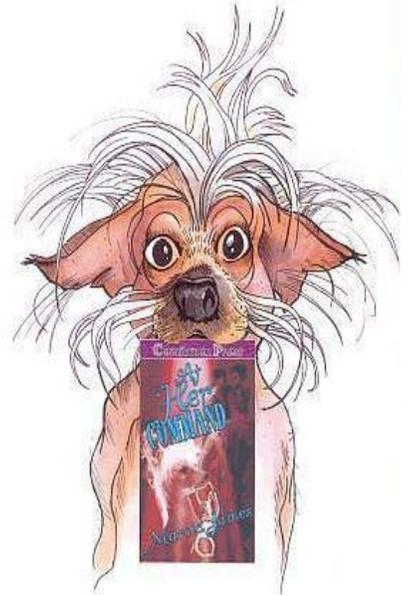


July 16th, 2008

## PROMO WITH MARCIA JAMES

*My guest-blogger today is Marcia James, an author of “hot, humorous romances”. Her debut comic romantic suspense, [AT HER COMMAND](#), was released in trade paperback and e-book last year from Cerridwen Press. In June 2009, she’ll have a short story in *TAILS OF LOVE*, a Berkley charity anthology, with nine other authors. After a career in marketing and advertising, she enjoys PR almost as much as “researching” and writing love scenes. Marcia offers her 150+ file of author promotion information to any author who requests it. Just email her through the “Contact Me” page on her <http://www.marciajames.net/>*



When I was offered the chance to guest-blog on Shelley’s blog, she said I could talk about my favorite topic: author promotion. I love hearing opinions and suggestions from readers and authors about their favorite types of PR. Shelley will draw a name from those who comment on this blog to receive a free download of my e-book, *AT HER COMMAND*. So comment often! ;-D

Here are my questions to you: Readers, what types of promotional items—bookmarks, excerpt booklets, autographed book plates, trinkets?—do you like to receive from authors? Authors, what are your favorite or most effective promotional efforts—blogs, chats, paid ads, book signings, workshop presentations? Readers and authors, which PR things do you dislike? For example, I’m not a fan of public speaking, although I make myself present PR workshops to get my name out there.

I also write PR articles, and the following is one from my Web site’s Articles page that presents an overview of author promotion. I hope you enjoy it! And thanks to Shelley for this opportunity! – Marcia ;-)

### **PR ISN’T A 4-LETTER WORD**

By Marcia James

Self-promotion isn’t for sissies. It can be expensive and time-consuming. There are many factors beyond budget and time constraints that play into an author’s decision concerning which PR options to try, including technological savvy (e.g., creating your own Web site), personality (e.g., too shy for public speaking and power-schmoozing), and whether the publisher is also providing promotional support. In addition, you need to decide if you’re going to target existing romance readers and/or try to “convert” new ones. Here are several options to consider, starting with the most traditional types of author promotion.

Readers can be found on message boards and email lists. And there are many Web sites that offer access to romance readers for a price. You can also purchase a list of readers groups from Pat Rouse and mail them your promotional items. Or you can buy an ad in *RT BOOKreviews*. But don’t overlook budget-saving options. For example, there are sites (e.g., *Coffee Time Romance*) that offer some free services, such as an online calendar for authors to post their book signings. And many publishers have an email loop for their authors to chat up readers, as well as post book blurbs and excerpts.

You can reach readers by cross-promoting with other authors. The simplest way is reciprocal links—authors posting each other’s URL links on their own sites. Another is guest-blogging, which is an easy, free way to introduce yourself to another author’s readers. There are also authors who interview other writers for articles, blogs, etc. For example, each month I interview a different author with “James” in his/her name for my “James Gang” Web site [page](#).

Creativity is part of a writer’s “toolbox”, and many are putting it to good use by inventing interesting ways to cross-promote. One such Cerridwen author is Paige Cuccaro, who has a popular *Writer’s Cave* page on her Web [site](#). She posts photos of other authors’ offices along with their URLs. Readers visit Paige’s site to see their favorite authors’ offices, then stay to explore the other authors’ photos and sites.

In addition to meeting readers and other writers, an author can forge relationships with booksellers and librarians through readings and book signings. Consider joining with several other authors to booksign at a store or do a panel discussion at a library. If you’re too shy to speak in front of groups, you might consider presenting an online workshop. And there are print and electronic publications that are always looking for articles from authors.

Targeting niche markets is a great way to reach interested romance readers and tempt those who normally avoid romance novels. Look at the different elements in your book to see which groups might be interested in it. For

example, if your hero drives a vintage car, there are groups of vintage car enthusiasts who might buy your book. If your heroine is a veterinarian, you can send a press release to the veterinarians' professional association. Library reference books, such as The Encyclopedia of Associations, offer the contact information on thousands of groups. You can also reach readers through your local media. Questions to consider when developing a press release include, Who is your audience? What is your angle? Also, it's important to use a cover letter to put the press release in context and suggest the next step to your media contact (e.g., an interview, coverage of an event or simply your availability as a subject matter expert). If you decide to send a folder-style press kit, consider including a cover letter, a business card, an author bio, a press release, the book's cover flat, a book excerpt, book reviews and copies of any previous media coverage. The press kit and its components should reflect your author brand (e.g., darker colors for a suspense author vs. brighter colors for a comedic author). And you should share your press kit with your editor and agent, so they'll know how you're promoting yourself.

Whichever PR options you choose, promote your author brand as well as your books. There are a number of good resources on branding, including articles on author Jenn Stark's Web [site](#). And it's never too early to create your brand or to develop your Web site, on paper at least. If you go to the national RWA's Web site page on member [sites](#), you can check out what others have done and note what you like and don't like about their sites. When it's time for you to create (or pay a Web designer to create) a Web site, you'll have noted your preferences on color, graphics, visuals, etc. Given the thousands of promotional options out there, try to find some that you enjoy. Life is too short to dread PR. Happy promoting!

