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# FOREWORD

Thank you for investing your time in reviewing the materials included in your Author's Kit.

This kit is designed to consolidate the many sources of information and assistance for self published authors and not as a selling resource for VIMI Corp. Accordingly, where additional resources are available for your use, we have made their contact information readily available and referred you to their websites. Many of them, especially Adazing.com has excellent tools designed to help authors, many of which are featured in this book. Adazing.com frequently adds tools and services to help authors sell more copies of their books and we strongly suggest that you refer to their site frequently to enhance your sales.

In addition to this manual, VIMI Corp., has assembled a number of additional resources and reprinted them for your convenience and review. Please note that all the opinions expressed in any of the material included in this kit are those of the authors and may or may not be applicable to your project.

We also have purchased a collection of customizable covers for your use in producing your next book project. The images of the covers are contained in this package, but please note that as each of the covers are used by our customers, they are removed from the list available for subsequent use. If the cover is available, we can send you the Photoshop file and images required to customize to your book project.

Thank you for your use and best of luck in producing and selling your book.

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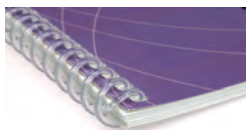
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Robert Harpelle, Maint. Training Mngr  
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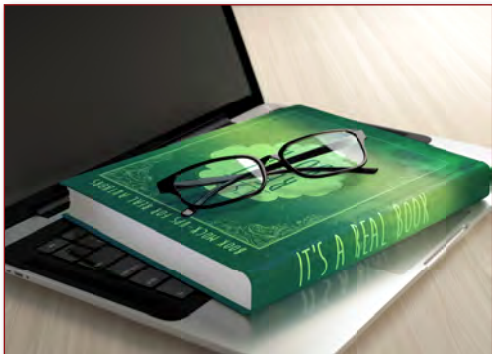
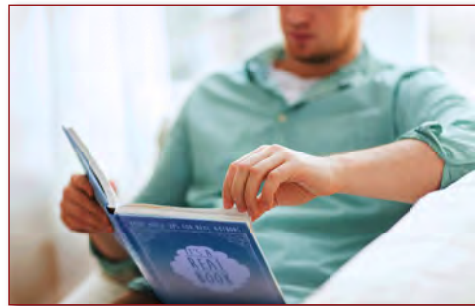


## RACK CARDS



# CUSTOMIZABLE SELL IMAGES TO HELP SELL YOUR NEXT BOOK!

VIMI Corp. has purchased a selection of well designed customizable templates available for producing artwork to incorporate in sell sheets, postcards and rack cards.



# READY, STEADY, SELF-PUBLISH

"I've discovered that rejections are not altogether a bad thing. They teach a writer to rely on his own judgment and to say in his heart of hearts, "To hell with you." - Saul Bellow

Many people turn to self-publishing when their book has been rejected by traditional publishing houses and their ego lies shrivelled and tattered behind a pile of rejection slips. If you are in this discouraging situation, firstly, take heart - check the rejection scorecards of the following famous authors:

- 1/ J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter - 12 no's
- 2/ Margaret Mitchell's Gone with the Wind - 38 no's
- 3/ Richard Bach's Jonathan Livingston Seagull - 140 no's
- 4/ Stephen King's Carrie - 30 no's.

You know the familiar phrase, "start as you men to go on". Well, when it comes to self-publishing, I think this should be modified to "start as you most likely will have to go on".

You see, nowadays, attracting the attention of a mainstream publisher makes finding a needle in a haystack seem like a breeze. You need more than a good book idea or even a good book. Many publishers now demand that you enjoy a reputation in your niche, a large established online audience, a blog following and a bullet proof, cost-effective marketing plan. Along with your manuscript, you might be asked to submit your opt-in list and Linked in profiles. If you do have all of this, you may ask quietly, tentatively (as writers tend to) why you actually need a publisher.

Authors persist in subjecting themselves to this punishing process, driven by the belief that there is no alternative if you want to get

your writing out into the world. If you lack a rhino-skin like resilience, there is another option. It's called self-publishing and it's been around since Dickens' times.

To authors who know about the self-publishing route, but only consider it a last resort, believing that you are not a real writer until published by a mainstream publisher, I say Hogwash, (or is it Hogwarts). If it's a seal of approval that you seek, consider E. E. Cummings first work—The Enormous Room. Now esteemed as a literary masterpiece, Cummings self-published after being rejected by 15 publishers.

Let me state from the outset that I don't reject the idea of being published by a big name, reputable publishing house. Although after achieving self-publishing fame many authors continue to self publish, what I advocate is reversing the process and luring the publishing house with your self-published work first. You are much harder to refuse when you already have a following and a few favourable reviews in your back pocket.

Why not aim for a small self-published print run of 2- 20 000 and then approach, or wait to be approached by, the big guns for the big deal. Traditional publishers send talent scouts, called acquisition editors, to book fairs around the world to snap up titles with potential.

I believe that there are at least two main reasons to decide to self-publish from the get-go.

## A/ YOU WANT TO RETAIN CREATIVE CONTROL

As an author, when you hand over your manuscript to a publisher you relinquish all control. A scary thought for the control freaks among us.

Imagine dropping your toddler off at crèche and finding that when you come to collect your darling at the end of the day, they are

unrecognisable, with cropped hair, dressed in tie-dye clothing and speaking Mandarin. Many authors express the equivalent feeling of horror when they see the printed version of their book. They place their manuscripts in the publisher's hands, only to find on publication that their dialogue has been radically altered, large chunks of text are missing and the cover looks as though someone has eaten their breakfast on it. If you call the editor to ask why they made these changes without your permission, you are likely to be told, witheringly, that no editor ever needs to call a writer for approval as once you sign your book over to a publishing house it's no longer your book, but belongs to the publisher to do with as they please.

Off-course, this is a worst-case scenario. Most reputable publishers know the rules of creating covers that help sell books and will produce an appealing book. However, a small, cash-strapped publishing house might do such a cheap and nasty job that you would definitely do better to self-publish.

If you want to create a book, self-publishing will allow you to have the final say in everything from the typeface to the type of paper that you use. For example, when I managed the self-publishing of Earth Artist Jenny Louw and myself spent an enormous amount of time researching paper. In the end, we opted to use Munken Lynx, an uncoated wood free paper, produced at Munkendals, in Sweden, one of the world's cleanest and most environmentally friendly fine paper mills. We would never have been able to request that a mainstream publisher use this non-standard, ecologically superb paper.

#### **B/ YOU WANT TO EARN AN INCOME FROM YOUR BOOK.**

There's no doubt that writers are what hard, headed business people call creative types when you examine even the large print of the contracts that they agree to. In traditional publishing, writers are usually paid on a royalty basis. Royalties are the amount of

money that you earn from your book sales. Usually the royalty is calculated from the net sales, after discounts. They are usually pitifully small – on average between 5 -10%. That ends up being shockingly small change. Authors from traditional publishers rarely earn more than \$1.50 per book on a \$20 book. For example, a book that retails for \$14.95 in the bookstore is usually discounted by 60% to the store chain, which pays only \$9.97 to the publisher. An author's 7.5 royalty adds up to a whopping 67 cents. The royalty road seldom leads to riches.

Then, there is the policy that many publishers have of selling authors their book at a 50 % discount. As conventional marketers rarely have an aggressive (or even effective) marketing plan to promote new authors, you will find that even if you are published by a mainstream publishing house, you will be expected to arrange book signings and self-promote your book. It comes as a bit of a shock to find that you have to buy your own books for this purpose.

If this hasn't made you pause and question the validity of signing a mainstream publishing contract, the final insult is that once the publisher buys your title, it still might never see the light of day. They might decide not to publish, in which case you have sold the rights to publish yourself. Not only that, but the publishers can decide to discontinue your title at any given time.

These are a few of the reasons why entrepreneurs like Peter Bowerman, author of *The Well Fed Self-Publisher* decided to self-publish. Bowerman earned \$11 000 in the first two months of publishing his first title.

If I've persuaded you to consider self-publishing as a financially viable, rewarding route, here are nine suggestions that I hope will contribute to making your venture successful.



## 1/ PLAN THROUGH TO THE END

Now I have to admit, this is my favourite part of the writing process. It's called Dreaming of Great things. It's easy. Just take yourself to a comfy place (the bed, beach or bath all work equally well) and ensure that you won't be disturbed. Now visualise in as much detail as you can muster, the entire writing project. Imagine how many hours you will spend writing, where you will write, what you will write about, what you will do once your book is published. Don't let modesty interrupt your daydreaming. Go on, visualise yourself leaning in towards Oprah and confiding, "well Oprah, I decided to write a book called Bonsai in Baltimore when I ..."

Popular psychology tells us that we create our reality by imaging it first. Our imagination draws us outwards into the world of action. It also allows us to anticipate every stage of the journey.

See yourself writing the cheque to the printer. Imagine how you will feel when a stranger stats delivering boxes to your home. Smell the ink on the freshly printed pages of your first book.

## 2/ TELL THE TRUTH

Even if you are itching to write fiction, non-fiction typically outsells fiction by two to one. I suggest that every first time author tries his or her hand at non-fiction first. How-to's, memoirs, and religion are perennially strong sellers.

Author Annie Proulx earned a living from writing how to books for years before she wrote her Pulitzer Prize Winning novel, *The Shipping News*. She says, "I was living in very remote, rural, difficult situations, and the question of how to make a living miles and miles from the nearest town came up. Writing seemed like a likely enough thing. I had sold a couple of stories in the past that I'd written just for fun, so I began writing articles. What interested me at this time was the back-to-the-land movement — communes, gardening, architecture, the

difficulty of maintaining a long, dirt-road driveway. Not only could I solve some of those problems in real life and observe what people were doing to make things work in rural situations, I could write about them and make some money. So I did. And I made a damned good living for a number of years doing this. But gradually this kind of thing became more and more boring, and my interests changed. I began to move towards fiction for intellectual stimulation.

When you read *The Shipping News* you will see how her training in non-fiction informs her writing, making it feel real and reliable.

## 3/ NICHE YOURSELF NICELY

Time spent at the outset clarifying your topic is time well spent. If you are writing in order to earn an income from your book, or build your reputation as an expert in your field, both great reasons for self-publishing, then you need to spend time researching and exploring your book's niche. Thankfully, with Amazon, this is astonishingly easy. Just type in the general theme of your book and see how many titles come up. Say you're a passionate gardener, type in that topic and you will get 47,895 books. That's hefty competition. How could your book stand out among the daisies and begonias in that crowd? Organic garden narrows the field, or the garden plot, to 4,300 books. Now consider your audience. Do you want to write for beginners or experts? Organic gardening for beginners yields 59 results. Let's keep on trying to narrow the field. If you have had success with raised bed gardening, plenty of other people like this back friendly method of gardening, it seems, as it yields 290 results. However, look what happens when we search for books on the topic of raised bed gardening for beginners. That yields only two results – the one being a general book - *The American Gardener* and the other - *raised gardening vegetable made simple*. By just taking some time to do simple research, you've uncovered a potentially profitable niche.

It's amazing how many manuscripts I read that purport to be about one topic, but on

closer reading, are actually about a different one altogether. For example, a gardening book on English Country Gardening, a topic that is already over-subscribed, on closer reading, with a little re-writing, could become a book on using lavender in the garden, which is still a very popular topic, but a much narrower niche. Spending time really narrowing your focus will give your writing greater depth and clarity and help if you sell your book online; the internet is used by people to find information about their particular interests. The more defined and narrow your niche, the easier it will be to market your book.

Knowing your audience will help determine your style, as well as content. Writing is an introverted activity, done behind doors and often in your pyjamas. But as you write, it's essential to remember that eventually you will be read. Writing without considering your reader is the equivalent to talking to yourself at a party. Knowing your reader will help you set the tone of your "voice". If you struggle with writing, it can be helpful to imagine yourself speaking to your target audience. If that is your peers, it is best to adopt a friendly, conversational tone. If you are writing to persuade other experts in your field about new findings you will use a more formal, professional tone of voice. John Steinbeck suggests, "Your audience is one single reader. I have found that sometimes it helps to pick one single person – a real person you know, or an imagined person – and write to that one."

#### 4/ DECIDE YOUR BOOK TITLE AND SUB-HEADING

Generally, I set aside one week with my authors to settle on a title before they start writing. Inevitable, this is difficult. Subconsciously, authors believe, or hope that the title will emerge after the book is written in the same way that a baby is named after it is born. Repeatedly this has proved to be a mistake. Your title should convey, as closely as possible, the area of interest that your book covers. The sub-title should tell the potential

reader what they will learn from your book.

Failing to choose a title and sub-title at the beginning of your writing process will mean that your writing meanders. One of the problems for beginner writers is knowing what not to write. It's kind of the opposite of writers block. The temptation is to write every last word on your topic. It is a much better idea to set out with the notion of writing only half of what you know. That makes the task less daunting and has the additional benefit of acting as a spur for you to write your follow up book.

#### 5/ BUFF UP YOUR EXPERTISE.

Are you ready to write your book? Many people suggest jumping in and learning as you go but I think that writing a book is too big an undertaking for this approach. Unless of course, it is a book that invites you to follow the author on a journey. I'm not suggesting that you put off writing your book indefinitely until you know the final word on your topic. Just that you do what you need to do to ensure that you are competent to write on your chosen subject.

Nowadays, the internet is packed with books, newsletters and articles on the theme of establishing yourself as an expert. Some claim that you can do it in 30 days. I even read one purporting that I could become an expert in 30 minutes (in what, I wonder? Fly swatting). Posturing yourself as an expert is laughably easy and many people take advantage of it. I find this degrading and contrary to the common trend, I would advise you to consider your qualifications for writing on a topic.

We live in a time characterised by an unprecedented availability of knowledge. The opportunities to learn almost anything are affordable and endless. You can publish any book on any topic merely by cutting, pasting and stealing like a magpie from other people's experience. But why bother? Why add to the mediocrity of the world?

The real test of expertise is time. In the

Outliers, The Secret of Success, Seth Godwin claims that if we study successful people we find they all spent 10 000 hours mastering their endeavour. While the exact number of hours needed to become an expert is debatable, it is evident that you need a fair amount of firsthand experience.

So, ask yourself what have you spent 10 000 hours doing? Most people, when asked this question, are likely to react like bunnies in a spotlight. Actually, there is probably quite a few things that you have spent this amount of time doing.

I can guarantee that writing a book will bring you recognition. You will be called to speak at conferences; you will be asked to express opinions. So, are you prepared for this? Before getting into this position, do you need to spend time brushing up your skills, filling the gaps in your knowledge.

## 6/ ALLOCATE TIME AND MONEY.

Writing takes time and self-publishing costs money. It takes an average of 475 hours to write a novel. Writing a nonfiction book requires about 725 hours. Costs vary depending on what you want. Probably the main reason why people approach publishing houses is that they don't want to pay the publishing costs. And this is why publishers can get away with such lousy contracts. Are you familiar with the notion of despising the free lunch? Essentially, it warns you that anything that comes without a price tag can often end up costing you more in the end. Many people hope that getting their book published will be a route out of poverty and for some this has been true. However, most people would be advised to calculate the costs beforehand. How much will your book cost? Well, how long is a piece of string? There are so many facts to take into consideration. How many books you want to publish, how much of the process you want to handle yourself.

Do not underestimate the amount of time that writing takes. One of the great benefits of attempting to write a book is that it will

give you a much deeper appreciation of every book ever written. Tolstoy will become your new hero. How could anyone write the 1 000 plus pages of Anna Karenina or War and Peace, you will wonder. So how are you going to put in these hours at the desk? Very few people who write on a whim, when they feel like it, ever get anything published. Don't wait for inspiration. Discipline is the key. Find your best time of the day for writing and write. Don't let anything else interfere.

Some writers, such as Colm Tóibín follow rather gruelling writing routines: "Work in the morning, a short break for lunch, work in the afternoon and then watch the six o'clock news and then go back to work until bedtime. Before bed, listen to Schubert". Others, such as Pulitzer Prize winning author Jane Smiley only put in two hours a day. Helen Dunmore (or should it be Dunless?) advises that writers to finish the day's writing when you still want to continue. Graham Greene famously wrote 500 words a day. Jean Plaidy managed 5,000 before lunch, and then spent the afternoon answering fan mail. The point is to find a schedule that you find comfortable and then stick to it.

## 7/ WRITE THE FIRST DRAFT

"The thing to do is write and keep on writing". Hemmingway

What a writer does is no more mysterious than sit down and form words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs and paragraphs into chapters. What is important is that you do not aim for perfection in a first draft. Set aside your critical faculties at first. Trying to edit as you write is like trying to walk through a marsh; you will be so bogged down in the details that you will not be able to make much progress.

Take a Jackson Pollock approach to your first draft; fling the words energetically onto the page. Stephen King writes, "I believe the first draft of a book — even a long one — should take no more than three months... Any longer and — for me, at least — the story

begins to take on an odd foreign feel, like a dispatch from the Romanian Department of Public Affairs, or something broadcast on high-band shortwave during a period of severe sunspot activity.”

While I think that this might be true for fiction, I believe most first time non-fiction writers need much more time. I think that 3 months is possibly only long enough to dream, plan, imagine and research. The actual writing could take much longer. If your budget allows, it's a great idea it work with an editor not when your manuscript is finished, but from the outset, before you have invested any time. A good editor or writing coach can help you organise your ideas into chapters and your chapters into a book. Especially, if you are writing non-fiction, they can offer daily encouragement and crack the whip when your spirits are flagging and you feel like giving up. And believe me these days will come. A good writing coach will get you past them.

As a writing coach myself, I know how many times authors have told me that they would not have finished their book without help. Writing is a lonely occupation and especially for extroverts, having the encouragement of a competent person by your side is invaluable.

## 8/ RE-WRITE

This is the most important step and the one that is overlooked by most novice writers. Most first time writers are so happy it have created lines of types marching across the page that they neglect to re-write. Or, without knowing how bad their writing is, they settle for a first draught, rush to the publishers and spend money printing something that really shouldn't see the light of day. Writing is a two-tiered process. The first part is creative; you open your self to divine forces and let the powers of inspiration flow through you. In the first writing phase, you are like a crazed medium, a being possessed, taking dictation from the muses.

In the second stage, you are like an artisan; you work with your grammatical toolbox. You adjust here; chisel away there. You should spend as much time re-writing as you did writing the first draught.

Isaac Babel describes the process:

“I work like a pack mule, but it's my own choice. I'm like a galley slave who's chained for life to his oar but who loves the oar. Everything about it.. I go over each sentence, time and time again. I start by cutting all the words it can do without. You have to keep your eye on the job because words are very sly, the rubbishy ones go into hiding and you have to dig them out – repetitions, synonym, things that simply don't mean anything...I go over every image, metaphor, comparison, to see if they are fresh and accurate. If you can't find the right adjective for a noun, leave it alone. Let the noun stand by itself. A comparison must be as accurate as a slide rule, and as natural as the smell of fennel. .. I take out all the participles and adverbs I can...Adverbs are lighter. They can even lend you wings in a way. But too many of them make language spineless. ...A noun needs only one adjective, the choicest. Only a genius can afford two adjectives to one noun...Line is as important in prose as in an engraving. It has to be clear and hard. .. But the most important thing of all...is not to kill the story by working on it. Or else all your labour has been in vain. It's like walking on a tight-rope...Well, there it is...We ought all to take an oath not to mess up our job”

## 9/ CONSIDER A COACH.

As a professional writer, I'm often stunned and amazed at the attitude of people towards writing. Many people believe that they can tap away to their hearts content on the keyboard and produce something that's readable. Perhaps it's because we all wrote words on a page throughout school that many consider that writing is akin to breathing. No other art but writing has to endure such an onslaught from amateurs. Everyone can open their mouths and sing;

but singing well requires training. Yet, novice writers expect to sit at a keyboard and churn out readable text. This is not meant to discourage you and in rare cases, it does happen. But it is meant to humble you and suggest that you approach writing if not with reverence, at least with respect for its difficulty. If you find writing is easy, an absolute breeze, then I would hazard a guess that you are not writing very well. As Anne Enright says, “Only bad writers think that their work is really good”.

## 10/ GET AN EDITOR

Even if you don’t want to work with an editor while you write, you must, must get an editor to polish your manuscript before you publish it. Believe me, no matter how good you think you are at grammar, your manuscript will be full of errors that will inevitably be the first thing that you – and others – will notice, once it’s hot off the press.

Print on Demand companies tell authors that their fee includes editing, but it is generally

of a very low standard and not worth the (usually expensive) price. And don’t count on friends (unless they are professional editors) and don’t think you can self-edit. I have been a writer and an editor for 25 years and I still employ an editor to check my writing. Ideally, your manuscript should go through two stages of editing. A first content edit that works with style, tone, structure and flow and a final copy-edit that focuses on the nuts and bolts of grammar and consistent usage. Find an editor that you like. Editing is an intimate process. Offer to pay for a sample edit of a chapter or so to determine whether the editor can edit your work without changing your voice.

## 11/ HAVE A PLAN FOR MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION.

This loops back to the plan through to the end suggestion at the just a few tips and suggestions to help you on your way to self-publishing your book.



# THE PURPOSE OF YOUR FRONT COVER, BACK COVER AND SPINE

Your best chance at convincing a potential reader to inspect your book lies within the spine, front cover and back cover, so it is important to know the purpose that each plays in the process.

## PURPOSE OF THE BOOK SPINE

All authors wish it was not so, but in most bookstores your book will be presented spine-out. This is due to lack of shelf space to display all the books face-out. For this reason, the spine is the first thing that a potential buyer notices. Therefore, the spine should also attract the attention of readers so they will take it off the shelf to view the front cover. Spines with images or other intriguing elements can increase your odds of being noticed.

## PURPOSE OF THE FRONT COVER

They say that an image is worth a thousand words, but in the case of your front cover, it is worth eighty-thousand words! This one image is your chance to represent your entire story and prepare your reader to get the greatest impact out of your story. Your front cover is pure marketing, and it is your best chance at reeling in a readers' attention to your book. At first glance, your front cover should clearly communicate what the book is about while grabbing the readers' attention and convincing them to inspect the back cover. On average, a person spends 5-8 seconds on a cover that they find interesting, in contrast to spending only 1-3 seconds on covers they find unattractive. The aim is for your front cover to elicit such a powerful response that a potential buyer has the gut reaction to flip it over and read your back cover.

## PURPOSE OF THE BACK COVER

Now that your front cover has convinced them that this is indeed a book worth looking into, you have to keep their focus. People go from the front cover to the back cover with the desire to be convinced that their gut reaction was correct, and that the content of the book will be as good as the design of the cover. Luckily, a potential buyer will look at your back cover a little longer (about 10-15 seconds). If you can convince a reader with your back cover, then it's just a quick flip through the pages and a walk to the cashier away from making the sale!

# SELL MORE BOOKS WITH A POWERFUL BACK COVER

by Judy Cullins © 2003 All Rights Reserved

Did you know that your book's back cover information is, after the cover, the best way to sell more books? And, that most authors, emerging and experienced, miss this opportunity to engage more potential buyers?

Did you know that your book's back cover information is, after the cover, the best way to sell more books? And, that most authors, emerging and experienced, miss this opportunity to engage more potential buyers?

Your book's front cover and sizzling title must impress your buyers in four seconds. If they like it, they will spend eight seconds on your back cover ( mini sales letter)-a great opportunity to convince them that your book is necessary for their success.

Does your back cover pass the test?

Five Best Solutions to the Biggest Book Back Cover Mistakes

1. Mistake: Too many non-powerful words and too busy to have a focus.

Solutions: A back cover of 6 by 9 inches should have under 70 words. Use sound bites; picture and emotional words; benefits, not features; and testimonials to capture your readers' attention and to keep your message focused. Make every word count and be willing to get five-fifteen edits, because the outside of the book's message is 10 times more powerful than the inside pages.

2. Mistake: Too much superfluous material on the back cover. Do you have too long an author's bio or large photo? Potential buyers want to know how the book will help them, teach them a skill, or entertain them.

Solutions: Write only a one or two-line bio on

the back cover. Put your photo and more bio on the inside of the back cover. Omit features such as format information, which belong in the book's introduction. Connect with your buyer emotionally with specific, powerful ad copy. For self-help books use bullets with specific benefits, and enough of the right kind of testimonials to sell your book in 8 seconds. For fiction, modify to include a bit of plot, with a powerful quote or dialogue. Use bookstore models to assist you.

3. Mistake: Repeating the book's title at the top of the back cover.

Solutions: Since your potential buyers already know the title and are stimulated enough to look at the back cover, hook them with an emotional question or benefit-driven headline at the top.

This "Hot Headline" includes your best benefit and should compel your reader to buy. Notice the headlines in your newspaper. Visit your bookstore and notice other best selling authors' headlines. "What's So Tough About Writing?" by wordsmith Richard Lederer, author of *The Write Way*; "Imagine Being an Author, in Dan Poynter's *Writing Nonfiction*; or "To Age is Natural...To Grow Old is Not!" heads Rico Caveglia's "Ageless Living" back cover.

4. Mistake: Omitting testimonials.

Solutions: Testimonials sell more books than any other information on the back cover. Put three or four up. Contact a variety of people. Use one from a top professional in your field, one from a satisfied reader, one from a celebrity who cares about your topic, and one from a famous media person.

In her book, "A Kick in Your Inspiration", Ruth Cleveland got one testimonial from an exconvict!

Jacqueline Marcell, author of "Elder Rage," took eight months to get forty testimonials from celebrities. Her book is endorsed by: Steve Allen, Ed Asner, Dr. Dean Edell, Dr. John Gray, Dr. Nancy Snyderman/ABC, Regis Philbin. Jacqueline Bisset, and Phyllis Diller it was worth the effort, because in April, 2001, she made the cover of the AARP Bulletin distributed to over 35 million readers. It included a feature story, some how-tos and contacts and large pictures of the author and her book. She had to dance fast, and order 10,000 books to get distributed by the time the piece came out. After it came out, she was inundated with speaking engagements. There's a problem you might love to have!

After you write several books and become rich and famous, you, like other professionals, will fill your back cover with testimonials. You won't even need to add benefits, because people have already bought your other books and liked them. Potential buyers will purchase when they see people they trust and know recommend the book. Besides filling the back cover with testimonials, you may want to even add extra testimonials in the front pages of the book. The more testimonials, the better! for more information, contact the book coach.

5. Mistake. Independent publishers submitting galleys to reviewers, distributors, and wholesales without ANY back cover information.

Solutions: People who may help the author want the back cover! Make the back cover your first area of concern, "says Susan Howard, Director of Consulting Services at top publishingfirm, The Jenkins Group Inc., who write "The Publishing Connection" She adds, "Waiting for testimonials is generally the reason the back cover of a galley is left blank. Failure to realize the value of the back cover seems to equate with the failure to realize that the text for the finished back cover can always be changed before the printing of the book."

It's important for writers to "market while they write"-- To make each part of their book sell copies. Your book's back cover is all-important.

# DIFFERENCE IN THE FOREWORD, PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION OF A BOOK

The foreword, preface and introduction of a book all have their own distinct purposes. While all three sections are unique, they exist to create an emotional connection between the reader and the book.

## THE FOREWORD

A foreword is written by a guest author and describes why you should read the book. A well-written foreword by the right person can increase both your platform and the sales of your book. The main objective of the foreword is to introduce the author and book to the reader and try to establish integrity for both. Generally, it does not provide any additional information about the subject of the book, but only serves as a reminder of why one should continue reading.

If you follow the accepted placement of a foreword in publishing, it is located after the "Table of Contents," and the pages are labeled using lower case Roman numerals (for example: i, ii, iii) instead of Arabic numerals that are used in the rest of the book.

## THE PREFACE

The preface is written by the author and tells the readers how the book was developed and why. This section should build the credibility of the author as well as the book. In the preface, the writer provides an overview about the reasons for writing the book, as well as the scope of the topic. In addition, it needs to show that the book is worth reading. The preface is most often placed after the foreword. Sometimes a preface includes acknowledgements.

## THE INTRODUCTION

This section can be written by an editor or the author, and introduces the subject of the book. In the introduction, the author prepares the readers on what they can expect in the book. It is an author's chance to grab people's attention and increase their desire to continue reading the whole book.

## BOTTOM LINE

It is important to distinguish between the differences of the foreword, preface and introduction, as all three sections are unique and execute their own particular function.

# PROMOTE YOUR BOOK WITH BROCHURES

A good, inexpensive way to promote your books is a flyer. What makes one flyer so much better than another? Use these 10 tips to make yours stand out from the crowd.

1. Include your front cover. People want to see what your book looks like. Color is great, but not necessary. Make sure your colored book cover copies well in black and white. It's far cheaper to print in black and white.
2. Hook your prospective buyers with the headline in the top line. For instance, read about SEX as it really is! Give your audience a reason to buy--Show those benefits!
3. Include some juicy excerpts. Buyers want to see a sample of your writing.
4. Include your picture with a brief biography near it. People want to see what the author looks like. Place it on the right side if possible.
5. Add praise from others. This is the most important way to market. The praise doesn't have to be from famous people. One author added a testimonial from a convict!
6. Put ordering information on a coupon at the flyer's bottom. Include ISBN number, Web site URL, and discount information.
7. Make it easy to buy. Offer easy ways to buy: credit cards, checks or money orders. Include your toll-free 800 number.
8. Give your buyers all the ways to stay in touch with you--street address, e-mail, Web Site, local phone and fax number, and 800 number.
9. Carry at least 25 flyers with you in a folder. Give one to every person you meet. Remember the "law of seven." After seven exposures, you have a buyer!
10. Use the backside of the flyer. Multiply buying results with more testimonials on the back. Include a longer excerpt from your book there.

