

## 2016 SC NEW WRITERS CLASSES – Publishing: Get Your Story Out There!

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Types of publishing (includes ebook and print books):

- **Traditional** – An author seeks agents or publishers and seek a contract. The publisher pays all expenses of publication. The author pays nothing. The author/publisher/agent are paid from royalties from book sales. 99.9 % of bookstore books are traditionally published.
- **Self-Publishing** – An author hires or oversees all aspects of publishing the book to include: editing, formatting, cover, sales, and distribution. (ranged from the author doing it all himself, or hiring different aspects
- **Indie Publishing** – Some say self-publishing is indie publishing. It can be considered an author who does NOT traditionally publish. But indie publishing is also another name for small publishers popping up, usually authors themselves, to avoid appearing as a self-published author in listings. Indie publishing can either treat the author like a traditionally published client, share expenses in a hybrid manner, or, for a fee, perform some or all of the steps required to publish a book.
- **Vanity Press Publishing** – These are turnkey printers who promise to take your manuscript and edit, format, cover, and market it for a costly fee. They consist of names like *AuthorHouse*, *Xlibris*, *Tate*, *Infinity*, *iUniverse*, *Dorrance*, *Famous Poets Society*, *Harbor House*, *Outskirts*, *America Star Books*, *SBRPA*, *Trafford*, *Xulon*, and more. They often charge five figures, making the grand majority of their income from authors rather than readers. Even some traditional publishers have bought in to the vanity press model by rejecting manuscripts and referring them to their vanity publishing partner. Some publishers who have done this are: Simon & Schuster (Archway Publishing), Thomas Nelson (West Bow Press). Harlequin got rid of theirs after so much press.

**NOTE: Print on Demand** – This is purely a term for making a physical copy of a book upon receipt of an order. This is how *CreateSpace* works under the Amazon umbrella. And how *Lightning Source* works under Ingram. Others are *Lulu* and *BookBaby*. Print on Demand used to be confused with Self-Publishing. It is not the same. Some traditional presses use POD. It's simply a method of producing a book, versus a print-run.

### Pros of Traditional Publishing:

1. No upfront monetary investment.
2. Possibility of an advance.
3. No need to understand how a book is made.
4. Editing. Their reputation is on the line.
5. Much better credibility for book and author upon release.
6. Your book has a broader reach and distribution.
7. Reviewers are more likely to review your book.

**Cons of Traditional Publishing:**

1. Odds of acceptance are low – highly competitive and selective.
2. Marketability dominates over quality.
3. Print royalty is about 8 percent. Ebook royalties range from 25-50 percent.
4. You must earn the advance back before you receive royalty checks.
5. Royalty checks are issued 2-4 times a year.
6. An agent will get a cut of your earnings, usually 15 percent of your royalties.
7. They have final say in edits, cover, formatting and title.
8. They own the rights to the book. How long depends upon the terms of the contract.

**Pros of Self-Publishing:**

1. You retain all rights to the book.
2. You make all decisions about the book – edits, format, cover, marketing.
3. You can twist and alter genres, write unique books that don't fit into categories.
4. You pocket a much higher percentage of the book – 50-75 percent.
5. Amazon now makes your self-published book accessible to the public.

**Cons of Self-Publishing:**

1. You make all the decisions about the book. (See Pro)
2. You pay all the costs of the book.
3. Fewer reviewers are interested.
4. Most of the time the book is edited less.
5. Difficult distribution (although you can now use IngramSparks)
6. You don't have traditional press standing behind you. They give you some initial platform.

**How to spot a Vanity Press:**

1. They pursue you with a sales mentality.
2. They are expensive.
3. They decline nobody.
4. Editing is limited.
5. They don't cite their fees upfront.
6. They pressure you to purchase your own books.
7. They may require a minimal number of pre-sales before they'll go to press.

**How to judge a publisher:**

1. Find several of their books and look at the quality of cover, editing, formatting, binding.
2. Contact authors who've published with them.
3. Google the publisher for complaints.
4. Have a knowledgeable person read the contract.
5. Make sure the publisher uses at least one distributor, like Ingram.
6. Confirm everything with a publisher in writing.
7. It's considered unethical for agents or editors to refer to a publisher and vice versa.
8. Promises and guarantees of sales, fame, fortune, and best-seller status.