*Note from Shelley: If you have any questions about promo just ask in the comments section. Marcia really is a whiz at promo so take advantage and ask lots of questions!*

### **87 comments to "Promo with Marcia James."**

1. Hi Marcia,  
Thanks for visiting me today. I thought I'd start the questions rolling.
  1. The 150+ file of promo ideas that you've collected and are giving away to authors who request it - can you tell us about a couple of your favorite ideas from this file?
  2. Apart from a website, what do you think is the most important thing an author can do for promo?Thanks! Shelley by [Shelley Munro](#)
2. Thanks for these great tips, Marcia. Very timely for me as I sold my debut book last month so need to start thinking about PR!!  
I'm off to check out all your links! by [Christina Phillips](#)
3. I'd love to take a peek at the 150+ file...  
by [Yvonne Eve Walus](#)
4. I love the writing part of this business, but I find the promo the hard part. I'm the person hidden in the back of the room behind the crowd. lol  
But I did step outside my own comfort zone this last month. I did my first ever workshop for the Canberra Writers' Festival. \*gulp\* Actually, as nervous as I was, it went off okay and I was thrilled with the interaction of the participants. Would I do it again tomorrow? Um, let me think about it for...oh, a few years? lol  
by [Alexis Fleming](#)
5. Alexis - good on you. Workshops can be a bit hard on the nerves.  
Marcia - quite a few of the visitors today will be from Downunder. Could you repeat your suggestions about how to approach promo if you don't live in the US? It's not always easy for authors in Aust/NZ and even the UK to do the face-to-face promo because we don't have the same opportunities as US authors have.  
by [Shelley Munro](#)
6. What a great blog, Shelley. I'm off to check out Marcia's website and her list.  
Pam by [Pam Champagne](#)
7. Promo has got to be the toughest obstacle for me. How much is enough? How much is too much? How much should an author spend on promo? I would love to see your 150+ list of promo ideas.  
by [Sarah McNeal](#)
8. Hi! It's not even 9 am here in Ohio, and I thought I'd get an early start on the blog — totally forgetting about the time difference! I should have gotten up much earlier. I see that my email box has a number of requests for my PR file, and I'll send it out to those requesters as soon as I respond to these nice comments and questions.  
Shelley — first, thank you again for asking me to guest-blog! And thanks for your very nice comments about me and my first book.

To answer your first question: I think the thing I like most about my file is the “insider information”. This file is a compilation of information passed along by other authors on my email loops—Romance Writers of America loops, Ellora’s Cave/Cerridwen Press loops—as well as by PR specialists in several promotion e-newsletters I receive. If someone has my file and hears about something new (like the social networking site Twitter or the author e-newsletter company, Vertical Response), she can just open my file, type the word(s) into the “Find” function in Microsoft WORD and go directly to that part of the file to see what other authors have said about it. I have author recommendations on companies that produce author PR materials, bookmarks, etc; people who do Web site design, details on PR options like banners and excerpt booklets, etc. There are file sections on blogs, markets for articles and paid ads, podcasts, conferences & conventions, review sites, contests for published authors, etc. The file is by no means comprehensive, but I drop information into it daily as I come across new ideas and recommendations. One area of the file that I wish was more detailed is the section on author promotion groups, like Writerspace and Author Island. I haven’t used or researched these sites, so I’d love to hear from other authors what they like or don’t like about these sites.

To answer your second question: I think the best thing an author can do besides a Web site is to cross-promote and co-promote with other authors. Doing so saves money and time, as well as creating a wonderful networking opportunity. For example, guest-blogging is a type of cross-promotion. Today I’m meeting Shelley’s blog readers, and I’m promoting her blog to my readers and on my email loops. We both bring something “to the table.” The co-promotion version of this is for several authors to band together on a multi-author blog. They can meet each other’s readers and possibly gain a new audience for their books. Other examples of cross-promotion include interviewing other authors for an article you’re writing and having them do the same for you and mentioning other authors in workshop presentations you do and having them return the favor. Co-promotion in articles would be if you co-authored an article with another author. Co-promotion in workshops would be if you created a presentation or panel discussion with other authors. There are many super creative ways to band with other authors to promote. Brenda Novak offers authors a great opportunity to promote themselves and do a good deed in her annual online diabetes auction, where hundreds of authors donate items and services. Brenda has also developed a Whodunit reader game with another author to promote their romantic suspense releases. Several other authors went in together to create a poster featuring their books, distributing it to libraries and bookstores. There’s really no end to the ways you can cross- and co-promote.

Boy, that’s a long post for so early in the morning! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

9. Hi, Christina! Congratulations on your debut book! Yes, it’s time to do some PR, but I want to mention that it’s never too early to think about promotion. I have an article titled “Promoting Yourself Before the Call” on the Articles page of my Web site. If aspiring authors do some research and make some decisions before they sell a manuscript, it can save a lot of stress after The Call.

Also, I’m a big supporter of promoting one’s author brand more than promoting a single book. That doesn’t mean I don’t think bookmarks and other things focused on a book vs. the author are bad; it just means I’d rather spend the majority of my PR budget getting my name out there and having readers visit my Web site, where they can learn more about my books. Either way, I love PR! Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

10. Hi, Yvonne! Thanks for stopping by! If you have requested the file through the “Contact Me” page of my Web site, I’ll have your email address and can email you the file as an attachment in just a few minutes. The file is up to something like 168 pages right now. I drop info into it each day as I come across new things and good tips.

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

11. Hey Marcia- great blog idea. I’m enjoying reading about your PR ideas. I love doing PR. I must admit that I spend way too much time on it some days. I do all of the usual online groups to promote but recently I joined Good Reads and I’ve found readers who I would never have connected with otherwise. I’ve had people from all over the world friend me and several who added my work to their to-be-read list.

Kissa Starling by [Kissa Starling](#)

12. Very timely blog for me, so thanks Shelley for inviting Marcia to your blog.

I’ve been wondering about the effectiveness of an author’s own Yahoo group - I’ve seen some that are used only for the author to post newsletters, others where members are encouraged to post but have no activity on them, some that so much activity I’ve had to go to special notices because I get fed up of the 50+ digests in my inbox every day just from that loop.

Same with Twitter and some of these other places - Myspace, Facebook, they seem to take up SO much time to keep active on when I want to/need to be writing. (plus I don’t ‘get’ most of these places - I mean do I really need to know what you’re doing every minute of the day?) How do you manage all that?

Oh, and I'm with Shelley - I'm not in the US, I'm in Canada - and Samhain and EC books aren't available up here in print, only ebooks. Any suggestions?

I have a ton more questions, but I'll just keep bugging you throughout the day.

by [Leah Braemel](#)

13. Hi, Alexis! Congratulations on stepping outside of your comfort zone!

I think it's a good idea to challenge oneself, but there are SO many ways to promote an author and a book that you shouldn't have to do things you hate just for PR. I think the perfect PR options are those that work with your budget, your schedule, your career (Are you a single title or category author? Is your book an e-book or a print book or both? How much PR assistance is your publisher giving you? etc.), and your personality. The last is important, since you don't want to burn out or make yourself sick doing things you dislike.

Some people do better interacting with readers online in chat rooms and on email loops. Others (like me) love in-person contact at book signings and conventions. Others just enjoy writing articles or sending out PR materials. What works best with your personality is something you probably won't give up in frustration or boredom.

Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

14. I would like a copy of the file of 150, too, please. Great blog. Too many good ideas here to comment on. It would take me an hour! Thank you for all your hard work. Liana Laverentz by [Liana Laverentz](#)

15. Hi, again, Shelley! ;-) The following is my answer from a different venue on how to promote an author/a book when the author is living outside of the U.S. How a book is distributed and how easily a potential reader can buy a book is a definite consideration in promoting worldwide. The following offers some options, but there are many more open to creative minds. – Marcia

My first book came out from Cerridwen Press—first as an e-book and then as a trade paperback. When a book is available as a download, they can be read by anyone in the world who wants an English-language novel.

