



Book an Author · Resources For Authors 2026 Q2

Why Smart Authors Are Advertising Now

Data-Backed Insights on Reddit, Pinterest, Meta & Google —And the Reader Discovery Opportunity That Won't Wait

Sources: EMARKETER Forecast (March 2026), Semrush (January 2026), Reddit / CEO Steve Huffman. Prepared by Book an Author Inc.

The Discovery Problem Every Author Faces

You wrote a great book. You have a story worth telling, a message worth sharing, a school visit worth booking. But in 2026 and beyond, writing a great book is only half the equation. The other half is making sure the right readers — parents, teachers, librarians, and book lovers who would love your work — can actually find you.

The data in this white paper tells a clear story: social media ad spending is at an all-time high. Reddit's ad platform is growing at 52.6% year over year. Pinterest's social buyer base is expanding steadily. Meta has become the single largest digital ad revenue company in the US. And AI-powered tools now source answers directly from Reddit — making a presence there more valuable than ever.

Book an Author has designed a done-for-you advertising pilot specifically for independent authors. The following eight charts explain exactly why the timing is right — and why waiting is the riskiest move you can make.

FIGURE 1 US Ad Spending by Channel, 2026 (eMarketer)

Social Media Ad Spending Is at an All-Time High — \$133 Billion and Growing at 22%

7 Media Categories Will Draw at Least \$10 Billion in Ad Spending This Year, Led by Social
US ad spending in billions and % change, by select media format/channel, 2026

	Ad spending	% change
Social network	\$133.35	22.3%
Traditional search	\$114.88	7.0%
Retail media	\$71.98	18.7%
Traditional TV	\$50.18	-1.5%
Connected TV	\$37.19	15.1%
Out-of-home	\$11.28	6.2%
Radio	\$10.12	-1.9%
Gaming	\$9.21	6.2%
Digital audio services	\$8.02	6.0%
Print	\$4.76	-12.4%

Note: social network includes paid advertising only and creator content amplified as paid media, excludes payments to influencers or other creators to produce sponsored content; includes creator content amplified as paid media; traditional search refers to digital advertising including contextual text links, paid inclusion, and paid listings; retail media refers to digital advertising that appears on websites or apps that are primarily engaged in retail ecommerce or is bought through a retailer's media network or demand-side platform (DSP), including ads purchased through retail media networks that may not appear on ecommerce sites or apps
Source: EMARKETER Forecast, March 2026

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Source: EMARKETER Forecast, March 2026



What this means for authors:

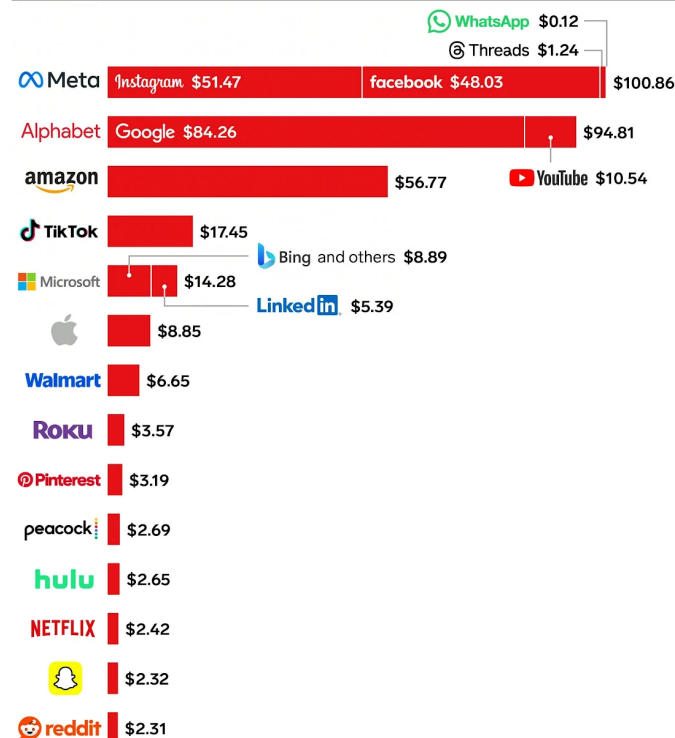
Social network advertising is now the single largest ad channel in the US at \$133.35 billion – surpassing traditional search and growing at 22.3% year over year. Meanwhile, print advertising is shrinking by 12.4%. The market has voted: readers are on social platforms, and every brand that wants to reach them is advertising there.

