The Indy Author’s Guide to Guesting Checklist

# General

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Choose the tech***   * Invest in a mic. (Don’t use your computer’s built-in mic.) * Use mic-less earbuds. They will improve audio by eliminating feedback from the mic, and look better than bulky headphones. * Light the scene. Ring lights are great but often normal household lamps work fine; experiment with number and placement of lights (and if needed, adjust placement to avoid reflections in your glasses). |
|  | ***Choose the audio environment***   * Choose an area with soft surfaces (e.g., carpets, curtains) if possible; check for and eliminate ambient noise; consider when background noise will be louder or softer, and try to scheduling interviews accordingly) |
|  | ***Choose the video environment***   * Look behind you--what parts of the room does the camera pick up? Adjust as needed. * Arrange your interview set-up so that the camera (build-in or auxiliary) is at eye level. |
|  | ***Know the platform***   * Make sure you know how to operate the platform. If you’re unfamiliar with it, ask the interviewer ahead of time if you will have time before the interview starts to have them review the platform with you. Be sure you know how to:   + Mute and unmute your mic   + Turn your camera on and off   + Screen share (if appropriate) |

# Prepping for the Interview

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Understand the logistics*** – format (solo, interview, panel?), medium (live or recorded?), venue (in-person or virtual?), interaction style (presentation or conversational?), persona / brand (chatty or business-like? Clean or explicit?), production (edited or raw?) |
|  | ***Reboot*** - Do this the day before in case your computer decides to run an update. |
|  | ***Review key best practices:***   * Replace filler words with silence * Avoid “again” or “as I said” * Avoid contrastive agreement (e.g., “Columbus is the nicest city in Ohio.” ... “No, I totally agree.”) |
|  |  |

# Before Signing In

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Check the mic selection*** |
|  | ***Check the audio environment*** – What will the mic pick up? |
|  | ***Check the video environment*** – What will the camera pick up? |
|  | ***Check the lighting*** – Is your face visible? |
|  | ***Frame the shot*** – Viewers want to see you, not the empty space over your head or the ceiling. |
|  | ***Turn off distractions*** – Put your computer and phone on do-not-disturb. |
|  | ***Warn your dwelling-mates*** – Encourage them not to pick that time to decide to vacuum. |

# Participating in the Interview

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Confirm the pronunciation*** of your name, book, etc., with the interviewer (and confirm the pronunciation of their name as needed) |
|  | ***Confirm the duration of the interview*** so that you moderate your responses with more or less detail, and can support the host in a graceful wrap-up at the appropriate time |
|  | ***Make it conversational*** – You’re here to have a chat, not give a sales pitch. |
|  | ***Tell your stores*** – Let the audience get to know you. |
|  | ***Have your closing ready***, a snappy sentence or two to direct people to your online home base (not every social media platform), and don’t waste syllables saying “www” |
|  | *After you’re off the air,* ***ask the host how you can help promote the episode*** |

# Interview Follow-up

It’s not over when the Recording light goes off!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Listen to the interview*** and write down one thing you did that was great and one thing that you did that you’ll work on improving or eliminating. |
|  | ***Thank the interviewer*** |
|  | ***Promote, promote, promote!***Share with your newsletter subscribers and on all your social media platforms (and be sure to flag the host so they know that you’re doing your bit). If the content is evergreen, post a calendar reminder to repost in the future. |