Your flyer is an extension of you and your book, and one of the least expensive ways to market with print. Print hundreds, even thousands so your book buying public can easily purchase your book.





# BROCHURES AND FLYERS

Brochures are a marketing mainstay because they're highly effective in multiple applications.

Leave-behinds, point-of-sales, direct mail, inquiry response, and sales support are all names for different types of brochures that take different approaches to achieve the same end: more sales.

## ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL BROCHURE

1. Headline and offer
2. Product Features and Benefits
3. Offer recap and call to action
4. Stunning Visuals
5. Quality Printing

A brochure that incorporates all of these elements, coupled with on-target distribution, is primed for success. Follow these tips to develop your own profit-pounding brochures.

Put print to work promoting your products and services.

For instant on-line quote or to place your brochure order:

[www.vimi.com](http://www.vimi.com) ⇒ "Wanted...." ⇒ Brochure....

## Top 10 Ways Printed Brochures Help Companies Prosper

1. Print is for Keeps.
2. Print is Portable
3. Print Drives a Higher ROI
4. Print is Beautiful
5. Print Plays Well with Others
6. Buyers Seek Print
7. Print is Credible
8. Print Puts Customers In Control
9. Print is Everywhere
10. Print is Personal



# 29 NEW WAYS TO SELL MORE BOOKS RIGHT NOW!

Recently I wrote about how most authors will never make any money. I was surprised by the comments, which I expected to be more negative. It seemed to comfort people to learn that they weren't failing at being an author – they were doing as well as 99.9% of other self-publishing authors, because almost everyone fails.

But it doesn't have to be that way: once you figure out that everyone is failing, it's much easier to see what they're doing wrong, and what the minority of successful authors are doing right. One of the comments I got on that post was....

What are some specific steps we can take to continue to drive sales our self (beyond being lucky enough to get a book bub). It might be nice to brainstorm a list of "lesser known" strategies.

So that's what this post is all about.

Lesser known strategies to boost sales beyond your immediate network or special advertising.

I usually harp on about building a platform, and making sure your basics are covered, because for the majority of authors who aren't selling any books, it's a problem of

- A) Cover design
- B) Description isn't powerful enough
- C) Not enough reviews
- D) The story doesn't resonate with readers

If any of these factors is missing or not good enough, extra marketing or promotion won't fix the problem.

That's why most of the time I try to focus authors on fixing THOSE problems, because the rest, while effective once you have an amazing offer, isn't very effective without one. But let's say your books are decent, your covers are decent, you're getting good reviews, and you're selling OK but just not great.

What are some simple and easy ways to get more exposure, visibility, traffic and sell more books?

I'm glad you asked.

Let's begin.

1. Google your keywords. See what sites show up on the first 3 pages. Find a way to get on five of those sites.
2. You'll probably see several Goodreads lists in the first page of results. Make sure your book is in them.
3. Instead of paying for advertising, contact the website owners about a guest post. Research topics that will appeal to their readers. Link to your website and mention your book at the bottom. Think about providing value BEFORE you think about marketing/promotion.
4. Interview ten other authors in your genre, traditional or indie. They will be more likely to say yes if you're posting the content on a bigger site (or if your blog looks amazing). If it's just a personal blog, they may not be interested. Even better, interview them about 3 specific topics relevant to your genre. Turn those 10 interviews into 30 pieces of content, or 3 major 'round up' posts about the topic (those are great pieces of content to pitch to the bigger blogs in your genre).
5. More established authors might turn down

an interview; instead you can write “top ten amazing quotes from X genre” and quote from their books, then share the article with the authors – they will likely share it to their followers. You can use Kindle’s “most highlighted” feature to easily find quotes from books in your genre.

6. Turn all those quotes, or interview statements, into an infographic, and also into individual quote pics (using canva or wordswag). Share one a day on pinterest or social media, linking back to the original article.
7. You can /should do the same thing with your own book: pull out 10 to 20 amazing quotes and turn them into image quotes. Pin and share them.
8. Everytime you learn something new about writing or publishing, write an article about what you learned. Other authors need to learn this stuff to. Let your education become content that brings traffic.
9. Giveaway a package of 5 or 10 bestselling books in your genre (newly published if possible). Books that are similar to yours, that your ideal readers would enjoy. Tell the authors about it; hopefully some of them will share your giveaway with their followers. Upviral or Kingsumo is best at getting emails and encouraging viral sharing.
10. Use targeted Facebook ads to reach your ideal readers. You can target readers who liked the specific authors or books you’re giving away, or readers who liked the specific genre. Keep it tight, don’t advertise to people who like “thrillers” or “The DaVinci Code” (too many, too broad). Use “narrow your search” to include more things, get the audience down to 20,000 or less.
11. You can do another giveaway to build your social media followers (rafflectoper or Gleam is best for this). It doesn’t have to be 5 or 10 books, it can be a cool item from ebay, etsy or even alibaba (I gave away some mermaid tail blankets recently to people who liked YA books + mermaids).
12. Once you have some followers, aim for engagement – ask them questions and try to get them to respond. You can even crowdsource content, by asking them to suggest their favorite books, quotes or authors in your genre, or asking about their reading habits. Take that info and turn it into a blog post.
13. Print some postcards or bookmarks. Find a place to leave them where your readers will be (ideally at a genre-convention or something). In general, offline things don’t work very well, online is easier and much more targeted.
14. But if you do offline things, go big and take lots of pictures. Doing a signing or something isn’t worth much, but can be good to make yourself look more credible, you can take pictures and videos and put them on your blog’s about page. Even if you only do it once, it gives you good content to use.
15. Take your book into a bookstore, put it next to the bestselling peers you want to be associated with and take some pictures as if you just spotted your book in the wild. Use those pics online.
16. Actively recommend other books in your genre to your audience. The other authors will appreciate the support, and if you drive more sales your book might start showing up under the ‘also boughts’ of the books you’re recommending (I usually include a list of recommended books to read at the end of my own books).
17. Follow 10 bestselling authors in your genre on Twitter. Reply to their clever tweets with your own clever comments.
18. Search Twitter for your genre keywords (you should know these!). Retweet 10 cool/interesting things you find.



19. Follow 10 bestselling authors in your genre on Facebook. Comment on their posts. If they're sharing a blog post, go to their site and leave a comment there too.
20. You can also instigate conversation. Did you like a book? Tell them so! Tweet them or comment on their page, thanking them for your book and telling them what you loved about it. (This kind of stuff isn't "book marketing"... it's better – it's platform building. You're trying to get your content in front of THOSE authors platforms, which are full of readers who might like your book. If you comment and start a dialogue with the authors, even something simple, people might click on your profile and read more about you and your books.
21. Organize a joint promotion. Go big – content 50 self-publishing authors in your genre who are doing decent (in the top 50K or so on Amazon) and ask if they want to do a group sale, everyone prices at 99cents for one day, and everyone promotes the discount... link to one page (probably on your site, or a bigger blog) listing all 50 authors (or every author can copy/paste your post on their own page, listing the 50 authors, links to the amazon page, and links to their blog posts. This is also great for link building – get 50 indie authors to each link to everyone else's and you'll be building a powerful blog network that's good for everybody.
22. Instead of a "book launch" party, organize a local event for authors in your genre. There are probably more of them than you think in your area (tip: you can make a Facebook group to find them, for example, "Paranormal Romance Writers in Tampa." You can also organize the event page and then spend \$20 on targeted Facebook ads to try and get in front of writers in YOUR town. Find ways to support other authors in your area or genre: it's a lot easier than just promoting your own books, and when you do group events, all those authors will be promoting your event for you, bringing new readers to you.
23. Bonus points for organizing it around a bigger movement or event, such as a movie or book launch (something more famous). You can usually find the keywords or hashtags people are using for the event, and get more visibility than usual.
24. If you're lazy, just search for hashtags... right now "Yallwest" is trending, a big young adult conference. So I can search Twitter for #yallwest and just like EVERYTHING that shows up. I know those are my peeps, and just by liking, I can be involved even though I can't attend the event (but commenting or replying is better, if you see someone you really want to be friends with).
25. Set up an Amazon giveaway for OTHER people's books in your genre; you can get them to follow you on Twitter or on Amazon (this gets a bunch of targeted readers following you, and they'll get notified of your book releases.
26. You can also set up an Amazon giveaway for YOUR books, but unless you have a big platform already people may not want them. I like doing this to my own email list, just before I launch a book or do a free campaign, I'll try to get more of my email list to also follow me on Amazon/Twitter for a free book.
27. Free books! If you aren't selling at all, you need to boost your page rank. Making changes to the cover or description won't matter if nobody can see the book, you need to do promotion first to boost rank and then see whether or not your book sticks. But that can be hard work. It's much easier to reduce the price to free or 99cents for awhile (probably both). Just doing that isn't enough however, you also need to make sure your deal is listed

on all the cheap/free ebook sites. There are tools to submit, or you can hire someone on Fiverr to do it for you (needs to be done a couple weeks before the promotion, and you need at least 5 reviews)

28. Permafree – putting your book on permafree for a couple months is better than it being invisible and getting no sales. Remember reviews are a numbers game, usually 1 in 1000. So if you're only selling 100 a month it could take you a year to get a decent amount of reviews.

In contrast, permafree books often have a few thousands downloads per day. I'll probably put all my books on permafree soon, and leave them until they have 1000+ reviews (because why not?) I can afford to do this because the books I've put out are really half books and lead-generators, to get people back to my website to sign up for the other half.

29. Now what? Share your tips!



# FRONT AND BACK SECTION (MATTER) FOR YOUR BOOKS

The following pages represent what your front and back “matter” of your book should look like. Blank Pages are included here to represent the (exactly) how your book pages should look.

A Word and PDF version of this layout is available for downloads from the Vimi.com website.

**Note:** Click on tip boxes to highlight them. Then click **Delete** to remove them from your manuscript.

When viewing an open book, odd numbered pages are on the right.

Your Book Title:  
Subtitle

---

This is the first page of your book, commonly referred to as the **half title page** and will appear on the right hand side – opposite the book’s inside front cover.

**Tip:** For a more professional look, use the same font on your title pages as used on your book cover.

**Tip:** When formatting your masterpiece, we recommend you view your manuscript with the formatting symbols displayed. This allows you to quickly identify extra spaces, full returns, and section breaks as well as header and footer settings. Click the pilcrow symbol ¶ in the Microsoft Word toolbar to view formatting marks.



When viewing an open book, even numbered pages are on the left.

**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Normal Block]**

This page can be left blank, it can include an illustration associated with the book (a frontispiece), or it can list other works by this author or publishing company.

**Note on Fonts and Styles:** The fonts in this template are set to Times New Roman using formatting styles. You can change fonts by right clicking on the style name in the toolbar (Header 1, Normal, etc.) and choosing the **Modify** option.

See section titled Recommended fonts for use in print books

**Tip:** By changing the font in the formatting style, you can be assured that fonts in all sections utilizing this style will be uniform throughout your book. For more information about using **Formatting Styles**, refer to the Microsoft Word Website.

**Tip:** Traditionally, all pages prior to and including the Table of Contents page do not include page numbers, headers, footers, or decorative components.

The full title page is usually page iii of a book, and displays the book's full title (including the subtitle), the names of the author(s), editor(s), and contributor(s). You may also include the publisher's name and/or logo followed by the year of publication at the bottom of the page.

Your Book Title:  
Subtitle

---

**Author's Name**

**Editors'and/or Contributors' Names**

**Important:** To qualify for distribution, your title, subtitle, author, and contributor names must exactly match what you entered in the first steps of the publication wizard.

**IMPORTANT:** You (or your publishing company) are the publisher of your work. **VIMI Corp. is the distributor, NOT the publisher.**

<Publisher Name and/or Logo>  
<Year of Publication>

The copyright page appears on the reverse side of the title page, usually page iv. The text on the copyright page is generally set two or three points smaller than the main body text so all of the information will fit on a single page. The copyright page contains all relevant publisher and author information, including the Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication (CIP) data.

**Example Text: Update to display information specific to your book.**

**[Style = Copyright]**

Copyright © <Year of Publication> by <Your Name>

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review or scholarly journal.

First Printing: <Year of first printing>

ISBN <Enter your ISBN>

<Your Publishing Company Name>

<Your Street Address or Post Office Box>

<Your City>, <Your State><Your Zip Code>

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You may want to include optional ordering information (example text below).

**Ordering Information:**

Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by corporations, associations, educators, and others. For details, contact the publisher at the above listed address.

U.S. trade bookstores and wholesalers: Please contact <Your Publisher Name> Tel: (XXX) XXX-XXXX; Fax: (XXX) XXX-XXXX or email <Your business email address>.

## Dedication

---

<**Example Text:** To my lovely wife/husband/life partner/children/editor/friends/pet and/or support group.

Thank you. Without your support and patience, I would have never achieved my dream.>

**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Dedication]**

The Dedication page often follows the copyright page. The dedication is optional and usually consists of one to four lines of text, set in the same font as the book's text (sometimes in italics), centered on the page about 2 inches from the top margin or aligned with the text on the copyright page.

If you include a Dedication in your book, the back of the Dedication page should be blank. A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page.

If you do not intend to include a Dedication, delete this page from the template.

**Tip:** To remove the line above the page number, double click below the line to open the **Headers and Footers** editor, choose the dropdown option on the **Borders** button in the toolbar and click **None**.

To remove the line beneath the section titles, simply click on the section title and repeat the above process.





## Contents

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<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	In this template, all section and chapter headings following the Contents page are created using <b>Heading 1</b> style.	<b>.. ix</b>
<b>Foreword .....</b>		<b>.. xi</b>
<b>Preface.....</b>	For more information about using <b>Formatting Styles</b> , see: <a href="#">Using Styles, Quick and Easy</a>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>		<b>... 1</b>
<b>Chapter 1: The Period .....</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Appendix 1 .....</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>Notes .....</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>References.....</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Glossary.....</b>		<b>11</b>

**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**  
[Style = Indent Normal]

The Contents page is set on the first right-hand page after the Copyright page or Dedication(if included). This page establishes the design motif for the remaining frontmatter (Acknowledgements, Preface, Foreword, Introduction, etc.), chapter headings, and back matter pages.

At a minimum, the Contents page should list all of the frontmatter pages that follow the contents page and the part, section, and chapter headings in the book. The Contents pages may also include all or some of the book's subheadings, but does not include the Dedication or the Contents page itself.

A simple contents page might have the word "Contents" set in 18 or 20-point type in the same font as the other front matter headings, centered, about 2 inches from the top of the page. It is customary to leave about an inch or so space between the contents title and the text that comes below. The front matter and chapter heading text on your

Contents page should be left aligned on the page, while the page numbers are right aligned.

Once you have edited all the sections of your book and added your book's text, right click on the table of contents and choose **Update Field > Update Entire Table**.

**Note:** Many works of fiction do not list chapters on a Contents page unless the chapters are individually named. In a print book, there is no need to include a Table of Contents that simply lists Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, etc.

If your table of contents requires multiple pages, the final contents page should appear on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

## Acknowledgements

---

I would like to thank my teachers, my editor, my creative writing course classmates, and my family without whose help this book would never have been completed.

Thank you for your patience and guidance, your use of the editor's red pen...

**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Indent Normal]**

The Acknowledgments page is usually the first of the front matter pages following the Contents pages. While the Dedication is usually only a few words or lines of text, the Acknowledgments page provides authors a chance to acknowledge or thank anyone they wish, especially people who were involved in the writing or production process.

If your Acknowledgement text requires multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including Acknowledgements, delete this page from the template.**

**Tip:** Traditionally, pages following the table of contents are numbered with Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). Although page numbers are not displayed on the pages before the Table of Contents, they are included in the page count. Begin using Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) in the Introduction and main story text.





## Foreword

---

<Insert Foreword text here.>

**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Indent Normal]**

The Foreword always begins on an odd numbered page (right side of an open book). The author or another person, preferably someone who will add something to the book's content and help sell more books, may write the Foreword.

When a Foreword is written by a particularly well known person, the writer's name may appear on the book's cover or title page (Forward by...), usually below the author's name and in smaller type.

The Foreword always ends with the name of the writer and often includes the date (month, year) it was written. Although it can be any length, the typical foreword is four to eight pages in length.

If your Foreword includes multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including a Foreword, delete this page from the template.**



## Preface

---

<Insert Preface text here.>

**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Indent Normal]**

When there is a Preface, it is almost always written by the author.

Unlike the Introduction, which contains information essential to understanding the book, the Preface is a chance for the author to speak directly to the reader. The Preface often explains the author's thoughts concerning the book's inspiration; however, there are no limits on what the author can write.

If your Preface includes multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including a Preface, delete this page from the template.**





## Introduction

---

<Insert Introduction text here.>

Double click in the page header to add the author's name (or to remove the text).

The author's name will display on all subsequent odd numbered pages within the book's body.

**Delete the instructional text below when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Indent Normal]**

The Introduction can be placed in one of two positions in the book. It should either begin at the end of the front matter section, or it can be considered as the first page of the story (body) and be designated as page 1 of the Arabic numbered text, as in this template.

The Introduction contains information considered vital to understanding the book. This may take the form of a summary, a synopsis of what occurred in previous volumes in a series, or anything else the author wishes to write as a means to introduce the book.

If your Introduction requires multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including an Introduction, delete this page and the next from the template.**

**Tip:** Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) are used for all pages following the front matter (Acknowledgement, Foreword, and Preface) pages.

<Book Title>

Double click in the page header to add the book's title (or to remove the text).

The title will display on all subsequent even numbered pages within the book's body.

## Chapter 1: The Period

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### [Style = Indent Normal]

IT WAS the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had nothing before us, we had nothing behind us, we were all going direct the other way, but at the same far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative of all that is ever before or behind us.

Replace this example text from *A Tale of Two Cities* with your remarkable work.

There were a king and a queen on the throne of England; the queen was fairer than crystal, and her face was clearer than crystal, and her eyes were brighter than fishes, that things

It was the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and twenty-five. Spiritual power was in the air, and the favoured period, as at the five-and-twentieth century, the Life Guards had been that arrangements were made at Westminster. Even the dozen of years, after the very year last past (such as theirs. Mere messages to the English Crown in America: which, still the human race than at the chickens of the Colonies.

France, less favoured sister of the shield and down hill, making part of her Christian past humane achievements as sentencing a youth to have his hands cut off,

To make your book an enjoyable reading experience, choose a single method for visually separating paragraphs. There are two common paragraph formats: **first line indent** (displayed here) or **block** paragraphs. Most works of fiction use first line indent while most non-fiction works use block paragraph style. Of course, there are exceptions, so you must choose what works best for your book.

Whatever style you choose, do not mix the two and do not use the **Return** key to add extra spaces between paragraphs.

The easiest way to format your document text is to use **Styles**. You can set the **Normal** paragraph style to include indents and/or spacing between paragraphs. This ensures formatting is consistent throughout your book. Also, if you decide to make format changes, you can simply update the style rather than individually updating the format for each paragraph or header.

For more information about applying and editing styles, see: [Style Basics in Word](#)

<Book Title>

his tongue torn out with pincers, and his body burned alive, because he had not kneeled down in the rain to do honour to a dirty procession of monks which passed within his view, at a distance of some fifty or sixty yards. It is likely enough that, rooted in the woods of France and Norway, there were growing trees, when that sufferer was put to death, already marked by the Woodman, Fate, to come down and be sawn into boards, to make a certain movable framework with a sack and a rope, to hang the poor wretch in the Paris, beset by poultry, which the Farmer, Death, had already set apart to be his tumbrils of the Revolution. But that Woodman and that Farmer, though they work unceasingly, work silently and no one heard them as they went about with muffled tread: the rather, forasmuch as to entertain any suspicion that they were awake, was to be atheistical and traitorous.

**Warning:** If you copy and paste your manuscript text into this template, you will most likely also copy the default style settings from your original manuscript. No worries! Simply follow the instructions in [Style Basics in Word](#) to update and format your text and chapter headings.

## Appendix 1

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**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Indent Normal]**

A book can have a single appendix or many appendices. If the book contains more than one appendix, label them as Appendix A, B, C or Appendix 1, 2, 3, etc.

The design for an appendix heading is often identical to the book's chapter headings, but "Appendix" followed by its number or letter replaces the chapter number.

The appendix includes material that does not fit into the flow of the book for one reason or another. It can be reference material, a long extract, a table, or just about anything the author wants to add to the book.

Depending on the type of material involved, the appendix can be set as regular body text, or in a smaller type size if it's an extract or table, or if you need to reduce the page count in your book.

If your Appendix requires multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including an Appendix, delete this page from the template.**





## Notes

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**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Notes]**

The Notes for a book can be set as footnotes at the bottom of the page within the main body of the book or on a Notes page in the backmatter. The Notes should come before the References or Bibliography (if included).

The font used in the Notes is generally set about 2 points smaller than the main body text. Notes are usually set in the same font as the body text, which is almost always a serif font such as Times or Garamond.

The first line of the note is usually set with a ¼-inch indent. If the main body text is left aligned then the notes should also be left aligned.

If your Notes require multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including Notes, delete this page from the template.**



## References

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**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = References Hanging Indent]**

The References section (or Bibliography) generally follows the Notes section if there is one. The references text can be set in the same font and size as the Notes.

The References are often set with a ragged right margin (i.e. not aligned), especially if there are long website addresses that would make it difficult to justify the text without leaving big spaces between words.

To make them easier to read, the References can be set with a small amount of extra space between entries, or with ¼-inch hanging indent, where the first line of text is flush left with the text margin and the following lines are indented.

If your list of References requires multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including a list of References, delete this page from the template.**

## Recommended fonts for use in print books

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If you are planning to upload a Microsoft Office Word file (.doc or .docx) for Lulu to convert to a print-ready PDF, we recommend choosing a font from the following list..

- Arial
- Book Antiqua
- Bookman Old Style
- Century
- Courier
- Garamond
- Palatino
- Tahoma
- Times New Roman
- Verdana
- Symbols

If you are planning to upload your own PDF, you may use any fonts you like, but you must embed the fonts in the PDF before uploading.

Follow these general guidelines when choosing your fonts:

- Serif fonts are best for printed documents. Use serif fonts like Garamond, Times New Roman and Palatino for blocks of body text.
- Sans serif fonts are best for online documents and for display text. Use sans serif fonts like Arial and Verdana if you intend your book to be viewed online.
- Use bold sans serif fonts for title text or headings.



## Glossary

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**Delete this instructional text when formatting your book.**

**[Style = Glossary]**

If the book has a glossary, it usually comes after the Notes and References sections if included. The Glossary text is usually set in the book's main body font and size, but it can be set smaller if page count is an issue.

The glossary terms are often set off in some way, using a bold or italic font. It is also common to set off the entries with a hanging indent and/or extra space between the terms.

If your Glossary requires multiple pages, the final page should be on an even numbered page (left side of an open book). A section break is included below to automatically insert the required blank page if required.

**If you are not including a Glossary, delete this page from the template.**



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada

Library and Archives Canada (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng>)

Home / Services and Programs / ISBN Canada

## ISBN CANADA

Please note: the ISMN (International Standard Music Number) is the required standard for any publisher wishing to distribute annotated music in Canada. Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is currently developing separate web pages for ISMN, which will be available at a later date. For now, publishers may request an ISMN using the ISBN (International Standard Book Number) registration process.

The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) Canada online system is a free service that allows publishers to manage their ISBN account and logbook, to assign their ISBNs to future publications, and to modify information about their publications.

To request ISBNs, you must first create an account in the ISBN Canada online system. As a Canadian publisher or self-publisher, you are able to manage your own ISBN account. This will allow you to view your logbook online, update and edit data, as well as request new ISBN blocks.

To register, go to create an ISBN Canada account (</eng/services/isbn-canada/Pages/create-account-isbn-canada.aspx>).

To access your account, login to the ISBN Canada online system (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ciss-ssci/app/index.php?&lang=eng>)

### ABOUT ISBN CANADA

International Standard Book Number (ISBN)

The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is a unique numerical identifier for books, pamphlets, educational kits, microforms, CD-ROMs and other digital and electronic publications. Assigning a unique number to each published title provides that title with its own, unduplicated, internationally recognized identifier. Each different format of an electronic publication (e.g., Kindle, Kobo, EPUB, MOBI, PDF) that is published and made separately available is assigned a separate ISBN. Publishers, booksellers, libraries and others in the book industry use ISBNs to identify publications and determine the publishing country. An ISBN is required for the sale and distribution of a publication.

Please note that periodicals, magazines, journals and other types of serial publications are not eligible for ISBNs. They are covered by a separate identification system called International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).

Printed music such as sheet music and music scores are assigned an International Standard Music Number (ISMN).

### DEFINITION OF A CANADIAN PUBLISHER /SELF-PUBLISHER

"Canadian Publisher" means a person or entity who:

- ♦ makes a publication available in Canada, and
- ♦ publishes from an official office of business that resides within Canada, and
- ♦ indicates that the published material's place of publication, when it is given, is within Canada, and
- ♦ has at least 75% of its employees based in Canada

## OBTAINING AN ISBN

As a Canadian publisher or self-publisher, you can apply to obtain an ISBN through the ISBN Canada online system, or request that a form be sent to you by email, fax or regular mail.

For inquiries, please call 1-866-578-7777 (select 1+7+3) or email [BAC.ISBN.LAC@canada.ca](mailto:BAC.ISBN.LAC@canada.ca).

ISBNs are free to Canadian publishers and are issued within 10 business days.

### OBTAINING AN ISBN FOR GOVERNMENT OF CANADA PUBLICATIONS

The Depository Services Program (DSP) of Public Works and Government Services Canada has delegated authority to assign ISBNs to publications produced by Canadian government departments and agencies. Applications for ISBNs may be submitted online by departmental publishing staff on the Government of Canada Publications website.

### THE 13-DIGIT ISBN

The ISBN changed from a 10- to 13-digit number on January 1, 2007. All sectors of the book trade and libraries are affected by this change. For details, please consult our frequently asked questions.

#### Contact us

Canadian ISBN Agency  
Library and Archives Canada  
395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N4 CANADA  
Telephone: 819-994-6872

Library and Archives Canada: 1-866-578-7777 (select 1+7+3) (Toll free in Canada and the US)

Fax: 819-934-7535

Email: [BAC.ISBN.LAC@canada.ca](mailto:BAC.ISBN.LAC@canada.ca)

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE PUBLISHERS

If you are a French-language publisher located in Canada and you publish in French

exclusively, you may wish to have an ISBN with a French-language designator "2". For more information, please contact the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) at [isbn@banq.qc.ca](mailto:isbn@banq.qc.ca).

## ISBN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. WHAT IS AN ISBN?

An ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is a 13-digit number that uniquely identifies each specific edition of a book or book-like product. This 13-digit number is divided into five parts of various lengths; each part is separated by a hyphen.

The five parts of an ISBN, in order, are:

1. the EAN (European article number) product code: the first three digits of the EAN barcode number
2. the group identifier: a single digit following the EAN product code that specifies the country or language in which the book is published
3. the publisher prefix: a number that identifies a particular publisher within the preceding group
4. the title identifier: a number that identifies a particular title or edition of a title issued by the preceding publisher
5. the check digit: a single digit at the end of the ISBN that validates the accuracy of the ISBN

### 2. WHAT IS ISBN-13?

Since 2007, ISBNs have changed from 10 digits to 13 digits. ISBN-13 is now the exclusive ISBN used on books and book-related products. Note: The letters ISBN always precede the number.

### 3. WHAT ITEMS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR ISBNs?

The ISBN is intended for a monographic publication: text that stands on its own as a product, whether in printed, audio or electronic format. ISBNs are never assigned to music, performances, or images such as art

prints or photographs. Below are examples of items that qualify for ISBNs and examples of items that do not qualify for ISBNs. However, the lists are not exhaustive.

#### ITEMS THAT QUALIFY FOR ISBNs

- ♦ Audiobooks
- ♦ Books
- ♦ Brochures
- ♦ CD-ROMs (non-music)
- ♦ DVDs (educational, documentary)
- ♦ E-books (digital books)
- ♦ Graphic novels
- ♦ Maps
- ♦ Pamphlets
- ♦ Picture books
- ♦ Posters (educational)
- ♦ Storybooks

#### ITEMS THAT DO NOT QUALIFY FOR ISBNs

- ♦ Art prints and posters
- ♦ Board games
- ♦ Calendars
- ♦ Colouring books (with no text)
- ♦ Comic books (periodical format)
- ♦ Crossword puzzles
- ♦ Customizable products
- ♦ Digital applications
- ♦ Greeting cards
- ♦ Individual pictures or photographs
- ♦ Music CDs
- ♦ Office supplies and stationery (e.g., agendas, bookmarks, diaries)
- ♦ Periodicals (e.g., journals, magazines, newspapers)
- ♦ Playing cards
- ♦ Search engines
- ♦ Sheet music and music scores
- ♦ Shirts (e.g., t-shirts)
- ♦ Websites

#### 4. CAN I USE BOTH THE 10-DIGIT AND 13-DIGIT ISBN ON A PUBLICATION?

Publications should only carry the 13-digit ISBN. However, you can use both the 10-digit and 13-digit ISBN on a publication if the ISBNs were issued between January 1, 2005, and December 31, 2006.