For authors, this is both a warning and an invitation. The warning: if you're not in the social ad ecosystem, you're invisible while everyone else is seen. The invitation: a well-targeted investment on the right platforms can put your book in front of exactly the right readers.

FIGURE 2 US Net Digital Ad Revenue by Company, 2026 (eMarketer)

Meta and Pinterest Are Billion-Dollar Ad Ecosystems — Built to Help Brands Get Found

14 Companies Will Have Over \$2 Billion in Net Digital Ad Revenues in 2026, With Meta Leading for the First Time
US net digital ad revenues in billions, by select company, 2026



Note: net ad revenues after companies pay traffic acquisition costs (TAC) and content acquisition costs (CAC) to partner sites; Meta, TikTok, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, and Reddit include paid advertising only and creator content amplified as paid media, and exclude payments to creators to produce sponsored content; Peacock, Hulu, and Netflix include in-stream video ads such as those appearing before, during, or after digital video content on a subscription-based OTT platform and video overlays; Reddit excludes non-advertising revenues; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding
Source: EMarketer Forecast, March 2026

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Source: EMarketer Forecast, March 2026



What this means for authors:

In 2026, Meta has overtaken Google to become the #1 digital ad revenue company in the US at over \$100 billion. Its infrastructure for targeting, retargeting, and lookalike audiences is unmatched anywhere online. Pinterest, at \$3.19 billion, sits ahead of Peacock, Hulu, Netflix, and Snapchat — brands at scale are investing there because they see returns.

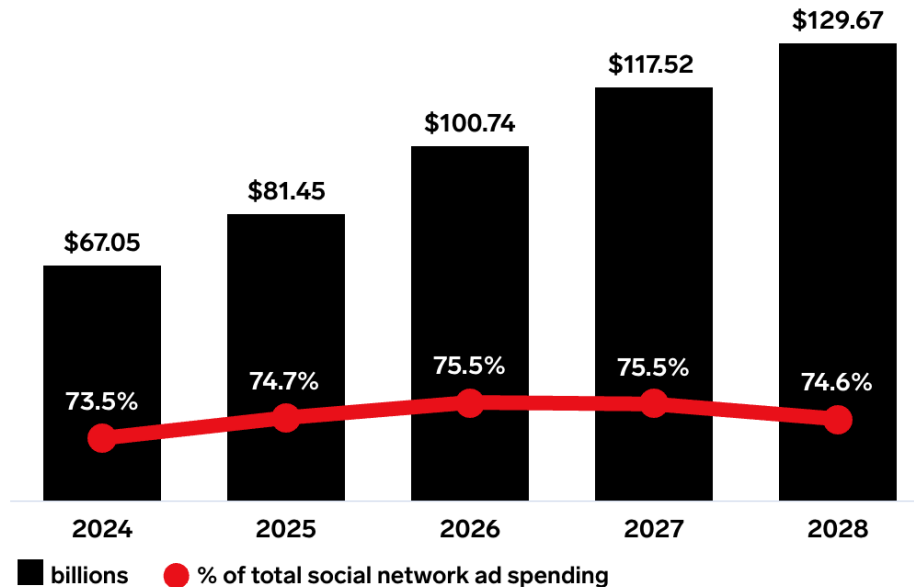
For authors, these platforms serve complementary purposes: Meta keeps you top-of-mind with warm audiences who've seen your book but haven't purchased. Pinterest introduces your book to new readers who are ready to buy. Together, they form a powerful full-funnel strategy.

FIGURE 3 Meta Social Network Ad Revenues, US 2024–2028 (eMarketer)

Meta's Ad Revenue Has Nearly Doubled Since 2024 — Its Targeting Tools Are at Peak Power

Meta Social Network Ad Revenues

US, 2024–2028



Note: includes Facebook, Instagram, and Threads; excludes WhatsApp; paid advertising only; includes advertising that appears on desktop and laptop computers as well as mobile phones, tablets, and other internet-connected devices; net ad revenues after companies pay traffic acquisition costs (TAC) to partner sites; excludes payments to influencers or other creators to produce sponsored content; includes creator content amplified as paid media

Source: EMARKETER Forecast, March 2026

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Source: EMARKETER Forecast, March 2026



What this means for authors:

Meta's US social network ad revenue has grown from \$67 billion in 2024 to over \$100 billion in 2026 — commanding roughly 75% of all social network ad spending. Meta's Advantage+ campaigns use machine learning to automatically find the best audiences. Its retargeting capabilities re-engage anyone who visited your website, clicked a newsletter link, or watched a video about your book.

