

## How Can You Get Published If You Don't Have a Platform?

Response by Michael Hyatt, Chief Executive Officer, Thomas Nelson, Inc.

I received an email yesterday from a young lady who wanted to write a book. She complained that neither publishers nor agents would give her a chance. According to her, their main objection was that she didn't have *a platform*. "How can I get a platform," she wrote, "if no one will publish me?"

Frankly, I get this question a lot. The answer is simpler than you think: *build one*. It's never been more possible. For the first time in history, perhaps, you don't need a lot of money or even the right connections. What you need is something to say, a fair amount of determination, and persistence. But it is possible.

By "platform" most publishers mean the ability to influence an audience that is large enough to make publishing a book less of a risk. Just a few years ago, this meant you had to have a television or radio show or write a regular magazine or newspaper column. This typically required a lot of money or important contacts.

But today, by starting a blog and making use of tools social networking tools like [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), you can build a big platform with little more than the investment of your creativity and time. I'm not saying it is easy, but I am saying it is within reach. (By the way, I consider my blog to be my "homebase" and [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Plaxo](#), [LinkedIn](#), etc., to be "outposts.")

Therefore, if you are thinking about writing a book, and if you don't already have a large media platform, I would strongly urge you to start blogging. Why? I can think of four reasons:

1. **It will hone your writing skills.** The truth is, that if you can't muster the discipline to blog consistently, you won't have the discipline to write a book either. In addition, blogging enables you to "find your voice," one post at a time. The more you write, the better you will get. There's no substitute for practice—and lots of it.
2. **It will provide near-instant feedback.** The problem with writing a book is that it is a long process. You won't get much feedback along the way. And you won't really discover if you have hit the bulls eye, so to speak, until *after* you have invested a great deal of blood, sweat, and tears. With blogging, you get almost instant feedback, particularly if you encourage comments. This will give you a tremendous boost to stay with the process and keep writing.
3. **It will enable you to build a [tribe](#).** If your writing is good, and if it connects with people, then they will begin to tell others. Whether they mention your blog in casual conversation or [Twitter](#) a link to a post that was meaningful to them, you will start to attract readers. This will be slow at first, but you must persevere. Like almost everything in life, it's difficult to overcome inertia and get the flywheel turning. But once you do, the growth will come more quickly.
4. **It will eventually get an agent or publisher's attention.** Once you are getting 500–1,000 [unique visitors](#) a day, you suddenly have a platform that can be leveraged into a

book deal. In order to track this, I would strongly urge to sign up with [Google Analytics](#). This will provide you with a verifiable way to prove to an agent or a publisher that you have the traffic you claim to have.

Obviously, you can blame agents, publishers, the industry, or even the economy for why you can't seem to get published. Or, you can roll up your sleeves and get to work.