



THE **SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK**
MARKETING PLAN
MARKETING PLAN EXAMPLE

NICK THACKER

MAY 2013



LIVEHACKED.COM

TURTLESHELLPRESS.COM

Step 1: Define Description and Purpose

Description: *The Golden Crystal* is a work of fiction in the thriller/adventure genre, and has been referred to as a work of “crossover” fiction, blending elements of the traditional genre thriller as well as science fiction.

Purpose: The book is intended to be fun to read and provide entertainment value. The purpose of this marketing plan is to detail an action-oriented plan to launch the book into the marketplace, generate sales, and find ideal readers. A secondary purpose of this plan is to generate leads by way of the LiveHacked.com mailing list, through in-book and blog post signup invitations.

Step 2. Define Target Market (Demographics)

Author Demographics: Nick Thacker is a resident of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is 26 years old. He is active and enjoys skiing, playing Risk, and reading thrillers. He runs a blog, LiveHacked.com, and writes to help writers market, promote, and sell their books.

Target Market: *The Golden Crystal's* ideal reader is male, between the ages of 35 and 65, who travels often and wants a “quick read” for trips. The ideal reader is someone who enjoys action, fast-paced dramatic elements of suspense, and watches movies and television shows similar to National Treasure, Heroes, Person of Interest, and other “Hollywood”-style pictures.

Reaching Target Market (Overview): *The Golden Crystal* will be released first on Amazon.com in ebook (Kindle) form at a low introductory price. Leading up to the launch date (TBD), the author will send free copies of the book to “beta readers,” in exchange for an honest (yet not obligatory) Amazon review.

Advertisements on book websites and review sites will be purchased to drive initial traffic, and the author will “blog tour” (guest post on numerous blogs) during the first two weeks after launch. The first “Kindle promo” of 5 free days will begin during the third week after launch, and advertisements at BookBub.com and BookGorilla.com will be purchased to drive traffic to the “free” sale.

Ongoing marketing will include (but is not limited to) free promotions via KDP Select, social media mentions, giveaways via blog tours, and additional advertisement purchases to drive strategic traffic.

Finally, the author plans to release the book on additional platforms a few months to six months after the book launch, depending on platform sales. Additional platforms include Apple’s iBookstore, Nook, Smashwords, and LiveHacked.com.

Step 3: Define Strategic Action Steps (Marketing Tactics)

Strategic Action Steps (External):

1. Advertisements: Advertising will be procured via the following websites: BookBub, KindleBoards, Goodreads, and BookGorilla. The budget for these ads is \$600 (subject to change) over a 30-day period. The advertisements will send traffic to 1. The Amazon sales page for the initial book launch, and 2. The Amazon sales page for the “free promo” days. The advertisements will be a book description and front cover image.

2. Blog Tour: The author will write and submit requests to post articles on relevant blogs, focused on helping authors write, edit, promote, and finish their books. These posts will mention *The Golden Crystal* and link to the Amazon sales page, but will not be overtly focused on selling. The author will prepare and write 30 posts for this purpose, and will attempt to publish at least 20 on relevant blogs. The author will try to schedule the blog post “go-live” dates for the first week after the launch date.

3. Social Media: Social media will play a supplementary role in marketing *The Golden Crystal*. Social media posts on Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Goodreads, and brief mentions on the LiveHacked.com mailing lists will point to the blog posts mentioned in the “Blog Tour” section. This indirect promotion will strengthen the overall marketing strategy by cross-referencing posts, articles, and social media mentions.*

4. Interviews: The author will seek out at least 20 interview opportunities both on podcasts (audio) and on blogs (written). 20 questions and answers will be pre-written, but the author will

of course request that additional/alternative questions be asked. These interviews will focus on the subject of writing, including craft, style, planning, outlining, marketing, and promotion. The author will try to schedule the interview “go-live” dates for the third week after the launch date.

5. In-Person Appearances: The author will seek out local bookstores and shops in the Denver, Colorado Springs, and Pueblo metropolitan areas, and will plan to schedule book signings and meet-ups one month after launch, to coincide with the release of the hardcover and paperback versions of *The Golden Crystal*. Any hard-copy books sold in this way will include at least a bookmark, and possibly a printed postcard as well.

6. Mailing List: LiveHacked.com maintains an email list of ~4,500 people, and mentions of *The Golden Crystal* and a small cover image will be placed at the bottom of emailings. These mentions will begin during launch week and continue throughout the first two months (at least) after the launch date.

7. LiveHacked.com: LiveHacked.com is a blog focused on providing writers with marketing, promotion, and sales help. Prior to launch week, the blog will mention *The Golden Crystal* and where it will be available. Three to four weeks after launch week, LiveHacked.com will host a giveaway for two copies of *The Golden Crystal* in hardcover or paperback format. This giveaway will be hosted and managed by RaffleCopter.com.

8. Facebook: The author will post announcements, updates, and release/launch information on their personal Facebook page and the author page. These announcements will focus on keeping the author's close friends and family up to date with The Golden Crystal.