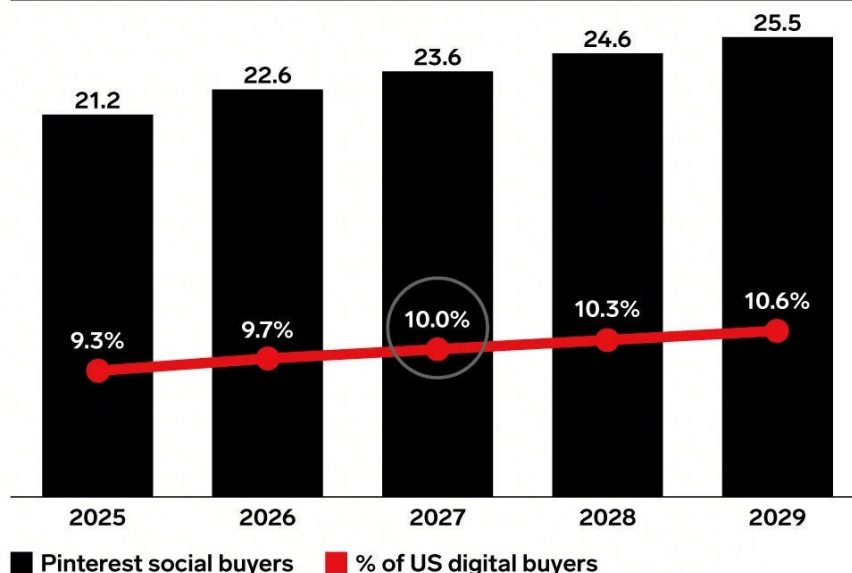
Even a modest budget — \$150 to \$300 per month — can generate meaningful reach and retargeting impact on Meta when the campaign is set up correctly. That's exactly what Book an Author's pilot is designed to deliver.

FIGURE 4 Pinterest Social Buyer Growth, 2025-2029 (eMarketer)

Pinterest Social Buyers Are Growing Year Over Year — and They Arrive Ready to Purchase

Pinterest Continues to Grow Its Share of Digital Buyers, Reaching 10% by Next Year

millions of US Pinterest social buyers and % of US digital buyers, 2025-2029



Note: ages 14+; social network users who have made at least one purchase via Pinterest, including links and transactions on the platform itself, during the calendar year; includes desktop/laptop, mobile, and tablet purchases

Source: EMARKETER Forecast, Nov 2025

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Source: EMARKETER Forecast, November 2025



What this means for authors:

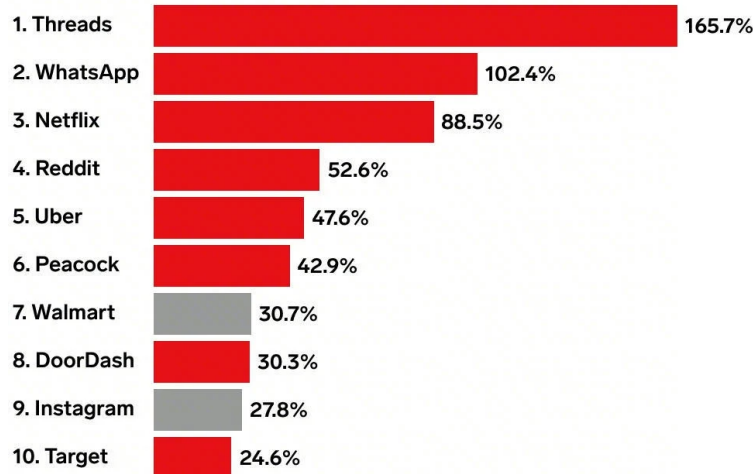
Pinterest is a purchasing platform. The number of US users who buy via Pinterest is growing from 21.2 million in 2025 to a projected 25.5 million by 2029 — approaching 11% of all US digital buyers. Pinterest users arrive in planning mode, searching for gift ideas, reading lists, and children's books. When they pin something, they intend to act on it.

