# ORGANIC MARKETING FOR AUTHORS:

HOW TO SELL YOURSELF AND YOUR BOOK



Topic one: Why You Should Listen to Me Topic two: Real Life Examples: Online Topic three: Real Life Examples: In Person Topic four: Quick Recap Topic five: Questions

From bookmarks and bumper stickers to social media and podcasting, author Bob McGough will show you how to grow your brand and your platform in traditional and nontraditional ways.

# WHY SHOULD I LISTEN TO BOB?

BECAUSE HE IS **USING PLANT IMAGERY AS A BAD VISUAL PUN FOR** ORGANIC MARKETING.





Dragons, Mermaids, Minotaurs, Oh My! panel at Dragon Con 2023. Bob seated beside Sherrilyn Kenyon.

### Jokes Aside (For The Moment)

- I'm going to be incredibly transparent with you, giving actual real-life examples drawn from my career.
- I have been/will be traditional published as well as somewhat successfully self publishing.
- I have done all this without paying for ads.
- Feel free to ask questions.

# REAL LIFE EXAMPLES: ONLINE



### Atlanta Comic Con Was Rad!

### YOUR NEWSLETTER IS YOUR BEST MARKETING DEVICE.

- Costs nothing/very little.
- You have total control.
- Make sure you have a written email list signup on your table at events.
- I promise, you are interesting enough for an email list
- Don't be spammy.
- Only email folks who actively have signed up for your email list.
- I have 750ish subscribers, and average a +40% open rate.

### INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY THAT HIGHLIGHTS THE FEEL OF MY BOOKS







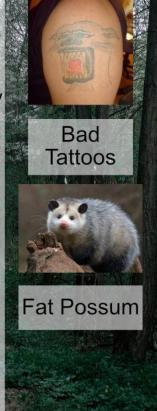
### How To Cosplay as Howard Marsh

(as of book 5)

1. You need to rock a mullet. Natural, or wig based.

 Marsh wears only the finest in thrift store Hawaiian shirts. Sleeves are fully optional, and not encouraged.

3. Marsh wouldn't be caught dead in anything but a pair of ragged jorts, all the better to run from the cops. The fringe feels good on the knees.



Bonus

Points

This is a very visually based post, which catches the eye. It also features a possum (which people love), is a little bit silly, and really captures the feel of my books, which will catch some interest.

### NO ONE IS GOING TO COSPLAY AS A REDNECK WIZARD...





### **BRINGING VALUE TO THE** COMMUNITY, THAT DRIVES TRAFFIC

Tales by Bol Tales by Bob > Fans Of Urban Fantasy!

Urban Fantasy Novels Set In Each State: 1st Five.

If you can't wait for the future posts then the full list is on my site, talesbybob.com/lists



In this specific post I mixed myself, with a pair of very popular trad authors, and a self published author who I am friends with, who is known in this Facebook group. It takes you back to my site, where I have more lists. (Pictured below)



### Great Urban Fantasy Books That...



### ... Have A Necromancer Protagonist

Misty Evans - The Accidental Reaper Series - <u>https://amzn.to/3jmZrT8</u>

- · Hailey Edwards The Beginners Guide to Necromancy https://amzn.to/3Vdrima
- Jonathan L Howard Joahnnes Cabal <u>https://amzn.to/3YDS3TI</u> N.E. Conneely - Kelsey Pine: Urban Necromancer - https://amzn.to/3HTTCgB
- Stephen Blackmore Eric Carter https://amzn.to/3F
- Lish McBride Necromancer https://amzn.to/3FLgYW3
- Laurell K. Hamilton Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter https://amzn.to/3PJevgi
- Max Gladstone Craft Sequence https://amzn.to/3PHr05>
- Darin Kennedy The April Sullivan Chronicles https://amzn.to/3hlgpLk
- Rin Chupeco The Bone Witch https://amzn.to/3PIcNWr

See a blog post with descriptions HERE.

### ...Feature Magic Tattoos

- Luanne Bennett Kate Bishop https://amzn.to/3Vem75i
- Jocelynn Drake The Asylum Tales <u>https://amzn.to/3YKshwX</u>
- Rachel Rawlings A Touch of Ink <u>https://amzn.to/3jtgsLq</u>
- Rachel Rener Gilded Blood https://amzn.to/3BVUVk2
- David Bussell, M.V. Scott Uncanny Ink https://amzn.to/3POPaLQ

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👩 r/Fantasy · Posted by u/talesbybob 2 months ago

With the launch of book 5 in my redneck wizard series, the rest of the series is free/on sale for the next 4 days!

