

Manual to Becoming Self-Published

Step by step guide on how to become a self-published author.

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What You Will Find In This Manual

In this manual, you will learn how to get your work published through the process of self-publishing. The steps will start briefly in the writing stage, and will go from there all the way to getting your finished work published. This will only give steps on how to self-publish your works in either an eBook or a print book. Within the steps, the different aspects will be defined, so that if you do not know all the terms, this manual will tell you what they are.

This is a non-exhaustive list and will be most helpful to those who have never been published and don't know how to get started.



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What Is Self-Publishing?

It is the process where you decide to manage the production of your book. Essentially, you are taking over the many roles that go into the publishing process.

- You are now the “publishing house” and you retain all copyrights to your work.
- You will retain all of the profit that your work earns if you sell your book due to the fact that you didn’t sell any rights to other companies.
- You have ultimate control over your work because you are publishing it yourself instead of having a publishing house do it.

With Power Comes Great Responsibility

Although that all sounds great and you might wonder why anyone would get published through a publishing house, you must also realize that it comes with a lot of responsibilities. For the writers that publish their work through a publishing house, their main job is to write their manuscript. But for those of you going the self-publishing route, you take on all the other jobs that go into publishing a book.

You will become the editor. Mind you that there are multiple editors in the field of publishing. Two of the main kinds are copy editing and proofreading. But, the editor is there to make sure that your message is getting across through your writing and that your work is at its strongest potential.

You will become the publisher. The publisher goes over preparation, distribution, makes sure that the book has cover art, hardcover versus paperback, and whether it will be available in eBook.

You will become the marketer. This means you will need to know who your audience is and how best to market your book to them. You will have to put some of your own money into advertisements and set up events to promote your book.

You will be the sales representative. You will need to deal with all the pre-publication requirements. That includes the job of obtaining your ISBN, barcode, and sales tax number. The sales representative also finalizes that printing settings (e.g. margins, trim size, binding, etc.).

While all of these responsibilities might make self-publishing seem daunting, know that by going this route, you will have all the control. Remember, just because you are self-publishing doesn’t mean that you have to be on your own. There are resources out there to help you.

Beginning Stages of Self-Publishing

Step One: Writing

Writing a book takes a lot of hard work and dedication. If you have already written your manuscript, then you already know this. For those of you who haven't, you will lose a lot of time in this stage. A good tip for any writers starting a new manuscript, dedicate a significant portion of your day to brain storm, write, and revise. Figure out when you feel at the peak of your imaginative and most productive time.

Something that is often overlooked is the title. When potential customers are looking for a book, one of the first things they will see is the title. Make sure that you know who your audience is and make a title that will draw them in and make them consider your book.



Step Two: Proofing

Make sure that your manuscript is complete, without typos or misspellings, grammatically correct, and getting the message you want across clearly to the reader. It wouldn't hurt to lend your manuscript to a couple friends to read through and catch any mistakes you didn't see. They will also be able to tell you if any place of the manuscript is confusing since they are coming in with little to no knowledge of what you wrote.

It is always a good idea to have a fresh pair of eyes review your manuscript. When you write your manuscript, you know everything about the topic you are writing about. Having another person, who is not an expert on your topic is beneficial in the fact that they can let you know where you need more information, character development, motivations, and more to make your story clearer.

Keep in mind that the editing stage will have multiple meetings. Odds are, you are not going to catch all the errors in one editing session. Go ahead and have people edit it more than once through the editing stage. One, two, three, maybe even more times will still not have the manuscript flawless, but it will be much stronger than it started out as.

Consider hiring an editor. There are many different kinds of editing to choose from. Two of the most common editing styles would be developmental editing and copy editing. Developmental editing is where an editor will go through the entire manuscript and change things to make it a strong piece of work. They will introduce new possible themes, smooth out some characters and the development, as well as the usual kind of mistake proofreading. Copy editing is mainly just the mistake finding proofread and focuses more on playing with what is already there instead of creating something that is entirely new. Since this is self-publishing, you can choose which one you would rather have.

How much the editor will cost depends on who you hire, and how they choose to charge their fee. Some will charge hourly, while others will charge per page edited.

