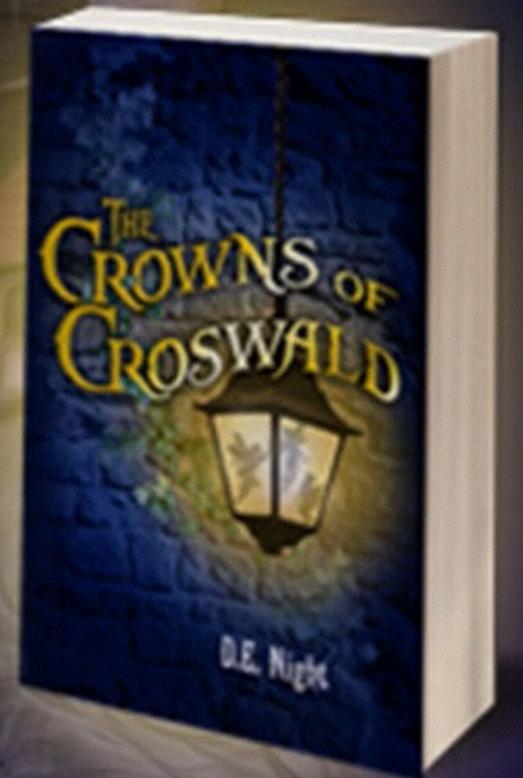


THE CROWNS OF CROSWALD



TOPLINE MARKETING PROPOSAL
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OVERVIEW

This document is an initial strategic overview and topline creative exploration for a multi-level marketing campaign in support of *The Crowns of Croswald*, a new YA novel from author D. E. Night about a young woman named Ivy who discovers her true magical and royal lineage.

Intended to promote both the first novel and the series as a whole, the campaign will combine best practices in the marketing of young adult fiction with Hollywood-style production values in order to discover, engage, grow and retain a wide audience for many years to come.

More in-depth materials will follow upon approval of the budget, timeline, and review of the revised novel.

Goals

- Make *Crowns* the must-read book of 2017 for tween girls, generating significant book sales (in the U.S. initially)
- Build a dedicated and active fanbase, leveraging the unique attributes of the property with stunning visuals and empowering messaging
- Position *Crowns* as a notable franchise, providing a solid platform for book sequels and eventual film production

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC

In its current form, *The Crowns of Croswald* will most likely appeal largely to preteen girls; however, the ongoing revisions that seek to consolidate storylines, characters and increase the adventurous aspects of the story will help broaden the audience beyond this demographic to reach a wider audience.

Initial marketing efforts will be aimed primarily at the core audience with a few tactics designed to reach secondary and tertiary audiences.

After launch, and as the book gains traction, we will widen our efforts to reach a broader demographic.

Core Audience: Preteen and Tween Girl readers (6-11)

Female-driven story

Princesses

Magic and adventure

Intrigue and mystery

An enchanting new world to discover filled with magical creatures and items

The mystery of the dress and necklace

Primary Audience: Book World

Reviewers

Journalists, Bloggers (+ mom bloggers)

Inventory buyers

Independent bookstores

Influencers

Educators

Secondary: Preteen and Tween Boy readers

Magic and adventure

The trolls and other creatures

Intrigue and mystery

Cool gadgets and things to discover (e.g. the scaldrons)

Tertiary: Over 18 Male & Female readers

Strong female lead

Magic and adventure

A story about family

Mystery and intrigue

COMPETITIVE SURVEY

There are dozens – if not hundreds – of competitive titles currently in the marketplace. A complete survey of them all is impossible, but the following information about a select few titles and their respective marketing campaigns might be useful to review.

Tiffany Aching (Discworld series) by Terry Pratchett

Series of fantasy novels that frequently feature Tiffany Aching, a character learning to become a witch.

Marketing Overview

- Official site and social channels:
 - Official Website
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
- Book trailer for “I Shall Wear Midnight”: <https://www.facebook.com/pratchett/videos>
- Social content includes inspirational quotes from the books as well as the author
- The social channels feature illustrations as well as UGC fan art

A Court of Mist and Fury (May 2016, book 2 of 3) by Sarah J. Maas (bestselling romantic fantasy series)

Feyre survived Amarantha’s clutches to return to the Spring Court—but at a steep cost. Though she now has the powers of the High Fae, her heart remains human, and it can’t forget the terrible deeds she performed to save Tamlin’s people.

Marketing Overview

- Official site and social accounts: (too many?)
 - Official site: includes extras such as a world map, jewelry for sale, pronunciation guides
 - Author’s Twitter
 - Pinterest: builds the world with original, existing, and fan content
 - Instagram: the author gets personal, sharing about her husband, her writing process and more
 - Facebook
 - Author’s blog
 - The World of Sarah J. Mass Tumblr
- Supported by a book trailer and official video introduction by the author created for Waterstones, a prominent European bookseller
- Ms. Maas is very active in giving interviews to bloggers and at live events around the world
- Book playlists that directly inspired the writing of the books can be found on the author’s Spotify page
- Merchandise and fan contest partnership was executed with litographs.com

COMPETITIVE SURVEY

The Queen of the Tearling by Erika Johansen (trilogy)

Magic, adventure, mystery, and romance combine in this epic debut in which a young princess must reclaim her dead mother's throne, learn to be a ruler—and defeat the Red Queen. Soon to be a movie starring Emma Watson.

Marketing Overview

- Official series [Tumblr](#)
- The Tumblr includes pages of inspirational social assets
- Very active [Facebook](#) page with 14k+ likes

What the Spell by Brittany Geragotelis (trilogy)

A teenage witch juggles popularity and romance while keeping her powers a secret.