Now, how do you reach those people around the world who read English and are not too technologically intimidated to buy an e-book? Obviously, countries like New Zealand, Australia, the British Isles, Canada and America are open to your books, and you can get your name and book release information out to author groups and reader loops in those countries. But what about English-speaking people in countries that get very little distribution of English-language books? These people are hungry for English-language books. And the ideal audience for e-books would be English-speaking, technologically literate young people – such as those who attend American Universities in countries other than America.

I've done some research into how to promote e-books to this “target audience”, but I haven't found a way—for example—to advertise in the student newspapers at these colleges. But it would be a great joint PR project for e-book authors to take on.

There are also author promotion sites, like Author Island and Writerspace, that can do some of the promotional work for you—if you have the budget for it. But while romance readers are voracious, instead of all authors trying for a piece of that romance reader pie, I think we should help “build the market” by turning readers who haven't tried romances into Happily Ever After addicts.

In that vein, one thing you might try is to identify elements in your books that might appeal to a niche audience. For example, since my books have Chinese Crested hairless dogs in them, I joined an international message board about “cresties” to chat with people who not only are great subject matter experts when I need detailed information on cresties, but are also interested in buying books that feature the breed.

You might have a hero who collects vintage cars, and there are groups of vintage car owners out there. Or maybe you have a heroine who is special events coordinator, and there is a professional association for those in that career. So you have to see what elements you can use from your stories to promote them to niche markets of people who might not currently be romance readers but who can be converted.

There are library reference books, like The Encyclopedia of Associations, that offer information (contact name, email address, etc) for every conceivable type of association, club, etc. And some of these reference books are available online through library Web sites. Most of these groups would be happy to hear from an author who has written a book of interest to their members. This does work better, however, for sweet-to-sensual books than for erotic romances, because the sensuality levels of the latter books might be beyond what certain groups are willing to promote to their members. I'm always open to hearing other ideas on how to get the world to order millions of e-books! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

16. Hi Marcia! This is actually a great post with divine timing...

I'm doing a workshop tomorrow for online promotion and you've brought up points that I know, but didn't think to discuss or mention. I guess it's just a case of even if you think they know it, there's more likely someone who doesn't. So tell all! LOL And yes! I'd love that 150 list. by [Diana Castilleja](#)

17. Awesome blog post!  
 What do you think about cross-genre authors promoting each other?  
 Would that be a waste of time?  
 What about sending an author a copy of your book and see if they'll be willing to exchange, then each make a comment about what they are reading on their blog? Not an actual review or pull quote, since I know some authors balk at that. by [Cassandra Curtis](#)
18. Hi, Pam! Thanks for stopping by!  
 -----  
 Hi, Sarah! Unfortunately, there is no formula to tell us how much time and money to spend on PR. However, there are LOTS of free PR options open to you—if you have the time. But you need to create a balance between your personal life and your writing life, as well as between your writing and your promotion. I'm a good example of someone who enjoys PR so much that I have to stop myself from spending all of my book writing time on PR. I learned there is no substitute for having good books available for your readers. You can bring thousands of people to your Web site through your promotional efforts, but you need to have a product waiting for them to buy. So this is what I recommend:  
 Get my PR file and look it over for things that appeal to you on a budget, time, and personal preference standpoint. Since the file is a WORD file and not a pdf, you can customize it—highlighting (with colored text) those things you'd like to try and adding notes afterwards as to how effective you think the PR option was. Make a note in the file as to which review sites gave you good reviews, which published author contests loved your books, etc. Make it a working file for you.  
 By the way, one way to track your PR efforts is to have a monthly Web site contest with an entry form that asks “Where did you hear about my Web site?” Authors more technologically literate than I am can track where their Web site visitors come from. That will give you at least an idea if some of your PR efforts are working.  
 Also, try to do a little PR every week vs. doing a huge PR push only when you have a new release. My file has a large section on blogs who are looking for guest-bloggers, so consider doing a virtual book tour on a series of blogs when you have a new book coming out. It takes time but is free — unless you give away a gift at each stop, which (of course) is a very popular guest-blogging trend. Best wishes! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
19. Hi, Kissa! You sound like a kindred PR spirit!  
 I'm a late-comer to social networking sites. I've joined Goodreads, but I haven't done a single thing yet on that site. ;-( A friend's daughter created a very basic Facebook page and MySpace page for me, but since I haven't “polished” them yet, I'm not promoting them or sending out “friend” requests. I think I also checked out Shelfari.  
 Since I just bought a tiny computer (an ASUS Eee PC) that has wireless capability, I might be able to get online more on trips and when I'm out running errands, and maybe then I will be better at “working” my social networking sites.  
 I think I have this info in my PR file, but author Tina LaVon has a list (in sections of 20-25 addresses at a time) of over 1,000 romance-friendly MySpace addresses, so you can go to her blog and get the list and send Friend requests out to them.  
 Obviously, if you have a MySpace page, etc. and you include the URL(s) in your email signature line, that's a good way of picking up new “friends”. Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
20. Great post! I wasn't able to connect to your site, Marcia, but I would be interested in the 150 promo file too. Some of my favorite promo items I've received from my favorite authors include sticky notes, notepads, bookmarks, and gift items (a journal with the author's contact info and a souvenir from the setting of the book). I also let readers know what I'm reading, and if I happen to love a particular book, I'll highly recommend it at the top of my blog entry.  
 I also need to know more about press releases. My first publisher sent me an example, but it was in Spanish, which I neither speak nor read! So I didn't dare send one out. And my 2nd publisher offered to send one out...for a fee. So all my promo so far has been online, word-of-mouth, and book signings. by [Molly Daniels](#)
21. Molly just reminded me - I forgot to answer what I like to receive. Bookmarks are ALWAYS welcome - my family is constantly looking for them, although some of the more erotic ones turn them off. And along the same vein, magnets of romance covers get taken off the fridge by my sons since I am in a houseful of men so they do not like to see their, um, competition on the fridge. I cannot say I have ever bought something via either a magnet or a bookmark, but I have bought books based on excerpt booklets I have received. by [Leah Braemel](#)
22. Shelfari is pretty but that's about it for me. Most of my friends are fellow authors and I don't think I've sold one thing due to that site. Facebook and Bebo haven't done much for me either.

Another thing that works for me is joining yahoo groups that are not writing groups. If I write a lesbian story I join lesbian yahoo groups. If I write a story about a cook I join recipe groups. I guess you get the picture. I don't join tons of them but try to include those people in my target audience.

I didn't know about Tina Lavon- thanks!