Beginning Editor:	\$20 an hour
Established Proofreader:	\$25-\$35 an hour
Experienced Editor:	\$50-85 an hour
Proofreading:	\$3 per page
Copy Editing:	\$4 per page
Content Editing:	\$7.50 per page

Step Three: Design

One of the first things that potential readers will see when they first look at your book is the title, and the cover. Make sure that your cover design is eye catching and stands out from all the other books it will be competing with in the store. It is wise to hire a professional to design the cover for you. Unless you are an artist and can do it by yourself, you will want the cover to look professionally done. A professional will know what people are looking at more often and they will be able to make your book appeal to customers.

So, how much does hiring a book cover designer cost? That depends on the person you hire. The cost can be anywhere from 25 dollars, to 4000 dollars. Yes, that is a lot of zeros, but that is for a professional who is a big deal in the book cover designing world. It all depends on the level of skill you are paying for. Aim for something from 125 dollars to 700 dollars. If that still seems really high, think of it this way. For 100 dollars and eight hours; that is 12 dollars an hour, which is cutting it pretty close. You won't find many professions that will be willing to work for that cheap. If this is not an option, you can usually find a pretty fresh designer who is still learning for 30 to 80 dollars.

Here are some places you can look:

CreativINDIECovers
BOOK COVER DESIGN AND MORE FOR SELF-PUBLISHING AUTHORS

upworkTM

 **designers**

Now, this step will differ for the kind of format you are publishing your book in. If you are doing an eBook, then you only really need to worry about the cover. But if you are publishing your book in print, you will want to make sure that you get the cover, binding, and back cover designed as well. It will cost more, but it is essential to have the best presentation you can have if you want successful results.

Step Four: Copyright

When you create anything, you are the sole owner of the copyright for that creation. For it to count in the courts though, you must register your creation as your work. For your book, in order to be able to take action on anyone that steals your work, you must be registered as the owner of the copyrights associated with that book. If you do not register, you will not be able to win any copyright court case. Here is a link to where you can get your work copyrighted.

Now, you will also want to include a statement of copyright somewhere in your book. A lot of self-publishing sites will provide this copyright language for you. Just make sure that it is somewhere that can be seen. Look at the books that you own and turn to the credits page or the back cover. You will most likely see this language somewhere.

Example

©Copyright 2013

Joe Student



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 United States License
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/us/>

Step Five: Apply For an ISBN

ISBN stands for an International Standard Book Number. It is a 13-digit code that is used to easily identify and track your book. With an ISBN, your book can be listed in the Bowker database. This database is where bookstores pick up the latest books so they can sell them in their stores.

There are many self-publishing sites that provide one for you, but if your plan on doing this all on your own, you need to get one for yourself.

- You can buy an ISBN for \$125.00 at [this website](#).
- You will need an ISBN for every format your book will be in.
- ISBNs are sold in bundles too
 - 10 ISBNs will cost \$250
 - 100 ISBNs will cost \$575
 - 1000 ISBNs will cost \$1000



Self-Publishing as an eBook

Step One: Know What Self-Publishing on a Website Means

There are many different websites that you can choose from when it comes to Self-Publishing your book as an eBook. It is important to know the advantages and disadvantages of publishing this way.

Advantages

- The costs that go into writing and editing the book are the same cost that go into publishing it. Making an eBook doesn't cost much extra.
- If your book sells well on the website, most eBook publishers make sure that the author keeps 70% of the total revenue that the book retains.
- You get to keep all of your rights to your book. By publishing this way, you get don't have to give up your rights to a publisher that might not have your success in mind.

Disadvantages

- You will be solely responsible for all of the marketing and advertising. The website that you use as your publisher will most likely not market or advertise for you.
- eBooks usually sell for less than a dollar due to the competitive prices. Thus meaning you will need to sell a lot of books over a long period of time to make a profit.

Step Two: Choose the Website You Want

There are some online publishers that will let you publish your book through their website for free. [Smashwords](#), [Kindle Direct Publishing](#), and [NOOK Press](#) are just some options that you can choose from. Make sure to read the fine print and research all these and more to get the best package deal.



Step Three: Set Up and Account With the Program

You will need to make yourself an account in order to upload your book to the website. This will give you access to manage all the details that go into your publication, as well as make it easier to publish another book in that account. You will need to follow the steps that the online publisher lays out for you.

Step Four: Upload Your Finished Book

Once you make a decision, your account is made, and your book is finished, you are ready to upload. When your finished book is uploaded you are officially a published author!

