



Should writers tweet, Facebook, etc?

by Julie H. Ferguson

Author and professional speaker, Julie H. Ferguson delivers keynotes and workshops that provide aspiring authors with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to approach publishers and succeed. Her paperbacks and e-books, as well as Coaching Towards Publication, are available through Beacon Literary Services at www.beaconlit.com.

My writers' group had a discussion about [Twitter](#) just over a month ago. We also talked about the value of social networking sites like [Facebook](#) (FB) to writers. Those of us who use these sites were unanimous in the time they require of us. The debate swirled around: Are they really worth the effort?

I believe they can be, as long as you are strong-willed enough to control your time. Since I joined Twitter, the traffic to my website and blog has more than tripled, which has translated into more book sales. Not a huge amount, but enough to notice. Another author colleague reports the same outcome.

Although my writers' [blog](#) posts are automatically uploaded and displayed on my FB page, I really only use FB to keep in touch with my family and friends. This site has never increased my sales, but has brought my local writing community closer to me.

There are other sites that might work better for writers: www.kindleboards.com and www.ebookgab.com. (Thanks [Debra Purdy Kong](#), for these suggestions.) However the jury is still out regarding their efficacy.

As these social sites are seriously addictive, how do you prevent them from eating into your writing? I restrict my time. When I am writing, I allow myself about 20 minutes a day and that is after dinner when I'm too tired to do much else. Others do the same.

I vote Twitter as the best return on my involvement and investment. How about you? Tips: use your own name, not an alias. A couple of short posts per day, one with a link to a blog post or your website, and you're done. Remember to post your colleague's websites too. But how much time you devote to reading Tweets and FB is up to you—it's easy to spend all day!

Since I wrote this piece in six weeks ago, my book sales have increased by 100%. These satisfying numbers stem from **Tweeting** not from FB.

Join me at www.twitter.com/BLSJHFerguson