Author Platform Building Checklist 2025

Your Step-by-Step Guide to Building a Modern Writer Platform

Phase 1: Foundation (Weeks 1-2)

Website/Blog Setup

- ☐ Purchase your domain name (preferably yourname.com)
- ☐ Choose a website platform (WordPress, Squarespace, Wix)
- ☐ Set up essential pages:
  - ☐ Home page with clear author introduction
  - ☐ About page with professional bio
  - ☐ Books/Work page with current projects
  - ☐ Contact page with form
  - ☐ Blog page for content
- ☐ Install essential features:
  - ☐ Newsletter signup forms
  - ☐ Book showcase with sample chapters
  - ☐ Media kit/press page
  - ☐ Mobile-responsive design
  - ☐ SSL certificate for security

Email Marketing Setup

- ☐ Choose email platform:
  - ☐ Mailchimp (beginner-friendly)
  - ☐ ConvertKit (creator-focused)
  - ☐ Substack (newsletter-blog hybrid)
  - ☐ Beehiiv (modern features)
  - ☐ Ghost (open-source option)
- ☐ Create lead magnet (free short story, writing guide, or exclusive excerpt)
- ☐ Design welcome email sequence (3-5 emails)
- ☐ Add signup forms to website
- ☐ Test signup process and automation

Phase 2: Social Media Strategy (Weeks 3-4)

Platform Selection (Choose 2-3 to start)

- ☐ Instagram/TikTok for visual content and BookTok
- ☐ LinkedIn for professional networking
- ☐ Threads for real-time engagement
- ☐ Substack for paid newsletter content
- ☐ YouTube for video content

Profile Setup for Chosen Platforms

- ☐ Professional profile photo
- ☐ Consistent bio across platforms
- ☐ Link to website/newsletter
- ☐ Create content templates
- ☐ Research relevant hashtags

Phase 3: Content Creation (Weeks 5-8)

Content Planning

- ☐ Create content calendar
- ☐ Plan core content (50%): genre/niche specific
- ☐ Plan adjacent content (30%): writing process, industry insights
- ☐ Plan personal brand content (20%): strategic personal sharing
- ☐ Identify content pillars/themes

Blog Content

- ☐ Write 4-6 foundational blog posts
- ☐ Create author FAQ page
- ☐ Develop "Start Here" guide for new visitors
- ☐ Set up blog categories
- ☐ Create editorial calendar

Social Media Content

- ☐ Create 30 days of social posts
- ☐ Design visual templates
- ☐ Plan video content ideas
- ☐ Schedule posts using tools (Buffer, Later, Hootsuite)
- ☐ Prepare engagement responses

Phase 4: Expansion & Optimization (Weeks 9-12)

Multimedia Content

- Consider podcast setup:
    - ☐ Choose format (solo, interviews, hybrid)
    - ☐ Select hosting platform (Anchor, Buzzsprout)
    - ☐ Create cover art and description
    - ☐ Record first 3 episodes
- Plan YouTube content:
    - ☐ Create channel
    - ☐ Design thumbnails
    - ☐ Plan first 5 videos
    - ☐ Set up basic equipment

Email List Building

☐ Create content upgrades for popular posts
☐ Design landing pages for specific audiences
☐ Set up automated welcome sequence
☐ Plan regular newsletter content
☐ Test and optimize signup forms

Analytics & Optimization

☐ Install Google Analytics
☐ Set up goal tracking
☐ Monitor email open rates
☐ Track social media engagement
☐ Review and adjust strategy based on data

Ongoing Maintenance Checklist

Daily Tasks (15-30 minutes)

☐ Respond to comments and messages
☐ Share one piece of content
☐ Engage with other authors' content

Weekly Tasks (2-3 hours)

☐ Write and schedule blog post
☐ Create social media content batch
☐ Send newsletter
☐ Review analytics

☐ Update website as needed

Monthly Tasks (4-6 hours)

☐ Review platform performance
☐ Update content calendar
☐ Audit email list health
☐ Create fresh lead magnets
☐ Plan promotional campaigns

Quarterly Tasks

☐ Review overall strategy
☐ Update author bio and media kit
☐ Audit website for broken links
☐ Clean email list
☐ Evaluate platform ROI

Platform-Specific Best Practices

Website/Blog

☐ Publish consistently (aim for weekly)
☐ Optimize for SEO
☐ Include calls-to-action in posts
☐ Update book pages regularly
☐ Maintain fast loading speeds

Email Newsletter

☐ Send consistently (weekly/bi-weekly)
☐ Segment list by reader interests
☐ A/B test subject lines
☐ Include personal stories
☐ Always provide value

Instagram/TikTok

☐ Post 3-5 times per week
☐ Use trending audio
☐ Create Reels/TikToks regularly
☐ Engage with BookTok community
☐ Share behind-the-scenes content

LinkedIn

- ☐ Post 2-3 times per week
- ☐ Share industry insights
- ☐ Connect with publishing professionals
- ☐ Participate in relevant groups
- ☐ Showcase achievements

YouTube

- ☐ Upload consistently (weekly/bi-weekly)
- ☐ Optimize titles and descriptions
- ☐ Create compelling thumbnails
- ☐ Engage with comments
- ☐ Cross-promote on other platforms

Success Metrics to Track

Website

- ☐ Monthly visitors
- ☐ Time on site
- ☐ Most popular pages
- ☐ Newsletter signups
- ☐ Book page views

Email

- ☐ Open rates (target: 20-40%)
- ☐ Click-through rates
- ☐ List growth rate
- ☐ Unsubscribe rate
- ☐ Conversion to sales

Social Media

- ☐ Follower growth
- ☐ Engagement rate
- ☐ Reach and impressions
- ☐ Click-throughs to website
- ☐ Saves and shares

Resources & Tools

Essential Tools

- ☐ Canva (graphics)
- ☐ Buffer/Later/Hootsuite (scheduling)
- ☐ Google Analytics (website tracking)
- ☐ Grammarly (editing)
- ☐ Trello/Asana (project management)

Advanced Tools

- ☐ SEMrush/Ahrefs (SEO)
- ☐ ConvertKit/Mailchimp (email)
- ☐ Descript (podcast editing)
- ☐ CapCut/Adobe Premiere (video editing)
- ☐ Jasper/Claude (AI assistance)

Remember:

- Start with 1-2 platforms and expand gradually
- Consistency beats perfection
- Focus on genuine connections over metrics
- Repurpose content across platforms
- Track what works and adjust accordingly