



THE WRITING ENTREPRENEUR

MARCH, 2017

A Business Newsletter for Writing Entrepreneurs

In This Edition:

- 5 Productivity Apps for Writers (including a link to the task list for *Completing The Writer's To-Do List*, Book 3 of the Business Books for Writers series.)
- Online Articles And Blog Post Links
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5 Productivity Apps for Writers



Indie publishers have a lot of tasks to track! Writing tasks. Editing tasks. Networking tasks. Marketing tasks. Financial tasks. So how do you keep on top of everything? That is the subject of the third book in the Business Books for Writers Series. Luckily, technology and the internet give us tools to help log, track and manage our task lists. Here are five productivity apps to check out:

[Focuser](#)

Focuser has some nice features. You can set a timer that forces you to determine how much time you will spend on an activity and then tells you when you've exceeded your time limit. This is a useful feature within a productivity app as it tends to keep you on track.

If you go longer than an hour, you can set a reminder that notifies you through email to tell you that you are exceeding your estimated time. This is an excellent way to get better at determining how long you typically take to complete a particular task such as writing your blog.

Focuster offers the following benefits:

1. API integration with Zapier that allows you to integrate features you like into the app with other programs such as Evernote or Dropbox. Many of these are pre-set up for you.
2. Daily, weekly and multi- calendar views which would be more helpful if you could set date ranges for projects
3. The option to set up tasks within projects
4. There is a free trial for 14 days. After that, you pay \$9.99/month for the Basic plan. The Professional plan costs \$19.99/month for features such as scheduling up to 2 weeks in advance.

Trello

An affordable plan for writers on a tight budget is Trello. This task management and productivity app is widely known and has been around since 2011. Trello is a much more visual way to organize projects and tasks. Trello draws heavily from Agile project management concepts of Kaban. Kaban is an approach that started in manufacturing facilities in Japan for just-in-time delivery, yet works for any team environment. Kaban works best for teams, and Trello has incorporated some nice group features into the product.

Trello offers:

1. Team options that are useful if you manage a group of writers for such activities such as putting together book bundles or if you manage an editorial team,
2. Team communication and collaboration features allow team members to coordinate activities, eliminating duplicate efforts.
3. Trello is free for individuals. The next plan, Pro is \$9.99/month, and there is an enterprise version. You need to contact the company for pricing.

Redbooth

A competitor to Trello is Redbooth as it is another team-oriented program. I like this app although visually it is not as attractive some of the other apps. However, I can do without a sexy interface if I can save money!

What is more impressive than the savings are of great features included in the app:

1. You create Workspaces, which are projects and add tasks to those projects.
2. You can set a date range for tasks, although the calendar only shows the due date, not the range, so you can't use it as a Gantt chart.
3. You can attach files to a project task. I tend to use Scrivener for organizing files for projects, but it is nice if you have daily tasks to be able to add a Word doc to a to-do list item.
4. The free version of Redbooth allows you to have up to ten team members and five

projects. The Professional version is just \$5/month and lets you have unlimited projects, sub-projects and you can integrate it with the apps, Evernote and Box.

The one drawback to Redbooth is you have to assign your tasks to yourself. This requirement goes back to the teamwork design. If you have five people on a team, you assign tasks to everyone. When you are working alone, it is a bit of a pain to have to assign every project to yourself!

Nozbe

My favorite task and project management tool is Nozbe. Before Nozbe I did all my spreadsheets in Excel and Excel is an excellent tool to use. It is the tool I used and discuss in *Meeting the Writer's Deadline*, book 2 of the Business Books For Writers. I still use spreadsheets for projects that I want to keep private. However, for my book projects, I don't worry if someone sees my task list.

Nozbe is a very simple interface to learn. Within a few minutes of opening the product, you are creating projects and task lists. You can set due dates, although not calendar ranges within the program, which is unfortunate. You cannot create a Gantt chart *within* Nozbe. I would like to see Nozbe add this feature! However, because Nozbe has been around for a while, it interfaces with several other apps. You can integrate Nozbe with Google Calendars to set a date range and then integrate Google Calendars with Ganttify. Okay, it is a kludgy workaround, but hopefully, Nozbe will come out with an integrated Gantt chart at some point. (I still have to create my Gantt chart in Excel, so I'm not losing that much.)