#### 5. WILL THE EAN PREFIX ALWAYS REMAIN "978"?

No. The EAN prefix 978 will change in the future. When that happens, ISBNs will have the prefix EAN 979. ISBNs that begin with 979 cannot be produced by a converter (i.e., by adding the prefix to a 10-digit ISBN and recalculating the check digit). These ISBNs cannot be converted to a 10-digit ISBN.

#### 6. HOW CAN I GET AN ISBN IN CANADA?

Obtaining an ISBN

As a Canadian publisher or self-publisher, you can apply to obtain an ISBN through the ISBN Canada online system, or request that a form be sent to you by email, fax or regular mail.

For inquiries, please call 1-866-578-7777 (select 1+7+3) or email [BAC.ISBN.LAC@canada.ca](mailto:BAC.ISBN.LAC@canada.ca).

ISBNs are free to Canadian publishers and are issued within 10 business days.

#### OBTAINING AN ISBN FOR GOVERNMENT OF CANADA PUBLICATIONS

The Depository Services Program (DSP) of Public Works and Government Services Canada has delegated authority to assign ISBNs to publications produced by Canadian government organizations. Applications for ISBNs may be submitted online by departmental publishing staff on the Government of Canada Publications website: Apply for ISBN / Catalogue Number.

#### FRENCH-LANGUAGE PUBLISHERS

If you are a French-language publisher located in Canada who publishes in French exclusively, you may wish to have an ISBN with a French-language designator "2". For more information, please contact the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ) at [isbn@banq.qc.ca](mailto:isbn@banq.qc.ca).

#### 7. IS MY ISBN VALID WORLDWIDE?

Yes. An ISBN is valid internationally. As a publisher, you can use the same ISBN in each

country where you wish to sell your books. In fact, you must request ISBNs only from the country in which you reside. Publishing firms that have offices worldwide must be assigned ISBNs by the country in which the head office or headquarters is located.

## 8. HOW CAN I GET A BARCODE FOR MY BOOK?

The Canadian ISBN Agency does not provide barcodes; they are issued by private companies. We advise you to speak with your printer or graphic designer about barcodes, as some of them offer the barcoding service. You may also search for local barcode providers online or in the local yellow pages directory.

## 9. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ISBN, ISMN AND ISSN?

### ISBN

ISBNs are International Standard Book Numbers. They can be assigned to monographic publications, such as books, e-books and audiobooks.

### ISMN

ISMNs are International Standard Music Numbers. They can be assigned to notated music (scores and sheet music) whether published in print, online or in other media.

### ISSN

ISSNs are International Standard Serial Numbers. They can be assigned to periodical publications, such as magazines and journals.

## 10. WHAT IS A PUBLISHER PREFIX?

A publisher prefix is not an ISBN! The publisher prefix identifies the publisher. A prefix issued by the Canadian ISBN Agency indicates that the publisher is Canadian. To obtain a full 13-digit ISBN, you must first apply for an ISBN Canada online system account. Once approved, you will receive an email with instructions to follow.

## 11. DOES THE ISBN PROVIDE COPYRIGHT PROTECTION?

The ISBN identifies the publisher and the books published by the publisher. You will need an ISBN to sell and/or distribute your publication

in libraries and bookstores. However, the ISBN does not provide copyright protection. For questions about rights and protection, please contact the copyright office:

Canadian Intellectual Property Office  
Industry Canada  
Place du Portage, Tower 1  
50 Victoria Street  
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0C9

Telephone: 1-866-997-1936

Fax: 819-953-2476

Email: [ic.contact-contact.ic@canada.ca](mailto:ic.contact-contact.ic@canada.ca)

Website: Canadian Intellectual Property Office

## 12. WHAT IS THE COST OF AN ISBN IN CANADA?

ISBNs are free. To obtain one, you must be a Canadian publisher or self-publisher physically and permanently located in Canada. You must have a Canadian-based company whose head office is located in Canada. Self-publishers must reside in Canada to obtain ISBNs from the Canadian ISBN Agency. The publisher's nationality, citizenship or intended market are irrelevant in the assignment of ISBNs.

## 13. DO DIFFERENT FORMATS REQUIRE SEPARATE ISBNs?

Yes. Every time there is a change in format or a change in edition, a new ISBN must be assigned (e.g., softcover, hardcover, e-book, new edition, revised edition, colour version, black and white version). An ISBN identifies one specific publication that belongs to a publisher. Different e-book formats (EPUB, MOBI, Kobo and PDF) also require separate ISBNs.

## 14. DO I HAVE TO CREATE AN ACCOUNT EVERY TIME I NEED AN ISBN?

No. You need to create an online account only once. After your ISBN Canada online system account has been approved by Canadian ISBN Agency staff, you will be able to request ISBN prefixes and assign numbers to your publications.



## 15. WHAT IS ONIX?

ONIX is a standard format that publishers must use when distributing electronic information about books to wholesale, online and retail booksellers, other publishers, and any other supply chain partner involved in the production, review or sale of books.

ONIX fields are used to describe a publication in the ISBN Canada online system. Only the publisher and the Canadian ISBN Agency can see this information. Publishers are free to change their information at any time.

You can also find more information about ONIX on the BookNet Canada site.

### HELP

#### Getting into ISBN Canada

To register for an ISBN account, all publishers, including those who have already received ISBNs in the past, must complete the online registration form.

Canadian ISBN Agency staff will review your application and will contact you if they have questions. However, you will first be directed to the Confirmation and Statement of Use.

Once your ISBN account is approved, you will receive an email with your username and password, and instructions for using the system.

Please note: mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk (\*). You must complete these fields or your application will be rejected.

### CREATING AN ISBN CANADA ACCOUNT

To create an account in the online system, please complete the registration form. This will give Canadian ISBN Agency staff relevant information about your publishing company, your publisher contact (the individual user of the online system) and the items for which you need ISBNs.

Please note that it can take up to 10 business days for your account to be approved.

#### Inputting publication information

The registration form has four sections:

- Publisher information
- Contact person information
- Publisher/ISBN Agency activity
- Publication information

You may return to any section at any time to add, change, or delete data you have input previously.

All fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are mandatory.

#### Publisher information

Information entered in this section becomes the official public publisher record and will be displayed in the Canadian ISBN Publishers' Directory.

#### Publisher name\*

This is the official name of the publishing company. It is also the official name of the group, society, association, entity, corporation, centre or person who pays the printer or manufacturer to produce the publication.

The publisher name is not:

- the name of a printing company or graphic designer;
- the name of a print-on-demand printing or publishing service;
- an individual acting on behalf of a self-publisher.

#### Self-publishers

If you are publishing your own book or paying a printer to produce your publications, you are then a self-publisher. Your publisher name can be:  
your personal name  
an official company name, whether or not it is legally registered

#### Contact name\*

Enter the name of the person who owns the publishing company.

#### Contact job title\*

With regards to the publications: are you the author, director, editor, secretary, etc.?

#### Street address\*

Enter the official address for the publisher. If you are a self-publisher, this may be a post office box number or your home address.

#### City\*

Province/State\*

Select from the drop-down menu.

Postal code\*

Use this format: X1X 1X1

Telephone\*

Use this format: 000-000-0000

Fax

Optional. Use this format: 000-000-0000

Email

Required if you wish to have access to the online system. If not, optional.

Website

Optional. Enter the official publisher website address (URL).

Contact person information

This section provides information on the publisher's representative or agent who is applying for the ISBNs on the publisher's behalf. This information is for internal use only. It is not displayed in the Canadian ISBN Publishers' Directory.

Contact name\*

Enter the name of the person who will be accessing and managing the ISBN account. The contact is the primary person who manages the ISBN account.

Contact job title\*

With regard to the publications. Please indicate the role of the contact person, such as author, designer, editor, illustrator, etc.

Email\*

Enter the contact's email address. It may be different from the official email address for the publisher.

All notification messages from the Canadian ISBN Agency will be sent to this email address.

Publisher / ISBN activity

This section provides information on the publisher's ISBN-related activities.

What was the last ISBN assigned to you?

(if applicable)

Please indicate if you were assigned ISBNs in the past.

I don't remember.

Check this box if you do not remember the last ISBN assigned to you.

How many ISBNs do you estimate you will use during the next three (3) years?

If you plan on publishing different formats (hardcover, softcover, e-book) you will need a unique ISBN for each edition.

Publication information

Describe one (1) forthcoming publication (e.g., book, video, CD) that currently requires an ISBN.

Type of publication\*

This field refers to the binding, media or format of your publication.

Select a type from the drop-down menu.

Title\*

The title is the exact, formal title that will appear on the publication title page of a book, or that will be prominently displayed elsewhere for other formats.

Subtitle

Optional. Useful for distinguishing works with the same title but different subtitles.

Publication date\*

Enter the anticipated date of publication. Please indicate the month and year.

Click <Submit> when you have completed this section.

Once you have submitted your registration form, your application will be sent to the ISBN Canada online system. When it has been approved, you will receive an email with your username and password at the email address you supplied in the Contact person information section of the registration form. You will then be able to log in to your account.

[USING THE ONLINE SYSTEM TO MANAGE YOUR ISBNs](#)

## Logging in

- Go to the login screen
- Enter your Username and Password
- Click on <Login> (if you have forgotten your password, click on <Forgotten Password?>)

## Editing publisher information

- Select <Profile> from the menu
- Click the <Edit> button
- Complete all mandatory fields (marked with an asterisk \*) on the <Edit Publisher> page
- Click <Save> when the form is completed
- How to assign an ISBN

## Select <Manage Logbook> from the menu

- Click on <Assign New ISBN> in the white space at the top of the page
- Updating item description

## Select <Manage Logbook> on the menu

- Click on the ISBN for which you wish to change the publication information
- Input or edit the item description
- Click on <Update>
- Requesting an ISBN prefix

Note: All ISBNs in your current logbook must be used before we can assign a new block.

## Select <Request ISBN Prefix> from the menu

- Choose a block size based on anticipated publications

- Click the <Submit Query> button

Your request will be sent to the Canadian ISBN Agency mailbox. Staff will review your request and assign the next block within one to two business days. (This time may vary if clarification is required.)

## Service standard

- Approval in the system may take up to 10 business days.

## CANADIAN ISBN PUBLISHERS' DIRECTORY

### WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE DIRECTORY

The Canadian ISBN publishers' directory contains the names and contact information of most Canadian publishers, past and present, who have been assigned ISBNs from the

Canadian ISBN Agency. It lists over 55,000 publishers who use ISBNs for their Canadian publications.

Information in the directory is provided by the ISBN Canada online system. The system is a free online service allowing publishers to manage their ISBN logbooks, to assign their ISBNs to future publications, and to modify information about their publications.

### WHAT'S NOT IN THE DIRECTORY

Many French-language publishers are not included in the directory because their ISBNs are assigned by the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ). For more information, consult BAnQ's Directory of Canadian French-language publishers (available in French only).

### Or contact BAnQ:

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, Agence ISBN  
2275 rue Holt  
Montréal, Québec H2G 3H1  
Telephone (Montréal): 514-873-1101, ext. 3785; or 1-800-363-9028, ext. 3785  
Fax: 514-873-4310  
Email: isbn@banq.qc.ca  
Website: www.banq.qc.ca

### CURRENCY OF INFORMATION

Publishers are responsible for updating their information in the Canadian ISBN publishers' directory. The Canadian ISBN Agency may also update information as it becomes available. If a publisher has not entered the online system recently, the information in that publisher's listing may not be up-to-date.

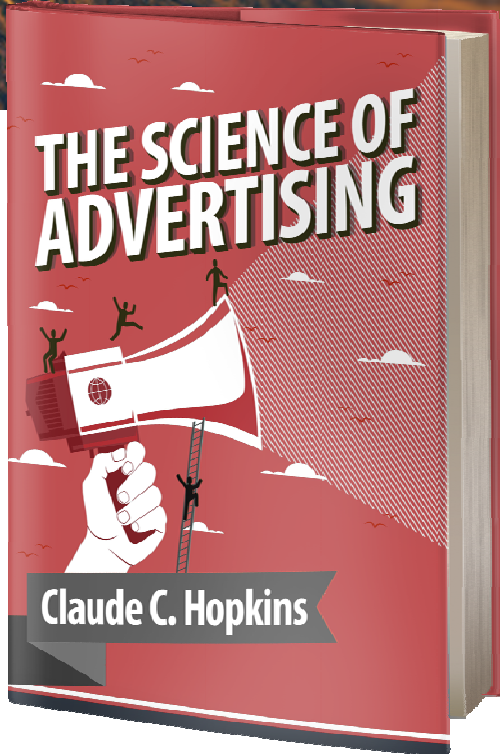
### Publishers who have ceased operations

The Canadian ISBN publishers' directory is a complete record of all publishers who have registered with the ISBN Canada system, including publishers who have ceased operations. As the information becomes available, records in the directory are updated to indicate that a publisher has ceased operations.

### Information in the directory listings

Each listing in the directory gives the publisher's name and postal address, plus their telephone number and email address where applicable.

# SAMPLE MEDIA KIT



Author: Claude Hopkins  
Category: Business Marketing  
Print ISBN:  
Publisher:

## MediaKit

[Author Bio](#)

[Book Bio](#)

[Testimonials](#)

[Target Audience](#)

[Book Excerpt](#)

[Interview Questions](#)

[Story Ideas for Reporters](#)

[Downloadable Author & Book Photos](#)

[Contact Author](#)

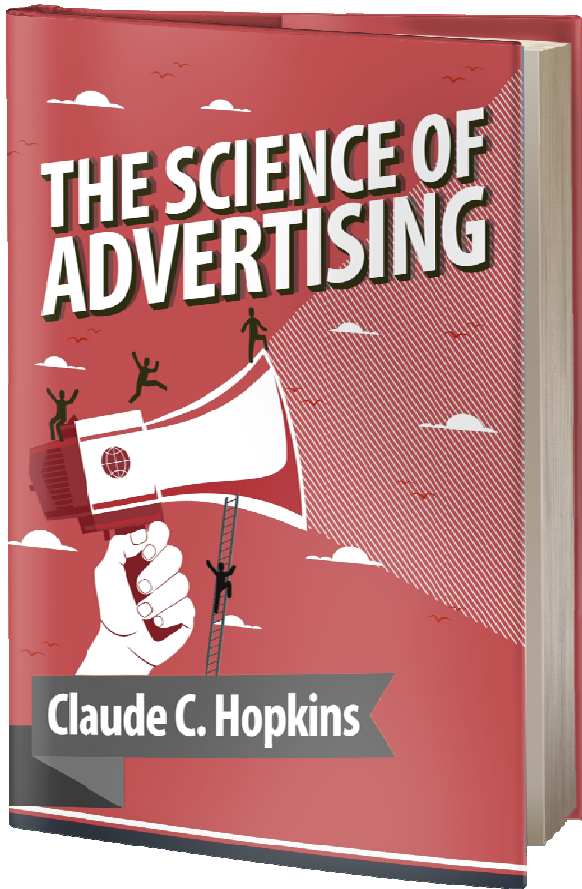
# AuthorBio

Claude C. Hopkins was one of the great advertising pioneers, he believed advertising existed only to sell something and should be measurable and justify the results that it produced. He worked for various companies and advertising firms. At the age of 41, he was hired by Albert Lasker owner of Lord & Thomas advertising in 1907 for \$186,000 a year the current equivalent of \$4.7 million a year. Hopkins insisted copywriters researched their client products and produce reason-why copy. He believed that a good product was often its own best salesperson and as such he was a great believer in sampling. To track the results of his advertising he used key coded coupons and then tested headlines, offers and propositions against one another. He used the analysis of these measurements to continually improve his ad results, driving responses and the cost effectiveness of his clients advertising spend.



Claude C. Hopkins





Author: Claude Hopkins  
Category: Business Marketing  
Print ISBN:  
Publisher:

# BookBio

Advertising is based on fixed principles and reasonably exact science. The causes and effects have been analyzed until and are well understood. The correct methods and procedures have been proved and well established. We know what is most effective, and we act on basic law. Advertising, once a gamble, has thus become, under able direction, one of the safest business ventures. Certainly no other enterprise with comparable possibilities need involve so little risk. Therefore, this book deals, not with theories and opinions, but with well-proved principles and facts. It is a book for students and a safe guide for advertisers. Every statement has been weighed. The book is established on fundamentals.



# TESTIMONIALS



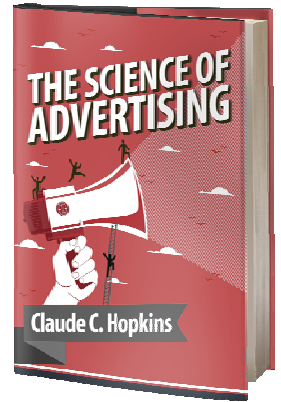
"I've read it over 50 times and learn something new with each reading." **Jay Abrahams**



"One of the most valuable books ever written on the subject of direct marketing.- **Gary Halbert, The Ravin' Maven of Marketing**



"Nobody, at any level, should be allowed to have anything to do with advertising until he has read this seven times. It changed the course of my life." - **David Ogilvy, The Father of Advertising**



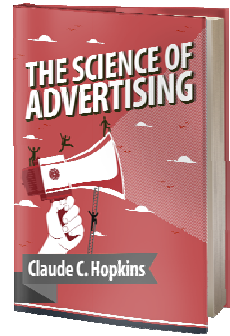
"This is classic book is a reminder that greatness is achieved by standing on the shoulders of giants." **Gregory Ciotti, marketing strategist at Help Scout**

"Claude Hopkin's book should be required reading for anyone thinking about getting into marketing or even business of any kind." **Justin Michie, MarketingGoneWild.com**

"This book by Claude Hopkins could possibly be the most important advertising book ever written." **Gregory Nemer**

"This book is one of the greatest classics in all of Advertising" **Terry Dean**

# TargetAudience



## WHO SHOULD READ

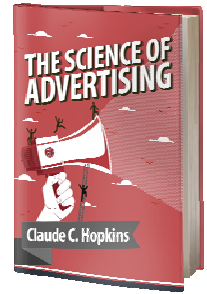
- copywriters
- marketers
- business leaders
- business owners & entrepreneurs
- salespeople
- customer service representatives
- human resources professionals

## BOOK BENEFITS

- advance their career
- learn secrets of copywriting
- increase customer retention
- manage marketing analytics
- make difficult conversations easy
- get and keep the right customers



# BookExcerpt



## Chapter 3: Offer Service

Remember people are selfish, as we all are. They care nothing about your interests or profit. They seek service for themselves. Ignoring this fact is a common and costly mistake made in advertising. Ads say in effect, "Buy my brand. Give me the business you give to others. Let me have the money." That is not a popular appeal.

The best ads ask no one to buy. That is useless. Often they do not quote a price. They do not say that dealers handle the product. The ads are based entirely on service. They offer wanted information. They site advantages to users. Perhaps they offer a sample, or to buy the first package, so the customer may prove the claims without any cost or risks. Some of these ads seem altruistic. But they are based on human nature. Smart marketers know how people are led to buy. This again is salesmanship. The good salesman does not cry a name. He doesn't say, "Buy my article." He presents the customers side of his service until the natural result is to buy.

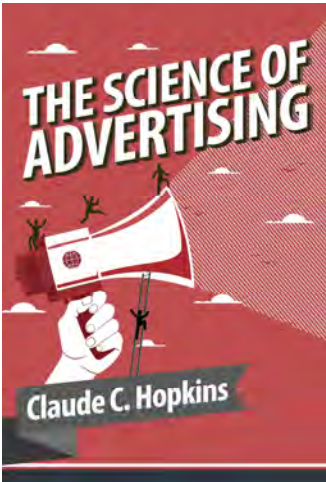
A brush maker has some 2,000 canvassers who sells brushes from house to house. He is enormously successful in a line which would seem very difficult. And it would be for his men if they asked the housewives to buy. But they don't. They go to the door and say, "I was sent here to give you a brush. I have samples here and I want you to take your choice." The housewife is all smiles and attention. In picking out one brush she sees several she wants. She is also anxious to reciprocate the gift. So the salesman gets an order.

Another concern sells coffee, etc., by wagons in some 500 cities. The man drops in with a half-pound of coffee and says, "Accept this package and try it. I'll come back in a few days to ask how you liked it." Even when he comes back he doesn't ask for an order. He explains that he wants the women to have a fine kitchen utensil. It isn't free, but if she likes the coffee he will credit five cents on each pound she buys until she has paid for the article. Always some service.

The maker of the electric sewing machine motor found advertising difficult. So, on good advice, he ceased soliciting a purchase. He offered to send to any home, through any dealer, a motor for one weeks' use. With it would come a man to show how to operate it. "Let us help you for a week without cost or obligation," said the ad. Such an offer was resistless, and about nine in ten of the trials led to sales.

So in many, many lines. Cigar makers send out boxes to anyone and say, "Smoke ten,

# STORY IDEAS FOR REPORTERS:



**1. Ad Ideas:** What are the steps to follow when creating an ad?

**2. Advertising failure:** My ads continually fail to convert. What can I do to make them succeed?

**3. Learning about your consumer:** I don't know much about my customers. What are some ways to learn more about how they think?

**4. Product names:** What should I name my product so that it sells?

**5. Try and buy:** I know that people will love my product if I can just get them to try it. What are some ways to entice them to try it?

**6. Where to advertise:** Should I advertise nationally? Locally?

**7. Guarantee success:** How can I guarantee that my ad campaign will succeed?

**8. Market testing:** What is market testing and how can it benefit me?

**9. Customer retention:** How can I make sure my customers keep coming back?

**10. Ad content:** What should my ad say? Should I use a lot of copy? Should I use lots of pictures? Should I be amusing?

**11. Taking the guesswork out:** If marketing trial and error? Or are there scientific principals you can apply to make sure you sell?

**12. Headlines:** What should my headline for my ad be? Is the headline even important?

# DOWNLOADABLE PHOTOS

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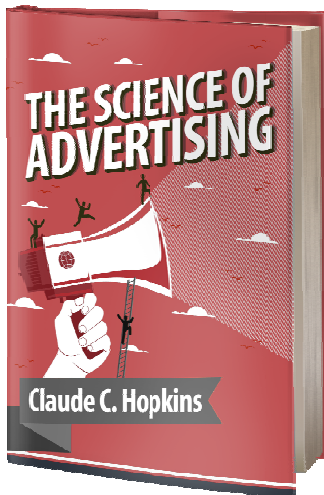
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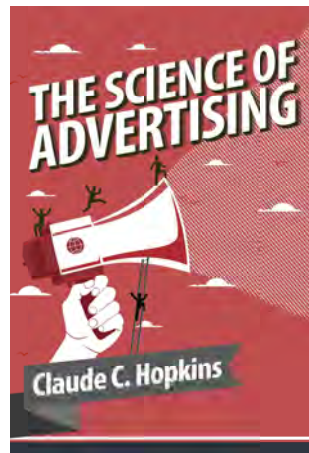
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# Connect with Claude C.

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# SELLING ON AMAZON



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**Comparing Amazon Advantage and Selling on Amazon**

<b>Selling on Amazon + Fulfillment by Amazon*</b>	<b>Amazon Advantage</b>
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# CHAPTER ONE

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## CHAPTER ONE

*“Nice intro quote here...” ~ Someone famous*

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Cras lectus ante, egestas quis blandit non, mattis quis metus. Vivamus sapien dui, ornare nec massa eget, porttitor gravida tellus. Donec hendrerit posuere placerat. Nulla facilisi. Cras non orci at nisi rutrum sagittis ac congue dolor. Aliquam pellentesque libero sed libero male suada laoreet. In venenatis dignissim sagittis. Mauris ligula elit, accumsan vel arcu et, dignissim rutrum dolor. Praesent vehicula lacus nunc, sed feugiat ligula semper et. Nunc id massa venenatis magna ornare faucibus quis sit amet arcu. Nam hendrerit mauris vitae urna pharetra lacinia. Aenean blandit nisi quis urna porta, id euismod magna condimentum.

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## 1

## The beginning of the story

**CRAS VEL PHARETRA LEO.** Quisque cursus convallis nisl, ac dapibus massa aliquam ac. Donec tempor neque at ante dapibus tristisque. Aenean eget mi massa. Ut velit neque, auctor ac sapien sodales, tristisque porttitor velit. Mauris vitae lorem eget nibh euismod cursus. Duis pharetra risus ut neque commodo pretium. Praesent suscipit at ligula vitae accumsan. Aenean condimentum aliquam dapibuEtiam ut justo aliquet, pulvinar tellus sit amet, lacinia arcu. Vestibulum non sagittis leo, sed volutpat odio.

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OptionD

# CHAPTER 4

## The beginning of the story

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## AUTHOR NAME

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Option **E**



## Chapter Title

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## BOOK TITLE

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Option **F**

# 2

## A FATED MEETING ON A DARK NIGHT IN BRUSSELS

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## CHAPTER

## THREE

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# Chapter One

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## CHAPTER ONE

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## Subhead 1

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OptionK

## SUBTITLE 2 HERE

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Option **L**

## LOREM IPSUM

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Option **M**



# CHAPTER 1

*M*aecenas porttitor ante a rhoneus convallis. Pellentesque tincidunt metus vel congue hendrerit. Aenean vehicula, odio nec dapibus auctor, mi nibh rutrum felis, nec molestie ipsum nisi nec purus. Ut felis mauris, volutpat at vulputate et, sodales sed arcu. Nunc ac velit condimentum, imperdiet turpis id, accumsan dolor. Ut ornare velit in tempus ullamcorper. Vivamus mauris velit, congue eget ultrices eu, pharetra id nisi. Curabitur eget lacus quis justo ultricies consequat id ultricies lacus. Donec et tempor augue, at consequat ipsum. Donec sapien urna, feugiat id interdum vitae, pretium vel nisi. Nullam suscipit consectetur pulvinar. Aliquam ac libero nisl. Ut pretium nisi cursus scelerisque dictum. Sed vitae bibendum tortor.

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Option **N**

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Option 

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Option 



# BEST FONTS BY GENRE

It's important to choose fonts for your book that match the genre, so readers can quickly identify it as the type of book they like to read. There are thousands of fonts to choose from, but here are some of my favorites. If you find one you like, just Google it. Some are free, but some you may have to buy. Fonts are usually under \$50.