Kissa by [Kissa Starling](#)

23. Hi, Leah! Keep the questions coming!

I think when it comes to chatting on reader email loops and doing social networking sites, it comes down to your time and personality. Both things are HUGE time-drains. I don't enjoy them as much as other authors I know. If you don't enjoy them, then it will show.

There are authors like Lori Foster who have a very active reader loop. I have a list of readers who want announcement emails from me on such things as when I have a new contest or when a new book is coming out. Both things can be effective, although connecting with readers on the level Lori is doing sells a LOT of books.

Once thing I've noticed in recent years is how authors like Sherrilyn Kenyon create reader groups that are into a fictional world they've created vs. just having a chatty reader group made up of fans. If you write paranormal, you can find readers who will love to immerse themselves in your world, chat with each other, fantasize about who would play your characters if your books were ever made into movies, etc. This can work with other sub-genres of romance, too. Recently I watched a series of book videos on YouTube created by a fan of Johanna Lindsay's Mallory family historical romances.

This is a long way of saying again that there are lots of possibilities out there, no one person can do them all, and you need to pick those that work with your budget, schedule, and personality.

As for e-books, it will be a challenge to sell e-books anywhere until there is an affordable (cheaper than the Kindle and the Sony eReader) e-book reader. But the younger readers aren't as intimidated by e-books as older generations, so we have a growing pool of e-readers. And many erotic romance e-book readers will always prefer to buy their sexy books as a download over walking into a store and buying a book with a racy cover and title.

I think the best way to sell e-books is to locate niche markets for your books based on elements in those books. For example, a friend of mine has written a traditional (no sex) Regency for Cerridwen. She could check in The Encyclopedia of Associations for groups who make Regency costumes or go to historical fairs or conventions. Then she could email the contact people and ask them if they'd like to read her book and review it for their groups' newsletters. Almost every group has an e-newsletter or print newsletter.

Best wishes on promoting your e-books! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

24. He Marcia! I'm so glad to see you here. Wonderful information! It must have taken a while to gather it all. And it's so nice of you to share it with the rest of us. I just have to say thanks.

And a big thanks to Shelley for having you visit. by [Kaye Manro](#)

25. Hi, Liana! Thanks for stopping by!

If you would go through the "Contact Me" page on my Web site ([www.MarciaJames.net](http://www.MarciaJames.net)) and email me to request the file, I'll have your email address and can reply and attach the file to send it to you. Sorry for the extra work.

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

26. I can't get the link to Marcia's web site to work. Can one of you post the link again?

Kaye by [Kaye Manro](#)

27. What do you think about using free reads as a promotional tool?

And what are your suggestions for contests? A lot of what I've seen are people who travel from site to site for 'things' and never buy one book. Kissa by [Kissa Starling](#)

28. Never mind my request above. I see that Marcia already posted her web site in the previous post!

Thanks! by [Kaye Manro](#)

29. Thanks so much for this great info. I'm one of the pr challenged folks, so I'm trying to soak it all up. I'd love a copy of your promotional ideas so I'm off to request it on your website.

Elaine Cantrell by [Elaine Cantrell](#)

30. Hi, Diana! Best wishes on your PR workshop! I wish I could take it. I love finding out how others do PR.

A couple things you might want to mention in your workshop:

\* it's always a good idea to Google a tag line or slogan to make sure another author isn't already using it. Being unique counts for a lot in PR.

\* make it easy for readers to find your Web site. I'm always amazed at companies like Cerridwen who pick names that people can't spell or pronounce easily. It makes it difficult for a reader to type out the Web site's URL properly. So choosing a difficult to spell pen name can have ramifications.

\* Before locking in your domain name, run the Web site name by others to make sure there are no hidden connotations you've missed. For example, a new author I know was considering using the last name "Beard" in her pen name. There's already a "Beard" author, but the main problem was that she couldn't get the domain name she wanted, so she was thinking of using one with "beard romances" in the URL. Now the problem with that is that in the U.S., at least, a "beard" is a woman who hangs out with a gay man to make him appear straight. This author didn't know that definition of "beard" and how that gave an different meaning to "beard romances".

\* when choosing giveaway trinkets, consider ones that will go with your brand vs. just with a single release. That way you can buy them in a larger quantity and save money. For example, I write books that have kinky sex in them and have law enforcement protagonists. So I give away thumbcuff keychains. They have both the kinky connotation and the cop connotation.

By the way, Diana, to get the PR file, please send me an email as I mentioned in several earlier posts so I'll have your email address. Thanks! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

31. Hi, Cassandra! You might not get as many readers trying your books if you cross-promote with authors of different genres or sub-genres because some readers are very loyal to a specific type of book. But there are also plenty of readers who like variety in their reading. So I'd say, "Go for it!"

As for your second idea about exchanging books with other authors, I think some authors would enjoy that. The best thing to do is mention the idea on an authors' loop and see if you get any takers. I think that is better than emailing an author privately about the idea. That can put the author on the spot if they don't like the type of book you write, don't have time to read for pleasure, don't recommend books on their blog, etc. Tossing ideas out on author loops is a great way to come up with creative ways to cross- and co-promote.

Happy promoting! – Marcia (who is taking a short break to give my fingers a rest!) by [Marcia James](#)

32. It's not easy to promo, there are so many places to hit and some days you can't keep up. It does take a ton of time and you have to be creative to stand out from everybody else... by [Savannah Chase](#)

33. Thanks Marcia for all this great information. I too saw my first e-book release hit the e-shelves in June and am floundering in the pool of PR.

I'm heading over to your link right now to get your list!

I have done a bit of tracking hits on my website and my publisher is tracking PR as well and so far it looks like little traffic is generated by all those author/reader yahoo loops. I know I find myself deleting many of the 100s of emails those loops generate just to unclutter my in-box, I imagine I'm not alone.

There has to be a better way - I can't wait to get your information to find them! by [Debora Dennis](#)

34. Hi, Molly! I'm sorry you couldn't get on my Web site. I'm not sure why that would happen. If you send me your email address to [Marcia@MarciaJames.net](mailto:Marcia@MarciaJames.net), I'll send you the PR file once I'm caught up answering all of these posts!

It sounds like you're doing lots of good PR. That's great! Here's a couple hints about press releases:

\* If possible, keep press releases down to one page. Think of them as resumes to a job interview. A press release should give enough info to make the recipient want to interview you or put the info from the press release into a newspaper, etc.

\* Come up with a hook for your press release, just like you do for the opening of your books. For example, in my first book, I have a Chinese Crested dog who is a Drug Enforcement Agency drug-sniffing dog. No one suspects this tiny dog is "undercover". I wrote a short press release for Romantic Times BOOKreviews magazine (RT) that was a combination press release for my book and a 4- or 5-paragraph article on "mini crime-fighters" — dogs of breeds smaller than your basic German Shepherds and Dobermans who work for law enforcement. RT printed the entire press release/article.