#### Deals

383

The Fifth book in my 'rural' urban fantasy series is out today! **Walking the Darkness Down** is the next book in the Jubal County Saga, which follows the shenanigans of a drug-addled wizard in rural Alabama. Ever unwilling, Marsh is constantly getting roped in to solve the various occult mysteries that crop up in Jubal County.

Book one, **Bringing Home the Rain**, sees Marsh at his lowest. Over the course of this book he ventures out of his storage shed home to find out just what is causing the strange weather south of town. He then is called on to investigate a missing persons case involving the mother of a man who once burned down a church.

Book two, **The Depth of the Water**, has Marsh caught up in yet more mystical mishaps. The first case has him trying to find a girl who went hunting a god...and may have found it. He is then roped into trying to solve just what is tormenting a young boy with a connection to Marsh's family.

Book three, **Feet in the Fire**, finds Marsh involved with possibly his two most dangerous cases yet. In the first, the appearance of a strange purple car hints at a nefarious new player in the County. The second features the return of a figure from Marsh's past, intent on bringing ruin to his family.

In the fourth book, **Praying the Day's Not Poison**, Marsh is caught up in the drama of a small town football game. Then, trying to tie up loose ends, he wanders into the swamps of Jubal County...and into the path of old foes.

Book 5, **Walking the Darkness Down** Marsh hears two words he never thought to encounter together: sex ghost. There isn't enough stolen wine in Jubal County to drag him into such a mess...or is there?

(Warning: These books contain much cursing and foul language, as befits a tale told by a drug addled redneck wizard.)

"Jim Butcher meets Bill Faulkner" – Amazon Reviewer

### LINK TO SERIES.

### MY FIFTH BOOK LAUNCH POST ON R/FANTASY (REDDIT)

This required that I be an active member of the r/Fantasy community. As in someone actively taking part in conversations, and not just spamming my books.

- It generated scores of comments
- Over 380 upvotes

 $\square$ 

### Types of Comments

- Requests for audiobook
- Comments from past readers
- Comments asking about the setting

□ 135 Comments → Share ····



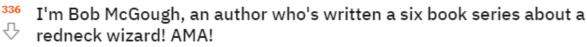


## INTERVIEWS AND GUEST APPEARANCES

THERE ARE ALWAYS PODCASTS AND YOUTUBE SHOWS LOOKING FOR GUESTS. JUST REACH OUT AND ASK...THE WORST THEY WILL SAY IS NO.

THERE ARE ALSO GROUPS, LIKE R/PODCASTGUESTEXCHANGE THAT ARE PLACES WHERE FOLKS GO TO FIND GUESTS, OR OFFER THEMSELVES UP AS GUESTS.

MANY OF THESE WON'T GIVE YOU A TON OF EXPOSURE. BUT EVEN THOSE ARE GREAT PRACTICE, BUILD CONFIDENCE, AND YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT WILL COME FROM THEM. r/IAmA · Posted by u/talesbybob 4 months ago



Hey! I'm Bob McGough, the author of the Jubal County Saga, an Urban Fantasy series about a redneck wizard with a crippling meth addiction. The books are set in backwoods Alabama, based loosely on the area I am from (an hour south of Montgomery roughly). Over the course of the series my protagonist slowly starts to piece his life back together, learn how to do magic properly, and may even one day move out of the storage shed he calls home, all while solving a bunch of rural occult mysteries!

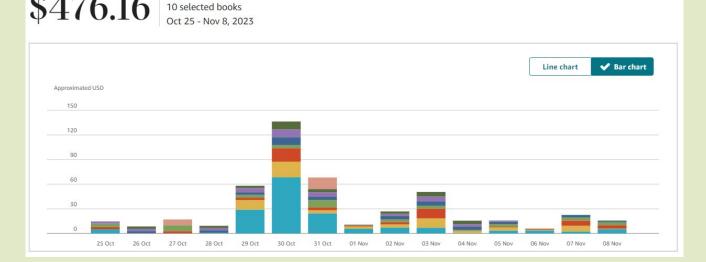
You can check out the series here: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09CC7KKM8

Beyond my books I also design silly little one sheet <u>rpgs</u>, run a small <u>non-profit</u> dedicated to supporting art and culture in the Montgomery area, and do some <u>podcasting</u>.

