



Welcome to July 🌸

We tell ourselves stories in order to live.

— [Joan Didion](#), writer and journalist

Summer is definitely here in NC! In this month's newsletter, we explore the importance of understanding the market of genre expectations and share the results of last month's poll on how authors are using AI. Also featured are recent blog posts on "Is AI Taking Over a Writer's Creativity?" and Alex Truby's mastering the art of genre *The Anatomy of Genres*. We share our Technica resource "Queries & Proposals: A Guide on How to Stand Out in the Slush Pile" and our project spotlight *Thinkbait* by Zsike Peter.

Happy Reading! 🌻



Market Expectations, Genre, and Telling the Story

YOU Want to Tell

This month, we want to talk about the tightrope we all walk as writers, namely the one between market expectations and your own creative instincts. It's that tug-of-war between wanting to tell the story exactly how it lives in your head versus making sure it fits within the (often) unspoken rules of your genre.

A lot of writers we've worked with here at Technica Editorial feel that genre expectations are a bit like handcuffs. Raise your hand if you've ever felt that way. 🙋🙋 We know an author who wanted to write mysteries with a touch of magic, deep emotional undercurrents, and quirky characters. She didn't want to be boxed in, but that's how she felt. Over time, though, she realized something important: genre expectations aren't there to limit us; they're a promise to the reader. And keeping that promise builds the kind of trust that keeps readers coming back book after book.

What Are Market Expectations?

Every genre has its own set of reader expectations. Sometimes they're subtle, sometimes glaringly obvious:

- **Mystery**—You need a puzzle to solve and at least a few red herrings.
- **Romance**—The happily-ever-after (or happy-for-now) is non-negotiable.
- **Thriller**—The high stakes, fast pacing, and tension promise to keep people up at night.
- **Fantasy**—World-building has to feel immersive and consistent.
- **Historical Fiction**—There must be authenticity to the time period, even if fictional elements are woven in.

These expectations are part of why readers pick up a genre book in the first place. They're buying into the promise of a particular reading experience. The challenge for writers is blending those expectations with individual creative voice. That means sticking with genre expectations while creating your own take on a story. That leads us to...

Creativity and Reader Promise: It's Not Either/Or

Here's where the magic happens. You don't have to squash your creativity to meet market expectations. You *do* have to understand the playground you're in, however, and then figure out how to make your story stand out while still honoring the promise of your genre.

Think of it this way: The structure and expectations of your genre are the frame. Your creativity is the art inside the frame. You can paint whatever picture you want, as long as it fits within that frame.

We've seen plenty of instances when this has gone sideways, especially with newer writers. They want to subvert expectations or mash genres in ways that, to them, feel groundbreaking. Sometimes that works; there are always exceptions to the rule. But more often than not, it confuses readers or leaves them feeling like they didn't get what they wanted. That's when you lose trust...and readership.

So, How Do You Find That Balance?

After years of writing and working with authors at every stage, here's our take:

1. Know Your Genre Inside and Out

Read widely in your genre. Understand the beats, the tropes, the pacing, and the character types that show up again and again. You can't successfully bend the rules if you don't know what they are.

2. Decide What's Non-Negotiable

What elements of your story absolutely light you up? These are the things you *have* to include to feel true to yourself as a writer. Keep them! But at the same time, be willing to mold them so they serve the genre, not just your personal vision.

3. Communicate Clearly with Your Audience

Your cover, blurb, and title all tell readers what to expect from your book. If your fantasy novel leans heavy into romance, signal that. If your mystery has speculative elements, let readers know. Surprises within the story are great. Surprises about what kind of book a reader has bought? Not so much.

4. Ask: Does My Book Deliver on the Promise?

Before you hit publish, or even before you finish drafting, ask yourself: *If I were the target reader, would this story give me what I came for?* If the answer is no, then you know you haven't met genre expectations.

The Takeaway

Creativity and market expectations don't have to be mutually exclusive. When you respect the reader's promise, don't think of it as limiting yourself. Instead, look at it as planting a seed. Once it's taken root, your voice, your style, and your unique perspective can flourish and grow.

Here's the bottom line: Readers want to be surprised, but they don't want to be misled. Give them what they came for, then layer in the unexpected, the heartfelt, and the truly *you* moments. That's where the best stories live.

👉 [Check out our manuscript editorial services](#), as well as a variety of author resources. Click [here](#) 📄

Results of Our AI Survey

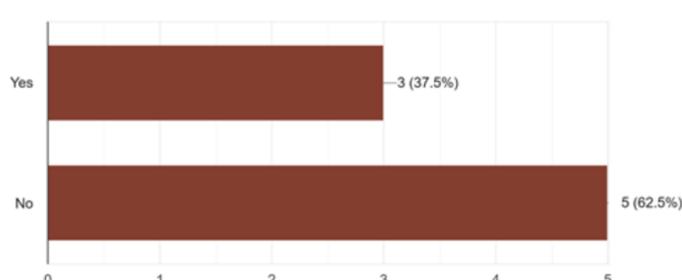
Last month, we asked our readers how they are using AI in their writing process. Although the response was modest, we thank those who did reply. Below we share the results.

