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Amazon Launches 'Amazon Connect'

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Amazon.com, Inc. today announced the launch of its latest innovation for customers, Amazon Connect, a new program in which authors can post messages directly to their readers via the Amazon.com home page. Authors interested in joining the Amazon Connect program can visit www.amazon.com/connect.

Many authors operate their own Web sites, but their readers may not frequently visit those sites. With Amazon Connect, a customer is automatically presented with author posts directly on that customer's Amazon.com home page. To ensure that author posts are relevant, the posts are shown only to customers who have purchased that author's work in the past, or to those who explicitly sign up to receive that author's posts. The posts are prominently displayed in standard blog format (reverse chronological order).

"We invite authors to communicate with their readers in a way that hasn't before been possible," said Jeff Bezos, Amazon.com's founder and CEO. "Amazon Connect brings the author's message to the reader instead of waiting for the reader to find the message."

"Amazon Connect creates a relationship with my readers that didn't exist before," said author James Patterson. "Communicating directly with my readers about anything I want, whenever I want, is extremely powerful."

More than 1,000 authors are enrolled in the program to date, including Marcus Buckingham, Michael Coval, Robert Crais, Nelson DeMille, Anita Diamant, Frank Gallinelli, Caroline Myss, Karen Katz, Elizabeth Kostova, John Lithgow, Elizabeth Pantley, James Patterson, Jodi Picoult, Ann Rule, Karma Wilson and Meg Wolitzer. Authors can post as often as they like, and their posts will appear to Amazon.com customers immediately.

Author posts can be anything from current musings or information about upcoming projects to reading recommendations. Promotional posts are not allowed. Recent posts include insights into the frustrations and joys of the writing process, tips for aspiring writers, opinions on popular culture, and even favorite travel destinations and recipes. In addition to the Amazon.com home page, posts will appear on book detail pages, a blog page and on a special author profile page that features the author's three most recent posts and entire bibliography. In addition, customers can sign up to receive posts from authors whose books they have not previously purchased on Amazon.

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