Here is my verification: https://www.reddit.com/r/talesbybob/comments/17j6qim/iama\_verification/

 $\bigcirc$  115 Comments  $\nearrow$  Share  $\bigcirc$  Save …

Approximated Royalties



### **REDDIT IAMA POST**

The IAMA (I am a) subreddit is a place where you can go to post something interesting about you, and folks ask questions.

- It generated 115 comments
- 336 upvotes (likes)

Δ

- 382.25 dollars in sales over the following week.
- Led to a screenwriter reaching out.

"you'll understand when you're older"

# i am older and i understand absolutely nothing



## MEMES

PEOPLE, GENERALLY DON'T LIKE METH. OR REDNECKS. THEY ESPECIALLY DON'T LIKE THE COMBINATION OF THE TWO.

**PEOPLE DO LIKE POSSUMS.** 

MY BOOKS HAVE A POSSUM.

THUS: I SHARE POSSUM MEMES.

- THEY MAKE ME HAPPY.
- THEY MAKE OTHERS HAPPY.
- THEY SOFTEN A 'HARSH' TOPIC.
- FOLKS LOVE TO SHARE MEMES.

# REAL LIFE EXAMPLES: IN PERSON



Dragon Con 2023 Panel Appearances: Friday 10-12:00: Book Signing at Booth 3201/3203 in the

Vendor Hall Friday 5:30: Dragons, Mermaids, Minotaurs, Oh My! (Panelist)

Friday 7:00: Podcasting for Authors (Moderator)

Saturday 10-12:00: Book Signing at Booth 3201/3203 in the Vendor Hall

Saturday 2:30: AI and ChatGPT, The Impact on Content Creators (Panelist)

Saturday 4:00: Postcards from the Expedition Live Play (Panelist)

Sunday 10-12:00: Book Signing at Booth 3201/3203 in the Vendor Hall



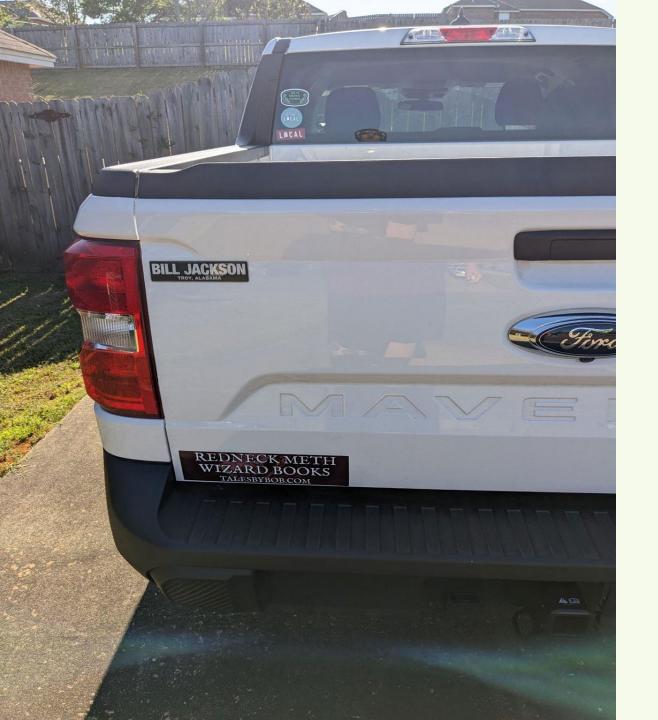
### CONVENTION PANELIST – WORKSHOP PRESENTER

I do a ton of panels at nerdy conventions across the southeast.

- They humanize you.
- They give you credibility as an expert.
- Folks will 'follow you home.'

Workshops are similar, except:

- They offer even more credibility.
- You get paid.



## PASSIVE ADVERTISING

I DON'T KNOW IF THIS HAS GOTTEN ME MANY SALES OR READS. BUT I DO KNOW THAT THERE IS ZERO CHANCE OF ME REACHING FOLKS ON THE RIDE TO AND FROM WORK WITHOUT THIS.

I ALSO WILL PLACE STICKERS IN OTHER SPACES THAT ALLOW IT. THEY MAY NEVER GET NOTICED, BUT UNLESS I AM GOING TO STAND IN THAT PLACE FOREVER, I FIGURE THERE IS AT LEAST A TINY CHANCE TO GET NOTICED THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE OTHERWISE.