\* Tie your press releases to things like holidays or trends. For example, many authors send out press releases in conjunction with Valentine's Day. I know vampire romance authors who send out press releases around Halloween. If your book ties to a trend (such as more and more people using online dating services — and your book having a hero and heroine who meet through an online service), then create a press release with that "angle" and suggest that the reporter consider having a sidebar to an article covering the trend about novels like yours that feature the trend.

\* One of the most important thing to remember about press releases is that it should do more than just present the facts about your book, your upcoming booksigning, etc. It should include WHY the information would be important to the recipient and his/her readership/listening or viewing audience, etc. For example, you can start off the press release with a remarkable statistic, such as "More than 50% of all paperback novels sold in the U.S. are romances." RWA's national Web site has a lot of great statistics on their press pages that you can use.

\* And one thing that most authors forget to do is tell the recipient in a straightforward manner in the cover email or letter WHY his readership or audience will give a d@mn about your press release. Your press release is one of

many they get every day. You are lucky if they read the first paragraph of your press release before tossing it away. So I always have a short cover email or letter that says “Hi. Here’s a press release that your readers will be interested in because…” And then I tell them why. For example, something like 1 in 4 people want to write a novel, so wouldn’t the readership be interested in meeting an author at a local booksigning and asking her questions about how she got published?

\* I also recommend having an online press kit, which includes your press releases. I have one at <http://www.MarciaJames.net>, if you want to check it out. Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

35. Hi Marcia -I really enjoyed reading your blog. I am currently promoting two books and really enjoy the opportunity to get creative with my promotions. You offer some really terrific ideas here. thanks!

Chelle Cordero author of Bartlett’s Rule & Forgotten by [Chelle Cordero](#)

36. Leah — and others — thanks for letting me know what you like to get from authors. That’s funny about the males in your family not wanting to see their “competition”. I keep all of my romance magnets on the file cabinets in my office.

As for excerpt booklets, they are cited quite often by readers as some of their favorite things. There really is no substitute for showing a reader a sample of your writing. Since they can be expensive to print up or time-consuming to make yourself, I opted for two alternatives: postcards that include my book blurb on the back and tri-fold brochures that have both my book blurb and an excerpt. I get them from Vistaprint.

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

37. Kissa — You wrote: “Another thing that works for me is joining yahoo groups that are not writing groups. If I write a lesbian story I join lesbian yahoo groups. If I write a story about a cook I join recipe groups. I guess you get the picture. I don’t join tons of them but try to include those people in my target audience.” That’s a great way to “think outside the heart-shaped box”!

Groups like you mentioned are not only target audiences but they can also be great resources for information — subject matter specialists. Smart PR! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

38. Hi, Kaye! Thanks for stopping by!

Here’s my Web site URL: <http://www.MarciaJames.net>. I hope you can get onto the site.

For those who can’t get onto my site for some reason, please email me at [Marcia@MarciaJames.net](mailto:Marcia@MarciaJames.net) and give me your email address so I can send you my PR file.

I use my PR file to bring traffic to my Web site, but I also have other author PR resources on my site — such as my PR articles and examples of such things as an online press kit and a way to cross-promote by doing a monthly author interview on my James Gang page.

Of course, for those who just enjoy risque things, I have a Sex advice column “written” by a fictional sex therapist heroine of mine. – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

39. Kissa — I know several authors who have had a lot of success offering a free read — usually a short story that ties into the series the author is writing or a world she’s created. I wouldn’t give away an entire book, though, unless it’s a free download for a contest winner or a book for a raffle basket.

I like to hold contests, in part because I personally enjoy entering contests and I enjoy shopping for the contest prizes! I think they are good for bringing traffic to your site. I don’t like contests that are difficult to enter, so I usually hold one monthly on my site that asks a simple question and gives a link to the answer. If the answer is something that can only be learned by reading your book blurb or book excerpt, that might be enough to get the contest entrants intrigued with your story.

By the way, occasionally a group of sweepstakes entrants will “discover” my site, and I’ll get hundreds of contest entries that month. That doesn’t bother me since these people read, too, and they are having to read my book blurb or whatever to answer the contest question correctly. Maybe I can covert a few of them into romance readers! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

40. Thanks, Elaine! I promise once I get caught up on these blog comments that I’ll start sending out my PR file to those who have emailed me about it!

41. Thanks for stopping by, Savannah! Yes, PR can be challenging. I wish so much of the PR task wasn’t on the author’s shoulders. Then we would have more time to write!

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

42. My biggest problem is time. What can I do on a regular basis to keep the promo alive that won’t suck up what little time I have left in a day? I blog regularly, guest blog or interview once a month, and lurk on Yahoo groups.

The groups, for me anyway, is a big time sink. I can’t keep up with all those emails, so I lurk.

But I’d like to manage at least one activity that is not so time invasive and still keeps my name in circulation. Any suggestions for a daily activity that won’t make me a stranger to my dog and husband?

PS. The only suggestion for promo items is to avoid candy. Once the wrapper is off, your promo is gone—and then so is the candy. by [Maria](#)

43. Deborah — that’s wonderful that your publisher is helping you track your PR efforts!

My biggest problem with reader loops is that I work out of my home and can’t seem to block out all of the millions of things I need to do professionally and personally when I’m on those loops chatting about someone’s birthday or whether Pepsi or Coke is better. I want to be off working down my To Do List, and I feel like I can’t relax enough just to chat about cyber champagne and virtual cups of coffee. So that means that readers’ groups don’t work with my personality. That’s why I concentrate more on things I enjoy:

- \* booksignings
- \* presenting PR workshops
- \* writing a PR column for RWA’s Kiss of Death chapter newsletter
- \* networking at conferences
- \* cross- and co-promoting

There’s too many PR options for anyone to do everything. So you need to pick and choose to stay sane. That means authors can’t feel guilty about the things they aren’t doing and/or don’t want to do.

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

44. Hi, Maria! Thanks for the kind words about Smokey, my Chinese Crested hairless dog logo! And I agree about the candy. Plus I think in this day and age, so people are leery about anything edible coming from a stranger. I wish I could suggest one thing that you could do daily. It really depends on a number of factors. Obviously, I’m all for free PR that doesn’t take a lot of time. But you also have to factor in not only what you enjoy but what works with your author brand and your books.

For example, my books feature a Chinese Crested dog, so at first glance, you would think I have a lot of pet-friendly places I could promote my books. But my books also feature kinky sex, so I can’t set up a booksigning at a local pet store and sell books set in a sex club.

You need to look for elements in your books that allow you to do some niche marketing. For example, I have a friend who writes Scottish historicals; she could get a booth at the local Scottish festival. If an author has a book featuring a wedding planner heroine, she could sell it at a bridal fair.