***Good luck!***

BEST FONTS FOR THRILLER

LHF HICK STICKS LHF Tallington BETA  
LHF EUPHORIA LHF CHARLOTTE  
LHF EUPHORIA MONTSERRAT  
LHF CONCLAVE SUBRAYADA  
LHF claretian LHF OLD NUC  
BEBAS NEUE BLOCK CONDMED BOLD  
DEVIL BREEZE LLRubberGrotesque  
ZurichLXCnEU emPanada LILAC ONYX  
U.S. 101 GEARED SLAB MALARIA  
VALENTINA MASTERPLAN  
LHF CONCLAVE  
FALLING SKIES LHF FANTIQUE  
HALFBLOCK  
GESSO Garogier Long Cool Mother MISPROJECT  
GOTICA MODERNA HH FRANCISCO  
HURSHEYS LUCAS BRIOSA  
INTERSTATE MONO MUNCIE  
ISABELLA STD Liberation  
FRANCHISE EPitough Sans Oswald  
LHF Argentine Solid LINUX  
Mekanik LET LIBERTINE CAPITALS  
LHF CLARETIAN Creativ INDIE



BEST FONTS FOR WESTERN

Oklahoma *Phraell* BIG TOP  
OUTSTANDING  
THUNDERBIRD  
PHOSPHORUS SULPHIDE *Pompierre*  
RIO GRANDE *Raymond*  
Poor Richard BIRCH RM GINGER  
PORTMANTEAU NASHVILLE  
RIDER Rye Rockwell  
Romeo ROSEWOOD Sanford  
ROMANTIQUE  
CM OLD webster *Scotch*  
WESTERN Roman  
TUSCAN CAPS  
Sancreek ARMENIANCIRCUS  
Sansita One Western  
*Satisfaction* THE DEAD SALOON  
SHADOWED SERIF  
Sexsmith Westwood  
SERAPION CARNIVAL Sanvito  
FREAKSHOW Pro  
Abraham Lincoln STEAK CreativINDIE



# BEST FONTS FOR CHICK LIT

*Amaze* Angelina Amienne  
 Sofia Annie Use Your Telescope  
**Stag** **St Charles** **Subpear**  
 Stewart Sans *Efekt* Stiltedman  
**Space Marine** *Celine*  
**Storybook** SONGBIRD AMATIC SC  
 AlexandriaFLF **AllegroEU**  
*Water Brush* Bilbo Alcoholica  
 Chocolate Covered Raindrops Fondamento  
*Blessed Day* Belwe Std **Belshaw**  
*Brannboll* *Fet* **Berkshire Swash**  
 Ballroom Tango BethsCuteHmkBold  
 BASIC TITLE FONT Cienki Caecilia LT Std  
 Torbayne Running Hand Beer Note  
 Can den Celde Script Champagne  
 Tartlers End & Limousines  
 INTO THE VORTEX Harrington Hasspis Delfin  
*The NautiGal* Aaargh Elsie  
*The Dreamer* Alison Aleo  
 Organic Elements THE SKINNY  
 KeyboardLight

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BEST FONTS FOR FANTASY

ETN Hasspis Mecheria  
 ArtCraft Trocchi K22 MONASTIC  
 Hercules Tusar LHF STETSON  
 ginebra bolds sevida LHF BIRGITTA  
 Twilight fontcalledLHF  
 GopSolaSD Zamrud & Immortal  
 Gabiela Khatulistiwa Valentina  
 Galathea  
 Garineldo Fortunata Wellsley Vivila  
 Auriol EFN Italica Bauer  
 Harrington Delfin BodniEU  
 HERCULANUM LT STD IM FELL  
 HERMIA IRELAND DOUBLE PICA SC  
 Lansbury FG  
 FHA Condensed French Heidorn Gill  
 Foglihten LHF Beryllium Harry P  
 Endor Becker Monogram Hancock  
 AYOSMONKIA Gothic Ultra  
 Isabella Std bad boys Trendy  
 kingjola EFN Freebooter Script  
 Abigail  
 Francisco MeriendaCipher DEMON  
 Lucas EFN Dekorator Euphorigenic  
 Briosia Mardian Demo  
 Elsie Swash Caps Metamorphous

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BEST FONTS FOR HORROR

30 PACK GIRL ADAMAS  
ADAMAS ACTION OF THE TIME  
AKOOM ALL OVER AGAIN  
AMAZOBITHREMS... avatar UNFORTUNATE  
AR DARLING Bastarda-K Infected  
Avatar Benegraphic BLOOD OMEN grunge  
BOYCOTT Broken 15 BRAND NEW BURN  
Cabin CALIFORNIA Californian IIF  
Sketch BY DIRT2  
Cartographer Charbroiled CARACURA  
clerica CMTAT100DRAGON COCAINE SANS  
EATER COMPLEX BRUJA CREATURE  
DARK II DCC - Sharp Distress DARKHEART  
DEMON DESTROY DESTROYED  
DIESEL DIRT2 DEATH Endor Disgusting  
Dogma DORNEN Edifact Behavior  
DOWNCOME Fairy dust FIOLEX  
FORMFOUND.COM GESSOM MEPHISTO  
frakturika Heidorn Hill guilty  
HEROIN 07 Horse Fuke

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# BEST FONTS FOR PARANORMAL ROMANCE

**LHF Hick Sticks** **Milonga**  
*Passions Conflict* *Sarah Script Neue*  
**METAL MANIA** **Wade Grotesque**  
**LHF LARCHER ROMAN**  
*NautiGal* **Monogram** **English**  
**Linden Hill** **LHF Mirage** **LHF New**  
**Metamorphous** **Modern Classic**  
**MORPHEUS** **LHF Shopfront**  
**PENUMBRA** **LHF Wade Grotesque**  
*Machia* **Perigord** **LHF Stratford**  
**Mikadan** **LHF Village** **Mikadan**  
**Montez** **MAEL** **Scriptana**  
**Mountains of** **LIBERATION** **Moonlight**  
**Christmas** **SANS** **Shadow**  
*Mutlu* **Loki Cola** **LHFBIG**  
**NARNFONT** **TOPREG**  
**Neuton** **Cursive** **Mardian Demo**  
**Newborough**  
**NÜ★CREACTIVO** **Optimus** **Princeps**  
**ff Da Vinci Script** **ff Moonstone**  
**OPTIMUS PRINCEPS** **Oleo Script**  
*Lydia Puente* **OCTOBER CROW**  
**MISPROJECT** **Lilith** **Northwood** **High**  
**INDIE**



BEST FONTS FOR ROMANCE

*Script MT Bold The Dreamer*  
*The NautiGal Sail WishMF*  
*Sacramento Satisfaction*  
*Shardee Satisfy Scythe Shelley*  
*Selfish Alison SELL YOUR SOUL*  
*Sexsmith*  
*Victorian LET Silent Reaction*  
*Sloop Script Three Swan Song*  
*Ballroom Tango Twilight*  
*Tideway Classic...*  
*Vladimir Script Candan Celdé..*  
*Tiranti Solid*  
*Turbayne Running Amaze Voluta Script Pro*  
*Wisdom Script WaterBrush*  
*Young Love ITC Zapf Chancery*  
*ZnikomitNo24 Adine Kirnberg*  
*Alex Brush Allegretto Script...*  
*Aquiline Arizona Bix Antique Script*

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BEST FONTS FOR SCIFI

Nesobrite Nova Round  
Neurosci Nova Opificio Order  
OUTER ZONE THIN DESIGN  
PASTELARIA Quasix Regra REZ  
Supermercado TALL DARK AND HANDSOME TANK  
Sui Generis TELEGRAFICO  
Square721 Supermercado  
SPACE MARINE Thin Design  
SPACE AGE Structia  
SF SPORTS NIGHT Squada One  
Rimouski Rina RINGBEARER  
AMAZONIA AMERICAN CAPTAIN  
Requiem II REVOLUTION SIX CAPS  
RAINFALL REPUBLIC Roddenberry  
PRINTF Proletarsk New Rocker  
ORATOR STD RED ROCKET  
LHF Ortlieb GALGA BOLD  
PF HausSquare Pro  
ORTLIEB Telegrafico Steelfish  
OCR A Std CONSPIRACY THEORY  
Next Star sharpedge Roboto  
Orbitron OMNIBUSOVA  
RNS Camelia  
LIBERATION SPIN CYCLE  
SANS SHORTCUT CreativINDIE



BEST SIMPLE SERIF FONTS

Industrial736 Jannon Moderne  
 ALIKE fontcalledCM American  
 Anti-history Garamond  
 TRAJAN PRO Bergamo Josephin  
 Arno Pro Doulous Arabic Slab  
 Athena CINZEL Typesetting  
 Unicode Filosofia ChochinLt  
 DidotLT AUGUSTUS  
 Barkentina Bauer BAUER  
 Giorgio Kepler BodniEU BODNIEU  
 Bauer CLASSIC Vidaloka  
 BodniEU ROMAN BriosoPro  
 Californian LancelotDeVinneEU  
 BernhardModEu Clarendon  
 CarminaLt ITC Cushing LATIN  
 CaslonBd Droid Serif MODERN  
 CentennialLT EuroNew ROMAN  
 EuroRoman Kepler ExcelsiorLT  
 Feline FELIX TITLING LHF  
 Galatia Garogier CLASSIC ROMAN  
 ITC Galliard High Tower Text  
 Goudy Bookletter Essendine  
 IMPERATORSMALLCAPS CreativINDIE



BEST SIMPLE SANS-SERIF FONTS

Quicksand    **Roboto**  
OSTRICH SANS    **Lato**  
Raleway    **Oswald**  
                         **Decker**  
**BEBAS NEUE**    Existence  
Source Sans Pro    **Universe**  
Cuprum    Helvetica Neue  
Colaborate-Thin    **Nevis**  
                         Neris  
Caviar-Dreams    **Antonio**  
Neurocol Nova  
**Montserrat**    Myriad Pro  
Maven Pro Light    Cumulus  
Corbel    Stewart Sans  
**Criticized**    DINpro  
Ebrima    Stag Sans    Cordia

Creativ**INDIE**

BEST FONTS FOR SCIFI

Nesobrite Nova Round  
Neuropol Opificio Order  
Neva  
**OUTER ZONE** **THIN DESIGN**  
PASTELARIA Quasix Regra REZ  
Supermercado TALL DARK AND HANDSOME **TANK**  
Sui Generis TELEGRAFICO  
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OCR A Std **KONSPIRACY THEORY**  
Next Star sharpedge Roboto  
Orbitron OMNIBUSOVA  
RNS Camelia  
LIBERATION **SPIN CYCLE**  
SANS **SHORTCUT** CreativINDIE

# 128 PUBLISHING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

134 publishing questions answered (the ULTIMATE resource guide on how to self-publish and market a bestselling book)

If you're interested in publishing or self-publishing a book, you've probably got a lot of questions.

There are so many tools, resources and services offering tips and information. How does it all work? How do you put a book together, get it out into the world, and get people to buy it? You might have questions like...

How do I get an agent or publisher?

How do I submit a query?

How do I optimize my Amazon sales page?

How do I build an author website?

How do I convert my files to ebook?

How do get into bookstores or libraries?

How much does publishing cost?

Should I use KDP select or Smashwords?

What should I write about?

How do I get book reviews?

I wrote this guide last year to answer common questions I get; but decided to post the whole thing here for one massive self-publishing resource. It also makes it easier to check out other resources and articles I mention. I've changed my mind about some things, so these ideas aren't gospel. I've also gotten much better at marketing... so you should check out this page on self-publishing first, it's newer.

These aren't robust, full length answers, these are short, conversational responses that will point you in the right direction. Also keep in mind I'm a strong advocate of self-

publishing, which gives authors more control, flexibility and earning power, so I may seem unreasonably biased against traditional publishing. But it's a brave new world, and progressive thinking authors like me are making a killing selling books.

I also decided to use this project to get me into doing videos – something immensely useful for building a platform and boosting traffic that I've been avoiding for several years. I thought posting answers to each question in a short video would be a great way to overcome my resistance and put out a lot of content. (You can find those on my YouTube channel – they're really boring and slow, but a lot of people have said they're helpful. I feel like I'm just now getting the hang of it).

Some of my advice may be different from what you've heard from other people, and it's very possible that I'm wrong about some things. That said, I hope these answers are useful to you, and if so, please help me out by sharing this resource with your author friends.

Also please remember this is a quick Q&A session – if you need more in depth guidance you should grab my other books, which I offer free on this website.

## PUBLISHING

### TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

A lot of writers are still resistant to self-publishing and are hoping to get their books published by a traditional publisher. This can be a good choice sometimes, for some books, but it often isn't. Also, the line between "real" publishing and self-publishing is blurring – self-publishing just means taking more control and responsibility over your book.

A lot of these questions are focusing on the wrong thing entirely: they are chasing the



side effects of being a best seller, such as showing up in bookstores and libraries, or getting media attention. True, once upon a time those things came first and the sales followed. But now everything is in reverse: it's up to you to sell the copies by connecting with readers and having an amazing book, after that things will become easy.

### 1

Q: What's the best software programs or apps for helping you draft or outline your book?

A: Whatever you're familiar with. A lot of people recommend Scrivener, and it's pretty great, but I know too many authors who put off writing until they've learnt how to use Scrivener (or any other new software). If you can do it in Word, or a plain text document, do it. The hardest part of writing is the writing. At the same time, a program that can get you to jot down proper story architecture can save you a ton of headache later. A lot of people write a rough draft and then try to add some story architecture or a plot arch later, and that's really hard. Learn what you're doing first. Make sure you hit all the key plot points that are staples for your genre. Final Draft or Dramatica Pro can help in this regard, but you could learn the same things from Larry Brooks Story Physics or Story Engineering.

Finishing your book shouldn't be your goal: your goal should be to write a book that sells, by fulfilling reader expectations, and that's mostly about learning the craft and mapping it all out ahead of time.

### 2

Q: When you want to write a book and you finish it, where would you go to get it published?

A: Finishing a manuscript is a big deal, and authors usually are so excited they want to rush out and publish it. There are two paths to publishing: you can send the

manuscript, along with a book proposal and some other documents to a literary agent, so they can try to sell it to a publisher. If you get a deal, your book will be out in a couple years and you won't make much money. You can also self-publish, but there's a ton of competition, and your book needs to be brilliant and expertly designed (usually). And even then, you're unlikely to make any money. With that in mind, you can either just pay a small press or an author services company to do everything for you (which is expensive and the quality may not be great) or manage everything yourself (which takes more work, but you'll save money and can make sure you get the best design).

### 3

Q: Do I need a literary agent or should I query publishers directly?

A: Some publishers require an agent, some don't – so the first thing you should do is make a list of the publishers you're aiming for. Go to the library and pick out 20 books in your genre or field that are “in the ballpark” of your own book. Write down the names of the publishers for those books. Those are your targets. Look them up and see if you can send them a manuscript or book proposal directly. If you can, make sure you follow their directions. If you can't, look up agents who handle that genre or field. You can find them on:

[www.agentquery.com](http://www.agentquery.com)

[www.pw.org/literary\\_agents](http://www.pw.org/literary_agents)

[www.querytracker.net/](http://www.querytracker.net/)

[www.writersmarket.com/cms/open/agent](http://www.writersmarket.com/cms/open/agent)

Both agents and publishers are going to want to see an author platform (your collective total reach, including your website, social media platforms, followers, friends and professional history). Your chances will also be improved by having an amazing author

story (why did you write the book, and why should anyone care). If you don't have any of that, you're going to need to have written the greatest damn book in the history of the world, or else nobody is going to take a risk on it. Remember, publishers and agents want a book that makes money, so having a good book isn't enough. You need to be able to help them sell it.

#### 4

Q: I have been offered a publishing contract, which I have signed. It is a small publishing house that has limited resources. I have a lot of questions, because I will be responsible for much of the process myself...ie the cover art, marketing, book reviews etc.

A: Have you accepted? Personally I wouldn't take it, and I hear this from agents all the time too: small publishers help you design the interior and book cover, and help you upload the files, but you could probably hire a professional yourself (and get better quality design for less – and design is a HUGE part, virtually the only major part of publishing so it must be done right, and small presses aren't usually very good at it. After the files are online, they won't do much to promote you. You won't get in bookstores until you start selling big numbers, and that's all up to you. If you want more support and feedback and help, maybe it's a good way to learn, but make sure you'll be able to get the rights back if for example you don't sell 10,000 copies in the first 2 years.

#### 5

Q: How not to be nervous talking with agents and meeting industry professionals?

A: Practice makes perfect. Make sure you can speak about your book intelligently. Make sure you can pitch it in 30 seconds, and you know the difference between the concept and the premise, and how they differ from the theme. Remember that

you're not asking for favors or help: you're providing the valuable content that they are actively looking for. They are desperate to find the next big money-making book. Do you believe you've got it? If so you're doing them a favor by talking to them and giving them the opportunity to get on board. If they pass, it's their loss. If you don't believe you've got the next big moneymaking book, maybe you need to write a better one. Also: dress well, smile a lot, get a haircut. If you have chronic social anxiety, think about experimenting with Kava Kava, St. John's Wart, or a shot of vodka.

#### 6

Q: If a publisher asks you to write a chapter for instance would there be a time limit or would you have free will?

A: If an agent or publisher asks for pages or a sample chapter, get it back to them within 2 weeks or they'll lose interest (although really, you should have finished it already before pitching, in which case you could send it immediately.)

#### 7

Q: How do I write a query?

A: Like this: "Dear (agent name), I just finished a book called (name of book), which is about (very short, 1 sentence concept + premise). I have an active email list of 5,000+ and my blog gets over 1000 unique hits a day. I see you worked with (author you admire) and also sold (this book) recently. Since mine is in the same genre I hoped you'd take a look and see if it's something you can work with. I'm attaching the first 3 chapters as a Word document and a brief marketing plan. Sincerely..."

Queries are just short pitches to get the book in front of someone who can help. Agents and publishers get lots of queries. The most important thing is to read and follow their directions, keep it short and casual. Don't



compare yourself or your book to great works of literature or famous authors. Don't say it's "Harry Potter meets Star Wars." It's OK to briefly introduce the numbers of your platform (if you've got them) or else your powerful background story (if it's related and important from a marketing aspect). It won't make the decision, but it may help them take a look and see it as a possible project. Having a marketing plan written up, even for fiction, will set you apart.

However, if you go the agent/publisher route you'll spend the next two years trying to publish this book. If you self-publish you can have it in stores in a month, and you can then start working on the next book.

## 8

Q: How do I write a book proposal?

A: Do a lot of research, follow the unique directions on the site you're proposing to. Focus on hard numbers and data. Don't speculate. Don't say your book is for "all women between the ages of 20 and 50." Make a marketing plan and really think about how you're going to make the right kind of connections (even better, do it first!). Book proposals and marketing plans are a lot of work, but you're basically asking them for money. You wouldn't go into an angel investor and say "Hey I'm awesome, give me money!" Don't expect to do it as an author.

## 9

Q: Besides the usual suspects (Writer's Digest, Querytracker.Net, writers conferences), what are some other places to find agents who accept submissions? I've tried them all, and only found 150-odd agents who accept books in my genre (self-help).

A: If you need 150 agents and they've said no, finding more isn't the issue. If you submit to 20 agents and they turn you down, your pitch or book proposal or book isn't good enough (or doesn't have a big enough market). Remember, agents

aren't gate-keepers and they aren't happy about turning you down. They want to find books that they can sell. But you've got to give them a full package (established author bio, professional headshots, beautiful website, thousands of targeted followers, an impressive professional history, and an excellent book) so that they can feel semi-comfortable sending it to publishers. If all you've got is a story, most agents will have to pass.

## 10

Q: How do you get your book translated? Amazon/KDP puts your book on their foreign sites, but does not translate it. What's the benefit if it is in English on a French site?

A: There are a lot of people living abroad who like to read in English, and you should expect to have a few sales a month from all Amazon channels. If you want to get your book translated, you'll need to pay for translating on your own. It probably isn't worth doing unless a) the book is highly targeted to another country (for example, it's set in France) or b) it's already selling really well in English.

But keep in mind, most other languages have much smaller markets, so it's doubtful you'll hit huge sales numbers. You can also sometimes find someone who will translate your work for you, in exchange for a cut. Someone offered to do this to translate my books in German, we both take 50%, but I don't pay him any upfront fees: that arrangement works great for me.

I also sold translation rights to a major Russian publisher, who contacted me on the strength of my website and the media frenzy I'd conducted for one of my earlier books. The deal was a little sketchy since they weren't used to dealing with authors directly, but the funds still came through.

You can also send the manuscript out to lots of international publishers or companies that

manage translation rights, just as you would pitch an agent or publisher. They are more likely to move on it if it will require less work (like a children's book) or if it's already selling really well.

But here's the main thing, if you can't sell it to people who speak your language, in the biggest market, you won't do any better selling it to people from other countries.

## 11

Q: How do you work with foreign publishers and contracts?

A: If you get an offer from a foreign publisher, consider re-pitching some agents and attaching the offer, to see if they will help you with the deal (agents can often negotiate a better deal or fix a flawed contract, to help you keep more of your rights). Otherwise, just be careful you aren't giving away too much. Personally, as long as I keep all the rights to my English version, I'm not picky about foreign language rights: I want the foreign publishers to be able to make enough money off it that they'll work on promoting it, which will sell more of the English copies.

## 12

Q: What are the top selling topics for e-books? What should I write about (genre, topics, etc.) for commercial/financial success?

A: Derek Doepker cites the 'four blueprints' laid out by Robin Hoffman (getpublishedcoach.com) in his book "Why Authors Fail":

Tips

Outline, Step-by-step

Three Act Story (Hero's Journey)

Essay

If you're writing a book that doesn't follow one of these proven formulas, Doepker says, "You're pretty much screwed from the start."

My friend Tom Knowles at TCK publishing put up a post of the "top 100 most competitive Kindle categories." I've rearranged the findings without the specifics to give you a general idea of the top categories:

Romance (Contemporary, Erotica, Romantic Comedy, New Adult & College, Suspense, Holidays, Westerns, Christian, Sports)

Literature & Fiction (Coming of Age, Women's Sagas, Historical Fiction, War, Gay, Horror/Occult)

Mystery, Suspense and Thriller (Women Sleuths, Police Procedurals, Psychological, Private Investigators, Espionage, Hard-boiled, Legal, Crime)

Science Fiction & Fantasy (Epic, Fantasy Romance, Paranormal, Paranormal & Urban, Werewolves and Shifters, Sword & Sorcery—I can't tell if this is a typo or the name of the genre—, Space Opera, Witches and Wizards, Fairy Tales)

Teen & Young Adult (Paranormal & Fantasy, Action & Adventure, Paranormal and Urban, Contemporary Romance, Dystopian)

For non-fiction

Health, Fitness & Dieting (Diets & Weight Loss)

Biographies

Memoirs

Historical Christianity

Christian Living/Spiritual Growth

Self-Help/Personal  
Transformation/Motivational

What does all this mean for you? If you want to sell a lot of books, you should probably be in one of these categories. However – those categories are really competitive, so it's harder to get up in the rankings and stay there enough for people to discover you. Except that – there's also a whole bunch more readers in those categories, devouring up lots

of books, so even if you're one of several hundred, they might find you if you're selling steadily (and yet, there may be thousands of books in the category that you're competing against).

So it's tricky: you could pick a much less busy micro-niche, so you can rank as the "#1 bestseller" in the category and get found by people searching for your tiny niche topic, but that doesn't mean you're selling many books. Or you could get in a huge major category with tons of readers. Try to do a little bit of both: find your popular category above, then get as niche and targeted as you can within that category.

If you don't know how to do that: just pick your two categories in KDP and then set your Keywords to match the exact categories you want to be in. If that doesn't work, contact customer support and they'll fix it.

What if you aren't writing in a popular genre? Even if your book sells well, gets great reviews, and is a bestseller in your category, you aren't going to earn a ton of money for it. Start writing more books.

Also note, the only non-fiction books that are bestsellers are religious/spiritual, self-help and motivation, or biography/memoir (and those are almost always of famous, successful people who already have a big platform).

If you want monthly, detailed sales info per genre, you could check out <http://k-lytics.com> run by Alex Newton. I just went over the August 2014 data and learned:

1. Fiction outsells non fiction by about 4 to 1. (The top 100 titles in fiction are selling an estimated 632 copies, while the top 100 non-fiction are selling 153).

2. The top 100 Romance books sell an estimated 485 a day; Mystery and Thriller 353; Science Fiction and Fantasy 202, Teen and Young Adult 180. That means if you're writing a romance you may sell 4X as many copies as you would have writing a Young Adult.

3. The top 100 business and money books only sell 42; compared to religion and spirituality (68).

So you can see, choosing the right genre/topic can make a huge difference in sales volume. I'm writing non-fiction books to build my platform, but I can't wait to start writing some fiction (I'm planning to finish 10 novellas by the end of 2014) so I can take advantage of this imbalance.

## 13

Q: People often have questions about titles (are they copyrightable? What should they choose? How long is too long?).

A: Titles usually aren't copyrightable unless you've done something unique and new, like "Freakonomics." There's a good chance if you search for the title you have in mind for your book, you'll find it's taken. A few years ago I designed a book cover for a project called The Lust Boat. Another author/designer team who had made a similar cover for the same title claimed I'd copied their idea. I responded by pointing out there were at least six books on Amazon called The Lust Boat, going back into the 70s. And what else are you going to put on the cover about a cruise-ship-romance, besides a romantic couple and a big boat? The discussion was getting heated so my author decided not to publish her book at all, at least with that title.

It's usually OK to use the same title as one that's taken, but you should try to avoid it. If you have to do it, make sure the other book isn't selling well, so that they won't show up anywhere in the bestseller lists (where you will be, right?)

Also you should add a tagline or subtitle, something to set your book apart. Finally your book should have a much better book cover; given two books with the same name, people will assume the pretty one is the "real" one and the other the knockoff.

According to The BookStrapper Guide to

## Marketing Your Book,

“The worst possible title is one that makes someone sound stupid when saying it out loud. For example, no one will ever recommend a book with a title they can’t pronounce or makes them feel stupid.”

I made that mistake when I published my MA Thesis with the title “Jesus Potter Harry Christ.” People didn’t know what it was about and they would never remember the order or how to say it. Pick a simple title, and add a subtitle until it’s very obvious what genre/subject the book fits in.

### 14

Q: What makes a good book blurb?

A: “Blurb” is a confusing word, but it usually refers to a shortened piece of a review. You put blurbs on the front cover, “Bold and daring! –Boston Globe” or sometimes longer blurbs on the back of the book cover. Blurbs are paired with the back cover copy or sales copy, which is often sometimes referred to as a blurb.

What you don’t want to do is brag about your book yourself in the sales copy, like “This book is passionate, moving and incredible, it will change your life!” You can’t say that in sales copy because people won’t believe you. But if you can get somebody else to agree to say it, that would make a great blurb (in other words, blurbs do the kind of bragging that you can’t do yourself, by putting the words into other people’s mouths).

Blurbs should also complement the sales copy and introduce any relevant info not found elsewhere. Often blurbs are just for social proof or to establish credibility, so that people will trust the stuff you say in the sales copy.

As for the sales copy, you probably need to get it edited. It should not just be a summary that says what happens in the book. You shouldn’t give away the main scenes or revelations. You want to hook interest and pose questions. Frame the story with the setting, the initial kick that gets things

started, and the main conflict, then ask “Will the hero survive?” etc.

### 15

Q: If I publish through Amazon, does that mean my local booksellers won’t carry my book?

A: Not necessarily; though booksellers are unlikely to sell your book even if traditionally published. Small/independent bookstores sometimes try to steer clear of Amazon... and local bookstores may be more likely to support books of local authors, but in general, bookstores are businesses that need to make money, so they will sell whatever people are buying.

### 16

Q: How do I even get into contact with a publisher?

A: Email or phone, or mailing your manuscript. But that will probably be a waste of time unless your manuscript is finished (and excellent), you have a large blog following or big connections. Make sure you have something to pitch/offer that they can’t ignore – and it can’t just be the book.

But first ask the question, what do I need from a publisher? If you are expecting them to take all the risk, spend all the money, publish and market the book for you, that’s about as likely as somebody leaving a pot of gold on your doorstep. It can happen, if you’re persistent and the book is good... but you’ll have a much better chance if you write some other books that sell well, build a platform, and have more to offer.

### 17

Q: What is the probability of your book being a hit? What is the pay like?

A: The probability of a book being a hit depends mostly on the genre; does it connect with a popular genre and deliver what readers expect? If so, it should do

reasonably well. But to be a big hit, it needs to be different and original as well (conform to genre expectations but over deliver).

The money isn't great, unless you start selling really well, then it can be fantastic. It's more likely to happen after you've built a platform and have several books out.

## 18

Q: There are so many publishing companies out there, what are the best ones to start with if you are an amateur?

A: There are lots of different kinds of publishing companies, and to answer the question correctly I'm going to need to talk about the different publishing options. The first kind of company are the big, mainstream publishing companies, and they are failing because the publishing industry is changing. They rarely take risks on new authors with no platform. To get into them, you need to have a great book, a great pitch and book proposal, find an agent and get them to sell the book – you'll get a big advance (hopefully) and they'll do some media and marketing for you. Even so, the majority of books published by these companies lose money which is why they are increasingly risk-averse, which means very hard to get into.

The other type are the small presses – little, independent publishing companies. Some of them are reputable and focus on niche topics, and getting published by them (if they are well known) may be good for you. BUT they usually offer small advances, around \$5000 or \$10,000, and you give up a lot of your earnings and rights.

Small presses may not have the money or the pull to do much marketing for you, so you are basically giving up control and earnings so to partner with them: that's fine if you need help designing and publishing your book, but you are unlikely to earn more than you would self-publishing, and if they don't do an amazing job of your book design, you may

actually be worse off.

Then there are other companies – and these are popping up more and more these days – that call themselves small presses but are actually vanity publishers. Which means, they charge you money for a publishing package; often several thousand dollars. They'll give you a bunch of author services, including (perhaps) website design, book cover and interior formatting, getting your book listed on bookselling sites, and distribution. They may or may not also take a percentage of sales. They often market and advertise themselves hard, but they are in the business of providing author services, not selling books. That means, they don't need your book to actually sell, they just need you to pay them.

In addition, many of these publishing companies have very poor quality book design (one the biggest and most important publishing considerations). They make more money if they do things they aren't really qualified to do, like formatting or web design, or else hire a cheaper provider. AKA, they are incentivized to charge high prices and under-deliver on quality. While it may seem easier to just pay someone to take care of everything, you can very often pay much less to hire a few design experts and get much higher quality work.

Your question may also be referring to book printing and distribution sites (Createspace, Lulu, Lightning Source) or ebook distribution sites (BookBaby, Smashwords). If so, Createspace/Kindle is the cheapest and most powerful for selling books, but you also want your book to get out on all the other platforms as well.

Which publishing company should you choose? You don't need one. Focus on getting the best cover design and interior formatting that you can, sign up on a few book distribution platforms (Kindle, Createspace, Smashwords) and you're done.

Common objections to this advice, like “but if I self-publish how will my book get into



bookstores or get major media placement” will be addressed in other answers.

Note: Lightning Source is actually for medium or big publishers, and it was a pain in the ass and not worth it for self-publishers, but they’ve launched a new platform called IngramSpark. IngramSpark is not so bad for print titles, and makes it easy to offer hardcover books, but the ebook distribution is not a good deal. Still I wouldn’t recommend using them over Createspace.

