

Blogging for Writers

by Zanni Louise -

<http://greatstorybook.com/bloggging-for-writers/>

This entry is part 5 of 5 in the series [Community](#)

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About Blogging for Writers and An Introductory Note from Chazda: Zanni Louise and I met in Bologna, Italy at the [International Children's Book Fair](#) of 2016. For both of us, it was a first-time experience. We shared our excitement and how overwhelmed and amazed we were at all the incredible books filling the many buildings and all the publishers, editors, art directors, agents, writers and artists.

Zanni Louise's story of becoming published for the first time is perhaps every writer's dream: she was busily writing a blog and it got the attention of a publisher. Zanni now has a beautiful storybook on the market and she has been touring it like crazy!

I'm so glad Zanni and I have kept in touch since Bologna, and I'm very pleased to have her guest blogging on GSB. There rest you read here is from her.

When my first child was very young, I found myself pushing her pram, composing stories, desperate for an opportunity to write them down. Lying down with her one evening, more stories came. And so awakened a cavernous hunger for storytelling.

I no longer looked at my day as a work day. With a newborn, I had to be creative when finding space to be... well, creative.

For me, evenings worked. As soon as Baby was in bed, I wrote furiously, until I couldn't write anymore.

Next Steps

I started attending short courses, and reading about how to get published. Consistently, I heard, "start a

blog.” At that stage, all I knew about blogging was that Julie, from [Julie & Julia](#), wrote a blog post every day about her attempts to recreate Julia Child’s recipes. [You can [read about Julie Powell’s success here.](#)]

What could I blog about? I wondered. One morning in the shower, it came to me. *Write about parenting*, I thought. Write about what you know.

Turns out, several million other bloggers had the same idea. But it didn’t matter. What mattered was that on a regular basis, I was writing blog posts, people were reading them, and I was connecting to an audience.

About My Blog

I received great feedback. Friends who read my posts were very encouraging. People started to contact me out of the blue to thank for my words. I grew a small, but engaged parenting community around my words.

My blog comprised of little stories about my parenting life and my parenting day. I began to think in blog. Every event was a possible storyline.

Getting Published!

At some point, due to a love of reading to my daughter, I contacted publishers and said I could review children’s books on my blog. Another avenue opened up. And the more I read and reviewed, the more I burned to write children’s stories myself.

When I put that idea out to my blog community, one of my readers, who happened to be the managing director of a leading children’s publisher, [Hardie Grant Egmont](#), emailed me. She asked me to send her a manuscript.

Of course, I took her up on her offer. And the manuscript became my first published children’s book, [Too Busy Sleeping](#) (illustrated by [Anna Pignataro](#)).

Promoting My First Book

My blogging community were so supportive, and excited for me. Many bought my book, and/or recommended it to their own communities. Half the people at my book launch were blog readers.

I developed a promotional tour by asking my community if they would like me to visit their town. I ended up in over 30 venues across Australia, which helped sales and overall publicity for my book.

What Now?

I am quieter on the blog these days, conserving my writing energy for children’s books. But it’s still a special place for me. I return there at least once a week, with a little family story.

Although I have never had an overly large readership, so many wonderful opportunities have eventuated as a result of writing a blog. A publishing contract, yes, but I also run blogging and creative courses, I coach people, and have had a number of articles published through different publications, all thanks to my blog.

Best of all, my blog has been a community of engaged readers. And it has enticed me to write regularly, which has helped my overall craft.

7 Reasons to Blog

Here are some reasons why I think blogging is great for writers.

Blogging is freedom.

It is a space you get to shape in the way you choose. Unlike Facebook, or Twitter which have algorithms and restrictions, blogging gives you complete freedom to express yourself how you wish. You could write about writing. But you could write about so many other things, and create a connection to potential readers and publishers through your words.

Blogging is immediate.

Write a blog. Hit publish. Get a response. As lucky as I am to be a published author, I feel just as lucky to have an engaged community to respond immediately to my writing. The wait in traditional publishing can be very slow.

Blogging is discipline.

Before I started blogging in earnest, I spent a lot of time thinking about being a writer. My blog though gave me external motivation to actually become a writer. I had an audience. I had a template. I just had to write. So I did. Three, sometimes four nights a week.

Blogging is creative.

And the more I wrote, the more words came. I started to think like an entrepreneur. Other business and creative opportunities arose.

Blogging is inspiration.

One of the most exciting and engaging part of blogging is being part of a blogging community. Many of your blogging colleagues are also writers, and so you inspire each other as you engage, and read other blogs. Reading and seeing other blogs made me want to improve mine. So I learnt a lot of tricks, and can now make just about any website.

Blogging is community and exposure.

Other bloggers are your community. Potential readers of your book are often in your blogging community. Publishers may be reading your blog. By continuing to create great content on your blog, you are feeding your community, and growing your community. And hopefully increasing your chances of being a published author.

Blogging is personal.

Your blog can be anything you want it to be. Be creative, and let it be shaped. Let it shape you in turn.

So, blogging is the bee's knees. But what next?

Keep it Going!

Setting up a blog on WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr or LinkedIn is relatively easy. Just follow the step by step guides. And importantly, start! It will probably take a little while for an audience to find you, which buys you time as you try out different blog topics, tone of voice, and blog style. The organic nature of blogging means it grows as you grow.

[Zanni's *next* book, **Archie and the Bear**, is illustrated by [David Mackintosh](#) and will be released 2017. **Keep creating, no matter what.**]

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