I’d have to know more about your books to make specific suggestions. But I think guest-blogging, interviews, etc., are great ways to promote without having a daily deadline. (I’m allergic to deadlines, which is why I don’t have my own blog!)

By the way, I know many authors who get their families involved in their PR efforts to give them a vested interest in your PR push. Some have their kids help them make book videos or MySpace pages or excerpt booklets. I know of one author who brings her husband to conferences, and he wears t-shirts with her book cover on them and lines like “I’m sleeping with a famous romance author”.

Again, sharing the load by doing co-promotional things with other authors, like RT ads and multi-author blogs, is a great way to get your name out there. Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

45. “Also, I’m a big supporter of promoting one’s author brand”

Did Marcia explain what branding means, because I just can’t quite figure out this term.

Thanks by [Jeanne Barrack](#)

46. I love the comment about the candy, and it was so true. If not for that tip I could see me buying candy for promo- thanks!

About the yahoo groups- they are hard to keep up with. I suggest that if you use these keep it down to 2-3 that you can read and respond to. No one likes it when authors drop by to promo only.

Marcia could you tell us some of the places you use to order promotional items? The only one I’ve tried to date is Vista Print.

And how important do you think it is to maintain a website?

Kissa (again) by [Kissa Starling](#)

47. Hi, Jeanne! I’m not an expert on author branding, but I do have some resources in my PR file, including author Jenn Stark, who has articles about author branding on her Web site: <http://www.JennStark.com>.

An author brand is your promise to your readers: What type of story (core story) are you writing? What genre and sub-genre? What themes? What is special about your author voice?

I write “hot, humorous romances”, and that is my tag line. A reader who has read one of my books (such as my first comic romantic suspense) will expect a book without a lot of angst when she picks up my second book. She will also expect sex and maybe a Chinese Crested dog.

I don't write about really bloody serial killers or couples who go through hell before they can be together. That's not my voice. So my author brand reinforces that. For example, I have my dog logo on all of my PR items, as well as on my Web site. My Web site has a humorous tone down to the visuals and the fonts. The sex therapist heroine of my hopefully upcoming comic mystery series (the manuscript is at Avon, Berkley and Dorchester) writes a tongue-in-cheek sex advice column on my site. I hand out thumbcuff keychains at conferences, and they always get a smile. At booksignings, I have a stuffed dog that sings "Puppy Love" on my table along with a dog dish filled with candy kisses. ;-)

An author of urban fantasy or dark paranormals would have a VERY different look to their Web sites, as would an historical author or an inspirational author.

Jayne Ann Krentz (JAK) is a good example of an author who has a basic core story whether she is writing her JAK romantic mysteries, her Amanda Quick historicals or her Jayne Castle futuristic romances.

While it can be a pain to promote more than one pen name, I think it's a good idea to have a different pen name for very different genres or sub-genres. Nora Roberts' romantic suspense books might not be totally different from her J.D. Robb futuristic police procedurals, but by having those two types of genres separate, she's won cross-over readers who might not have picked up her books otherwise—particularly the men who try her J.D. Robb books and then give in and try her romantic suspense.

Once you identify your brand, you can buy PR items to promote it in much larger quantities than you can buy them to promote a single book that has a limited shelf life. For example, I choose to buy my thumbcuffs in orders of 1,200 cuffs at a time (I've already given away something like 6,000 of them!) vs. coming up with a cute giveaway just to promote my first book, AT HER COMMAND.

If you have difficulty coming up with your author brand after reading Jenn Stark's articles on it, ask friends and family who have read your books to give you several adjectives to describe your books, such as suspenseful, funny, scary, exciting, etc. Then look for trends among the feedback to see what impressions readers are getting from your books. That can help you narrow down your books' core story and themes.

Hope that helps! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

48. Hi, Kissa! Thanks for all of your questions!

I agree that readers don't like "drive-by" promoting, when authors comment on a loop just to promote their books. However, many loops have special days — I know Ellora's Cave has "list mom" days — where a call goes out for book excerpts and prizes. I have participated in some of those, since it's a one-day commitment. But other than that, I don't do a lot of reader loop promotion because it's not for me.

I have a long list of companies like Vistaprint in my PR file (which I'm going to start sending out to requesters any minute!). I also have companies who make book videos, banners, bookmarks, Web sites, etc. They were gathered from recommendations by other authors.

A Web site is an author's #1 tool. It's where you should spend your money if you have a limited budget. (And who doesn't?) I wish I was technologically literate enough to maintain my own Web site, but I'm not — so I pay my Webmistress (Karen McCullough, a Cerridwen author who is also a Web designer) to update my site each month.

Before I had a Web site, I went to RWA's national site to access the list of member authors' Web sites — and then I spent a fun afternoon cruising through the sites, noting on a pad of paper those things I liked and didn't like, so that I could come to Karen with a strong idea of what I wanted on my Web site. I knew what visuals I wanted and paid a local caricaturist to do the visuals, which I sent to Karen. I knew I wanted the sex advice column to be on a blog-like part of my site that I could post to without having Karen do the update. I made a lot of these decisions "on paper" before asking Karen to make the site. I saved money that way.

I'm currently designing a new Home page for my site and hope to have it up in late August. (I'll be out-of-town for two weeks between now and mid-August.) My first book has been out long enough that it no longer needs to be on my Home page. And it's time to start promoting the Berkley charity anthology I'll be part of in 2009.

I try to give my Web site visitors some new content regularly — a new contest, new sex advice posts, a new James Gang interview, a new article, an updated schedule, etc. I certainly could do more, but I try not to beat myself up for not doing every conceivable PR option out there. – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

49. I read what you said about pen names and it brings up yet another question for me. I write erotic romance but I also write sweet romance with no sex at all.

I don't really want to use more than one pen name but of course will if it becomes necessary. Do you think that is enough of a difference to warrant another name? Kissa by [Kissa Starling](#)

50. Kissa — Yes, I definitely think there is enough difference between erotic romance and sweet romances to warrant two pen names. Readers of sweet romances may be offended if they pick up one of your erotic romances

and don't get the book they expected. And erotic romance readers love their sex, so they might feel cheated if they bought one of your sweet romances.

I'm sorry, but your brand is a promise to your readers, and you essentially have two brands. That doesn't mean you have to hide your erotic books from your sweet romance readers and your sweet books from your erotic readers. You can have a Web site that features pages for both books. But you want your readers to know that this pen name means this type of books and that pen name means that type of books.

Sometimes you can change just a small part of your pen name so they are similar. For example, I could write erotic romances as Marcia James and write sweet romances as MA James.

Those two sub-genres of books will offer different PR opportunities, too. Best wishes on promoting both!

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

51. Thanks Marcia, that's a great idea that I hadn't thought of - switching my name around.

Kissa by [Kissa Starling](#)

52. I like that title. I like both genres also. I can see where readers could get confused. I've set up a back-up pen name just in case. Might just use that one.