### IF you want to Traditionally Publish:

- Choose whether or not you want an agent.
- Find agents at:
  - [www.agentquery.com](http://www.agentquery.com)
  - [www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/guide-to-literary-agents](http://www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/guide-to-literary-agents)
  - [www.writersmarket.com/](http://www.writersmarket.com/)
  - [www.querytracker.net](http://www.querytracker.net)
  - [www.publishersmarketplace.com](http://www.publishersmarketplace.com)
  - <http://mswishlist.com/> - Manuscript Wish List
- Develop an elevator pitch for your book. Something along the line of (from Nathan Bransford): *When [opening conflict] happens to [character(s)], they must [overcome conflict] to [complete their quest]* Or from Jane Friedman: *Protagonist, conflict, stakes and sizzle.*
- Research the agents to find the zing factor that connects you.
- Research the publishers that will accept submissions without an agent.
- Whether you pitch to an agent or straight to a publisher, learn how to write a query letter. <https://janefriedman.com/query-letters/>
- Keep it on one-page, probably no more than 400 words.
- Pitch a dozen at a time and give each at least six weeks to respond. (Keep writing.)

### IF you want to Self-Publish:

- Use *CreateSpace* for print distribution to Amazon (no cost)
- Use *IngramSpark* for print distribution to non-Amazon places (\$49 and up)
- Use *Amazon KDP* (Kindle) for ebook distribution to Amazon (no cost)
- Use *Draft2Digital* or *Smashwords* for ebook distribution to non-Amazon places like Kobo, Apple iTunes Connect (iBooks store), Barnes & Noble (Nook Press), Google Play (no cost)
- HOWEVER, if you wish to use a service to prepare and upload your files for publishing and distribution, help with print and ebook formatting and distribution, consider *BookBaby.com* – or for just your ebook, consider *Smashwords.com*

A single-channel distributor is like CreateSpace (Amazon) or Nook (Barnes & Noble) or Kobo. A multi-channel distributor is like Smashwords, BookBaby and Draft2Digital.

### Where to find a cover?

- There are inexpensive ways at all the above resources.
- Best to come to the table with your cover designed by a specialist.
- Aspect: 1:1.5 ratio
- Smashwords: 1600 x 2400 pixels. KDP (Kindle): 3200 x 4800 pixels
- Ask for print and ebook covers – different standards
- A few places to find a designer:
  - <http://damonza.com/>
  - <http://www.creativindiecovers.com/>
  - <http://www.jdsmith-design.com/>
  - <http://www.bookscovered.co.uk/>
  - <http://extendedimagery.com/book-covers>

- <http://www.jessicabellauthor.com/book-cover-design-services.html>
- <http://www.gobookcoverdesign.com/>
- <http://ebooklaunch.com/ebook-cover-design/>
- <http://www.fionaraven.com/>
- <http://myvisionpress.com/>
- <http://idobookcovers.com/>
- <http://www.thebookdesigner.com/2011/08/monthly-e-book-cover-design-awards/>
- <http://www.myhouseofdesign.com> – did my Shy Writer Reborn cover

### **What does it mean to convert or format your work for uploading?**

- There are several standards.
- You can upload yourself, once you learn the standards.
- Or you can use someone like *Smashwords*, *BookBaby* and *Draft2Digital*
- All places you upload ebooks usually have formatting guides.
- EPUB – the global standard for the ebooks
- MOBI – Preferred for Kindle, though Kindle will accept EPUB
- PDF – Can be used but can also display poorly on ereaders – used for print
- None of these instantly convert from Word. That's the reason there are guides available at all ebook uploading sites, to allow you to go through an unformatting process in Word so that the files can be converted to the appropriate file.
- Tools to format and convert your ebook by yourself:
  - Calibre – free
  - Scrivener - \$40
  - Reedsy.com – free (paid assistance available)
  - StreetLib.com – free (paid assistance available)
  - Jutoh.com – free (paid version available)
  - PressBooks – \$20 (ebook), \$99 (PDF)
  - The Book Designer website – go to [www.fundsforwriters.com](http://www.fundsforwriters.com) and see *Book Design Templates* on bottom right to click right through to the templates – I've used these twice and adore them.
  - InDesign – paid program – used by professional designers

### **How much should I charge for my ebook?**

- 99 cents to \$2.99 for new authors
- Smashwords recommends \$3.99
- Smashwords studies show \$1.99 the weakest performance price
- What is a permafree book?
- The more known you become, the more you charge.
- Amazon by far is the best place to sell ebooks – 60-70 percent of the world's ebooks.
- Amazon pays 70 percent for ebooks of \$2.99 to \$9.99.
- Amazon pays 35 percent for ebooks outside this range.

### **If you set up your own publishing company:**

- Set up a name and determine the rules in your state to operate a business.
- Usually a sole proprietorship
- Buying ISBNs. \$125 for one; \$150 for one with bar code; \$325 for 10 ISBNs
- List your books through Bowkerlink.com – this gets your books in libraries, retailers, publishers, bookstores, schools. These places use Bowker's Books in Print catalog.
- More professional appearance on Amazon.