Marketing Overview

- Live action [Book trailer](#)
- Live action [Exclusive scene](#)
- Hired Emmy-winning makeup artist influencers to create "[magical makeover](#)" videos for YouTube
- Posted her first book on Wattpad which was so popular it caught the attention of the press; Simon & Schuster awarded her a three-book deal in a bidding war between four major publishing houses

The Magicians by Lev Grossman

Considered a successful Harry Potter knockoff, it tells the story of Quentin Coldwater, a young man who discovers and attends a college of magic in New York. Now a show on Syfy.

Marketing Overview

- There was a bidding war for the novel by film producers
- The winning publisher ordered a re-write it to focus more on characters
- Grossman had Perry Gripp, a musician who created the theme for Buffy the Vampire Slayer, to write a [promotional song](#) for the novel
- Later, Grossman hosted a single cover contest for Gripp's song
- For subsequent books in the series, Grossman put out a call for videos of readers to put into his book trailers; the final "[crowdsourced reading](#)" included such authors as Gregory Maguire, Peter Straub, Terry Brooks, Charles Stross, Patrick Rothfuss, Neil Gaiman, Erin Morgenstern and more.

MARKETING A YOUNG ADULT NOVEL

Launching a successful YA franchise requires a careful and highly specific strategy. While no book or series is exactly alike, the following best practices are a common thread running through almost every successful YA product launch.

Build Relationships with Readers and Bloggers

It is paramount for the writer to build a relationship with both her readers and with book bloggers / reviewers. Today with the Internet and social media, younger – and even older – readers want to feel a sense of ownership in something they particularly enjoy. Because of this, opening a window into the writing process and the persona of the author is a smart way to engage them long before the book is commercially available. Furthermore, fans of YA now expect to have a direct relationship with their favorite authors.

The author's online presence must be more about the author and her inspiration than book sales. Potential readers don't want to feel "sold to" – they want to feel engaged, excited, and have a sense of ownership. They must also not be talked down to in any way, shape or form.

Start early, and bring potential fans into the process to get them excited long before the book is published. This means establishing a presence and getting readers excited not only about the book by teasing it with social art and excerpts, but also getting the reader excited about the author herself.

Platforms to consider:

- Facebook (might be becoming less essential)
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Goodreads, Netgalley (the Teens and YA category is their biggest), Amazon, Barnes & Noble

MARKETING A YOUNG ADULT NOVEL

Know Your “Hook” and Stick With It

It’s critical to hone in on the marketing message. Our campaign will be defined around this message, which will be used consistently across all platforms throughout the campaign cycle.

Create an Abundance of Content

Social audiences are insatiable for content of all types. All audiences, and especially younger ones, are constantly looking for new things to share and talk about on their favorite platform. Our task is to enable these brand ambassadors to articulate their love. The activity, reach and support of these fans can unlock support in thousands of others. It’s imperative to create a wide variety of content that targets all of our potential demographics seeded consistently across platforms.

Smart campaigns encourage fans to create their own content - take existing content and make it their own, or create fully imagined art. We should encourage user generated content creation (UGC) and foster co-creation, especially post-release when we can leverage new fans to share their excitement with people who haven’t yet encountered the book.

Create a Trailer

It’s become increasingly common to launch a book with a trailer. For a self-published, young adult novel, a well crafted trailer will be highly effective in creating awareness and interest. We strongly recommend the creation of an atmospheric and engaging trailer that uses motion graphics, animation, live action or a combination thereof to showcase *The Crowns of Crowwald* in a way that is fine-tuned to the core demographic of preteen girls. (Reference: AvatarLabs just created an [animated trailer](#) for Audible’s *The Adventures of Tom Stranger*.)

MARKETING A YOUNG ADULT NOVEL

Build a Relationship with Independent Bookstores

For the self-published author, building relationships with independent bookstores is important; a tour of such stores can be key in reaching the audience and selling books. These tours might include signings, readings, contests, giveaways, and more. These events are designed to not only entice readers but to educate booksellers about your product so that they'll recommend it.

It's worth noting that younger readers tend to read physical hard copies of books rather than digital versions on their phones, tablets or computers.

Responding to Negative Comments

The Internet is filled with trolls (a very different breed from those in Crowland) and people who leave nasty comments across the social space. People are entitled to their opinions and negative reviews of books, like any other product, are common and expected. However, the author must not respond to negative criticism. It must all be taken in stride and left alone. Responding to negative criticism sparks further negative comments and creates an antagonistic relationship between the author and her readers.

POSITIONING STATEMENT

Secrets abound in a world where power is magic and only royals have both. Through mysterious stones placed in crowns they are gifted with at the age of 16, only royals are allowed to wield magical powers, while the common citizens of Croswald are kept at a distance. When the feared Great Queen lands in Ravenshollow for an unexpected visit, a young woman with a natural gift for magic is about to discover her secret past and the shocking destiny that beckons.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

Even with the proposed revisions, initial marketing efforts through launch should focus primarily on the core audience of preteen girls. Once that audience is established and excited, we can leverage word of mouth to amplify awareness to a wider demographic.

The campaign for *The Crowns of Croswald* should:

- Tease unique characters, themes and setting
- Create visual-first digital assets that are beautiful and shareable
- Create a dynamic franchise website and a robust social campaign
- Target select press, influencers, independent bookstores and book fairs for promotion

TIMELINE

This overview is meant for discussion and will be refined and expanded upon in the coming rounds based on your feedback and additional campaign elements.