So glad to have been exposed to your writing, and advice, through this blog! Kissa by [Kissa Starling](#)

53. Kissa — as someone who writes pretty risqué books, I've been on the receiving end of some snubs and worse because of the content of my first book. So I wouldn't want you to get hassled by someone who picked up an erotic romance of yours expecting to get a Debbie Macomber-like sweet read. I personally like both types of books, but not everyone does.

I was asked to contribute a short story to a 2009 anthology which will raise money for a no-kill animal shelter. Lori Foster, the driving force behind these charity anthologies (the current one is THE POWER OF LOVE and the money goes to a battered women's shelter) told me the stories have to be PG-rated. She knew my author brand was for R-rated books. I enjoyed writing the short story about a Chinese Crested stray who reunites a pair of ex-lovers. There's one kiss at the end of the story and no sex. Berkley chose my idea for the title of the upcoming anthology: TAILS OF LOVE. – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

54. Marcia, if it's okay, I would like to ask a specific question about promoting my book, Touch Of Fire. It is a futuristic fantasy set on a post-apocalyptic Earth. There is a group of people who have "evolved" into Elementals, mages who can wield one of the four Elements: earth, water, air and fire.

So how do I promo a book about a society that no longer remembers where they came from? Do I work the Elemental angle? In their society, the Elementals are considered witches, but that would be a misnomer in our society. Do I use the post-apocalyptic aspect?

My lead character can summon fire and read auras. I'm thinking my audience would be people who enjoy the metaphysical and the supernatural. Is that where I should be focusing? Thanks for any help!

PS As a staunch animal rights advocate, I will be the first to buy any book that will raise money for no-kill shelters. Good on you, Marcia. by [Maria](#)

55. Thanks, Kissa! Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

56. Hi, Maria! I think you have good instincts about your target audience. You might want to see if there is something like an organization of metaphysical retailers, for example, and see if you can advertise through their customer newsletters. There are also conventions for almost everything, so you could probably have a booth at a metaphysical convention — or just do some power schmoozing-type networking at one.

I have to admit that I don't know a lot about your target audience, but I know that some authors do VERY well going to s/f and fantasy conventions to promote their books. Many of those conventions would love it if you wore a costume you designed to represent a heroine of yours. And the annual Romantic Times convention in the U.S. is also a great venue for costumes.

I have friends who write paranormals, and they have temporary tattoos made up of symbols, etc from their books. You can do press release tie-ins to supernatural holidays. (Google supernatural holidays and metaphysical holidays to find more than Halloween!) You can start a blog about supernatural/metaphysical events and things — have guest-bloggers from those realms.

Ellora's Cave has an imprint called The Lotus Circle that is about everything from tarot cards to crystals. You could get some of their authors to do cross- and co-promotion with you.

You could run contests that have prizes from the four elements. Personally I like promoting the elements angle over anything like witches that lots of authors have already done. These are all off the top of my head, but I think you have VERY interesting aspects of your book to use as hooks. I hope that's helpful!

– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

57. I'd love to have your tips on promotion. I blog, use twitter, am on eons, and myspace as well as crimespace but I know I could use all of this more effectively. Christine by *Christine Duncan*
58. Christine — I am in awe of anyone who can do all of those things regularly. I am learning how to do MySpace by being part of a joint Ohio Romance Authors MySpace page (<http://www.myspace.com/romanceauthors>).  
The social networking sites seem to be especially good for paranormal promotion, since there is a younger crowd on a lot of those sites and that's a sub-genre popular with young as well as older readers. Although if you ever hear anyone say "I can't read vampire romances", chances are the person is over 35.  
Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
59. Just a quick clarification on my PR file. It is a Microsoft WORD file, not a pdf, because I drop things into it daily. It is a 150+ page file, not a 150 PR Tips file. I've gotten requests for it, and I wanted to make sure people knew what they were getting. I don't have it on my Web site since I update it daily. And being a WORD file, it can be customized to fit your needs. – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
60. Marcia, you rock, woman!  
Great ideas! You've given me some terrific jumping off points.  
Thank you! by [Maria](#)
61. Thanks, Maria! I appreciate your stopping by. Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
62. Hi Marcia! The info you shared here was great! I would definitely send authors that are just starting with promo stuff to read this.  
To answer your question for readers, I love getting signed bookmarks, book plates, and cover flats. I find that bookmarks are the best because they end up starting conversations when I remove them from my books.  
by *Dani Keith*
63. Great Blog, Marcia! :) by [Michelle M Pillow](#)
64. Hi, Dani! Thanks for your input! I think bookmarks will always be very popular. Plus, bookstores prefer them over postcards because they can fit in their acrylic holders of the store counters.  
I offer signed bookplates through my Web site. With the cost of mailing things these days, I ask that readers send a self-addressed stamped envelope, then I mail back the bookplate.  
I also sign the postcards I use for PR. It makes them more personal and collectible.  
– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
65. Thanks, Michelle, for stopping by! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
66. *I offer signed bookplates through my Web site. With the cost of mailing things these days, I ask that readers send a self-addressed stamped envelope, then I mail back the bookplate.*  
Hmm, that causes problems for people outside the US, then you have to get into the whole International Coupon thing which I understand are hard to get in US post offices, or so my crit partner tells me.  
And thanks, Deborah, for the info about the Yahoo loops and whether they result in sales. It'll help me coordinate my time in the near future. by [Leah Braemel](#)
67. Leah — I haven't had anyone outside the U.S. request bookplates, but I've had quite a number of people from outside the U.S. win my keychains and my contests. The latest is from Finland. But I just have to deal with mailing things directly and not trying to use the International Coupon thing. That does cause a problem.  
– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
68. As a writer of ebooks at present, I seldom feel bookmarks work for me as a promoting tool. But I love the idea of the temporary tats!  
And thanks for explaining the branding. Really helped! by [Jeanne Barrack](#)
69. Hi Marcia, enjoyed the excerpt for your story. As for promo items, my favorites are pens, sticky notes, ebook downloads and gift certificates, ( bookstores, Bath & Body, Lush, & Sephora). by *Cathy M*
70. Jeanne — I like postcards for e-book promotion because you can fit a longer book blurb on the back of them. I use them for the goody bags at writer and reader conferences. Of course, there are email loops and such that can reach e-book readers, so you wouldn't have to have printed materials, if you didn't want them.  
By the way, Pat Rouse sells a list of book clubs that you can send PR materials to, but again, it can be costly. When the charity anthology comes out next year, the authors (nine other authors and me) might go in together to do postcards and a mailing to the Pat Rouse list (which costs \$75, I believe, before the cost of the postcards and the postage). I think a big effort like this is a good time to co-promote with other authors.  
I have Pat Rouse's contact info in my PR file.– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
71. Cathy — thanks for your input. ;-) I like getting pens and things like notepads and sticky notes, too. Basically I love all sorts of author PR goodies. Thanks for your kind words about my story! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)