## 19

Q: I’ve always wondered about publishing under a pseudonym. Do you have to go through a legal process to publish under another name? If you’re not using your own name, is it different when you publish through a literary agency than when you self-publish? How to manage two or multiple pen names/online personas with various social media accounts (or should this be avoided with all the non-writing work and time involved?

A: I discourage using pen names, since it’s harder to make a real connection with people if you’re hiding behind a fake name. Writing shouldn’t be your dirty little secret, unless perhaps you’re still working and the office people wouldn’t appreciate your robot porn. A lot of people seem to use them for YA since they are worried about turning off either girls or boys, and want a gender-neutral name that won’t alienate. But that can just be your own initials, not a totally fake name. If you have several different online personas, you’ll have different websites, social media profiles, and it will all get confusing. One brand platform is hard enough to maintain.

The only difficulty with this is if you have certain books for two radically different audiences, so much so that one audience may hate the stuff you do for the other audience. But in that case, rather than using a fake name, I’d just keep my two online lives and

communities separate. You don’t want to make it a big secret, because then you’ll get “found out” and people may be livid (people are so easily livid these days). But you don’t need to share everything with everyone.

## 20

Q: I am of course looking to make a decent profit, how do you know what you can profit from a good novel if it is published?

A: Profit = genre + quality. Not every genre has the same number of readers, so choosing a major genre (thriller, romance, mystery) is a huge indicator of success. If you want commercial success, write something marketable. Writing a commercial genre fiction is usually about using the templates that all bestsellers in that genre have. Look up the genre and read the top ten bestselling books. Is your cover design, your author bio, your story, all pretty similar to theirs? If your story doesn’t use the same story architecture or doesn’t fit in with those other bestsellers, it probably isn’t a bestselling book.

If you’re a bestseller, you can make a ton of money. Let’s say a good goal is to sell 100,000 copies a year. If you profit \$3 per sale (easy to do if you price your ebook at 3.99, and your print book at around 9.99) you could make \$300,000 a year (but only if you self-publish... if you went with a publisher and are only making around 10% of sales, you’ll need to sell much more). Pretty good. But selling that many copies (10,000 a month, 300 per day) is really, really difficult.

Which is why it’s very difficult for an author to make a living off of just one book. But let’s say you have the same goal, but you write ten novels. Now each of them can sell 10,000 a year, or about 28 per day. That’s still a lot, but not extremely difficult for a decent book with a nice cover in a major genre.

## 21

Q: What’s the best way to make the most money? I know the book really won’t

generate that much income, but whatever resources will?

- A: Long Term (One Year): Start with short stories and the beginnings of serials. Learn how to write and how to self-publish. Learn how to design and format books, or market, or find some other niche publishing or writing skill that you can become known for. (The stories aren't enough). Craft yourself an amazing personal journey story that connects with people. Write genre fiction and short popular non-fiction. Blog about everything you're doing or learning, every struggle you face and how you overcame it. Put out at least 10 books on Kindle before you worry about the money – have those books link back to your website or mailing list. Make sure they have great reviews, and a lot of them. By this time, even if you only have 100 people on your mailing list, you can run a contest or give prizes for reviews (be careful of how you manage this so they don't qualify as "paid reviews.")

Once you have enough reviews, make sure the book covers are amazing; test new ones and see if sales improve. Make sure all the traffic you are getting to your blog is utilized (you make an offer and get them to take action). Make sure you're connecting with people on Twitter and sharing valuable content (not just links to your books). See if you can partner with other authors or get reviews on bigger sites. Write guest posts for larger sites, about things your target readers connect with. Get reviews by bigger name authors or bloggers. Test advertising and see if you can make ads that work well enough that you earn back the money you spend in book sales – if so, you can just keep running ads until it stops working. Create a product or online course from everything you've learned, or that solves a specific problem. Start attending events and meeting new friends. By now you should have a medium sized platform, at least a few thousand people on your list, and some traffic, which you can use to make money or direct people towards

your products. If you have a great cover in a popular genre, and at least 10 books (even really short ones!) you should be making around \$1000 a month (1 or 2 sales a day of each book, not too difficult to pull off).

The Short Term: (One Month). Set up a website with a big promise but not much content – a "squeeze page." Have people sign up to get the free manifesto or amazing course that you haven't written yet. Advertise or guest post hard to drive a ton of traffic to your list. This is much harder to do for fiction; so consider a free guide like "How to write stronger dialogue" or "the 100 greatest opening lines in literature." A little bit of research will give you a powerful offer. Keep this up until you have at least 1000 people on your list, then finish writing the guide and put it out. Ask your followers what they need/what troubles they are having, see if you can help or solve them. Turn all that experience into a course or package.

## 22

Q: What is the cheapest way to publish?

- A: Finish your manuscript, use a free ebook converter, get a cover from Fiverr (or Canva, or Wordswag) put it on KDP and do a free giveaway – notify all the sites that your book will be free during these days.

## 23

Q: There are so many people writing about the same subject, why should I write another book about it?

- A: People don't stop reading after the first book; they'll keep reading similar books to recreate their experience. It's great if there are a lot of other people reading about the same subject. But you need to be (for non-fiction) a confident and masterful writer, you have to be extremely knowledgeable in your field, and you need to be trustworthy. For fiction, you need to tell an amazing story that only you could write.

Q: How would you self-publish? What are the steps involved?

A: Self-publishing sounds really scary and intimidating, but is actually simple. All you need is to prepare your cover design file, and the interior files. That's it. You can use KDP or Smashwords, upload your files and fill out the details, and hit "publish." Your files will be online for sale in under 24 hours. (If you aren't a US citizen, things will be a little more difficult and they may withhold a larger percentage for tax purposes). For print books, upload your interior print file and full cover file with back and spine to Createspace (recommended) or Lulu or IngramSpark.

But just because it's available doesn't mean anyone will find it or buy it, so while self-publishing is easy, selling books is not necessarily so. Being a successful self-publisher requires some of these things as well:

- Building your own 'platform' which includes your blog or website and social media profiles
- Connecting with fans of your work and converting them to zealous evangelists
- Professional quality design in everything you do
- A winning "author story" that answers why you write, your purpose and intention.
- Finding a way to relate your story to current events or specialized organizations
- Researching bloggers, writers or journalists who would be interested in your book and cultivating relationships with them.
- Networking with other authors in your genre for mutual support and benefit
- Finding ways to bring a lot of traffic to your and your book (like guest-posting)

Q: If you self-publish, will a publisher or agent pick you up later?

A: Yes. It happens all the time – but with increasing frequency. You see, publishers are already taking a big risk on most books. If you self-publish and grow your own fans and platform, you do most of the work for them: once you are selling steadily and the ball is rolling down the hill, agents and publishers will be eager to sign you up. However at that point, you may be losing more money by signing than you would if you stayed independent (but it can be nice to have them get more physical books out there and make a bigger deal out of everything). The thing to remember is that this will only work if you are selling a lot of copies – so your main focus should always be on increasing sales.

Q: Where can I self-publish? Any good sites that can help?

A: Why, yes! Thanks for asking. Here's a huge list of valuable sites that will probably help. The only danger is that it's overwhelming, and sometimes a simple plan is better than an ocean of helpful content.

For publishing services, I would avoid Author House or any author services that charge a big fee upfront to help you publish. Createspace, Lulu and Self-publishing.com also offer services, from book editing to design and marketing, but they are mostly over-priced and you can find better quality elsewhere. Blurb.com is good for speciality or books with images. Smashwords or Draft2Digital are great for ebook making and distribution. BookBaby is worth checking out.

For better recommendations or to connect with quality providers, here's a list of blogs I follow:

For better recommendations or to connect

with quality providers, here's a list of blogs I follow:

- About the book deal
- Book Market
- Publetariat
- Self-publishing Review
- The Book Designer
- The Creative Penn
- The Saavy Book Marketer
- Let's Get Digital

And a list of sites:

- Top 50 best sites for indie and self-published authors

The trick is not to just hire someone who promises to take care of everything, unless you first know what you want (and your expectations are reasonable!) and they have lots of samples/proof you can look at.

## 27

Q: Can I presale my books if self-published?

A: Yes! You could already do so with iBooks and some other sites, (most conveniently through Smashwords), but as of August 2014 Kindle offers an easy option when you set up new projects, to either release your book right away or make your book available for pre-order.

You can edit the date anytime; but you need to submit your final file 1 week before the deadline. It seems as though you can set a publishing date about 2.5 months in advance.

The great thing about this is that all those pre-sales will count on the first day the book goes live, which will make it so much easier to launch with a high sales rank. But be careful, if miss the deadline or change the publishing date, they will remove the privilege for one year.

## 28

Q: What is the number one thing you see self-publishers doing wrong?

A: What a great question!

- Ugly website
- Boring articles on their site
- Refusing to work with other people because they're scared of being used for free work
- Ugly book cover
- Promoting without enough book reviews
- Using Twitter to spam with news about their book (or paying other people to do it for them!)
- Betting the farm on their first book or marketing after the first 3 months rather than writing more books.
- Paying money to other people for book promotion or marketing (unless it's a small amount, and they are paying close attention to sales so they can see the benefit).

## 29

Q: How to be a hybrid author? (Meaning after successfully self-publishing, pitching a future book to an agent to be traditionally published and after that, doing both self and traditional publishing for various projects for the rest of my career).

A: This isn't something you can just choose to do: you will have these options once your platform is big enough, which means a lot of traffic (50k unique views a month at least), a lot of followers, and a history of books that are reviewing and selling well. Once you have that, you have the freedom to continue self-publishing or pitching to agents/publishers if it makes sense for that particular book.

## 30

- Q: Can I make a publishing company name after self-publishing a few books and go back to change them?
- A: Sure – just pick a name and Google it to make sure nobody else is using it. Get a nice simple logo or graphic made. Almost every author tries to make something visually complex, but you need a dead simple, 2D graphic. Search for a vector or a symbol). Then just revise your files to include your logo and publisher name. If the books have been published on Createspace or Kindle, it shouldn't be difficult to login and change the details.

### Publishing in General

## 31

- Q: What kind of an investment should a first time author be willing to make to publish their work?
- A: Usually around \$2000 seems to be an average number. But it can cost much less, or much more.

-Book Editing/Proofreading, \$1000 to \$3000

-Book Cover Design, \$100/\$1000 (huge range)

-Book Formatting, \$50~\$150 in Ms Word, \$150~\$450 in Adobe InDesign

-Website Design, \$1000~\$2500

-Advertising/Marketing, \$500 to \$2000 (Don't just pay someone else to do it, you want to be able to track exactly what is working so you can find that sweet spot of perpetual sales).

But personally, I don't recommend spending a lot of money publishing unless you have a platform and know reasonably well how many books you can sell.

You can get a free WordPress site. You can self-edit and then get beta-readers to find typos. You can format yourself and do a free KDP launch instead of marketing.

To publish this book, I spent \$0 – I made a simple cover, formatted loosely in MS Word and distributed with Smashwords and KDP.

However much money you have to spend, make sure you spend most of it on getting high quality design so that the finished product is as good as it can be. After that, it's usually more effective to do things that are free, like building your blog traffic or guest posting, than paying a lot of money for marketing or advertising.

## 32

- Q: What is a proof copy? I remember when I was trying to get copies made, and the website kept throwing this term around without explanation.

A: A proof copy is a special pre-publication copy of your book; sometimes it's without real cover art – or with a badge on the cover that says "Proof Copy." Often these are sent out to reviewers before publishing, because some reviewers want to make sure they get an early copy about 3 months before it is really published. If you're self-publishing, this basically means you need to finish, then send out proofs to reviewers and wait 3 months hoping they'll give you a blurb or review you can use. Personally, that's not worth it to me for most books, but if you're going for a major bestseller, doing it right may be worthwhile.

## 33

- Q: Does crowd funding for books work?

A: It can, yes. It's a good way to introduce the idea of your book to new audiences. It can be good for promotional purposes. However you usually need a brilliant cover and a video, and those can be expensive. If you're fundraising a thousand dollars or more (so that you can hire an editor/book cover designer) it will be very difficult to get strangers to support you, unless your premise and sample is freaking amazing. And even then, not likely without incredible



graphics. At the very least you can make a nice video or yourself talking about the book, telling your story, what you plan to use the money for. But remember, publishing can be very cheap; I would get a great cover first, plan a book launch and then use crowd-funding just to promote your books to new readers. To do that, you need great ideas for rewards and prizes, you have to be remarkable and do something different.

### 34

Q: How does one gauge the amount of money to throw into advertising and other promotional resources for a book? Certain genres are more commercially viable than others. Publishers know which genres do what; authors, not so much.

A: It's not hard to find out. Look up the bestselling genres, calculate the sales of the top 10 of each category. Look at the sales rank of the 20th book – that's the one you NEED to beat to get to the first page of the bestsellers list, you need to sell that many copies. If you were selling that many copies (and it should be your goal) you can estimate how much income you would be making, and predict how much you are able to spend.

Example: I'm writing a book about creativity. It's a pretty saturated field but I have a unique angle. So first I'll look for some books that are similar to mine and check out what categories they are in. Here's one:

Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Self-Help > Creativity

If I go to that category I can look at the 20th book, Twyla Tharp's *The Creative Habit*. It's ranked at #30,452 in the Paid Kindle Store. Then I can go to <http://kdpcalculator.com> which tells me she's selling between 1 and 10 books a day. She's charging \$9.61, so she makes about \$7.25/book. If she sells 5 a day, that's about \$1000 a month.

In contrast, the #1 spot in the same category

is Steven Pressfield's *War of Art*. It has a sales rank of #2,564 in the Paid Kindle Store, so Steven is selling between 30 to 55 per day. He's making about \$5 per sale, so if he's selling 40/day, that's \$200 a day or \$6000 a month.

Now I could try to find a category that is less competitive, so my book will always show up on the first page of that category – but I want to go big and displace Twyla Tharp. So I need to sell 10 books a day, or 300 a month. If I'm selling 300 a month, I'd also make about \$1000 a month, or \$12,000 a year. So I could consider spending \$5000 or so to make the book, assuming that I'd make my money back if it's successful.

However, to hit those numbers (10 a day) I need to make sure I put the book in front of at least 100 interested people (and to find interested people, I could either do very targeted advertising, or put it in front of 1000 people and hope 100 of them are interested (which may lead to 10 sales... although if your sales platform is all set up right, you should actually be converting about 50% of interested people into buyers. A very targeted website that pulls in 50K+ new visitors every month and focuses on selling the book from the sidebar could do pretty well (plus, it's FREE, and as a writer, you already have the skills you need).

Advertising and marketing doesn't have to lose any money. If I spend \$100 on Facebook ads and sell enough books during the same period to earn over \$100 – then I can just keep advertising. I'm not making money, but I'm not losing money either.

### 35

Q: How do I get noticed?

A: If you mean standing out from the agent's pile of manuscripts, follow directions. That's the thing most authors are too lazy to do. Have an amazing book that has a market and follow directions. If the book is good enough and there is a build-in group of readers, and you've done your marketing research in your

book proposal, you'll stand out.

If you mean online, in general (for your self-published books), then you need to be extraordinary. You need to do extraordinary things. You need to do things that are interesting enough for people to talk about. You can also do something that invites participation or helps others achieve their goals, or you can share practical advice that solves a problem (be insanely useful).

For example, recently I decided to buy a castle in Europe to use as a writer's retreat. Having that as a major goal on my blog makes me more remarkable than somebody who just blogs about publishing. I've also started a short story contest and an "indie author champion" program dedicated to helping indie authors get more reviews. Don't think about new ways to market your book directly – it's very difficult to do that. Instead you want to think about what you can do in general, with your life or your blog, that will fire up the imagination or encourage people to share. Focus on getting more traffic, by providing lots and lots of value – your book is just the footnote or sidebar link.

## 36

Q: What makes a book 'Publish worthy'?

A: Nothing, anymore. You can publish anything you want. If you sell 10 copies and changed the lives of those 10 people, your book is worthy. If you mean mainstream published, you are publish worthy if the publishers think your book will make them money, and they will assess this based mainly on the # of readers in that genre, how hot the topic is, and your personal platform (what you bring to the table, how you plan to market the book). If I was going to pitch to an agent, I would tell them I manage over 10 blogs that get over 100,000 unique visitors a month, and have an email list of over 10,000. Then I'd also ask all my publishing industry buddies if they would be willing to promote the book on their blogs, and add up those

numbers (we could easily reach over 1 million people with a book launch). Those numbers would help an agent or publisher decide whether or not to take a risk on my book. But the other powerful asset you have is your author story. If you have an amazing life story, full of diversity, hardship or overcoming challenges, that inspires and uplifts, that story is what will attract media coverage (so make sure you write your own author story carefully!)

## 37

Q: Is it worth the investment?

A: AKA, will you recoup the time and money you spent writing and publishing your book? It's doubtful. At least if this is your first book. That's because you're learning how to do everything, and you're going to make a lot of mistakes. So if you learned all those practical skills and spent many years writing and publishing your book, you're unlikely to make all that effort financially worthwhile. But only if you stop writing. Because the next books you write will be much easier. You'll need to spend less time and effort writing and publishing them. You'll publish them more quickly and need much less marketing budget (if you've been building your platform). So publishing becomes very profitable, once you have the skills and knowledge in place, and you can publish faster with less effort. If you're using popular fiction to boost your income, or writing non-fiction to boost your traffic and business, it can be very worth it. But if you're writing for yourself, in a small genre with not many readers, and you spend a decade writing each brilliant book – it may not be worth it, for you, in this lifetime (but that doesn't mean people won't recognize your genius later. Kafka didn't want anyone to see his strange stories, ever – he made his friends promise they would burn everything. But they published his content

posthumously anyway).

### 38

Q: How do I handle rejection/ fear?

A: Feel the fear and do it anyway. Rejection is just someone helping you get to a better place, by letting you know something is wrong. Rejection is amazing – it means you’ve finished something and you’re trying to do something. Now get better and try again. Get rejected as much as possible. You don’t hit a homerun on every swing – you need to swing and fail 100 times before you get a big hit.

And what are you afraid of? Failure is impossible if you keep trying – it only happens to quitters. Are you afraid of big money and success and fame? If so you need to align your expectations with your emotions. You need to be sure of what you actually want, and picturing those things needs to make you feel good.

### 39

Q: How can I be a bestseller?

A: Publish in a very small category. Drive a lot of concentrated traffic on the same day (Facebook ads marketed at people who have liked similar books, saying “Fans of XYZ will love this sci-fi/thriller/romance.” Hit #1 in your category. Congratulations, you’re a bestseller. But it doesn’t mean you’ve sold many books, and it doesn’t mean you will stay there. How to be a New York Times bestseller? Sell thousands of books a month. Build a large platform of devoted followers. Partner /befriend people with large platforms of your own. Make community projects to get people involved. Make it an event, an activity, a cause, not just a book.

### 40

Q: Compared to years past, how important is the ISBN number?

A: Not as important, especially for ebooks – most ebook publishing/distribution sites no longer even require one. The ISBN number lets the book’s info be listed in official file cabinets. It lets bookstores look up and order print books easily. It’s still necessary for print books.

### 41

Q: Do print books need different ISBN than the Kindle version?

A: Yes, although Kindle and some ebook distributors don’t require an ISBN for ebooks anymore. Technically each version of the book (ebook, print, hardback, audio) need a new one. But don’t sweat it too much.

### 42

Q: My question is about the process of registering ISBNs. How does one do this successfully? I purchased a block of numbers, but every time I go to register them invariably I run into a question I’m not sure how to answer, and Bowker doesn’t offer much in the way of guidance on their site.

A: You will need an ISBN for the print book – Createspace will give you one for free, as will many other POD/self-publishing sites. With Createspace you can also pay an extra fee to change the publisher name that displays on the sales page, or pay more to get them to register the ISBN officially to you on Bowker. Or you can buy your own, which is much cheaper if you’re buying ten – but then you have to use the Bowker platform which isn’t great, and fill out a long and complicated form for every book.

Personally, I’ve bought the ISBNs from Bowker but I don’t worry about updating through their site: I just have a list of my ISBN’s on my computer, when I put out a new book I use one of those, publish through Createspace, and assume Createspace will “trickle down” the information about the book everywhere it needs to get to. My

information may not be set up perfectly on the Bowker database. But I'm not aiming at bookstores or libraries – I'm selling to readers. It's important to make purchasing in a format they feel comfortable with convenient and easy.

### 43

Q: How do we self-publishers compete on the same level of traditional publishing?

A: Think about the product first. Make sure your book cover design, your interior formatting and your author website are professionally done; compare your book to mainstream published in the same field and make sure yours looks as good, or better (actually, don't trust yourself. Get other people to help you judge, preferably strangers rather than fans or family). Your marketing will fail if you don't have a professional product.

After that, don't compete on their level! It's like bringing a knife to a gunfight, or trying to invade America with sticks and stones. Self-publishing is a truly David-and-Goliath combat, and if you've read Malcolm Gladwell's book on that topic (you should, it will help!), you'll know that David won because he broke the rules of engagement and did something nobody expected him to do.

Slings were like the archers of their times: custom required a manly, face-to-face, armed combat. David cheated. As self-publishers, you have the power to do things that traditional publishers could never do, like pricing low or giving away books or pulling creative marketing stunts or selling in serials. I'm working on a book called Guerilla Publishing that will go into these tactics in greater detail.

### 44

Q: How can you get into libraries if you don't have any professional / industry reviews?

A: You can donate copies of your books to libraries – but how does that help you?

You may also end up in libraries if you sell a lot and other people donate your books. If you want libraries to order you, you need to seek out those industry reviews. Get some quality, trustworthy reviews first (just contact people and ask for them!) Then you can place an ad in LibraryJournal or one of the other big sites or publications that librarians read.

But getting in libraries should not be your business model.

You want people to order your books on Amazon, so that a new POD version of your book is birthed into the world and finds a home. You want to make income for each book you sell so you can live your dream as a full-time writer.

Getting in libraries may be especially great for YA fiction though; if it were me, I would print 50 copies and see if I could donate 5 to the libraries of the top 10 high schools/middle schools in my area, along with a brief book reading/talk at those schools. If you have a quality book with a great story, those 50 books may be all you need to fuel explosive growth. But if the kids don't like your story, it'll be a slightly embarrassing failure. This is why you should publish online first, on Wattpad or other sites, for immediate feedback, then launch on Kindle. When you're selling and getting positive, unsolicited reviews, you know you can take it to the next level.

### 45

A: How old do you NEED to be to publish a book?

B: There's no age requirement. I know a very talented author in fourth grade who Kickstarted her book, then self-published on Createspace. Recently she exchanged autographed books with the author of A Series of Unfortunate Events and is doing quite well. (In fact, her story is interesting and powerful enough to do much better than she would have done if she was older). In many ways it's similar to the Eragon story – the fact that Christopher

Paolini wrote it when he was younger and pitched it to high schools so diligently is part of the author myth that has made his book so successful.

## 46

Q: How do people find my works?

A: Let's assume your books are up for sale on Amazon or iBooks (the two major online booksellers).

Here are the way they find your books.

-They go to Amazon and search for the topic or category and look at the bestsellers or the first few pages of the book results. If your book has been selling well, it will appear and they'll check it out. You can increase the likelihood of this happening if your title or subtitle matches the search terms they entered (so think very carefully about your keywords)

-They look up or buy a book on Amazon and then see the "customers also bought..." feature on the bottom. If your book appears and your cover design looks professionally, they might click on it to read more. You can hack this by having your friends and family buy your book together with all the bestsellers in that category or genre.

-They are visiting a website they like and see an article written by you that has the book in your author byline. To do this you need interesting guest posts that appeal to the normal visitors of that website.

- They follow someone on Twitter or Facebook who has shared your book: for that to happen you need to cultivate relationships with the movers and shakers in your field or genre, by providing value (thinking about what they need, what you could do for them, and trying to help them out somehow.) Consistently add value and they may eventually decide to return the favor by promoting your book.

-They search for something online and your blog comes up. To do this you need to focus on writing very specific blog post titles about

very specific subjects, and you also need to have enough history, content and backlinks for Google to recommend you over other websites with similar articles. That means you need to post a lot of content on your blog, you need to keep it going for a long time (so start immediately) and you need reputable blogs and websites to link to you (which is why guest posts are so important). Another way to get backlinks is to write about other popular blogs... these are sometimes called "link bait" articles. For example I could write "The top ten most awesome indie authors writing thrillers and why I love them." Then you link to each of those author's blogs and write about how awesome they are. Many of them are very likely to share your article or link to it, which is great for you.

## 47

Q: How can I get popular?

A: Read Dale Carnegie's "How to make friends and influence people." Then, write amazing, interesting content. Dream up big exciting projects. Help as many people as you possibly can (solve problems they didn't know they had). Encourage and inspire others. Fill yourself with boundless optimism and positivity. Share and be generous, without worrying about how you will profit from it. Give favors freely, but don't ask for them yourself. Have well designed websites and products that project your professionalism and experience.

## 48

Q: What are the best ways to insure that someone else won't steal your work or take your idea and use it to benefit themselves?

A: Piracy isn't the enemy – obscurity is. Ideas aren't really that valuable – even if you explained your plot and somebody took it and wrote their own book, it wouldn't be the same as the book you were planning on writing. And nobody is going to steal your full manuscript and



put their name on it. It doesn't happen (and if it did, you could make a big stink about it online and get far more media and traffic, and sell more books, than you would have done if it never happened).

If your book starts to become successful, some people will want to get it for free, and it may show up on pirate sites. That's a good thing. There will always be people who don't want to pay. A person who reads your book without paying is better than a person who doesn't read your book at all. Unless you're selling a high-priced info-product, there's no reason to be over-protective of your content. More readers are always good for business. That's why Tim Ferriss and Paulo Coelho, for example, pirate their books on purpose (or parts of them) because they know it will increase their fan base, generate traffic and ultimately sell more books.

If you're trying to make a lot of money with your first book... don't. Focus on building your platform and followers and fanbase as large as you can, so that you can make more money later in your writing career. If this is the only book you're planning on writing... same advice. Focus on getting as much word of mouth as possible and connecting with a ton of readers, even if you have to give the book away. There will always be lots of people who would rather buy it for convenience than search for a pirated copy.

## BOOK COVER DESIGN

Firstly, I've put a bunch of videos and tutorials at [www.diybookcovers.com](http://www.diybookcovers.com). If you want to hire a designer, my site is [www.bookcovers.creativindie.com](http://www.bookcovers.creativindie.com).

My other favorite designers are:

1. Damonza
2. Scarlett Rugers
3. BookFly Design (from Oregon)
4. Design for Writers
5. Ebook Launch

## 6. Rocking Book Covers

7. Goon Write (premales, cheap and nice)

8. MS Corley (why are so many designers from Oregon?)

## 49

Q: On the topic of cover art, if I make my own cover with free stock/Creative Commons, how and where should I give credit?

A: You can give credit for the photography, and the cover design, on the bottom of the back cover, and also usually on the copyright page. For stock photography it usually isn't necessary, but it's nice, and it can make the book look more professional. However if you make your own cover, you really shouldn't say "Cover design by...." and put your own name there. Doing all the parts of a book yourself may seem cool and thrifty, but strangers may turn their nose up at an author who also designed their own book cover... at least if it's ugly. If your cover is truly brilliant, they might be impressed. (I just met Jason Gurley and JC Andrijeski at an event in Portland, they make amazing covers for their own books, as does BellaAndre). But I would put a photo credit and leave your name for the title of the book only.

By the way, I make covers for my own fiction that's pretty freakin' badass.

## 50

Q: Does my book need a tagline or subtitle?

A: YES. You want the cover to do as much as possible to set reader expectations. It needs to tell them what's in the book (genre, basic setting or major conflict) and be beautiful enough and professional enough to build trust. The tagline or subtitle is the hook – the thing that catches their imagination, either by offering very specific benefits, or posing a question or mystery. It's that extra bit

of information that complements the title and the scene of the book cover art to finish letting the reader know this is the right book for them.

But it also gets a little tricky: for a vampire novella you need the title (Bloody Fangs), or the subtitle (A Historical Vampire Novella, or the tagline ("She was the apple of his eye... until he took a deep bite"), or the series marker (Book One of the Parisian Vampire Clan Series), OR the cover art (a picture of vampires with fangs, with a vintage Paris setting) to convey the information that this is a vampire novella. But you don't need all of them to repeat the same information, so collectively they can offer different pieces of information that build more interest.

You don't want to be everything to everybody. You want to turn off the readers who you know aren't going to like the book. If it has any weaknesses, don't hide them – point them out early. Pull in the readers who will love the book, keep out the ones who will hate it. Managing reader expectations like this will lead to a stronger fanbase and better reviews.

## 51

Q: If I buy pre-made covers online, should there be a contract between me and my designer?

Q: How to work with a cover designer?

