Matt Ahlshlager. Since then I've had other authors on who use the tool.

This tool punishes you if you are not cranking out the words. It will play irritating sounds, and display images until you make progress.

If you are struggling to get the first draft done, you need this. It applies just the right amount of pressure, and even has a "suicide" mode, where if you don't keep writing, it will actually delete what you had already written. Not for the faint hearted!

HINT: *There is a free version that you can use in the browser window. If you want more features or to be able to use it on the desktop, you need to spend \$20 on the software.*

6. **Author Marketing Club** - Free - Makes promoting your book easy.
Site: [AMC](#)

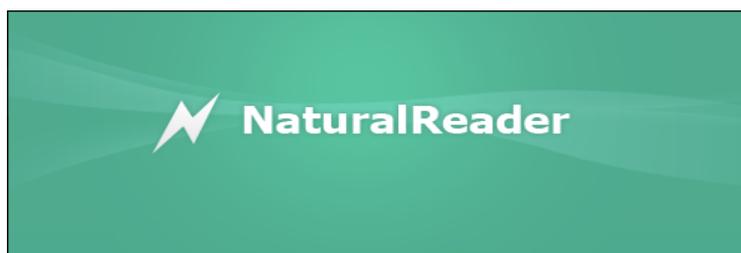


Many big authors got their start by getting their book into the hands of readers by giving it away! You can do this via permafrees (making the book free on Smashwords so that Amazon will 'price match' it to free), or by using one of your KDP free days (5 every 90 days).

There are loads of sites out there that will tell people about free books (and many of them are free), but finding all of these can be a headache. That's why you should use the free section of AMC to find all these sites and let them know about your free run.

Many authors I have had on the show have seen a great deal of success through free promotions. Check out my interview with Chuck Rose for more info on that.

7. **NaturalReader** - Free - Clean drafts the easy way.
Site: <http://www.naturalreaders.com/>



Creating a clean manuscript is essential for getting a book out, and don't just rely on your proof-reader for this.

Many RSP guests use tools like NaturalReader to read their manuscript back to them, and spot mistakes they are glossing over. I use this extensively for spotting typos.

This app is a computer voice that can read your words back to you. When a word is misspelled you might be blind to it, but this app will allow you to hear it. It's surprising how obvious the mistakes are when they are audibly read back to you!

TIP: Kevin Leigh told me about a great mobile version of this, so you can listen back and proof your manuscript while on the move. It's called Voice Dream <http://www.voicedream.com/> - this one you have to pay for though, it's \$9.99 for the app.

TIP 2: Note that web address has an 's' at the end of it, despite the problem being called "NaturalReader" – don't go to naturalreader.com by mistake, it's a spam site :).

8. **A Quality Website** - Cheap (<\$10 a month) - Your home on the internet.
Site: [Start with Hostgator \(link\)](#)



A website is your home on the web. I have never interviewed an author who didn't have a website. Fortunately, these days websites are incredibly easy and cheap to set up.

Make a good impression by sending readers to a professional website. Professional indie authors don't just rely on Facebook or Twitter for engaging with fans. You should also start a blog (don't worry, it doesn't have to be time consuming), because it can bring fans closer to you as an author, and help cultivate superfans who will buy everything you produce (and tell their friends to buy too).

I have a free course [on RockingSelfPublishing.com](#), which shows you how to set up a fantastic author website quickly and easily. I'll email you with more detail about that in a few days :), but you can get started today if you want to.

HINT: Tie this in with the email newsletter for maximum effect (e.g. link in the back of your book, sending them to a "signup to my newsletter" page on your website.)

9. **KindleSpy** - Paid - Increase your sales by tweaking the title of your book.
Site: <http://rspcast.com/kindlespy>

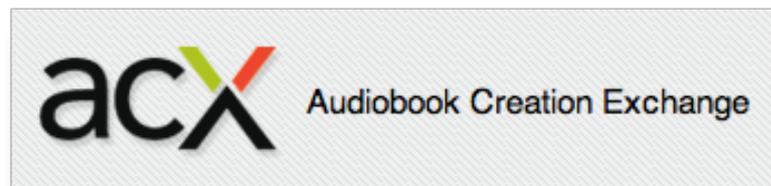


Don't go flailing around in the dark, get this research tool, and work out what titles are going to help you rank in Amazon and sell more books. Writing is an art, but selling writing is not. Put on your business hat, get this tool, and work out what you need to do to get your book in front of readers. This tool will help you discover popular keywords you can use in your books title and description to get Amazon to put your book in front of the right readers!

For more detail on why having the right title and keywords is important, I'd listen to my interview with "keyword master" Nick Stephenson ([that's episode 63, this is a link to it!](#))

BONUS: The tool also lets you peak behind the curtain and estimate how much your favourite indie books (and authors) are earning!

10. **ACX.com** - Free - If you haven't thought about audiobooks, you could be leaving money on the table.
Site: <http://www.acx.com/>



The vast majority of authors who are successful are capitalizing on their other rights (audio, translation, movie...), and audiobooks are the easiest place to start. For those in the US and UK, ACX (the "Audiobook Creation Exchange") makes it easy to exploit your audio rights and create a new revenue stream. You can either pay a narrator upfront, or opt to split the sales of the audiobook with them (at zero cost to yourself up front).

Oh, and (not to be too self promotional or anything ;)) but I just so happen to have a book about that. The book is on sale for \$3.99, but because you are smart, and downloaded this guide (and actually read this far...), if you promise me an honest review for the book, I'll send you a copy for free! ;)

Just email me and ask: simon@rockingselfpublishing.com

11. ???

Site: Okay so there isn't really an eleventh tool. But if you think there should be, let me know, I'd love to expand this list! Just use that email address I just mentioned.

*Please note that some of the tools that I mentioned in this guide are affiliate links to the services. I included them here because I believe in them. If you don't want me to receive a small kickback (*sad face*) for recommending these tools, just Google them, and find the site that way. These kickbacks keep me caffeinated, and keep RSP on the digital airwaves.*