### SUBTLE PROMOTION AT OTHER EVENTS

I do a lot of events that aren't book focused, usually through my non-profit. These are spaces where folks see I am bringing value to the community.

That doesn't mean that I can't have a book off to one side. It's not the focus, and I don't bring it up usually, as that's not the reason I am in these spaces. But if someone asks, I will tell them about my books.



## GET WEIRD WITH IT!



I DRESSED UP AS HOWARD MARSH AND STOOD ON THE STREET CORNER IN DOWNTOWN MONTGOMERY, COMPLETE WITH SIGN AND STUFFED POSSUM.

- I GOT A GUN BRANDISHED AT ME.
- I HAD SEVERAL PEOPLE HONK.
- A FEW TOOK PICTURES.
- FOLKS TALKED ABOUT IT ON REDDIT.
- A MONTH LATER A GUY RAN UP TO ME AT AN EVENT AND TOLD ME HOW HE BOUGHT ALL MY BOOKS BECAUSE HE SAW ME.





### Bob McGough makes supernatural Alabama tales ring true

Shannon Heupel USA TODAY NETWORK

It's said that authors should write what they know, and Montgomery's Bob McGough knows a lot about rednecks, the supernatural and, probably most importantly, Ala-

"I hate reading books that are set in the South by people who have never lived here," McGough said. "It doesn't ring true." McGough grew up in rural Alabama near Honoraville. Though his works delve into ur-ban fantasy and horror, the locations and people in his stories have a strong sense of

"I hope people from Alabama who read it feel like they've been seen," McGough said. hope it gives a more realistic insight into pic that have really struggied with drug is leased as an audio book in May. what life here is like."

McGough said he was raised around a lot of "unlose" individuals. He has turned them of the syste, he kind of works on titing some ad character. Howard Marsi, a redincek wiard from south Alabama with a cripplang math addiction.

There's been more than a low that 1 just, the second more a foreign through downtown what it would be that guy Molegogh sud. Montgomery, Marsh is from McGough's sud. The smaller wig, "McGough sud. The series "The Jubal County Saga" - based always wears cutoff jean shorts and a Hawai series the subar county baga - based anways wears cutof year anotts and s frawar-heavily on Crenshaw County, Alabama - ian shirt. I put those on and I carry a sandwhich has six parts: "Bringing Home the Rain"
"The Depth of the Water"

• "Feet in the Fire" · "Praying the Day's Not Poison" • "Walking the Darkness Down" · "Calling the Devil Partner" "The reason I write about drug addiction

sues, and a lot of those people are not going to have happy endings," McGough said. "I'm See MCGOUGH, Page 3D

Montgomery author Bob McGough with his collection of books from his "The Jubal County Saga" series, which features a redneck wizard and is set in south Alabama. PROVIDED BY BOB MCGOUGH

beth addiction. There's been more than a few that 1 just . One of them is occasionally dressing like with the mant thought man, if anyone was a . Marsh and walking through downtown at the mark the second secon

Books." I go downtown and stand on street corners. Folks may have seen me and wondered what the hell was going on." In addition to their individual books, "The

Jubal County Saga" has also been released in a two-part collection: "The Demons That Haunt Him" and "Burning Wisdom." "Bringing Home the Rain" was also re-

### said

story writing was when he was around

couldn't tell you." McGough kept writing stories all the

ing his undergraduate years, he said. "I was too busy," he said. He started taking writing again seriously in 2012, while he was finishing his master's degree at Troy University.

"For the next few years, I focused on ry," he said. short stories," McGough said. "I got four or five of them published in different lit-

erary journals and anthologies, and then realized you can't make any money writing short stories."

His next project was a horror novel set in Montgomery called "Capitol of More from McGough Nightmares," which he shopped around

publishers for a few years.

wrote it." he said.

called "Southern Saudade: A Supernat-Then a real nightmare hit Montgo- ural Southern Gothic Collection. It's strange hotel is haunted by possibility. mery - and everywhere else. During the tales of ruined romance and harrowed

One of Bob McGough's books with an illustration of main character Howard Today, McGough said he leans more Marsh, a redneck wizard in south Alabama.

chael Stackpole, and has modeled him-Falstaff Dread to publish "Capitol of Nightmares." McGough said it should be "Those three are the folks I'd say were most influential on me trying to out sometime this winter or early spring become a full-time author," McGough next year. When it's out, McGough said he'll schedule book signings in Montgo-Way before that, McGough's earliest

six years old. Even then, he leaned into Have mullet will travel

"It was about a monster that attacked This past weekend, McGough took people with a ham sandwich," McGough his magical version of Alabama up north said. "Why a ham sandwich? I really to Tennessee for the Fanboy Expo Knox-

WIZARD In the coming months, he'll be an atway through high school and into col- tending professional at Dragon Con, lege, at which point he fell out of it dur- Aug. 29-Sept. 2 in Atlanta, Georgia, a guest at Multiverse Con (Oct. 18-20) in Atlanta and at CONjuration (Nov. 15-17) in Duluth, Georgia.