A: I'm not big on contracts myself, just make sure the art they used is royalty free and that they remove the premade cover from their site after you buy it. If working with a cover designer, they will usually be bound by the terms they offered on their website, so an official contract isn't necessary, but make sure you know:

- whether images are included
- how many revisions you will get
- whether they will charge later for updates and changes
- whether they will help you with other publishing questions

-whether they know much about selling and marketing books

In terms of getting good work out of a book cover designer, you need to find someone with lots of excellent samples. Then you need to give them all the info and listen to them. It's a very interactive balance, but if you're the one giving directions and making decisions, the cover design will turn out like you want it to (and what do you really know about cover design art?) You may know a lot about your book, but you don't know how to use art, colors and fonts to attract the right kind of readers and get them to buy. It's find to keep them on task and push them towards excellence, but make sure you're not just taking over and bullying them into making you the ugly cover of your dreams.

## 52

Q: How do I brand for a serial? Same cover with different titles and volume number? Or different covers for each episode?

A: Same style, same fonts and author name font, similar art work but probably different, specific to each part. You need to consider whether the series will be your brand (big "Harry Potter" and smaller series title, "and the prisoner of Azkaban") or a title ("Prisoner of Azkaban" with a series marker "The Harry Potter Chronicles, Book Three"). You can't really have both, it's too much text. In most cases I would focus on the unique title and make the series name very small... although if what you're selling is very short sections (serials) rather than a set of serialized novels, having each short section have a unique title and cover may be misleading; make it very clear this is a short serial. It's probably OK to have one major piece of cover art and just put a big "#1" on the cover somewhere for each part, in fact it may be better.

Don't try to "brand" the series, title name and author name altogether. You only get to emphasis one big thing. Don't ruin your

pretty art with too much text.

## 53

Q: Should I use the same fonts/style for my author name to increase recognition and branding?

A: You should if it's part of the same series, because a series needs to be stylistically intact and recognizable. But here's the thing about your author name: if they don't know who you are, your name is meaningless. That doesn't mean you need to put it very small though, because you're "not a big name author." Follow the style conventions of your genre. If you're writing thrillers, put your name big and bold. Nobody else knows whether or not you're a big name author – as long as your name is displayed in the style of those big name authors, they will assume you are one.

But if they do know your name and they are already your fans, they are going to buy the book anyway (they recognize the letters of your name – the particular style or fonts of the author name won't make any difference to them). Your author name should be consistent with each specific book cover – but trying to use the same font or colors on every book cover, in different genres, is very difficult. Make it look good, make it match similar books in your genre, use the same name if you want your fans to find you (rather than initials or something).

Don't try to use a fancy or decorative font for your "author brand name" – use very simple serif or sans-serif fonts that are easy to read.

## 54

Q: Should all the text of my cover be legible as a thumbnail?

A: NO. This is a common indie publishing myth: "Nobody will buy the book if they can't read the title from the thumbnail size." It's bogus. Next time you're on Amazon browsing books, notice your own behavior. If you see a book that

looks interesting, do you squint and read all the tiny text on the thumbnail, or do you read the big, clear text right under the cover?

Take a look at these book covers — you can't make out the title in all of them. You can't read the author name in all of them. And you don't need to, because that info is right there staring you in the face. What you can tell, immediately, even at thumbnail size, is that these are all stylish, high quality, well designed book covers.

Focus on the design, the colors, the arrangement — you want your cover (even as a thumbnail) to make an emotional statement that resonates with readers. The text doesn't matter — as long as it looks well designed. If it looks good, they'll click on it, and then they get to see the full cover in all its majesty.

Don't screw up a cover design by trying to make the thumbnail legible.

Indie authors mess this up by using huge text (in some genres, like thriller, big text is fine. But not in all. And small text can be nice too).

What this advice really boils down to is, don't make rookie design mistakes that are obvious even in thumbnail view, like using too much dropshadow or bevel, or using boring common fonts, or crowding the text, or clashing colors, or poorly photoshopped elements, or putting dark red text on a black background.

Design matters. Text legibility doesn't.

You don't want them to be able to read everything, shrug and move on. You want them to say "Huh, what's that?" and click your thumbnail so they can actually learn more about the book. Thumbnails get clicked based on design, colors and emotions — not because of the book's title or author (unless they are pre-known to the reader).

Q: Can I use a painting I / my niece made?

A: I don't recommend using art for book covers, because it usually doesn't say enough about the content – the cover has to make the genre super clear, and let readers know what to expect in the book, and photos are usually stronger. But it depends a little on the genre and it can work for some books (self-help, historical, etc.) For a book cover you'd want something at around 1600px wide and book-shaped. But again, you'll probably sell more books using photo-manipulation and photoshop.

Q: Do you know how to create a real hard cover on Createspace or they don't give us the choice?

A: Createspace doesn't give a choice yet. In general – you'll make the most money with ebooks, and paperbacks can be nice to have for people who want real books. Hardcover books are good business for mainstream publishers because they can set a much higher price for them – so they usually come out first to force buyers to pay as much as possible, then eventually they bring out the ebooks and paperbacks.

For indie authors, they don't make much sense unless you want display models, or gift copies, that look professional and impressive. You can order them through Lulu or IngramSpark (and if you set them up there, they will show up on Amazon and other sites as well).

Q: Another question I have is how can I go about finding a reasonably priced illustrator for my children's books? I have a series in mind which would be about 12 books, so I need consistency in the drawings. I got a Wacom tablet, and it's not that I couldn't do the illustrations myself, but 1 page took me 3 days to illustrate and I feel a professional would get it done way more quickly than

that. I also have 1 stand also children's book that there is no way I can illustrate b/c I can't draw people. The other books are animals.

A: Check out Deviantart.com or Fiverr.com. On Deviant, find an artist and pay them to make a sample sketch, if you like the drawing, pay them more to finish the book. You can easily pay \$50 per illustration though, which will add up. Fiverr is a cheaper option and it may be good enough for what you need, though you'll find higher quality artists on Deviant.

Q: If custom artwork is required, is it typical for authors to source the artwork to give to a cover designer, or is that something the cover designer might do as part of their commission?

A: Again, custom artwork is rarely recommended – unless you find something brilliant on Deviant art. I would usually hire someone directly, negotiate a price and pay them for the art out of my normal cover design rates. Many other designers (including Amazon's book cover services) charge extra for custom illustration. It can save time to find your own and just hire someone cheap to add on the text, but make sure you get someone experience with book covers who will tell you if the art isn't going to sell the book well.

Q: Should I enter book cover contests?

A: Here's how cover contests work: they let all entries be 'finalists' and encourage everybody to comment and vote with social shares, which means they get a lot of traffic and a big bump in Google Love from all the links and shares. But they don't really care who wins, and it has nothing to do with cover design – so you often see really ugly covers win, which confirms the author's bias that they have a great cover (or worse, sets up a bunch of ugly cover designs as "winning book covers" to emulate.

However, it's true you do get more visibility and traffic just for participating, especially if it's a bigger site... so... why not? But don't brag much about winning.

Exception: Joel Friedlander's monthly cover contest. Joel actually looks at and provides feedback for the covers, so it can be an excellent way to get some free feedback on your cover. If it's ugly or poorly made, Joel will say so.

## 60

Q: Have you considered writing some kind of a Beginners' Photoshop Tips and Tricks for Creating Cover Art book?

A: On [www.diybookcovers.com](http://www.diybookcovers.com) I have some guides and templates. I'm finally learning how to produce high quality videos and screen shots, so when my studio is all set up next month I'll start recording practical how-tos. And I'm going to turn DIY Covers into a big resource site with not just MS Word templates, but a whole bunch of alternative ways to make a quality cover yourself. I'm also putting out a book soon on "Cover Design Secrets that Sell Books."

Photoshop is tricky to learn. I've invested a few thousand dollars in a new design software that should have some of the best features of Photoshop, but be online and simpler to use (and free!). That way I can make templates that people can actually use, even if they don't have Photoshop.

## 61

Q: How do you find cover art?

A: As a book cover designer, I've written a lot of stuff about book cover design. Basically, stock photography works best as long as it's blended together well, beautiful to look at, highly polished and professional, and unique. You can spend a lot or a little, but the book cover makes an enormous impact on the success of your book. A good book cover will make it easier to get reviews and blurbs, and

easier to do any kind of marketing. I've also proven through dozens of case studies that I can double sales by improving an author's book cover.

You should read my post, "Is your cover designer lazy and unethical?" (about why you should use stock photography).

## 62

Q: Why not sell from my website for more profit?

A: When somebody buys a book from your website, it's a dead end. You make a little money, but you don't get any new prospects. In contrast, when people buy from Amazon, Amazon will automatically recommend your book to more people, leading to more sales. Amazon knows how to sell stuff to the right people. They are very, very good at it. So you're basically paying Amazon to sell your book for you. If you decide not to use Amazon, you need to find a way to drive traffic directly to your own website. If you're selling something cheap or low price, it's an unsustainable model. However if you turn your book into a higher price package, or package options, then you could afford to advertise or do other things to drive traffic and make more money. Really you should have a free or cheap ebook, and a more expensive guide or your site (for non-fiction).

For fiction, you can't really raise the price because people won't pay it (or they won't feel satisfied). And while you could sell directly on your website and make more per sale, you will sell much less than you would partnering with Amazon and other sites. This is the case unless you have a huge, established platform of fans who will buy anything you publish, and you're also famous enough to get a ton of media coverage just for sneezing near a typewriter (like JK Rowling).



Q: How do you get legitimate book reviews before publishing? And, I don't mean how do you get people to say nice things about your work (which you are likely to get if you use your 'online friends'), I mean how do you get a thoughtful review that does not cost an arm and a leg? I'm interested in this also from the point of view of recognizing how valid are the reviews that one might read about self-published work? How do you know if it's just the author's friends being nice?

A: For pre-publication reviews, you need to submit your book (finished, with an ARC stamp on the cover) out to reviewers 3 months in advance. You can also send it to other writers – you'd be surprised how many of them will write back. I have a client who recently pitched a big name, and he wrote back saying "Sorry but I'd never read the book. No time." She wrote him again and pasted in a sample section, so he could just glance at that without reading the whole book – and she received a brilliant blurb for her effort. It's OK to get reviews from your friends or people you've built relationships with. You can add them under the "editorial reviews" section of your Amazon page.

And they are important... However – it's true that most people don't take them seriously any more. If you look at any mainstream published book, they usually have about 10 editorial reviews from famous authors or people or websites or newspapers, they're all great and glowing. But we know that just means the publishers used their connections. We don't trust them anymore. So we look at the real reviews on Amazon – and we also ignore all the positive ones (the five star books that are a little too enthusiastic). We assume those are friends and family. Which leads us to the one and two star reviews. Those are the ones we trust, because we know the author wouldn't have encouraged anyone to leave a poor review.

But just because we trust the bad reviews, doesn't mean we'll agree with them. We want to read the bad reviews to know the warnings or drawbacks, but if we're interested, we'll probably buy the book anyway and decide for ourselves.

That's why I set up the website [www.1starbookreviews.com](http://www.1starbookreviews.com). It's mostly meant as a joke, pretending as a real business – but the points made are well grounded: that well written "negative" book reviews that accidentally reveal positive aspects about the book or author, or seem so uneducated and crazy that no one takes them seriously, can work much better than glowing 5-star reviews.

Q: I have 2 books on Kindle Amazon right now, the problem is I can't market them because I need reviews and no one has really reviewed them. How do you get the amount of reviews needed to really start being able to market more successfully? What is the best way to get reviews?

A: Continuing this discussion from the last answer, what are the options to actually get reviews?

Personally I wouldn't pay for the expensive options like Kirkus. I go after real reader reviews, good or bad. To get those you need to get a ton of downloads. If you assume 1% of readers leave reviews, you need 100 downloads to get 1 review. Luckily if you do a smart KDP select giveaway and promote it, you may get several thousand downloads. Your chances of getting good reviews will improve if you put a notice in the front of the back saying how much you need and appreciate reader reviews.

You can also email people directly who have bigger platforms or are related to the book's topic or subject somehow. (You should have thought about this as you wrote the book, so you could include more of these connections.)

You can also bribe people; I usually offer a

free something if they leave a review. It's not quite a paid review if it isn't for cash. But you don't want flippant, baseless positive reviews – as I mentioned earlier, they don't work that well anyway. Instead you want realistic, truthful sounding reviews. You shouldn't go around asking people “for a good review.” If you ask anybody for a review, make sure you stress you'll be happy with an honest, critical review, with what they liked and didn't like about your book. Writing a review is a lot of pressure for most people, especially for your friends and family. Make it easy for them by telling them it can be short, casual, and honest.

Last but not least, you can pay for reviews. It's considered slimy, but if you pay for honest, genuine reviews, that inform rather than deceive readers, there's really nothing inappropriate about it (as evidenced by Kirkus and Foreword: if it's OK for them to charge for book reviews, it isn't automatically unethical to pay less for the same service somewhere else). You shouldn't be doing any marketing without some reviews up, and if you've already tried everyone you know and are stuck, you may find adding a few from Fiverr.com is a temporary fix at least.

Something I've done in the past is to have one big prize for the review voted most helpful by a certain date (I gave away a 1-week resort vacation). Then I made a page talking about that offer and advertised it on Facebook. That gets people to buy and review the book – but this won't work so well with strangers who don't care about you or your book.

The very best way to get book reviews, hands down, is to have a list of your readers and followers – but that takes time to build up and probably isn't in place for the first book. Although, something I've seen recently is Facebook posts trying to get you to join a list. So you could write a simple guide or free offer, advertise to get people on your list, and use the list to sell the book/get reviews. It's also possible to grow a list really fast by writing a lot of quality guest posts.

PS) I also set up a website that lets you get in touch with other authors to trade book blurbs: [www.blurbtrade.com](http://www.blurbtrade.com) – which was well meant but mostly failed, I don't even know if it still works.

If the idea of trading or buying reviews makes your skin crawl or your blood boil, please read my article, *Authors, Ethics and Utilitarianism* (Or, “Why Authors are Bad People”) which discusses book reviewing practices and controversies.

## 65

- Q: What is good etiquette for using quotes? If I get a good review on Amazon for example, should I ask the reviewer before using it?
- A: It's generally acceptable to modify or edit reviews or blurbs, and I believe once someone has posted a review to Amazon it becomes public domain. So you're probably fine using it... although I would just cite it as “Amazon Reviewer” rather than using their real name, unless you ask them for permission.

## 66

- Q: How to deal with negative reviews.
- A: One of my books, *Book Marketing is Dead*, got a pretty nasty one star review because I say it's OK to buy reviews (as a last resort, and if done ethically). I tracked down the reviewer and remade her book covers for her. This softened her reserve and she edited her 1 star review to a 3 star review, which was less nasty but kept the points she disagrees with. Her review is consistently voted as “helpful” by other people – my best five star review has 16 helpful votes, hers has 71 – which means a lot of people are either agreeing with her review, or they are choosing not to buy the book because of her review (presumably because they also think it's evil and dishonest to pay for book reviews).

Meanwhile, I've gotten a couple more 1 star

reviews on that book, including: “I found this author to be condescending and boorish. Not to mention far too negative! I don’t recommend this book at all.”

The other says there’s nothing new in my book; his profile name is “Grumpy Whiny Old Man.” These are excellent one star reviews, because they are negative without actually saying anything specific about my book. Plus they are competing with 80 other reviews that are mostly very positive. People aren’t likely to believe those reviews, and if those are “the worst I’ve got” then the book can’t be too bad.

The three star review is much more damaging, because it introduces a controversial issue (paid book reviews) – which is only a very tiny portion of the entire book’s content, but enough to scare some people off, especially since it’s voted most helpful and appears at the top.

If you have a majority of three star reviews, your book probably isn’t as good as you think it is.

If you have a majority of one star reviews, then you are mishandling reader expectation. People don’t write 1 star reviews after reading a book that wasn’t very good; they write 1 star reviews when they are disappointed, or angry, or upset. They feel lied to or cheated. This often happens if you have some bullshit five star reviews, or a ton of media, or heavy promotion... they are excited about the book and then they find out it’s not very good. Their experiences differ from their expectations. That’s going to lead to bad reviews.

If you want to gamble, try posting your book with a few negative book reviews. Then people who read it will expect it to be not so great, and may be pleasantly surprised and disagree with the negative reviews enough to defend it with positive reviews.

But really, don’t take reviews too seriously. Yes you need them – but you want to get a lot of them, and having negative reviews doesn’t

necessarily kill book sales as long as you’re driving traffic and visibility.

Unless the reviews mention poor formatting or spelling/grammar mistakes. In that case, fix the book, then contact the reviewer and email them the improved book, thank them for their helpful criticism, and ask if they would please consider updating their review.

## EDITING

### 67

Q: How do I find an ebook designer? A print book designer? What’s the range of costs for these editing & design freelance professionals? How do I know if I’m getting ripped off? Is it worth it to pay for a publishing package from an author services company? Which ones are good? Or am I better off with freelancers? Or DIY? Again, how do I know if I’m getting ripped off?

A: I let all these questions run together because they all mean the same thing: “What’s the best way to get your book published professionally without overspending?” It’s not easy. The value of a small press or author services is that everything is in-house. You pay them one big fee and they delegate and get everything done. It’s convenient. They are well-oiled machines.

But the success of your book is going to have a lot to do with your book cover, it’s the most important piece. And author-services or small presses may not provide stellar work, in which case, you’re not only wasting money, you’re shooting yourself in the foot. Find the best designer you can, look at their samples and testimonials, make sure they have a lot of experiences (hundreds of samples... or 10 amazing ones).

See who are consistently recommended by other indie authors.

This answer about book editing was REALLY

LONG so I posted it as a separate article:

How much does book editing cost and are you being ripped off?

TIP: I had a question and a section about Wattpad, but unfortunately it disappeared. Using Wattpad or a fan fiction site is a great way to put up your content as you go, grow your fans and reader base, and also get real feedback on the story as you're writing it – that feedback can help you significantly improve the book so that you get the story right. If you use Wattpad you'll end up with a small fanbase and a better story (which is a pretty huge advantage). So go use it.

## 68

Q: Is joining an organization like RWA or MWA worthwhile? How and where do you find a crit partner?

A: It can be, but only if you make an effort to make friends or attend real events. I'm in the "Alliance of Independent Authors" group, and it has led to a few professional relationships I wouldn't have made otherwise. For professional networking, LinkedIn can be pretty powerful as well. The thing to remember about these groups is you have to provide value. You can't just go in and ask for help. You need to actively participate, help other people, volunteer feedback, post useful content. Build your social karma. Get people to like you. Then when you need a favor, they'll be happy to help. Rather than a crit partner, I'd look for beta-readers. Try to connect with readers who enjoy your type of books and offer them free books for life if they provide early feedback. Make sure to get readers who read a lot of stuff in your genre, so they can pinpoint what went wrong in your story and offer suggestions.

## 69

Q: Illustrating your own picture book if you are self-publishing. Free images, and formats without spending a ton of money.

A: Illustration doesn't have to be too difficult; the trick is putting everything together into a book. I suggest putting all your JPG pictures into a Word file and converting it to ebook format; or saving all your pictures as PDF then merging them together into one PDF document. You can hire someone on Fiverr.com to help with this kind of stuff (they could also add text over the pictures if you need it).

Blurb.com works best for full-on picture books. You can use stock photography – which will work fine for an inspirational book of quotes or something. One of my favorite books of all time is the "Blue Day Book" which is just a bunch of cute animal pictures and some text.

But generally speaking, picture books are going to be harder to pull off and do well than straight text books.

## PRINT BOOKS

## 70

Q: Do I need a publishing imprint or button?

A: Nobody really cares if you self-publish anymore, but I think having a publishing name or button can make your book look more professional. It's fine if you just make something up. You don't need a full website for your publishing name. Your website should focus on you, the author.

However I often come across the issue of ugly logos that I need to put on otherwise beautiful covers. Especially if the authors demand I use the garish and bold primary colors they've chosen to use. If you make an amateur or ugly logo for your publishing company, it doesn't help you look more professional, it ruins and otherwise perfect book cover and proclaims that you're a design novice.

This is yet another reason why I'm skeptical towards the promises of small presses, who offer publishing packages but often have ugly logos.

Q: What goes on the back of my book cover?

A: A blurb or review (or three!), a short summary of the book, an author photo/very short bio (a couple sentences, an ISBN barcode. Possibly a link to your website or social media profiles. Usually a “Cover design by....” and possibly “cover photo by...” if you have the photographer’s name (a lot of stock photography providers don’t use real names, just handles, so I wouldn’t use those.)

For the barcode, you can use the free barcode maker I have on my website.

If you’re using Createspace (or Lightning Source/IngramSpark) they’ll give you an ISBN barcode. Createspace will add one on, but it won’t have the price on it. Lightning Source gives it to you on the template, so you need to move it into your design.

Q: How should I write my sales copy/book summary?

A: This is really tricky for authors to do well; and it’s absolutely critical to sales. The back cover copy will be about the same as the Amazon copy. Don’t try to do it all yourself. You’re too close to it. Hire a professional editor – there are even some people on Fiverr who offer this service only. Look for someone who can edit your description and overpay them (\$25 or so should be fine). Make it tighter and cleaner. Don’t give everything away, hook attention, demonstrate the conflict but not the “what happens next.”

Don’t say “This happens, and then this happens, and then that happens.” Don’t reveal the plot, show what’s at stake (hint – every conflict should be a life and death conflict. Even if not literally, the problems should feel like the end of the world to the characters). You can refer to the worst thing that could happen (a bomb set to destroy half of New York, killing millions of people) but don’t show the hero swooping in to save the

day.

Again, hire help.

Q: How do I format the interior of my book for Create Space so that it looks nice and reasonably professional?

A: It’s possible to do this in MS Word, and that’s probably what I recommend in most cases – but use a high quality template and get high quality, professional fonts. I have a package of free templates on [www.diybookformats.com](http://www.diybookformats.com) and you can also check out Joel Friedlander’s templates.

I’m going to start making “how-to” videos for formatting and design soon so that may help more than just a text summary of the process, those will be on my YouTube channel.

You can find a template and then send it to someone on Fiverr to lay it out for you, because it can be a pain in the ass and \$20 or so can save you a few hours. I send all my stuff to a guy in the Philippines who lays it out in InDesign.

Adobe InDesign looks a little cleaner and nicer (most people won’t be able to put their finger on it, but the word spacing is more even and it just feels more professional). But, I need to go through lots of revision and changes because books are never finished, there are always typos, and authors go through several rounds before they catch everything. Which takes up a lot of time and slows down your publishing schedule (plus formatting in InDesign is more expensive).

There are InDesign formats on [www.diybookformats.com](http://www.diybookformats.com) as well, and you can hire someone on Fiverr to do it for around \$50 (much cheaper than someone like me, who charges closer to \$400).

Just like book cover design – if you try to do it all from scratch, by yourself, and it’s your first try, it’s going to look like crap (not to mention take weeks of hair-pulling). Find a



sample or template you like, find a cheap designer, tell them what to do. Don't get fancy or inventive.

The point of formatting is to get out of the way of the reader experience, not to distract. My other book, "How to Write, Format, Publish, Promote" goes into the process in more detail, but I'm excited about the videos, which will make it much easier.

## 74

Q: Should I copyright my title?

A: I don't do copyrights, for anything. But I'm not really cautious or good at legal stuff. The way I understand copyrights is, if someone uses your stuff and you can prove that they are making money of your idea, while you are losing money, you can try and get some of that money back.

But as I also understand it, you have an automatic copyright when you produce anything. If you wrote a book and Hollywood wanted to make it into a movie, and they didn't ask you for permission, I think you would be able to sue for damages by proving your story came first, even without a copyright.

But that's unlikely to happen, because big companies will be pretty safe and smart about stuff like that. What you're probably more worried about is other authors stealing your book ideas.

JK Rowling has alienated a lot of her fans by being overprotective of her content. But Hugh Howey is an indie publishing rockstar because he encourages people to use his world and write fan fiction. A friend of mine was struggling as a writer, but felt really inspired by Wool to write his own story, and he sent it to Hugh to check his reaction. Hugh told him he should go ahead and publish it. (The three of us even got to hang out a little in Taiwan after the TIBE.)

Hugh's done this for dozens of authors; he even writes them blurbs, significantly

boosting their own writing careers. He knows that fan fiction will only increase his own reputation and book sales.

Conclusion: if your work matters to other people and they want to share it, why limit your world to only the books you're capable of writing?

## 75

Q: Do you know if a responsible yet quality company or program I can get my interior formatted?

A: I always recommend Lisa DeSpain of [ebookconverting.com](http://ebookconverting.com). But I've also hired people from [E lance.com](http://E lance.com) or [Fiverr.com](http://Fiverr.com). The trick with formatting is to know what you want (there are only really a few options) and to match the style/fonts of your cover design (so get an awesome cover!)

## EBOOKS

## 76

Q: How do I add all the nice touches? I want to make the reader comfortable with links to Google Earth or other online sources when a place name appears, I want a Table of Contents that takes the reader anywhere she wants to go.... all that. The catch? The Smashwords epub-editing software is buggy and the help files are not helpful. In the two short pieces I've published so far I've been able to dance around the problems. But this does not bode well for publishing lengthier works. This can't be that hard. Who's got some decent software?

A: Smashwords can be a little testy – there's also [Draft2Digital](http://Draft2Digital.com). [Jutoh](http://Jutoh.com) is pretty awesome for making ebooks, a little easier to learn than [Sigil](http://Sigil.com) ([Sigil](http://Sigil.com) actually lets you go through and edit code, but is not as user-friendly as [Jutoh](http://Jutoh.com)). If you aren't picky, use [Calibre](http://Calibre.com) or a free conversion tool – those should work fine as long as you've set up your Word file the right way before converting (for

example, you've set your chapter titles to "H1" tags and Word has already made a TOC. There's a full walk through on [www.diybookformats.com](http://www.diybookformats.com)). I also have a free ebook tool on my site that's simple and automatic.

Adding simple links shouldn't be difficult: I'm just linking in this book using the "insert hyperlink" in MS Word; when I convert it to ebook the links should all work fine.

With ebooks, the text needs to be fluid so other people can set the size and style they are most comfortable with, which means you need to make it pretty simple and not try to add too much style. Big publishing firms almost always go stark, with no dropcaps, decorations or any other fancy stuff. Tables and things should be converted into images.

## 77

Q: Distributing to Australia or other countries?

A: Createspace shipping to Australia is crazy expensive, almost always about double the cost of your order. Europe is much more reasonable. Lightning Source has a printer in Australia so I believe you can set up with them and save a lot on shipping costs. You can also find some printers in China but you'll have to order several hundred copies.

## 78

Q: Publishing on iBooks is good for me and I have some sales from it but unless you use an iMac or third party aggregator, you can't publish on iBooks and Apple. Do you know of a way or work around to publish directly to iBooks?

A: I wish; I have the same problem so I have to use Smashwords, unless I buy a mac. You could also use Draft2Digital or another distribution service (BookBaby, Lulu) but it would be better to go direct if you can borrow someone else's mac. It's a pretty stupid decision so they may make an effort soon to let more people

publish on PCs.

## 79

Q: How do I format scanned letters, pictures, etc. for an ebook?

A: JPG is fine, around 1000px wide should be big enough.

Kindle also just announced this (September 3rd 2014):

Starting today, you can use Kindle Kids' Book Creator to create illustrated children's books for Kindle, taking advantage of features like text pop-ups. Here's how to get started:

Download the tool, and you can convert individual illustrations into interactive books for both Kindle devices and free reading apps.

Once your book is ready, export the file and upload it to KDP.

Set the book category, age range, and grade range to help customers find the right books for their kids.

## AUDIOBOOKS

## 80

Q: Is audiobook a good option as well for self publishers?

A: YES. A lot of people are too busy to read books, and prefer to listen while they're doing something else (shopping, working out). It's hard to say if it's worth the cost, because getting an audiobook done can be expensive. It might be especially suited for non-fiction, but it's definitely a way to reach more readers (and possibly earn more income). I only have one book, *Book Marketing is Dead* available as an audiobook. It's only been up one week, I've done absolutely nothing to share or promote it – it just appears on my Amazon page as available in Audiobook. It's sold five copies this week, and I believe I get 40% or about \$30. If that keeps up, it would mean an extra \$120 a month, which is about what I'm making off the book sales (in other

words, doubling my income from this book). The interesting thing about that is it's only five sales, as opposed to over 40 sales a month for the ebook and about 5 sales for the paperback, but it's making as much income as the other two formats combined, because ACX sets a price automatically based on length of the book.

Matt Stone of Archangel Ink helped me with mine and got it all set up on [www.acx.com](http://www.acx.com).

One thing I should caution however, my audiobook is doing OK because my book already shows up pretty high in search results and rankings; but if you have a book up that's not selling at all, has really low sales ranking, then adding an audiobook won't do much (because nobody is finding it). So make sure you've built your book well enough that it's doing OK and making consistent sales, at least one a day or so. If it isn't, I probably wouldn't invest in an audiobook.

## 81

Q: For some of my publications, I am considering some audio books for the visually impaired and those who do not read well. The audio will be available with or without the book. How much will it matter if I go into a studio and do it myself?

A: I think it's definitely possible to read your own books yourself with a nice quality mike on your own computer. If you go this route you should also think about podcasting/putting out more content in different forms than just the book.