Pinterest pins have an average lifespan of 3.5 months versus minutes on Instagram or Facebook — meaning your promoted pin keeps working long after you've stopped paying for it. And 97% of Pinterest searches are unbranded, so readers searching 'middle grade adventure books' are completely open to discovering you.

FIGURE 5 Fastest Growing Ad Platforms 2026 (eMarketer)

Reddit Is the 4th Fastest-Growing Ad Platform in the US — Your Readers Are Already There

Smaller or Newer Ad Platforms Will Make Up Most of the Top 10 List for Fastest Growth This Year
top 10 US companies, ranked by % change in net digital ad revenues, 2026



■ Less than \$3 billion in ad revenues

Note: net ad revenues after companies pay traffic acquisition costs (TAC) to partner sites; Threads, WhatsApp, Reddit, and Instagram include paid advertising only; Threads, Reddit, and Instagram exclude payments to influencers or other creators to produce sponsored content and include creator content amplified as paid media; Netflix and Peacock include in-stream video ads such as those appearing before, during, or after digital video content on a subscription-based OTT platform and video overlays; Uber and DoorDash include digital advertising that appears on the company's browser or app or is bought through its ad platform utilizing first-party data for real-time targeting, and include ads purchased through its ad platform that may not appear on its sites or apps, and exclude purchase-dependent marketing partner offers

Source: EMARKETER Forecast, March 2026

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Source: EMARKETER Forecast, March 2026



What this means for authors:

Reddit's ad revenue is projected to grow 52.6% this year — making it the 4th fastest-growing ad platform in the US, ahead of Uber, Peacock, and Instagram. Major brands with data-driven agencies are investing in Reddit because it delivers results.

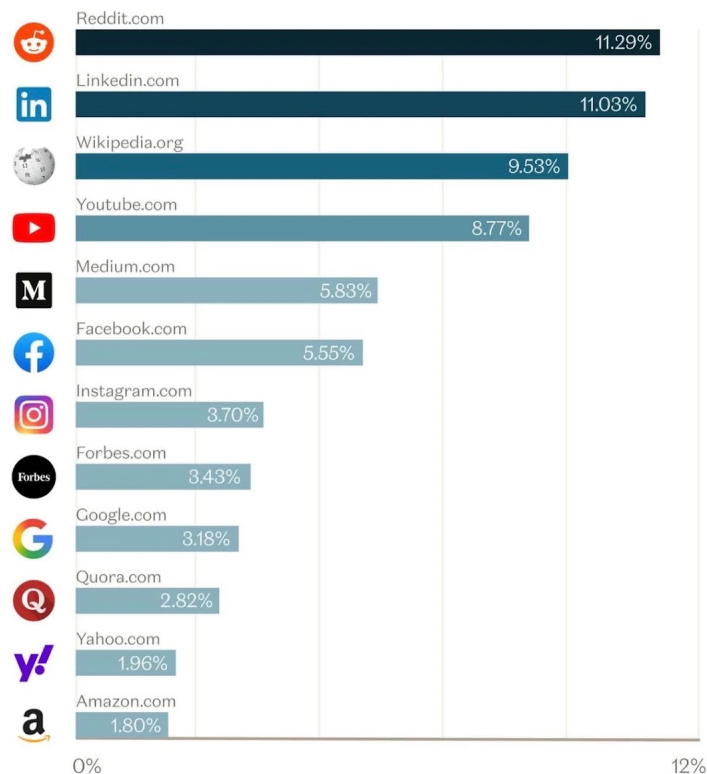
For independent authors, the window for low-cost early entry is narrowing fast. As more brands discover Reddit's book-loving communities, ad costs will rise. Authors who act now get the early-mover advantage — and the lower CPCs that come with it. Unlike Meta or Google — where Amazon's ad machine drives up costs — Reddit's book ecosystem is still wide open.

FIGURE 6 Top Domains Cited by LLMs, January 2026 (Semrush)

Reddit Is the #1 Source AI Uses to Find Answers — Being on Reddit Means Being Found by AI

Where do LLMs find answers?