"There's a bunch of events I'm a guest at, but just none of them in Montgome-

There is actually one thing. He'll be a guest at the Local Author Book Fair on Montgomery author Bob McGough Aug. 17 at NewSouth Bookstore, 105 S. occasionally dresses like his redneck Court St., Montgomery. That's happenwizard character Howard Marsh and walks around downtown Montgomery. ing from 2-4 p.m. PROVIDED BY BOB MCGOUGH

For more tales from Jubal County,

• Two strangers who find each other "I was living in Montgomery when I McGough has a short story collection at the end of a world frozen in time. • A meeting between a familiar back-

REDNEC

Montgomery Advertiser repo

### It May Just Get You Noticed!

- I had been trying to get in the • paper, but no one nibbled.
- I started 'marshing' and then I ۲ was able to get in.
- Just ask

"I don't sugar coat it. I don't glorify drug use, or anything like that, McGough said. "But I do share the nega tive effects of it. It's not really a book a

kid or a teenager needs to be reading."

McGough said he was way too young when he started reading books from the

Growing up McGough style

master of horror, Stephen King. "Tve always sort of idolized him and

toward authors John Harkness and Mi-

his writing," McGough said.

self after them.

asts and game design. McGough is transparent about his writing efforts, and also loves sharing

the art and business of writing. He has workshops planned on that ahead at The Kelly Fitzpatrick Center for the Arts in Wetumpka in August. He's also a podcaster, the longest running of which is "Books, Beards,

Booze," which has more than 180 epi-On top of all that, McGough's been

pretty heavily involved in the Montgo-mery music scene through the Hilltop Howlers, a group that also supports arts, culture and business "Music is a huge influence on me,"

McGough said. There's a music link back to his be-

loved "Jubal County" as well. He's got a playlist online that is the music he listens to to get him in a mindset to write the stories — a mix of genres like Americana and outlaw country.

"My secret wish is that someone will write a song based on my main character, Howard Marsh," McGough said. "That's on my writer bucket list for

#### So what's ahead for the redneck wizard?

McGough said there's a script being shopped around that's based on part one of the "Jubal County Saga" series. "A lot of my reviews say that the books read like a Netflix series," McGough said. "I would love to see them adapted into TV or film."

He's also a huge comic book fan. "Before I die, there will be a Jubal County comic of some sort," McGough said

For now, you can get a peek into the illustrated version of Howard Marsh's world through McGough's website.

"There is art there of him," McGough said. "And I've started recreating scenes • A would-be actress whose stay at a from my books in Lego. I've got a Lego figurine with a mullet and tattoos."

### STICKERS AND BUSINESS CARDS (SMALL FREE THINGS)



People like free stuff. Picking the right free stuff is hard.

### Business cards are a can't miss.

- Put a QR code to your linktree on it.
- Do not put your email or phone number. You can always write it on the back if needed.
- A lot of authors do bookmarks and stickers. In my opinion stickers are a better choice.
- Folks LOVE stickers.
- They will often put them in public places, like their water bottle.



They might even put a sticker on something at a gas station

I work at a gas station. Someone stuck one of your "read redneck meth wizard books" on one of our windshield valets (I didn't scrape it off, it's still there) and I was intrigued and now I can't put Howard Marsh down, I just finished book 2

Reply Hide

They were in South Carolina, where I hadn't ever done an event.



# TOP TAKE AWAYS AND TIPS!

- Bring value to the community.
- Be genuine.
- You need to be creative, not just in your writing, but also in your marketing.
- Blind luck will be a factor. You never know what will be the thing that kicks off or brings a great opportunity.
- Just ask.



# THANK YOU

A copy of this presentation can be found on my website. You can also use the contact form there to ask me any questions about...well pretty much anything really.

# www.talesbybob.com