Other features with Nozbe include:

1. A team function, but you aren't forced to use it as you are with Redbooth.
2. You can add categories which I find useful. I use Nozbe for my to-do list and Evernote for filing my information documents, etc. By using the same category tags in both programs, it is easy to find information. Speaking of Evernote, Nozbe integrates with Evernote and Dropbox. You can set up an efficient filing and tracking system using these products.
3. Nozbe has been around for ten years and has a large, devoted community that shares ideas and templates. (As I build up my Templates for writers, I'll be sharing these too!)
4. Nozbe offers a free plan with up to 5 projects. A Pro plan for \$8 per month if paid annually and a business plan for \$80/month billed annually for ten members

BookPlanner

I just discovered a new app just for writers: BookPlanner, a to-do list and project management system! If you are new to managing your book projects and have a visceral fear of spreadsheets, then this may well be the productivity tool that captures your writing

entrepreneurial heart.

One note: you cannot use book planner for all your tasks. Financial tasks, home projects, family trip tasks, etc. cannot be logged here. It is strictly for book projects. That is both good and bad.

The great thing about BookPlanner is that included in service is a guided task list for creating a book project. Except for your writing tasks. Many authors don't have writing tasks as they don't write to an outline. Others do. It makes sense not to include these items since you can add tasks to get around this limitation. Me, I love to check off the chapters I've completed, so I always include my chapters in my project to do list.

BookPlanner includes a Gantt chart, which is a visual way of seeing how you are doing in finishing a task by its due date.

There are no free trials for BookPlanner. The app costs \$9.99/month or \$99.99 a year. If you have no experience setting up projects and tasks, this app will teach you exactly what tasks to include in your book project to-do lists. Later, if you want to save money or if you get addicted to setting up projects for all your to-do lists, then consider Nozbe. For now, I'm using both Nozbe and BookPlanner!

Learn more about Nozbe and BookPlanner at my blog post, "[Productivity Apps Keep Writers Organized](#)."

As a bonus, I have made the [Book Checklist](#) I made for Completing the Writer's To-Do List available for all subscribed Writing Entrepreneurs! Click on the link and let me know if you have any ideas for improving the list. I'll give you credit in next month's newsletter!

I like Nozbe and BookPlanner so much I am an affiliate of these two products. If you click the links and decide to buy either one, I would get a small commission for the referral. However, choose the app that best fits your needs.



Online Articles And Blog Post Links From March 2017

A summary of online articles and blog posts of interest to writing entrepreneurs:

Marketing:

- [How to Write the Perfect Business Blog](#)
- [7 Mobile Trends Every Small Business Should Follow This Year](#)

- [What Marketers Need to Know About Facebook Carousel Ads](#)
- [8 Reasons Facebook Will Beat All Other digital Marketing Channels This Year](#)

Entrepreneurship:

- [The Role of Gender in Entrepreneurship \(Infographic\)](#)

Finances:

- [Skype's Niklas Zennström backs London fintech startup Cleo](#)



Paying Markets (Not all Pro Rates)

I get an email from [Publishing and other forms of Insanity](#) every month and thought I would pass it along. If you know a great paying market list, let me know and I'm happy to add it!

Upcoming Calendar Events



[Writers Conference to train Black authorpreneurs how to save time and money in self-publishing](#), May 20, 9 -5 p.m.

[IBPA Publishing University](#), Portland, OR, April 7-8

[Non-fiction Writers Conference](#), Online, May 3-5

[Indie Author Fringe: Selling Your Book](#), Online, June 3

[Indie Author Day](#), Libraries across the nation & online,

October 14, Early-bird registration April 2017.

[The Independent Authors Conference](#), Philadelphia, PA, November 3-5:

Know A Great Conference To Recommend? Want To Contribute To The Writing Entrepreneur?

If you have a good tip, a conference to list on calendar events or want to recommend a great blog post just send it to [Tonya](#). She will include your suggestion along with an acknowledgment and link to your site!

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The Writing Entrepreneur Newsletter is produced by [Magnolia Lane Press](#), publisher of the [Business Books for Writers](#) series.

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