Self-Publishing as a Print Book

What is Print on Demand (POD)?

Print on demand is where you will submit an electronic copy of your book and have a vendor print the book for you. By doing this, sometimes, the vendor will try to distribute your book to other sellers such as big chain stores (Barnes & Noble). But most of the time, they will just offer your book online.

Advantages

- You will receive a good marketing tool in the form of a physical copy of the book.
- You will have a source that will potentially distribute your book to sellers worldwide.
- The vendor will handle all of the production when they are printing the physical book.

Disadvantages

- You will have to format your book to the vendor's specifications. Each vendor you go to will have a list of formatting that you will need to meet before submitting your book.
- This will cost more money. You will have physical copies of the book, but the cost of production will be much higher than that of eBooks.
- These vendors do not do as much marketing and distribution as you think. They will help in the process but, most of the time, they will just place the book online to sell. You will be responsible for any major marketing and distribution.

Step One: Choose a POD Vendor

There are a lot of different POD vendors out there to pick from. Make sure to know how much it will cost and compare it with the other vendors that you are interested in to get the best deal. Some popular POD vendors for writers with not a lot of money would be [Lulu](#) and [Createspace](#).



Step Three: Format to PODs Specifications

Formatting specifications will differ between any given vendor you choose. It will be your job to format it to their standards. This part will be potentially frustrating since the directions you will receive will be hard to follow. But, once the book is formatted, submit it to the vendor and they should take care of the rest.

What is Vanity Press/Subsidy Publishing?

Vanity Presses, vanity publisher, or subsidy publisher is just a term used to describe a smaller scale publishing houses where authors pay to have their work published.

For contrast, mainstream publishing houses recoup money by selling copies of the book; while Vanity Presses and/or Subsidy

"A smaller scale publishing houses where authors pay to have their work published." Publishers recoup money by the fees that the author has to pay. Vanity presses are also less selective than mainstream publishing houses.

Not many writers choose to go this route due to there being no advantages compared to the other options. It will also give them less of a good reputation because it would be like they were only published because there was nothing keeping it from getting out there.

The only real advantage that this option will give is the fact that you will receive a physical copy of your book, but they will not help distribute or market your book in the end.

14 Tips On How To Market Your Book

1. Identify the target audience most likely to buy your book.
2. Create a strong local following, and then gradually expand your efforts.
3. Create advertisements: business cards, posters, fliers, etc.
4. Use word-of-mouth methods to get people talking about your book.
5. Create new forums to find more target audiences.
6. Make buying your book quick and easy with online payment option.
7. Enter your book into competitions.
8. Use social media.
9. Have an author website.
10. Plan an event to launch your book.
11. Email newsletters with a brief and focused message aimed toward your target audience.
12. Write blog articles on germane blogs.
13. Bookstore signings.
14. Google alters to stay connected with the people talking about your book.



Websites for Publishing

Here are some of the most popular self-publishing websites you can choose from if this is the way you want to get published.



This is a site where you can publish your words the way you want to. Free tools and book services are offered, as well as wide distribution options, higher royalties, and help whenever you need it.



This site claims to be the “world’s largest distributor of indie eBooks”. It offers free tools for marketing, metadata management, sales reporting, and distribution. You will have complete control over pricing, marketing, and sampling of the work you publish. Ideal for novels, short fiction poetry, memoirs, etc.

This host allows you to upload your manuscript, decide where you want to sell your eBook and how to protect it, how much it will cost with the option of putting it in multiple currencies.



Uploading and publishing your book here is completely free and the site will start selling your book within 72 hours.

Here, you can publish your book for free! This includes being able to create your cover, format your eBook, distribute to Amazon, Apple, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, and Google Play.



On this site, almost 2.2 million books have been published from authors in more than 225 countries. You get to control the marketing and pricing of your book. You get full control and all rights to your content, as well as feedback from your readers. All in just four steps.

There are a lot of steps to becoming a self-published author...

In this manual, you will learn how to get your work published through the process of self-publishing. The steps will start briefly in the writing stage, and will go from there all the way to getting your finished work published. This will only give steps on how to self-publish your works in either an eBook or a print book. Within the steps, the different aspects will be defined, so that if you do not know all the terms, this manual will tell you what they are.

This is a non-exhaustive list and will be most helpful to those who have never been published and don't know how to get started.



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