## AMAZON/KINDLE

## 82

Q: How do I pick my keywords and subtitle?

A: This is a science that is not my forte (I was about to add an accent on that word, but interestingly, the American pronunciation doesn't actually place emphasis on the "e" – so punctuating that way would have been a lie). Some

people love to get into the details.

For me, I would do this: First find your category. Find your top 10 closest competitors – those other books that are similar enough in genre and theme that readers who enjoyed one might enjoy the other. Research their Amazon pages and see what categories and keywords they are using.

Choose the two categories you want your book to be in.

You can't easily choose your categories in KDP – you probably can't choose exactly what you want. But if you use the keyword phrases, separated by commas, you can match a category exactly and Amazon usually figures it out. Also note, "Keywords" really means keywords phrases, so don't do "vampire, romance, space opera" because that counts as three. Instead use "vampire romance space opera," which is only one. You can even make super long ones to fit in lots of keywords. You might as well try to get in more than 3 categories – but those categories don't really show up anyway until you are selling enough to have an active rank number.

The subtitle is more fun, and more tricky. Very few people are using the title and subtitle well. If you've got a properly titled non-fiction book with a keyword rich subtitle, you just put it in and you're done.

But you probably don't have a subtitle for your fiction.

Or you may put in the title "A Paris Murder" and a subtitle or tagline, or the series marker.

The tagline is going to be something clever but it not usually keyword rich; it will help readers decide whether to buy the book, but it won't help them find the book in the first place. So even though it looks a little strange, you might want to add in some extra keywords in the title box. "A Paris Murder: A Bloody Police Investigation Thriller Mystery Set in 18th Century France." Or you could just put the title in the title box, and the rest in the subtitle box. It looks a little clumsy, but

many more people will find your book this way if you have precise genre keywords.

### 83

Q: Where should I submit my book to first—Amazon, Smashwords, etc.?

A: I usually do Kindle, because it's fast and easy, and then I usually do a KDP Select campaign (more on that later). Then after the 3 months I use Smashwords to put it everywhere else.

### 84

Q: If you enroll in KDP Select, you can't distribute your book anywhere else. Is it worth it?

Q: KDP Select vs. using all possible distributors

Q: What's your take on the countdown promotion and free giveaway on Amazon? How often should you use these programs?

A: Kindle Select lets you "sell" your book for free for five days. If you promote it on all the "Free Kindle book" websites, groups and Facebook pages, you can get thousands of downloads. If you don't have a platform, you need to remove all resistance (including price) so that people start reading your book. The few thousand people who read the book probably wouldn't have bought it at any price, but they are willing to take a risk to read it for free. If you can get a few hundred real fans and a few dozen reviews, it can be very worthwhile to start with KDP Select, then move onto other platforms after the initial launch.

However, you could also just set your book at 99cents (and if you want to make it free for a short time, you could set it out zero on Smashwords and wait for Amazon to price match it at zero – then promote it, then put it back up again.) A few years ago Kindle was the only game in town for ebooks, now iBooks has a substantial market share and you could double your sales if you are on both

platforms. But before anybody starts actually buying the book, you need those initial readers and reviews – and doing a big free campaign is a great way to get that ball rolling.

I usually just do one, during the initial launch. You could keep doing it every 3 months, but I believe after the first push, you should spend those three months writing another book and building your platform.

If you already have a big platform and you don't need that extra push, you could just sell it to your followers, but it's almost always best to find new readers. Your later self will thank you for it.

### 85

Q: Is Kindle's new pricing support (Beta) worth changing your ebook price?

A: It's worth taking a look at. I have this book (100 Questions) set up at \$2.99. Kindle's pricing support suggests raising it to \$4.99 to maximize author earnings, but it also tells me I'll only make 10% more, while losing 35% of sales!

The main question to consider is this:

Is this particular book meant for earnings, or for platform building?

For me, I don't need any earnings from 101 Questions – this is a little book to build my platform and introduce me to new readers. My money comes from cover design, and I do this stuff because authors need a lot of help and advice to brave the challenging waters of the publishing journey.

If you're starting with little or no platform and you plan to write more books in the same genre, the first book should be platform building. But if you're writing only one book in a very particular niche, and don't plan to follow it or build a platform on that topic, then focus on the maximum profit.

Also, if you've already got a platform and you write something that is appealing but not directly tied your platform, you may want to

focus on earnings. I have several other books coming out soon that will focus on profit: I'll build them and market them as money-earning products to boost my income, partner and market them well, and they will sell a lot of copies.

But if I charged a lot for this book, which is just a collection of short answers, people may not feel they got their money's worth. This book is just to prove I can provide value and I know what I'm talking about; it's to build relationships, not to earn.

## 86

Q: Should you publish in many formats? Ebook + Print + Audio? Different languages?

A: Yes – however, you should also make sure you know

Who's going to care about the book and why

How you are going to reach them

How much money you will make

If you're platform-building, you may lose money at first but build your platform, which will become valuable later. But if this is a product and you're not thinking about your platform, just because you put it out there doesn't mean anybody will buy it. So focus on what's cheapest and easiest (ebooks). If the ebook is selling really well and getting great comments, then do an audiobook if you can afford it, and a print book. Audiobooks are hot right now and selling; but don't spend a lot of money on audio or print if nobody is reading your ebook and you think you need to reach more people before you "catch on."

Ebooks will make up about 80% of your sales. If you aren't doing well on ebook, other formats aren't going to help you out much. That said, if you are doing a brilliant launch or marketing campaign, have a large platform, know exactly how many people you and your partners are going to reach, then having other formats to take advantage of your media blitz will mean extra earnings.

For different languages; I would say usually don't bother. The problem isn't that people who speak your language aren't reading the book. The problem is that you don't have a platform, or nobody knows about your book, or nobody likes your book. If you can't sell to people who speak your language, how are you going to sell to people who speak other languages?

## 87

Q: Can you explain Expanded Distribution through Createspace? Have you spoken to bookstores about their experience with Expanded Distribution?

A: Createspace's Expanded Distribution works great and I recommend it over LightningSource/Spark or Ingram. Your book will be listed everywhere it needs to be. However, bookstores won't buy your book until you hit bestseller lists or make a big stink in the media. Bookstores don't have any space. They are not your target. I doubt they know anything about Createspace or Expanded Distribution.

The idea is that people could go into a bookstore and ask the bookstore to order a book for them – but we live in the 21st century, that never happens anymore, people can just buy it from Amazon themselves.

I've had my books in Expanded Distribution and I do get bookstore orders sometimes (if I market really hard and get in the news often). I've also had university professors order my books to use in their course. So yes, sign up for it, but don't worry about the bookstores, worry about online sales and selling a lot of books in a short time period with a massive launch, guest posting and content marketing.

## 88

Q: How does one find a publisher once their self-published book is released on Amazon?

A: They don't: a publisher or agent will find you if you sell enough books or get a ton of media coverage. Publishing is not



much of an achievement. Anyone can do it. Even finishing a great book no longer merits fanfare. Stop looking for help. Stop asking other people to make your book successful for you. Nobody is going to.

Publishers don't really know how to market books – that's why the publishing industry is going out of business. There is nothing a publisher can offer you. If your book is brilliant enough, you may earn some champions, devoted to sharing your book with as many people as possible; so you better be sure to write a mind-blowing book. That may excuse your failure to build a platform or do any book marketing.

But after that, stop waiting for it to “catch on” – make it happen. Get it in front of the right people. Remove purchase resistance. Create a ton of content and a strong author platform. After you do that, you won't need a publisher at all.

## 89

Q: There has been a lot of discussion about how Amazon's new Kindle Unlimited program will affect sales and revenue for self-published authors. Do you believe this will have a significant impact on Kindle authors? Have you seen any effects on sales and revenue thus far, or is it too early to tell? Do you have any suggestions of how manage Kindle books in light of this (Free vs. no free books, KDP or not, etc.)

A: I'm not qualified to answer, since I don't have any big selling titles yet and don't have enough data (sales seem to be down for me personally, but that may just be because everyone is on vacation for the summer). But my view is this: yes Amazon is a huge company and they are too powerful and after they are the last ones standing, they can do whatever they want (like not pay authors). But in the meantime, they are working really hard to sell my books to exactly the people who want to read them—a better job than anyone else in the world. Someday

they may decide not to offer as many benefits, in which case authors are free to pull down their books. If they get too unpopular, there will absolutely be new competitors that offer authors better terms. Amazon is winning because it offers the best terms to authors and to readers; as long as they keep winning I'm not really worried about them being a dictator: it's an open market. We use them because they're good and convenient and better than any competitor. When that's no longer the case, things will shift again.

## 90

Q: I have tried to format for Kindle myself and after 2 long unsuccessful days with a guide, by the way, I was ready to pull my hair out. I'm not talking just a few hours. I was at it from 7am until 2am for 2 days in a row. Why is formatting for Kindle such a hard thing to do? I wouldn't expect it to be rocket science. Since then I've gone on Fiverr and paid someone else to do it for me, but it can take a while and I'd love to learn how to do it myself but obviously someone would need to really show me and explain what to do step by step. I've got 4 or 5 other books ready to put up and it would be helpful to save the money since I have to also pay to get the epub file for Nook for each as well.

A: I had the same struggle, and hit my head against the issue for months without being able to overcome that hurdle. I finally got a training kit from Suzanne Fyhrie Parrot ([www.unrulyguides.com](http://www.unrulyguides.com)); the trouble is that ebooks are in code, so using any kind of a visual editor is a best guess and can make problem code that messes things up.

The easiest way to do it is to format your Word document the right way, then use an automatic converter like the one I put on my site, and everything should look perfect; but you can't go in and edit it. You can use Sigil to open the epub, then Kindle Previewer to generate a mobi file for Kindle. Jutoh or

Scrivener work well if you want to learn something new, and there are a bunch of new ebook making sites where you build them chapter by chapter (I'm building an online tool like that also but I'm not sure how it will turn out). Fiverr is a good choice, but it's worth learning Sigil (free software) so you can make changes yourself.

## MARKETING

Marketing is like going fishing. Since there is no limit to how many fish you catch, you should put out a line and pole in as many lakes as you can. However, putting lines down everywhere can be exhausting, so you can focus on the biggest lakes, with the biggest fish, that you know adore the kind of bait you're using.

You've got to use bait that's suited to what those fish, in that pond, are looking for. If you come in with something shiny and fast moving, when all they want is a bug or a worm, you may not get any bites. This is what Gary Vaynerchuk calls "Native Content." You can't just put the same ads everywhere, you have to build valuable content that fits into whatever platform you're on and gives visitors what they want.

Here's a quick list of the most effective things you can do:

Partner with other authors in your genre, trade blurbs.

Write reviews or articles on your blog about books and movies your target readers would enjoy

Guest post on bigger blogs with lots of traffic

Tie your book (or yourself) into local media. Do something that is newsworthy (besides publishing, which is too passive)

Tie into a social cause or movement that people care about

Align yourself within the beliefs and attitudes you share with your target readers

Don't be invisible, people visit blogs to learn about the blogger. Be a real person. Post

pictures and videos of yourself

Build your email list by offering a ton of valuable content, consistently, and having an opt-in offer that appeals to your target readers

And now, back to the questions.

## 91

Q: How do I get on TV/radio?

A: First, make some YouTube videos of yourself speaking about your book. People want to hear and see you before they'll agree to let you on their show. Then, offer something valuable and relevant. Join haro.com (help a reporter out) and pitch reporters when they are looking for a lead. Listen to the TV shows and radio programs that may be a good fit and try to "Jump In" to a hot topic. For example, if they are covering X, and you have some knowledge about that, send a quick email saying "I noticed you've been talking about X recently, but that other presenter/speaker you had on was wrong about Y. I've just published a book on the subject and would love to speak with you some more." Offer a contradictory viewpoint, they don't want more of the same, they want dialogue and controversy. They want to hear from both sides of an issue. Find a way to make a contribution and further the discussion (not just talk about your book). If you're writing fiction, you should have thought about the possible relevant issues your book deals with before you wrote it. One character could have had Multiple sclerosis, for example, so that you'd have a tie-in to MS organizations or shows.

Start with very small, local TV and radio programs – sometimes just saying "I'm a local author who published a book" is enough to get some air time. They won't sell much, but they will prove your ability so that you can snag national coverage more easily.

PS) Nobody listens to radio anymore! You need to get on Podcasts instead. You can get

on Podcasts by having something important and relevant to say that a specific audience will appreciate. Listen to some, figure out what their theme is, and pitch them a unique idea. It doesn't have to match the theme of your book exactly, just whatever you can offer.

If you object that nobody listens to radio; the other argument is that radio is too localized: it's a lot of effort and it will probably only get you in front of a few hundred people in one geographical area. You should spend time going for big wins instead.

Q: How do I get my book reviewed in newspapers?

A: You don't – newspapers rarely do book reviews anymore. Instead, what you need to do is create a story, by doing something remarkable. And your book doesn't count. You need to do something else. Often this can be related to your author mission (why do you write/who do you write for). You could start a community youth writing program. You could start a mastermind group for authors in your area. Create something that involves other people, hopefully something fresh and interesting. That's the news. Your book is just the byline or footnote. Start small with something local, then work your way up.

## 92

Q: How do I get bookstores to carry my books?

A: Big chains like Barnes & Noble won't touch you, because they are about A) selling books and B) preserving their reputation as guardians of culture. So you can aim at smaller or independent bookstores. If you want to do this, make sure you have a brilliant cover and the book doesn't look self-published. Make sure it's got a bunch of great reviews on Amazon, and hopefully some blurbs from reputable sources. Most independent or small bookstores will let you put a few books in their shop on consignment,

meaning you give them the books and they will pay you if they sell, then order some more.

For my first book, I had books on consignment at about a dozen stores, both locally and internationally, but I soon realized it was way too much work for far too little money. Getting in bookstores is not worth the effort. And it wastes valuable time that you should be using to build your online platform. One good guest post on a major website will keep selling your book for years to come.

## 93

Q: How do you get bookstores to invite you for book signings?

A: Same as above (although, they won't invite you.) If you push hard enough smaller independent bookstores will probably let you in. And doing book signings may be enough of a story to pitch it to local media and get in the news, which can help to build your platform. If you can't get into bookstores, screw them – do it in the coffee shop across the street. But there are better things you could be doing with your time. Book signings stroke your own ego but are very unlikely to sell a lot of books. It's old school book marketing – it's part of the publishing dream that has become a fairy tale. A book signing isn't the crowning achievement which signifies you've made it as a professional author. Focus on creating online content or building a platform that keeps your books on the top seller lists and earning money.

## 94

Q: How to promote your writing to successfully brand ourselves in a niche for circulation and profit?

Q: What kind of promoting and how to promote your book?

A: It's pretty important to brand yourself

into a niche. Think of your author mission statement and a personal tagline (who are you, what do you write, why and for whom?) Use that on your website and social media profiles. Put your statement or your personal story into all your books. (Tip: most author bios are terrible and only highlight achievements. Instead you want a personal author saga that includes a troubled history, a pain point, and an epiphany/conversion moment when you realized your defining purpose in life).

Once you've found your niche, become the #1 expert. This works for both fiction and non-fiction. If you're writing thrillers and you want to be known as an expert in writing thrillers, then research and write articles about how to write thrillers. Give examples. Hold thriller writing contests. Give thriller story prompts. Appear as a guest on podcasts or other websites writing about thrillers. Organize a collection of stories from other thriller writers. Interview other famous or best-selling thriller writers. Write book reviews for (at least) the top 20 free and paid thrillers on Kindle. Then write articles like "The top 5 most amazing thriller books that will make you pee your pants."

Ideally what you want, is that whenever anybody searches for "best-selling thrillers" or "how to write thrillers" your name comes up somewhere pretty quickly, in the first page of Google. (Tip: easiest way to do that is by making YouTube videos or doing Google On Air Hangouts.)

I'm still working on this: even though I'm not the best book cover designer in the world, I will appear to be, because when you search for "Book Cover Design" on Google I will take up the first five slots. (I'm not quite there, but if you go through the first page of results on Google, you'll find me.)

## 95

Q: How to connect with your fans somewhere.

A: That's a misleading questions: you have

to make fans first. You can make fans with just your writing, but you only make raving, loyal fans by letting them connect with you personally (there are exceptions, like JK Rowling... but if you're starting from scratch, having fans that like and support you is really valuable). Here's the secret to making loyal fans:

Give them a reason to get in touch with you.

Respond.

That's pretty much it. You can post great content on Facebook and Twitter, and you get new fans either through your work or by the content your share. But to create loyal fans you need to respond to them. You need to listen to them and care about them.

That's one of the reasons I can't stand authors complaining about not wanting to get onto social media because they're introverts or they aren't good with people: What I hear is "I don't care about my fans and I don't want to talk with them." Social media isn't difficult. You post interesting stuff, and your respond to other people's interesting stuff. When someone says something to you, you chat back with them. Twitter is way easier than having a real or email conversation, because it's just a few short sentences at a time.

Think about who your "ideal fan" is. Then keep them in mind and share anything that might interest them. When someone writes to you, respond.

You can also set up an author profile at Goodreads... which is a good idea, but you really want people to drop into your "home" or blog (as long as its professional and not ugly like most author websites).

## 96

Q: How to sell more books?

A: First, get 10 reviews and a better book cover. Then, find your author story, fix your bio and you're your website more professional. Just use a quality WordPress

theme and it will look fine, don't muck it up with graphics and customizations! Next, find people with audiences who will like your book and ask if they will share or if they will publish a guest post for you. Then make content (videos, articles, blog posts) and put it up everywhere you can. (Don't just email them with the ask; do the work and finish the article. Bloggers need content. If it's done and it's good, and everything is there so they just have to post it, they are more likely to accept. They aren't going to say yes (if they don't already know you) without seeing the full article.

Tip: look at the top 10 bestsellers in your category, search for them by name in Google and check out what website are talking about them or what kind of content mentions them. You can reverse engineer their success by doing all the same things they are doing, and getting on all the same websites.

## 97

Q: Should I do a press release?

A: Only if you have a story – publishing your book is not news, unless it's a non-fiction about a very relevant or specific topic. Posting a press release may get the news on a lot of websites and make it easier to find you if people are searching for specific keywords. But that's not how people find books. They rarely Google "best romance books" – they'll look at what's selling, wherever they buy their books from.

But if you have a great story then go for it. For example I know a ten year old from Portland Oregon who's got a Kickstarted, Createspace-made book for sale at Powell's (Rena Marthaler, *Magic The Crest*). That's a great story: she should do a press release.

The problem is it's really hard to do a press release for yourself or your own book. It's awkward and weird. It's hard to write, and you probably have to submit it under a fake name. For most fiction books, it isn't worth it, unless you're doing something amazing

apart from writing and publishing. (Giving 10% of proceeds to a charity doesn't count).

## 98

Q: Should I make a book trailer?

A: Book trailers can be fun, but it's very expensive to do a good one. It's mostly about getting something on YouTube: you want some kind of content on all the major websites (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, SlideShare... ) pointing back to your book so that you can connect with new readers in as many ways as possible (plus it helps your own website shows up in results faster). So sure, it doesn't really hurt, except a homemade or unprofessional video that doesn't get many views won't sell the book.

You need to have the right keywords that people are searching for. Something to consider, if you do a YouTube video titled with your book's name and your author name – that's going to be the #1 search result for you, forever (because YouTube is a much bigger site than your author site).

Do you want your trailer to be the first thing people see? Is it your best content, that converts better than anything else?

A better idea may be to make 10 videos of just you talking about some related niche subject, so you can hit other keywords. You want people to find you who weren't already searching for your or the name of your book, but just might be interested in it. If you are doing all the stuff you should be doing (writing lists of top books in your genre, or reviews of books in your genre) you could also record the same info as a video and post it on YouTube to "double-down."

## 99

Q: What's the best way to promote? What's the best way to get people to notice the book?

A: First, forget everything you think you know about book promoting and



marketing. It is not talking about your book, telling people it's on sale, posting reviews or excerpts on social media. That's spam.

People will only trust that junk if somebody else that they trust and respect is sharing your book for you. People won't trust "Twitter Marketers" who tweet dozens of books a day, for whichever author pays them. People don't trust strangers. Telling strangers about your book somewhere they are browsing with a totally different objective than buying books is spamming.

Read Gary Vaynerchuk's *Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook* if you want more details.

Instead, only post what Gary call "native content": things that people are used to seeing on that particular platform. Don't sell, think of something you can offer or give away. Don't try to get people to buy, try to provide value and build a reputation for being awesome.

If you don't want to do any of that, focus on advertising instead: advertise on Goodreads, or better still, run insanely specific, targeted ads on Facebook.

## 100

Q: When's the best time to publish a book?

A: Some people say November/December, so you can convince people who would regularly buy one copy, to buy several copies as gifts. But I think it's better to find an event that you can tie into. If you're writing a civil war story and there is a big civil war re-enactment, schedule your launch for that same date and make sure the organizers know about it. Pester them about being involved or participating somehow. Then write a press release (or article) citing your involvement.

NEW ANSWER: the same day as another big author publishes a bestselling book in your genre.

## 101

Q: What kind of promotional material should authors have?

A: I usually love printing up jumbo postcards: if you have an amazing cover, using a post card gives you room to put the full back cover (which should include your incredible sales copy, blurbs and reviews, a short author bio and photo, and a website).

But then you have to go to events and hand them out, which is awkward (if I go to events now, I focus on making friends, listening, and helping others – not showing off my postcards).

But the other nice thing about postcards is that you can just leave little stacks out at coffee shops or around town; just leave them there and hope people pick them up. You could also leave a stack of them at events, if appropriate. If you get desperate enough, go to an event and put your postcard on the inside door of all the bathroom cubicles so people will be forced to look at them.

A business card is usually nice to have when you're talking about your book. If you have a great cover, let the cover take up the whole card and just leave a little space for your website or social media links (although, if they have the name of your book and your name, they don't really need more information). However, it's kind of a pain to have lots of different business cards for each book. Plus, people don't really hold onto business cards. And, as I mentioned earlier, passing your stuff out and talking about your books to people you've just met is not good marketing. Listen, be friendly and make friends first. Otherwise they are never going to go look up your book later.

## 102

Q: How to meet other self-published authors in your genre to do joint promotions with?

A: Good question – but it isn't so hard, at

least after they're published. Just look up the top 50 or so bestsellers in your genre, find their websites and email them. You can pitch high, but you'll have better luck looking at the authors who are doing OK, but aren't really bestsellers. Don't ask for help, offer something of value. Offer a way they can promote and sell their own books. Give them an opportunity.

You can check out [www.BlurbTrade.com](http://www.BlurbTrade.com), although it won't start to be effective until more people are using it. I'm also building a new community for author accountability, productivity and support at [www.wriye.com](http://www.wriye.com) (it won't launch until the end of 2014 2015 2016? Actually I might turn it into a 365 day email sequence).

### 103

Q: What is your take on perma-free books? Does giving away free books still work to increase sales of your other books?

A: If you have a related series, absolutely. It's also great for building your platform (you could give the first away for six months and get people to sign up on your list if they want sneak peak access to the second – hopefully by the time you launch the second you'll have a list you can use to bump your 2nd book immediately into bestseller status).

If the book is just to generate leads or promote your other businesses or gigs, free can work as well. (I could make this one free... but I'll probably put it at .99 cents. Or maybe test both.)

The trick to this is having lots of books for sale; and also having an amazing cover (I've remade some covers for perma-free books which increased sales for every other book the authors had written).

### 104

Q: What promotions should I do before my publication date for a self-published book and what promotions should I wait to do

until after it's available for sale? (Such as blog tours, book awards, newspaper reviews, press releases and others).

A: Before: start building your platform. Start writing articles. Make sure you know what you're offering and who you are marketing to. Start sharing useful content and getting people to follow you. If you're trying to get reviewed by places like Midwest Book Reviews, they usually want it 3 months in advance of publication. Send out review copies to your target reviewers and solicit blurbs. These are important, so making friends with these people is worth the time and effort. (Building relationships take time. If you email a stranger and ask for a favor they will probably say no. If you get to know them for a few months first, share their content, try to be helpful and "get on their radar" you'll have a much higher chance of success).

After: Start guest posting or appearing in different places. If people find out about you and your book, make sure they can go buy the book immediately, otherwise it's a wasted effort. They aren't going to remember later when the book is available.

PS) I know a lot of authors don't start building a platform until the book is done, so I'm working on a 21 day program, to go build up a solid platform as quickly as possible. I'll probably run the program as a free webinar the first time, so if you'd like to have a stronger web presence and sell more books, follow me or join my list to get access.

### 105

Q: Book Awards?

A: Rarely worth the effort. You'll get a little bit of visibility if you win, and you can call yourself an "award winning, bestselling author" which sounds cool but is meaningless these days with so many awards and genre categories. It probably can't hurt, although don't screw up your book cover by putting a big "winner" sticker on the front (it's usually

distracting – if your cover art is good enough, nothing can be added or removed without messing it up!).

I wouldn't brag about being a 2nd place winner or runner-up, or nominated for... unless it's a very prestigious award. I've won some and lost some. Sometimes I win back the money I spent. Once I even got a little crystal trophy. Not sure where it is now. I don't enter them anymore. You don't need permission or recognition, you need real readers who like your book.

If the book award in question has a huge, very active following or does significant promotion, winning may be worthwhile. If you feel like it, go ahead and enter them all. But don't expect it to make much of a difference in book sales. (Build your own platform, don't just try to borrow others!)

Edit: if you win you might get links from the book award site, that bring you SEO benefits and traffic for years... but there may be better/cheaper (and more relevant) ways to get links like that; like trading author interviews with other indie authors in your genre).

## 106

Q: Blog Tours?

A: Depends on the size of the blog and the following. I see a whole bunch of "book marketing opportunities" inviting authors to do blog tours on tiny blogs with no readership. You'd be much better off advertising on one specific blog that reviews books in your genre: pay for a sidebar ad for a few weeks, rather than getting on 10 blogs in a day.

If you're going to do a blog tour, focus it all into a few days (be everywhere, at once) so that your cumulative sales will spike and get you a higher sales rank. And rather than just grabbing a "blog tour" opportunity, it would be much, much more powerful to single out the top five blogs that your target readers adore and pitch them a guest post, or advertise on their sidebar, then to just do

more general websites.

I'd find easier ways, like trading author interviews with 50 indie authors in your genre (ask to interview them, put the content on your site linking to theirs, then do the same thing with them).

## 107

Q: Should I take the time to write reviews for books on my blog?

A: Absolutely. Book reviews are a really easy way to create content that will appeal to your target readers. It's also a good way to build relationships with other authors in your genre. Review them, post them on your blog and on Amazon, then send a short email to the authors saying "hey I enjoyed your book and just left a review on Amazon!" Don't ask them to review your book in exchange, but add them on social media so they can look up your book if you want. After you build relationships with a few of them, next time you can email them about doing some kind of group event or promotion.

It's a good idea to bring people back to your own website (so you can get people on your list with a great opt-in offer) but depending on how popular the book is, your little blog may not show up on the first page of search results. So you may also want to post some articles on other sites with higher PR and more traffic. See if you can write "top ten" lists and put them on bigger sites.

## 108

Q: Getting the book out there for all to see or at least know that it exists is difficult. I read your ebook regarding placing comments and reviews other blogs. Do you have a list of blogs that would be more entry level or user friendly?

A: For reviews or comments, focus on big blogs with lots of traffic and lots of engagement. If you're writing articles of your own, I'm building some that you can use as your own personal marketing platform.

[www.publishinginsider.com](http://www.publishinginsider.com) (you can write about publishing related stuff)

[www.offtheshelf.info](http://www.offtheshelf.info) (for YA fiction / book reviews)

[www.webwisewriters.com](http://www.webwisewriters.com) (for spiritual/self-help articles or book reviews) – I haven't worked on this in ages but am open to anybody who wants to take over

[www.edwardcullensucks.com](http://www.edwardcullensucks.com) (for paranormal romance) – this also needs more content and a manager...

THIS SITE: [creativindie.com](http://creativindie.com); if you want to write a guest post about publishing, books, creativity, productivity or business, I can start a 'guest posts' section.

If you want to leverage these websites to help build your author platform, they have high page rank so building a presence on them will bring you more traffic. Email me if you're interested.

## 109

Q: Imagine the first novel in a three part series got good reviews but negligible sales, after spending, say, \$8,000 to publish the first novel. How would publishing the 2nd of the 3 part series affect sales for both books?

A: Having more novels out will help and should increase sales for all the books – but you shouldn't spend that much money to self-publish a book (unless you already have a platform you are sure will buy thousands of copies). Take your first book publish the first few chapters on Wattpad. Then break it up into five chunks and publish them as cheap serials for .99 on Kindle. Then launch your 2nd book at a regular price (4.99 or so).

