See How Maryann Jordan's Devoted Readers are a Key to Her Success

(Image created at BookBrush.com)

When I caught up with Maryann Jordan, it was clear to me that she is exceedingly self-aware, dedicated and disciplined to her writing as well as to the business side of her craft. How fortunate we are to have access to her passionate wisdom and insight. She encourages authors to remember to write because they love it but to never forget that it's a reader-driven business.

Most writers will tell you the business side can suck so much time away from writing, but to be successful, you have to understand that as an indie author, you are running a business. I am now able to hire people to assist with much of the mundane tasks, and ultimately, the bottom line of my success comes down to the writing of good books that readers want to read.
~Maryann Jordan

About Maryann Jordan: USA Today Bestselling Author, Award Winning, Amazon International Bestselling and All-Star author, Kobo, and Barnes & Noble Best Selling Author! I have always been an avid reader. In 2013, I started a blog to showcase wonderful writers and finally gave in

to the characters in my head pleading for their story to be told. Thus, Emma's Home was created. My first novel, Emma's Home, became an Amazon Best Seller in three categories within the first month of publishing. Its success was followed by the rest of the ***Fairfield Series*** *and then led into the* ***Love's Series****. Soon, other spin-off series came along and eight of my books have made Amazon's top 100 bestselling books. (Source: Amazon)*

Now for our exclusive interview with Maryann Jordan.

THE REAL AUTHOR

Q: When did you know you would become a writer?

I have written "unofficially" for many years but had not delved into fiction. Finally, in 2014, I decided to give in to the character voices in my head.

Q: Who are sources of inspiration for you as a writer?

I have read so many genres, from cozy mysteries, historical romance, epic sagas, classics, romantic suspense. I am first a reader and second, a writer. So, the many books I read give me inspiration, whether it is for certain aspects of the craft or a character. I gain inspiration for my suspense plots from real life stories in the news. I also gain inspiration for my characters from the many people I have encountered in my life.

Q: Describe your work day.

Becoming a successful indie writer, I am now retired from my former career (adolescent counseling for over 25 years) and work from home. I am an early riser, often hitting the computer by 6:30 a.m. If I am embroiled in a story, then I will write for most of the day, taking breaks for meals, family business/errands. I am most productive in the morning, so my evening hours are spent marketing, editing, reading, or watching TV with my husband.

Q: Do you have "office" hours?

All day, every day! No two days are exactly alike, so I do not have specific office hours.

Q: Would you rather write at home, at an office or in a coffee shop?

Home!

Q: Why?

I am a people watcher and working in a place with people around would not be good!

Q: Coffee or tea?

I love flavored coffee but have switched to tea. A co-writer introduced me to English Breakfast Tea, topped with whipped cream and cinnamon sugar sprinkles. What an indulgence!

Q: Business attire or comfy/casual?

After many years of business attire, now that I'm at home, it's casual all the way.

THE REAL STORY

Q: How did you hone in on your writing niche? What was that process like?

I love reading romantic suspense and found that I had a talent for writing romance with a twist of mystery/suspense.

Q: When you are writing a new book, what comes to you first, the storyline or the characters?

I write in series (and spinoff series) so the characters are the first things that come to me. I want them to be believable, interesting, draw readers in, etc. If readers don't like the characters, they won't keep reading.

Q: Do you find that the business side of being a published author overtakes the writing side? How do you find a balance between the two?

Yes! Most writers will tell you the business side can suck so much time away from writing, but to be successful, ***you have to understand that as an indie author, you are running a business****. I am now able to hire people to assist with much of the mundane tasks, and ultimately, the bottom line of my success comes down to the writing of good books that readers want to read.*

THE REAL STATS

Q: What marketing tool or strategy would you say has offered you more potential for success?

Facebook has been a tool for getting my name out in front of readers, through groups, ads, posts, my author page, fan group, etc. Having a presence on social media (and not just Facebook)

makes a difference. My newsletter has also been a huge asset to selling books. It takes a long time to build up a list, but it's worth the effort.

Q: What numbers are most important to you in terms of being a successfully published author?

***Sales, first and foremost**. I want to see that my books are selling. I look daily at how many books sold the previous day. I look for trends and make adjustments (do I need to run a sale on an older book to gain traction, etc.)*

I also maintain a monthly royalty spreadsheet, by book, so that I am able to quickly see trends as well.

I also keep an eye on my expenditures. I want to gain the most sales while keeping my expenditures down…just like any business.

MORE REAL STATS

- How many readers do you have on your email list? ***33K***
- What is the largest number of books you've sold in one day? ***My average number of books sold per day (right now, with 36 books currently published) is about 100-300. The most I have sold in a day was about 3500 (on sale with a Bookbub ad).***
- What is the next milestone you are shooting for in book sales? ***I recently hit two milestones...selling over 10,000 audiobooks and hitting a career milestone of making 7 figures total.***
- How much do you spend a month on advertising? ***An average of less than $1K per month.***
- How many books do you sell in the first week of launching a new release? ***I typically have pre-orders of about 1500-2000 per book (at full price) and then another 500 during release week.***

Q: What online tools do you most frequently use?

Social Pilot *(for scheduling daily promos to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram)*
Bookbub *(for new release emails, pre-order emails, and for featured promos)*
Booktrakr *(tool for keeping track of sales)*
Draft2 Digital *(for uploading to a variety of platforms) including Books2Read (for universal links for all books)*
And for graphics, I use PicMonkey, eCoversAuthority, Animoto, *and newly* BookBrush.

JUST FOR KICKS

Q: What book would you want with you if you were stranded on an island?

I'm very practical…I'd probably want a book entitled "Stranded on an Island for Dummies…" I doubt anyone has written that, but it would be useful!

Q: What books are on your nightstand?

My kindle is still loaded with many books that I have been reading for years, going way back to some of the historical romances that filled my early imagination. Many are the newer military romantic suspense (same genre that I write in). Some are re-reads…but not many. I download several books a week (I'm a skim reader) and am always trying to support my author friends.

Maryann was generous with her time so we asked her what else she would like to communicate before we let her go.

I did not publish my first book until I was 54 years old. My advice to ANYONE, is you are never too old to try something new. I had no idea it would become a second career.

My advice to new authors is to write because you love it. This is not a get-rich-quick business. The market is very different than it was when indie publishing became popular. So many more books being published makes the environment for getting readers and getting noticed difficult. But, the rewards of seeing your stories in print is amazing!

All successful authors that I know say, "It is a marathon, not a sprint." Good words!

Q: What is the best way for our readers to connect with you?

Email: authormaryannjordan@gmail.com
Facebook
Twitter
Website