

■ Author's Corner

German-born Susan Finlay joined Las Cruces Writers in 2021. She wanted to meet other local authors and become part of the writing community. A self-published author, she published her 15th novel, *Gold and Gunslingers*, in December 2021. Although related to our popular Tangled Roots series, the new release is the first in a spinoff series called Tangled Roots II. Her books in both series are dual-timeline novels, with half set in modern times and half set in the past.

Susan has another series-- all with a mystery and with time travel. The books are *The Outsider, the Bavarian Woods, Project Chameleon, Crisscross, and Cambre Noir*. Not letting any grass grow under her feet, Finlay is working on a YA fantasy novel set in Germany.

She loves reading a well-written novel because the words become a movie in your head. She says you get to feel what the characters are feeling or visit many exciting places in the story. You are learning, experiencing new things, and perhaps even empathizing with people you didn't previously understand.

Marketing Tips

Focusing on your existing content is essential. Marketers today understand the need to produce large volumes of content to build a traffic base. Writers often focus on creating new content, overlooking the value of their existing assets. Here is a pro marketing tip: if you want to keep up with today's competitive markets, it's important to use your current content to its fullest potential.

For example, you can identify your most popular content and use these insights to inform future content you create, update old content with new data, visuals, or perspectives then republish, and repurpose all content as an intro, graphic, video, slide deck, etc. You can also turn a series of blog posts into an e-book guide or report.

Prioritizing authenticity should always be considered. Consumers know you have an agenda-driven motive. You want to sell your books.

Writing Tips

To be a better writer, you need to be direct and clear, while putting your own stamp on your writing. Follow these writing tips to improve your style. 1) Be direct in your writing, do not use filler words or unnecessary adverbs or prepositional phrases. 2) Choose your words wisely, there are many ways to write a sentence, and there are different words you can use to convey the same idea. 3) Short sentences are more powerful than long sentences, stories lose steam with wordiness. Avoid trying to pack too much into a line. 4) Write short paragraphs. Keep your paragraphs short and manageable. Each one should consist of sentences that support the same idea. Short paragraphs are easier to digest. Short paragraphs create a more visually appealing layout on the page. 5) Always use the active voice. Using the active voice and adhere to the verb object and sentence structure. It's the most direct path to making your point. With the active voice, the subject is doing something,

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