Top domains cited by LLMs (January 2026)



Source: Semrush, January 2026



What this means for authors:

When someone asks ChatGPT or Perplexity 'what are the best picture books about grief?' those AI systems pull answers from a ranked list of trusted domains. The #1 source they cite? Reddit.com at 11.29%. Reddit is literally how AI finds its answers.

If your book or name is discussed on Reddit, you are far more likely to be surfaced by AI-powered search. If you have no Reddit presence, you are invisible not just to Reddit's users, but to the AI systems an increasing share of readers use to find their next book.

A \$300/month Reddit investment doesn't just buy clicks — it buys a seat at the table where AI learns what books to recommend.

FIGURE 7 Reddit Ad Platform Growth

Reddit Is Becoming a High-Intent Search Platform — And Authors Are Missing It

Reddit's weekly search activity jumps 30% YoY, boosting ad intent and user reach

The news: Reddit is becoming a search-led platform, with weekly on-site search activity up 30% YoY. Daily active users and retention are growing as a result of strong search offerings, according to CEO Steve Huffman, and the expansion of its ad products and AI-powered shopping features are driving up ad revenues and engagement.

Recommendations for marketers: As Reddit moves toward a business model that lets user intent determine advertising value, marketers should treat the platform as a performance channel with high-intent, engaged audiences.

Source: Reddit / CEO Steve Huffman

What this means for authors:

Reddit is no longer just a discussion forum — it's a search-led platform where readers actively look for book recommendations and genre deep-dives. Weekly on-site search activity is up 30% year over year, meaning more readers use Reddit the way they once used Google: to find trustworthy answers from real people.

Independent authors who advertise on Reddit now are entering before the crowd arrives. Ad costs are still low. Competition from other authors is virtually nonexistent.

**FIGURE 8** eMarketer Brand Guidance

Industry Experts Agree: Pinterest and Reddit Each Require a Distinct — and Smarter — Strategy



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Recommendations for brands

- **Optimize campaigns for learning as much as for performance.** Many social platforms' automated ad systems will execute campaigns in ways that won't tell you about how users engage with the platform as a search surface.
- **Align investment to each platform's search strengths.** Match budgets to how users actually search on each platform—visual discovery (Pinterest), the consideration phase (Reddit), commerce-driven queries (TikTok). Avoid treating social search as a single channel; performance depends on playing to native behavior on each platform.
- **Test conversational ad formats early.** The performance of ads in AI chat conversations is likely to differ significantly from platform to platform.

Source: eMarketer

What this means for authors:

eMarketer advises brands to stop treating social platforms as interchangeable ad channels. Each platform has its own reader mindset, and success requires matching your approach to how users natively behave. For Reddit, that means ads that feel like authentic community contributions. For Pinterest, it means visual storytelling that fits a reader's planning journey.

The third recommendation — 'test conversational ad formats early' — is particularly relevant as AI chat integrations grow. Authors who establish a presence now will be better positioned as AI-driven discovery expands across every platform.



The Window Is Open. For Now.

Every chart in this white paper points to the same conclusion: the platforms where readers discover new authors are growing fast and filling up with competing voices. The authors who move now will build audiences, generate data, and establish credibility at a fraction of the cost latecomers will pay in 12 months.

Book an Author's Author Growth Ads Pilot is a done-for-you program designed specifically for independent authors who want to reach more readers, generate more book sales, and secure more school visit bookings — without becoming advertising experts themselves.

What the Pilot Includes

- › Strategy development tailored to your book, audience, and goals
- › Full campaign setup on Reddit and/or Pinterest (Meta & Google available for retargeting)
- › Ad creative production — copy and visuals included
- › Audience targeting and community/keyword research
- › Ongoing monitoring and campaign optimization
- › 60-day performance report with next-step recommendations

Investment: \$400 per author · per platform · per month · 2-month pilot · 5–10 authors per platform only

Spots are strictly limited. This is a genuine pilot — small cohort sizes ensure every author receives hands-on, high-quality campaign management.

Ready to be discovered?

Contact us to claim your spot in the Author Growth Ads Pilot:

saira@bookanauthor.com

BookanAuthor.com

All data sourced from EMARKETER (March 2026 Forecast), Semrush (January 2026), and Reddit corporate communications. Prepared by Book an Author Inc. for informational purposes as part of the Author Growth Ads Pilot outreach program.