The Busy Writer's Book of Checklists

Checklist 17 – Setting up a Website or Blog

Tasks and Decisions	Your Assessment		
The following checklist will not show you how to create a website. It is just intended to get you thinking about what you want to achieve, and how you will go about getting it.	Done	Learn More	Out-source
What 'look' do you want your website to have? (A fun place to visit? Information about your books and author talks? Pages from which schools can download worksheets to go with your books?)			
What do you want to have on your website or blog? (Do you want to use WordPress and have a combination of static pages and a blog? Do you want just a few pages that showcase you and your books, which you will rarely have to update? Do you want to make regular blog posts to attract readers and involve them in discussions?)			
Make a list of pages you want on your site and/or post categories you want on your blog. (Browse other writers' blogs to see how they organize their posts.)			
How will you create your website/blog? (Do you want to do it yourself? Outsource the job to someone?)			

If you want to do it yourself...

What platform will you use? (E.g. WordPress? Blogger? Website creation software? An online site provided by your web host? You might like to browse the Internet for options before you decide.)			
If you are using WordPress, will you host it on the WordPress site, or host it yourself? (using a web host such as Hostgator, for example)			
If you are going to host it yourself, which theme will you use? (Many web hots will have cPanel, which allows you to install a WordPress blog in a couple of clicks. WordPress will come with a default theme. You can use this, or search for another one you like better. Just do a search for 'WordPress themes'.) Weaver II is free, and a nice theme with plenty of options for customization.			
Do you want to upload a personalized header graphic for your site? If so, how will you create this?			
Do you need to outsource header graphics or buy software to help you create it?			
Do you need help with anything else? (Have an IT-savvy family member or friend handy if you struggle with technological issues.)			

If you want to outsource it...

Create a list of providers who can give you what you want. (Ask other writers or do an Internet search, using terms like 'Website creation' or 'who can set up a blog?' Make sure you compare prices.			
Establish a realistic budget for your website or blog and don't go over it. (Remember that you can quickly and easily create a free blog via either Blogger or WordPress.)			
If the person who sets up your blog doesn't do header graphics, find someone who can do this as well.			

General Maintenance

Plan and write the content of the pages you want on your website.			
Plan and write the first few blog posts.			
Establish a regular routine for adding posts to your blog or content to your website.			
Other Aspects of Website/Blog Creation to be Covered:			