## 110

Q: As far as marketing goes, what exactly do you suggest? I sent out messages to all my friends on fb and honestly I don't think one of them bought the books and they are \$2.99. I even put up a message about

the free days. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

A: Don't ask for favors, don't make it a chore. I (almost never) post my books to my Facebook page, because my friends and family are not my target readers, and they probably wouldn't need or enjoy my books. Sometimes I might ask them to "buy" a free book just to bump my sales rank, but it's still a favor. Asking people for favors gives them the power. Why would anyone buy your book? Because they've enjoyed your content (which you've published for free and put in front of them), because they like and trust you (because you've been building relationships, making friends and helping people), because you're committed to a cause or movement that they agree with (which they read about in your author bio), or perhaps you're offering a prize or contest (but they won't really care unless the prize is huge or they know you). What you need to do is put out so much value into the world and do so many free favors for so many people, that when you publish your book you're not "asking for" a favor, you're just "calling in" all the favors people feel they owe you because you've showered them with positive, life-improving benefits for so long.

## 111

Q: When starting out, is it best to go with a "big bang" launch across all eBook sites and use many marketing channels, or ease into it with a softer launch on, perhaps, just Amazon?

A: Depends on several things. I do a slow launch on Amazon, where I put it up and tell my friends and followers. I sell it cheaper than usual (because I don't like to charge my followers for things). I may also email my list a free copy of the book and ask for their help spotting typos, and also ask them for some reviews. I'll make sure my Amazon page and everything is working well. I might do a KDP Select free

But if I'm going to do a big launch, by being everywhere at once, doing some big articles on sites with a lot of traffic, then having a book only on Kindle is going to be limiting. I'd lose half of the audience if I didn't have other formats (paperback, audiobook, and ebooks on iBooks and other ebook stores).

Most of the books I'm putting out now are small, niche topics. They are useful, but they aren't high quality or mind-blowing enough that I feel comfortable doing a real big launch or book promotion. And I put out books so quickly it isn't worth it to do a big, full on launch for everything.

But for some of the other books I plan to launch soon, I'll be everywhere, doing guest posts for huge blogs, getting on podcasts, doing publicity stunts and media campaigns – because those books have more of a shot rising up to real best-seller status.

## 112

Q: What are the best marketing resource websites for self-publishers?

A: Marketing a book is like marketing anything else. Unfortunately, the majority of self-publishing authors, even the ones who are doing pretty well, don't know jack about real marketing. Most of what they say is bogus. They simply don't have the numbers to analyze the data and know for sure what is working and what isn't. I find it so much more valuable to listen to marketing experts (not "self-publishing marketing experts.") I recommend listening to these podcasts:

Entrepreneur on Fire  
The School of Greatness  
Publish, Position, Profit  
Seth Godin's Startup School  
Internet Business Mastery  
The New Business Podcast  
Online Marketing Made Easy  
Pocket Changed  
Solopreneur Hour

Q: Should you hire a publicist?

A: Probably not. The hard part is building your platform, positioning yourself the right way, and making an awesome, professional quality product. A publicist or agent may be very good at helping you do that, in which case – money well spent. A publicist may be able to help you connect with the right people, tell your story the right way, focusing on pitching news stories that resonate or connect with current events. So... yes they can be very helpful, if you have a book that people want to buy. But in my experience, most people don't – they have a book which is not bad and may earn some profit, but was never meant for huge bestseller success, because it was written without ever thinking about the target readership.

So before you spend the money, make sure you know how big your target readership is (if it's a niche topic or field, it should be even easier to identify with or connect with the right people yourself.)

It's true however, that some professional attention and criticism – very unlike the feedback you're going to get from your Facebook friends – could significantly improve your website and other online presence. But before you spend thousands, spend \$20 on Fiverr.com getting some feedback. I've hired people there to critique my blog or my author bio or book description and they've done a good job. You can also get a virtual assistant to research blogs that might be a good fit for a guest post, or who may be willing to do a book review.

## 114

Q: People from all around the world have read my novella (they're not many but still from all around the world)... and thankfully, the feedback I've received was rewarding and very positive. They like the story. However, after all the blogs,



guest posting, tweeting, and facebook-ing, I've come to the conclusion that I don't know the first thing about reaching an audience or selling books. I put in the hours, but no sales. Where did I go wrong?

- A: Where are you publishing? If you are blogging on your own new blog, or Tweeting without followers, or Facebooking without followers, then you're standing in the woods alone by yourself shouting but nobody can hear you. They are all at the party. You need to make friends first and get followers; you do that by NOT talking about your book, but instead being friendly, helping people and sharing great content, either your own articles or other people's. Also, what are you posting? If you're posting a lot of marketing crap about your book everywhere ("Buy my book on sale NOW!!!!") that's a smoke screen that's blocking people from actually getting to know you. If they don't know you, they won't care about you and your book. If you're doing the work but it isn't working, you probably don't have any friends. If you don't have any friends, it's probably because you're trying to sell shit to strangers.

## 115

Q: Should I do a cover reveal?

- A: Indie authors growing their fanbase probably don't have enough loyal fans to care so much about their cover design as to be overawed at the prospect of having the curtains slowly drawn back so they can behold an author's cover design for the first time.

But that's besides the point: there are more reasons why a "reveal" is a bad idea.

- 1) You decided on the cover without enough feedback

Most cover designs are not impressive enough to warrant a reveal, but much less so if the author has taken over the process and done

most of the work quietly with the designer. It might be pretty good. It might be great. Your audience might like it. They might not.

You'll never know, if you don't give them the opportunity to participate.

A cover design process is a great thing to invite your readers into, by asking for their feedback and recommendations.

Not that you should listen to them – especially if you have twenty readers and you make your final decision based on a split vote. You should get feedback, but you should get it from a statistically significant audience (100, possibly, but 1000 would be better).

Low numbers don't mean much. But they do give you the opportunity to share something with your readers and get them involved.

- 2) You are wasting an opportunity, by focusing on YOU, and not adding value.

Nobody really cares that much about your book cover design. Even if it's totally awesome. They probably aren't going to share it to all their friends and say "Holy CRAP, look at this AMAZING book cover!" They'll "like" it to support you, but it won't go viral (book covers themselves almost never go viral).

Indie authors could use the cover design process much more effectively by sharing it with their readers openly and step-by-step, getting feedback on the early samples, having them vote on images.

You could be writing posts that actually get shared, like "10 things about publishing I learned from my cover designer" or "how to make a book cover that sells." Write posts that help other people and they will get shared (and they will also, of course, bring in more traffic and new readers.)

If you do things right, there won't be any need for a "reveal" because your readers will have watched the cover come together, they will feel they had a hand in making it, and they will be much more emotionally invested.

Q: Do you use Fiverr to promote your books?

A: Yes, as well as for a ton of other stuff. Especially for notifying lots of sites about your KDP promo, or editing your website or sales copy, or improving your graphic elements, or SEO. There are lots of offerings. You could get a personal VA to do some things for you, but there are so many diverse Fiverr offers. You can get book formatting or ebook conversion done on the cheap, or have them research blogs or websites that would be a good fit for your book... don't expect innovative, high level creativity or innovation, but if you need something simple done and you tell them what to do, it can go well.

It's almost always worth saving yourself hours of frustration if you can outsource it for \$10.

There was a big scandal this year with Amazon suing Fiverr over reviews, so don't use Fiverr for that.

Q: My biggest question (after many of the ones you already have up there) is: How, in person, over radio, TV, etc., can I get over my nerves? I once read a poem in front of my small church, and that made me feel queasy, so how can I deal with that so that I can promote my book?

A: I'm actually working on a book about drugs and creativity, and so my own approach to this problem is pharmaceutical. Nervousness is a flight or fight response. I also can't control it, even though I've done a lot of public speaking, I still get sweaty or shaky and panicky. A lot of professors take Propranolol, it keeps you calm, and you'll speak more slowly, which is good if you're reading, but not as good if you need to be animated or think quickly. I've also found Modafinil makes you crazy smart and articulate, but removes your filter so you may come off

colder/meaner than you would otherwise. And Vicodin removes social anxiety, you just feel good and confident, but not drugged up or anything. Huperzine A makes me a manic genius: passionate, opinionated, strong-willed and full of "I can do anything" bravado. I don't recommend taking drugs regularly but for important events, you want to do as well as you can, and they can be an easy fix.

But if you plan on becoming a career speaker then you may need to practice harder and get up in front of a lot of people often. My uncle was a motivational speaker for decades, sharing the stage with the most influential and inspiring speakers in the world (Tony Robbins, Robert Kiyosaki, etc). But he's had a tough time since the economy flatlined. He's an old-school public speaking guru and has more to offer than anyone else I know on the subject; I've been building him a new platform so he can start sharing his knowledge with free YouTube videos.

## ADVERTISING

Q: When should I just dig a little deeper and pay for ads?

A: Advertising can be very effective – I would use Facebook Ads to target to very specific people. For this book I could target people interested in self-publishing, KDP and Smashwords, then say "Got publishing questions? Get answers!" But if I took them straight to the Amazon page, I probably haven't warmed them up enough to buy the book. A better strategy would be to bring them to an article on my blog, with the option of buying the book – or to a page that offers this book for free in exchange for an email sign up. For fiction, you can say "Fans of X and Y will love this new (steampunk horror novella)" – then target fans of X and Y directly. Those ads will be so targeted people will take notice. Spend \$15 and see how it goes, tweak, try

again. The trick is to advertise and sell enough books to recoup your spending; that way you can up the budget and just keep going indefinitely. (Eventually, you'll exhaust the people you're reaching and the ads will stop working for you, until you target new people).

But you can also advertise with Project Wonderful, or Blogads. If there's a website that reviews books in your genre, or is related to your genre/field that gets lots of traffic, see if you can advertise there (or offer to pay them for a sidebar ad). Don't spend a lot, and track it to make sure you're earning your money back. But doing it along with your book launch is a good way to stick up in the #1 bestseller spot for a while to get more visibility.

If you get up to the bestseller slots, and you already have reviews, and people still aren't buying the book, or if your advertisements aren't working at all (nobody is buying or clicking...) it's almost certainly due to an ugly cover design. You can test this – put up a text only ad; do people click? Now run the same ad but with your cover design; do people stop clicking?

If you have a targeted offer and good sales copy but nobody buys, it's your packaging (cover), presentation (website), or social trust (lack of quality reviews or suspect rave reviews only).

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Q: Is NetGalley worth the investment?

A: (Qualified) No. First, you need to do a little advertising and see if ads are working at all. If ads don't work, it's because your website or book cover is ugly, or unprofessional, or your sales copy is poorly written, or you don't have enough reviews. If \$15 Facebook ads don't work, NetGalley or any other big site isn't going to work either.

If your ads are working splendidly, you've got a tightly sealed sales tunnel, people are buying it and loving it and posting

unsolicited reviews, then you may want to increase your spending. However – (and here's an extremely valuable, secret tip) – you can almost always reach the exact same audience with Facebook ads for much less.

For example I can think of the ad I want to use on NetGalley (or any other big community offering advertising) and then target people who have liked that community. Instead of paying to advertise at an expensive Thriller Book Convention, I can target people who like that organization on Facebook and reach the same people for a fraction of the price.

It's true though that a lot of elderly readers aren't very plugged in; if your target readers don't spend a lot of time online, or don't use Facebook, or hate cell phones, you're going to be better off advertising in a snail-mail newsletter (and you also better have print books available, and hopefully they can order online or ask someone to do it for them). For that particular audience, you should probably focus on live events or something.

Incidentally, this is probably why Young Adult fiction sell so well and are so popular – it's because young people are the ones reading on devices.

## EMAIL LIST

### 120

Q: Why do I need an email list?

A: When you post something on Twitter or Facebook, not everybody is going to see it, and very few people are going to pay much attention to it or actually take action. In contrast, if somebody signs up to your email list, you have permission to email them personally. Most people open and read just about 100% of the emails in their inbox. That means whenever you have a sale, a new book, or an event, sending an email to your list is going to be the single most effective thing you can use... but only if you have a list!

You can get a free plugin for WordPress (I'll

talk more about that later) or use the two main services, Aweber and Mailchimp. With those two, you login to manage your account, create an email campaign, and send an email to everybody. They keep track of how many people open the email, and how many people click the link. The thing with emails lists is you can't keep selling the same thing to the same people – so if you only have one book, an email list isn't going to do anything for you.

I have a list at Creativindie, where the people who sign up have probably read a little about me and know who I am. They are pretty likely to open my emails and take action, because they know I always offer a lot of valuable free content and am devoted to helping them achieve their goals. I nurture that relationship by helping everyone I can and not asking for anything in return. But when I develop something new, I can email them for support or ask them if they'd like to participate.

I have another list for DIY Book Covers, where people signed up to get some free book cover templates. They signed up without really knowing who I am. They don't know I have a bunch of other stuff to offer them. So they are less likely to open my emails (which means I need to work harder to earn their trust).

I wrote recently about how frustrated I was getting with my email list – with Mailchimp, the first 2000 subscribers are free, but then you start paying. I'm paying about \$100 a month right now, but since I don't really have any products or courses to sell, that seems like a lot. And when I get up to 100,000 (I'll get there!) I'll be paying \$500 a month. If you're just selling books, that kind of money may not be justifiable. Personally, having that expense has prompted me to start developing some higher value courses and offerings, so I can at least cover the expenses of running my business.

Finally, I just started a new list for CreativCastle (the castle I'm going to buy to use as a writing retreat). I'll build it up by traveling around the world visiting all the

best castles and blogging about it. Then we'll run a Kickstarter project to fundraise the money to buy the castle.

## 121

Q: How do I get people to sign up for my list?

A: You need an opt-in offer. What do they get? Think of something simple and easy – a 7 week course to writing romance? A beautiful quote from romantic literature every week? 10 steps for growing your author platform? You have to know what you're providing and what you will be able to continue providing. For most of last year, my email list never got anything from me, because I was writing and building stuff. I didn't have any news.

The offer doesn't have to be amazing; 5000 words of content about something is fine; you can hire someone on Fiverr to turn it into a beautifully designed PDF.

## 122

Q: What's "Drip Content" mean?

A: The power of a list is that you can build a personal relationship with people. To that you have to interact with them, not preach to them or try to sell them something. Sometimes a simple note asking how they're doing is much more powerful than news or updates.

"Drip Content" means you plan out the steps you are going to take to develop the relationship. There are experts and gurus for this, but I've found a lot of them overdo it by sending too many posts. Once a week is enough (and maybe too much!). You can just plan out your emails ahead of time. Introduce them to your vision; guide them towards taking action; focus on them, not you or what you're doing. Or just send something unique and interesting. Send an article you enjoyed or something new from your blog. I only send 3 or 4 emails before quitting; I don't believe you need to stay fresh on their

minds all the time. But you do need to build that relationship at first by providing a lot of value, and letting them trust you and look forward to getting your emails (because they are so amazing, fun, intriguing, helpful, etc.). It's not easy to do. What I was doing before, is they would just sign up and not get anything for a few months; then when I emailed, they might not know who I was. Now, they'll get an email every five days or so, for a couple weeks – then another about every month, or when I have something big going on.

Some people will unsubscribe. It happens. When Picasso first got his art published, in a little magazine with only 11 subscribers, 10 people canceled their subscription! (They were hideous little absinth-cup statues).

Email marketing is extraordinarily powerful, but hard to pull off. I think you can succeed by caring about people, being thoughtful and helpful, and delivering valuable content. But if you're writing fiction and that seems overwhelming... don't worry too much about it. Although you should still try to move fans into your list, by having some kind of an offer or promise, like "sign up if you're interested in being a beta-reader and getting free, early access to all my future books." Yes, I think you should give your books away for free to your fans. They will be your evangelists.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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Q: Do I need to have social networking sites to make myself known?

A: In my experience, yes. Think of publishing this way: You get published and your book goes up on Amazon, which is like Walmart. But every other platform you can put your book on will sell more books. Why stop at Walmart? Get them up in Kmart and the Grocery store. Put signs about your book at the gas station and the public library. Get people talking about it at Starbucks and McDonalds. Now rephrase the question.

Do you need to be on social media is like asking is it better to be in just one store, or lots of different stores? Now the answer is obvious. The reason everybody keeps asking this question is that authors are already hearing, from everybody, that they should be using social media, but they don't want to.

They don't like Twitter or Facebook. They don't get Pinterest or Instagram or Tumblr. So they ask this question because they are defensive and they secretly hope they can just not do all that stuff and still be successful. Does it happen? Yes, sometimes, if your book is amazing, you might just get lucky. But it's far, far less likely. Plus in my experience it's also a symptom of a negative attitude that I can't support: the idea that writers don't need to form relationships with their readers. Authors who ask this question don't want to get to know their readers. They don't want to have to communicate or "waste time" building relationships unless it "is worth it" in terms of income and book sales. In my opinion, this is a mentality that will make it far more difficult for you to be a successful author these days.

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Q: How do you market on social media if you are not the social butterfly or guru?

A: It's a complete myth that you need to be extroverted or great at conversation to be good at social media. Most authors prefer to spend their time alone writing; that means we are better writers and usually excellent at expressing ourselves with words. If you feel uncomfortable with social media it's probably because you have no idea what to say, or who you're talking to. When you post something it may feel like you're just shouting into the void and nobody will ever hear you. You don't know how to "stand out."

But you don't need to be polished or professional or clever or even particularly interesting to be good at social media. You just need to show up and be yourself. You



don't need to comment or like absolutely everything people post. You don't even need to read other people's stuff if you aren't interested. And you certainly don't need to (nor should you) "market" or promote yourself on social media. So relax.

Take a deep breath. Here's the thing about social media – it actually refers to lots of different sites, and they all have unique behavior. Here's a crash course on how to use the ones I consider to be most effective.

Twitter is great for building lots of relationships and building your platform. There are two ways to use it. The first is to develop relationships with people who have bigger platforms than you do. These would be other authors you admire, or bloggers or celebrities in your field or genre. Make a list of the 25 dream people you'd love to be friends with; whose blurb or review of your book would be amazing for you. Search them out and follow them. If they share something interesting, retweet it – or better, reply with a comment. Don't tell them about your book or anything, just participate. Don't force it, don't over-think it, just pretend like they are your friends already and be casual. Don't share everything they do or you look like a suck-up. But if they post some content – they want it to get seen. They'll appreciate it if you retweet or reply, or even use the star icon and "favorite" it.

The other way to use Twitter is to get people to follow you, so that you become the celebrity. The best way of doing is "curating content." All that means is, when you find something interesting online, you share it on Twitter. Just add a short comment or note, add the link and a few hashtags (a keyword preceded with a # symbol) so people can find you. If you can add a picture as well, it'll be even more effective. Don't stress, you don't have to spend time worrying about what to post. Just do whatever you would otherwise be doing. If you find something interesting, share it. (It would be a good idea however to consider what kind of people you'd like to have follow you, and think about what they

might enjoy). Don't post a lot of personal crap all the time, but it's OK to post some, some of the time (it's good to be human). Don't whine or complain about stuff, but it's OK to ask for help if you have questions.

You can also share new blog posts or articles if you write them, or news about your book, but don't talk about your book too much. And please don't use more than one exclamation point, ever (unless you are trying to appeal to low-brow followers by faking enthusiasm. It's been proven to work with Bieber fans.)

Some people post their big news several times, or schedule their tweets to a time when more people are active on Twitter. Some people follow tens of thousands of people, to get tens of thousands of followers. You can do those if you want. I could certainly be doing better on Twitter and get my content to reach more people. But I don't like using the automated software. That said I realized recently that I'm only following back the people who follow me (passive), when I could be seeking out writers and following them (active).

Pro Tip: if you have a Kindle, just highlight great phrases from whatever you're reading and share them on Twitter – it's pretty easy to do. You can do the same thing with articles you're reading: instead of just posting a link, highlight a great sentence from the article and then link it. Bonus points if you can also find the person who wrote the article and tag them (using the @ symbol) so that they will know you shared their article. I love using Medium.com because it's so easy to highlight and share content, which automatically includes the @author tag. PS: I made a WordPress plugin that does the same thing, which you can get for free if you sign up on my website to use on your site.

That's it! Some people use Twitter much more effectively than I do; but don't make it too hard on yourself. Just start using it and it will become more and more comfortable. I didn't like it until I got an iPhone, and now I find Twitter is an easy way to kill time if you're

ever standing around waiting for something or in transit.

Facebook is trickier: some people may say you need your own page for yourself as an author, or your book. But those are rarely effective, especially in the beginning when you only have 5 likes (which looks really unprofessional). For me a Facebook group with less than a thousand likes seems unprofessional. Asking people to like your page is meaningless, because it doesn't mean they will take other action or buy your books, and even worse, it doesn't ensure that you can contact them. Facebook decides who sees your posts, and if you want to reach all your fans, you'll need to pay to boost the post. With over a thousand fans, only 25 people or so see my posts. When people like, share or comment on something, then Facebook knows it's valuable and will share it with others. So the way to succeed at Facebook is to only share amazingly interesting content, which is really difficult to do.

So for marketing, or reaching your fans, Facebook is pretty worthless – except for the advertisements or “boosted posts” option, which can work really well, especially if you have a contest or prize, but not so much if you are just trying to get people to buy a book.

Instead, Facebook is a great way for making friends. Remember that list of 25 influential people you want to get to know? Find them on Facebook and follow them. Facebook tends to be under-used, so while their blog may get lots of content, often a Facebook post will only get a few comments. Which means if you comment on their Facebook posts they'll probably read them and know who you are. Do that for a month or so, then add them as a friend. They might say no, but you can try. Facebook is mostly for sharing yourself into the world; but that means you can develop closer, personal relationship with people, because you're not just chatting about business or books, you're liking their travel photos, or witnessing their life events, or commenting on their food pictures. It's

like experiencing someone's life with them and getting to know them. If you follow them for a while and comment sometimes, you can also interact with them on Twitter or their website, and send them an occasional email.

Remember to provide value. See if you can help them out somehow, even by offering feedback (not just praise, but valuable constructive criticism) on their projects.

LinkedIn is for professional networking, so it's fine to talk about business; the best way to use it though is to help others. Answer people's questions. Respond and share. Enter discussions.

Pinterest is for sharing pictures; you can make boards with topics and just add pictures you find online as you're browsing around. You can use Canva.com to make photo+quotes from your book (or hire someone to make you a hundred of them). Those can be posted on Twitter and Facebook as well, and if done right can be very powerful for marketing. As an example, check out my post, “Awesome quotes for authors (that will make people like you more)”.

You might ask, “But how does any of this help me sell my books?!” The answer is that you need to do all of these things to build trust and let people get to know you as a person. If they know you, they may like you, and if they like you they will support and buy from you. Post stuff that interests you and you will naturally attract the kind of people who like you: social media is an automatic friend-finder – people who don't like your personality will stop following you. Keep sharing and after a few months you may have several thousand people who like you.

That's when you finally launch your book and ask people nicely if they'd like to buy it or review it. The mistake most authors make is they jump into social media and start promoting and selling: that's like ringing the door-bell with a big advertisement covering your face. Nobody can see you. They aren't looking for what you're selling. And you've interrupted dinner. They just want you to go

away.

Properly done, the right strategy is to move in across the street. Go over with a plate of cookies. Volunteer to walk their dog. Babysit their kids. Then after they trust you, you can make your move. Remember, you don't want to ask for favors: but you can let them know what you're working on and try to pitch it in a way that focuses on the benefits. (Instead of "Please buy my book for 4.99!!!!" you can say "I finally launched my book; it's \$9.99 but I set it at \$4.99 today only so my friends can get a copy.")

You need a great offer they can't pass up, AND they have to know, like and trust you first. It's very tricky. But the more they know, like and trust you, the easier it is – which is why social media is so valuable and important.

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Q: Should you start social media even if your book has not been published or even edited?

A: Yes. Sign up. Start posting useful stuff. Follow influential people, or people who write in a similar genre, or people who you'd love to get a blurb from, and respond, like or share their content. Do that for a few months. Use social media to build relationships with influencers, not to sell books. Later this year I'll be working on a course called "21-day Bestseller" – because I know most authors wait until their book is finished and then want to get everything set up really quickly... and there are some things you can do to launch fast, but there's no good reason to put off starting. Do it NOW.

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Q: How do I sell my book without turning into a total Amway douche on social media?

A: Don't talk about your book. Don't quote passages from your book or post every review you get for your book. Don't pay

other people who promise to promote your book on Twitter for you, or any "social media marketers" for a similar service. All they do is spam about a bunch of books all the time, with lots of exclamation points. Don't add a ton of hashtags without actually saying anything (3 is enough). Don't associate your book with those douchy-tactics. Post valuable content at least 9 out of 10 times. If there's a group or person who is widely trusted, or you're doing a KDP free campaign, then maybe you can do it once. And it's better to let someone else do it than doing it yourself. But not more than once. You can use hashtags like #freebook or #kindlebargain. (Google "hashtags for authors" and you'll find a bunch).

It's not that using them and heavy promotion doesn't work; it's just that it doesn't work very well, and it's not great for building relationships. If you're starting with zero platform and want to test some things out, go for it; you can even pay for Kindle marketing and see if it makes any difference on sales.

But if you want to be a career author, it's not just about selling books, it's about building a supportive community who will share your work. Personally, I try to write good content with good headlines and share the links on social media; other people retweet them, which brings new people to my website, where they might buy my books or join my mailing list.

If you want to grow a following super-quickly, write articles about people with big followings, and then share the link while tagging those people (or, just quote from their books and websites and share that instead). Those people are likely to retweet you, or favorite you, which will get you in front of all of their followers. So even if you're starting with no followers, if you use this technique ambitiously, you can grow a big platform fast.

If you are going to market aggressively, it's usually better to offer something for free: for example right now I'm experimenting with

Twitter Ads to promote my “Four Free Books!” offer to people who aren’t already following me. Jeff Goins is doing the same thing with Facebook ads to get people to sign up for free webinars. We know that giving people free stuff so they get on our list can be very valuable long term, and is much more effective than using ads to sell something.

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Q: What is “Content Marketing?”

A: Content marketing means, you give away great free content that people enjoy. You’re not selling what you want people to buy, or trying to get them to do anything. You know they don’t know who you are and don’t care about your projects, so you get in front of them by putting interesting stuff on the platforms they are already using.

A good example is how Bud Light recently posted a bunch of cat gifs to Buzz Feed, with a very indirectly related offer at the bottom. If they’d started with an advertisement, people would have run away or ignored it. But they started with cut moving cat gifs, and then blindsided you when you got to the end.

Another example is the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. Rather than talk even more about the problems and why they need fundraising money, they:

Gave people something fun and visually active to do

Encouraged people to challenge other people for growth

Encouraged them to post the videos

The sample challenge really could have worked to raise money for anything.

Content marketing works – and it’s just about all that works these days – which is why just about every huge company is doing it. Instead of posting ads talking about the benefits of their product, they post ads that are fun, zany, totally unrelated. The Geico ads are often brilliant, but don’t have much to do

with insurance. Especially the new ones – like “Well, did you know Pinocchio wasn’t a good motivational speaker?” (cuts to a clip of Pinocchio telling people that they can be successful, but his nose grows because he’s lying). It’s funny. It makes me like Geico. Even though I know nothing about their company or whether they really offer the best deals, if I need insurance I’ll buy from them because they made me laugh and their ads are cool.

## BLOGGING

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Q: What’s the easiest way to create an author website? Is there a template? What tabs should I have on my site?

A: I prefer WordPress: it’s a free blogging software. There’s really no distinction anymore between a blog and a “regular” website. On WordPress you set up static pages that show on the menu and are always there; and you also post new articles that are automatically added to your feed/blog page (so when people click “blog” on the menu, they get taken to a page that shows all the recent posts).

Tons of people are using WordPress, and there’s a ton of fancy plugins that make it easy to do just about everything. What you don’t want to do is invest a lot of time and effort planning out exactly how you want your website to look: if you design it, it will be ugly, and there are no exceptions to this rule (unless you’ve been a web designer for 10 years, and even then, don’t do it!)

You don’t want to hire a web designer who will make exactly what you have in mind. You don’t want to be creative and original and move things around. It’s not about your personal preferences. There are studies that prove where everything needs to be; there are studies that show which color button gets more clicks. People have tested this stuff. Design matters. You need to provide a functioning, professional, good looking website that is easy to use and has everything







# MISSION

To provide Virtual Impact Marketing customers with any print communication product or service they require to meet their corporate objectives, at competitive prices enhanced with value-added services.

## ABOUT US

Since 1996, Virtual Impact Marketing (VIMI Corp) has provided better printing and service to over 50 multinational Fortune 1000 firms and numerous small businesses, marketing firms and graphic designers.

VIMI Corp. combines state-of-the-art printing equipment with experienced print professionals and colour specialists to deliver convenient online ordering, consistent colour matching and 99.7 percent on-time delivery.

Virtual Impact offers a 100 percent customer satisfaction guarantee. We stand behind every order, every time. Most of our printed products and related services are available online at [www.vimi.com](http://www.vimi.com), but please call with your questions or requirements, and we will exceed your expectations.

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Spiral Binding

Ring Binding

Perfect / Adhesive Binding

Mouse Pads

Counter Pads

Coasters

Note/Writing Pads

Calendars

Keychains

Black and White Output

On-Demand, Self-Publishing

Colour Newsletters & Flyers

Color Copies and Output

Variable Data Printing

Colour Manuals = Enhanced Recall

Colour Manuals = Enhanced Learning

Personalized Benefits Statements

Web Based Ordering System