No one used it for writing, but used it to check their writing and to create helpful marketing blurbs. The two AI platforms used were Claude and ChatGPT.

Technica Editorial collaborates with both Scholarly Publishing associations and individual writers. In Scholarly Publishing, the ethical implications of AI are a significant concern, particularly regarding its appropriate usage.

We'd love to hear more opinions about your thoughts and issues regarding the use of AI.

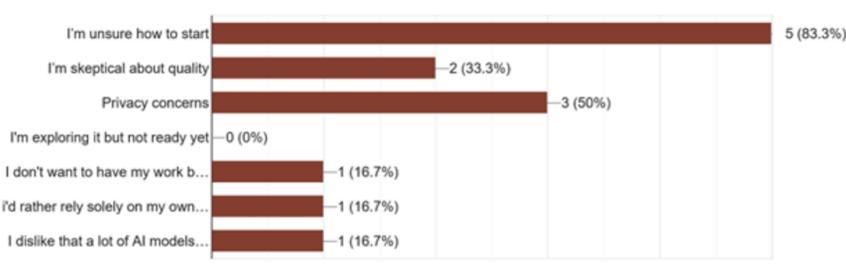
Are you currently using any AI tools to assist with your writing or marketing?
8 responses



What's holding you back from using AI tools in your writing?

If you answered no, let us know: What's holding you back from using AI tools in your writing?

6 responses



Is AI Taking Over a Writer's Creativity? by Anne Brenner

Like it or not, a world without AI is a thing of the past. It's morphing the entire publication industry and is significantly impacting anyone and everyone in it—including how you, as an author, might approach writing your book or manuscript.

Regardless of what kind of work you're writing, AI is likely going to play some kind of role. In this first installment of a two-part series, we'll explore what that AI role might look like for genres such as fiction, biographies/memoirs, or nonfiction analysis of events or trends.

When it comes to AI in the book-writing process, there's a pretty clear list of what to do, versus what *not* to do. When used effectively, AI can be a helpful tool to make the journey to publication faster and more efficient, with a much more attractive finished byproduct.

But when AI is misused or abused, it'll no doubt lead to an end result that publishers and readers can tell was essentially written by a computer, not a human being—and no one wants to waste their time and money on that.

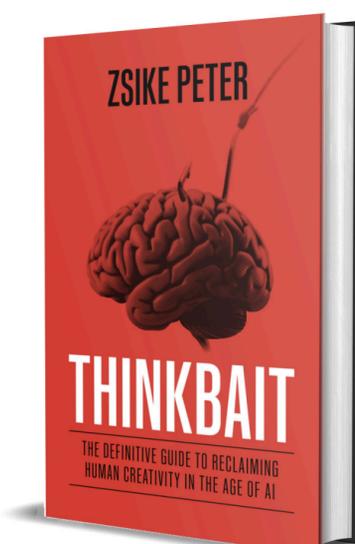
Delve into the details [here](#).



Mastering the Art of Genre: Insights from John Truby's *The Anatomy of Genres for Authors* by Grace Dietz

Genre is the key to fully comprehending fiction reading and publishing alike. Any writer looking to professionally publish their work requires a certain knowledge of publishing as an industry. Editors and executives look at what they can have the most luck selling... [Read on.](#)

Project Spotlight



Thinkbait by Zsike Peter

Technica Editorial was excited to partner with UK publisher Youpreneur & 4C Media on their latest title, *Thinkbait* by Zsike Peter. Technica created the book cover, designed and composed the interior pages, copyedited the text, and delivered print and epub files.

Check it out at <https://thinkbait.co.uk/>



Looking to finally finish that manuscript you've been working on? Take the next step. Technica Editorial offers editorial support including copyediting, developmental editing, interior page layout and design, cover art, and more.

[Contact us!](#)

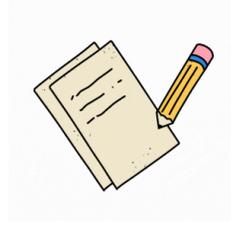


Queries & Proposals: A Guide on How to Stand Out in the Slush Pile A Technica Resource

Pitching your book can feel intimidating—but it doesn't have to be. Whether

you're a fiction writer crafting a one-page query or a nonfiction author putting together a full proposal, the goal is the same: capture attention and communicate value. Use this [Quick Guide](#) to keep on track with your plotting.

Seeking additional guidance or inspiration? Explore our **[Resources](#)** for downloadable author guides and tools!



Follow Us On



You are receiving this email as you signed up for our newsletters.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [Unsubscribe](#) or [Update your preferences](#)