9. Word-of-Mouth: The author will ask friends and family to post links to The Golden Crystal on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media feeds, and will request that if they are going to buy the book, that they all purchase on launch day (to drive additional "early-bird" sales).

10. Writing Courses Mentions: The author is currently writing, preparing, and recording a writing course to be released on Udemy.com that will be an extension of the free Fiction Writer's Guide to Writing Fiction. Both courses use The Golden Crystal as examples of learning experiences, and these links will forward to the Amazon sales page for the book.

Step 4: Tactical Breakdown (To-Do List):

6 Weeks Prior to Launch:

- Finalize eBook versions
- Send "beta reader" advance reader copies
- Set up follow-up emails to beta readers (asking for a review) to send 2 and 4 weeks from now
- Write 10 blog posts (for blog tour)

- Prepare 20 interview questions and answers

4-5 Weeks Prior to Launch

- Purchase and schedule launch-week advertisements
- Finalize print book versions (and print giveaway copies)
- Submit 10 blog posts for blog tour, requesting “launch week” as publish date
- Submit 10 interview requests, requesting “launch week” as “go-live” date
- Write and schedule 20 tweets, Facebook posts, and any other social media updates
- Write 10 blog posts (for blog tour)

2-3 Weeks Prior to Launch

- Submit 10 blog posts for blog tour, requesting “launch week” as publish date
- Submit 10 interview requests, requesting “launch week” as “go-live” date
- Write 10 blog posts (for blog tour)
- Schedule print version book giveaway(s)
- Prepare internal blog posts and mailing list mentions
- Purchase and schedule “free promo” (week 3) ads

1 Week Prior to Launch

- Review marketing/launch plan

- Review guest post publish dates (mark them on calendar)
- Review/confirm interview appointments/posts
- Send “launch week” email to mailing list
- Submit book to Amazon via KDP Select (don’t publish until 24 hours before your launch date!)
- Create tracking/sales spreadsheet

Launch Week!

- Personal email to friends and family (let them know book is ready to buy!)
- Publish book on Amazon KDP Select
- Send email update to mailing list (launch announcement)
- Schedule follow-up update to mailing list for end-of-week (“Hurry! Sale ends this week...”)
- Respond to comments and discussion on blog tour posts
- Interviews
- Send update to beta readers (“Now’s the time to post your review!”)
- Begin Facebook posts to “word of mouth” audience

1-2 Weeks After Launch

- Review first-week sales; alter/redo advertisements
- Respond to blog tour and interview comments
- Send final follow-up email to beta readers (end of 2nd week)
- Solicit requests for in-person appearances (use reviews as social proof)

3-4 Weeks After Launch

- First “free promo” on Amazon (5-day)
- Run “free promo” ads
- Twitter, Facebook, social media mentions of free promo
- Final giveaway of swag/hard copy book

Step 5: Calendar and Timeline*

*Based on estimated launch date of July 1, 2013.

Week of May 19:

- Finalize eBook versions
- Send “beta reader” advance reader copies
- Set up follow-up emails to beta readers (asking for a review) to send 2 and 4 weeks from now
- Write 10 blog posts (for blog tour)
- Prepare 20 interview questions and answers

Weeks of May 26 & June 2

- Purchase and schedule launch-week advertisements
- Finalize print book versions (and print giveaway copies)
- Submit 10 blog posts for blog tour, requesting “launch week” as publish date
- Submit 10 interview requests, requesting “launch week” as “go-live” date

- Write and schedule 20 tweets, Facebook posts, and any other social media updates
- Write 10 blog posts (for blog tour)

Weeks of June 9 & June 16

- Submit 10 blog posts for blog tour, requesting “launch week” as publish date
- Submit 10 interview requests, requesting “launch week” as “go-live” date
- Write 10 blog posts (for blog tour)
- Schedule print version book giveaway(s)
- Prepare internal blog posts and mailing list mentions
- Purchase and schedule “free promo” (week 3) ads

Week of June 23

- Review marketing/launch plan
- Review guest post publish dates (mark them on calendar)
- Review/confirm interview appointments/posts
- Send “launch week” email to mailing list
- Submit book to Amazon via KDP Select (don’t publish until 24 hours before your launch date!)
- Create tracking/sales spreadsheet

Launch Week: July 1

- Personal email to friends and family (let them know book is ready

to buy!)

- Publish book on Amazon KDP Select
- Send email update to mailing list (launch announcement)
- Schedule follow-up update to mailing list for end-of-week (“Hurry! Sale ends this week...”)
- Respond to comments and discussion on blog tour posts
- Interviews
- Send update to beta readers (“Now’s the time to post your review!”)
- Begin Facebook posts to “word of mouth” audience

Weeks of July 7 & July 14

- Review first-week sales; alter/redo advertisements
- Respond to blog tour and interview comments
- Send final follow-up email to beta readers (end of 2nd week)
- Solicit requests for in-person appearances (use reviews as social proof)

Weeks of July 21 & July 28

- First “free promo” on Amazon (5-day)
- Run “free promo” ads
- Twitter, Facebook, social media mentions of free promo
- Final giveaway of swag/hard copy book