72. A quick thanks to those who visited my Web site and entered my contest! If you indicated you would like to join my email announcement loop (a great way to learn about future contests!), you should be getting an invite to join at any moment.  
I'll keep checking back to make sure I haven't missed any emails. Thanks so much for making this guest-blog/PR discussion a whirlwind day! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
73. Great Blog.  
I knew nothing about promotion when I started writing, but I started with the basics.  
I joined chat groups, I blog and guest blog, I take advantage of review sites that offer free or low cost advertising. I have a website, newsletter and blog. I have done some advertising in RT magazine.  
Slowly, but surely, I'm getting my name out there.  
Promo items like bookmarks and postcards are affordable and they do get your name out there.  
I'm looking for ways to expand my promotion so I'll be emailing for your PR File. :-)  
by [N.J. Walters](#)
74. Hi, N.J.! It sounds like you are really doing a strong PR push! One thing I need to learn more about is the free advertising some of the author PR sites offer. I like anything that is free!  
I think an important part of successful promotion and branding is having a backlist that readers can get. That's something e-book authors have over print authors. We can still get royalties from e-books long after a print book would be out of print. Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
75. Marcia - wow! Thanks for all the great answers on promo.  
I've found it makes a difference if you actually enjoy doing something. My hint for anyone starting out is to try quite a few things and keep up the ones you enjoy. You won't always know if your promo results in sales, but if you enjoy doing the actual promo then it's a good thing! by [Shelley Munro](#)
76. Thanks, Shelley, for the opportunity to guest-blog!  
I think of PR as a game. For example, with my press releases, I'm trying to get past the goalies (e.g., the newspaper reporters) to reach the audience. If I get a press release in the paper, for example, or get an interview, then I've scored.  
If an author tries to enjoy PR, like you said, it makes it much less of a chore.  
– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
77. Marcia - I'm sure you'll get some more questions. I'm soaking up the information. I'm sure everyone else is too. There's a lot to read! by [Shelley Munro](#)
78. Hmmm, having never received any promos I have no clue what I prefer. I do like when I write an author and get a real response back and not a form letter (I love you Shelley!). I would say I'd prefer a trinket or autograph, but the excerpt booklets would probably be more effective in view of generating sales. I think I'd go gaga if I ever got to meet one of my favorite authors in person at a book signing (Coming to the US anytime soon Shelley?) but since most of the ones I like live overseas or across the country I'll just have to dream. I'd personally like to see promos with the cover models posing in loincloths for us to take a photo with (A tuxedo would work as well, but not as much fun.). But I don't know how realistic that dream is, probably more likely to get to meet an author- LOL! I do like your ideas of cross promotion Marcia in sending an email or press release to a group that's associated/mentioned with the book. Great stuff and good guest blogging.  
Have a wonderful day! by [Amy W.](#)
79. I have Marcia's file, and it's amazing! Thanks for sharing so much Marcia!! by [Amy Ruttan](#)
80. Hi, Amy! Thanks for your post! Where do you live? There are romance authors in almost every town in the U.S. You can go to the Romance Writers of America Web site and click on "About RWA" and then click on "Chapter Listings" to find an RWA chapter in your neck of the woods. Most chapters have Web sites with lists of their member authors, so you can locate nearby authors that way.  
Have you ever been to a Romantic Times (RT) conference? Plenty of hunky guys in scanty outfits. The next RT conference will be in Orlando, FL in April 2009, I believe.  
Take care! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
81. Thanks to Amy Ruttan, too! So many Amys on one blog!  
Happy promoting! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
82. Thanks Shelley and Marcia. This has been the most interesting blog (and comments) I think I've ever read.  
As a reader, I've received pens, magnets, bookmarks, cover flats, free reads, etc. My favorite items are free reads and bookmarks.  
I have purchased many books because I read an excerpt on a blog or on someone's website. So another favorite promo is the website or blog.

- The last promo I like is word of mouth. I like to try new authors on the recommendation of other readers and my friends, those that like to read the same books I read. by *Janet H*
83. Hi Marcia Fabulous post! I think my favourite way of cross-promoting it to have authors guest blog with me. I've been doing this all during 2008 to celebrate a writing milestone and authors from all genres have guested, which brings in readers from all over. Liz by [Liz](#)
84. WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT:  
My husband picked the winner for me.  
Congratulations to Diana Castilleja who is the winner of Marcia's download, At Her Command. You're in for a real treat. by [Shelley Munro](#)
85. Hi, Janet! Thanks for your input! I think positive word-of-mouth is gold for authors, which is why so many of us will give away free books and downloads in contests. Many print authors try to give away back list books so the recipient will be eager to buy their new release, but also hope the readers will tell other readers. I know I love to chat about books when I get together with other book-loving friends. – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
86. Liz — Guest-blogging is a favorite of mine, too. Especially when I get to talk about PR!  
Thanks for stopping by! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
87. Yay, Diana! I sent you a private email asking you which of the five e-book formats you'd like the download in. I think the pdf format is the most popular. As soon as I hear back from you about the format, I'll email the book to you. I hope you love it!  
Thanks again to everyone for commenting and having such a great PR conversation!  
– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
88. I'll keep an eye out for new posts in case anyone else has some PR questions or observations. Have a great day!  
– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
89. Thank you Marcia! I was totally surprised to see I'd won. I just never expect to. It was a bright spot for me this week, that's for sure. :) Have a great weekend! by [Diana Castilleja](#)
90. Thanks, Diana! Just email me at [Marcia@MarciaJames.net](mailto:Marcia@MarciaJames.net) to let me know what format of the e-book you'd like, and I'll send it right away! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
91. Thank you very much for all of the wonderful insight and information here. I am still very new to marketing and promoting and it is so helpful when others are willing to share their treasure trove of information. Thanks!  
~Colleen by *Colleen Love*
92. Hi, Colleen Love! What a wonderful name for a romance author! I appreciate your kind words. I am trying to get caught up with all of the requests I've received for my PR file. I think it is so smart and proactive of people to get the file and try to check out the PR options available, even if they haven't yet received The Call. Authors have a lot of pressure these days to do their own promotion. Have a great day!– Marcia by [Marcia James](#)
93. Thank you so much! It is my actual name. Talk about pre-destined! lol I did request the file from you as well and look forward to seeing it. This is sad to say, but, I have two books out and a third in edits and I am still just kind of standing still when it comes to promoting them. The third book is the charm, right? It's time for me to get busy!!Hope you have a great day too!~Colleen by *Colleen Love*
94. Best wishes on promoting your books! I'll be sending your PR file out today. I hope you find it helpful! Take care and have a good weekend! – Marcia by [Marcia James](#)