## **PRINT BOOKS**

### **Print-on-Demand (POD)**

- Little upfront costs because of smaller volume
- The unit cost, however, is higher than offset printing (which usually prints 1,000 min.)
- Book available at most online outlets
- Books can be distributed through Ingram, the largest US book wholeseller
- Frowned upon by bookstores

### **Off-set Printing**

- Lower cost per unit
- Can be a higher quality, but usually not seen unless illustrated
- Minimum print runs of 1,000 which means upfront cost of at least \$2,000.
- Take a higher risk – what if book doesn't sell?
- Much preferred by bookstores

### **Are there honest service providers for my book other than a vanity press?**

- <http://www.girlfridayproductions.com/>
- <http://winningedits.com/>
- <https://reedsy.com/> (has a free book writing/ebook converting program)
- <http://pressbooks.com/>
- <http://authorfriendly.com/> (Carla King)
- Diversion Books – hybrid publisher – traditional print right while author keeps ebook rights
- <https://www.bookworks.com/2016/05/comparing-reedsy-pressbooks-online-book-creation-tools/>

### **Average costs of various parts of self-publishing:**

- Developmental editing - \$800 - \$3,000
- Copyediting - \$500 - \$2,000
- Proofreading - \$300 - \$700
- See <http://www.the-efa.org/res/rates.php> for all editing/writing rates
- Cover design - \$150 - \$2,000 (avg \$250)
- Interior design - \$100 - \$1,000 (depends on type of book)

- ISBN - \$125 - \$325 (10)
- Copies of books - \$4/book (CreateSpace) to 50 percent of retail

## Marketing

- Create a remarkable website.
- Target/identify/imagine your niche market. Everyone is not an answer.
- Build an email list for your readership. Update them every 1-3 months.
- Set up your Amazon Author page.
- Focus on at least one medium platform outside of Amazon (blog, podcast, YouTube, Skype – although a strong email list can carry this load)
- Focus on at least one social media site (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest)
- Use appropriate keywords on Amazon for your book. Find successful books like yours, study their keywords and use them. Especially those with better rankings. (For example, a ranking of 30,000 on Amazon means they sell around 10 books a day. 100,000 means 1 book a day. These rankings, however, are fluid and constantly moving.)
- Get at least five reviews.
- Use other people's platforms – guest blog, get mentioned on others social media
- Interact with every reader you can.
- Use visuals everywhere you appear online: social media, email, blogs, etc.
- Business cards, postcards, bookmarks
- Join your Chamber of Commerce
- Make appearances – but avoid looking desperate – vet appearances, especially when many other authors are involved
- Saturate your local area first
- Fine tune your one-liners for the following questions:
  - What is the book about?
  - What do you write?
  - What kind of author are you?
  - What are you writing now?
  - When will your next book be out?
  - What have you published?
  - Where do you get your writing ideas?
  - Who's your favorite author?
  - What is your writing routine?
  - Is your book in the bookstores?
  - Is your book in the libraries?
  - Is your book online?
- Keep writing
- <https://insights.bookbub.com/book-marketing-ideas/> 98 Book Marketing Ideas That Can Help Authors Increase Sales

## 10 things not to do when self-publishing your novel

- Never settle for a quick cover. This is your first impression to the world.
- Never settle for quick synopsis/back cover copy. This is your 2<sup>nd</sup> impression.
- Never forget to promote your book. They NEVER sell themselves.
- Never wait for reviews. Give free copies/ARCs to people for review at the outset. When someone tells you they like it, ask them to say it on Amazon.
- Never compare your book to someone else's. The reader will compare.
- Never take all criticism at face value. Learn to maturely be selective.
- Be careful of marketing packages with self-publishing sites.
- Never ignore an email or contact from a reader. Answer it promptly.
- Never take the bait when criticized or given a bad review.
- Never stop writing.

## The experts on self-publishing:

Jane Friedman - <https://janefriedman.com/>

Hugh Howey - <http://www.hughhowey.com/>

Joanna Penn - <http://www.thecreativepenn.com/>

Carla King - <http://authorfriendly.com/>

Mark Coker - <http://blog.smashwords.com/>

Joel Friedlander – <http://www.thebookdesigner.com>

David Gaughran – <http://www.davidgaughran.wordpress.com>

J.A. Konrath – <http://www.jakonrath.blogspot.com>

## Website designers that specialize in author sites (and design book covers):

<http://authorbytes.com/>

<http://authorsontheweb.com/>

<http://www.bizango.net/>

<http://myhouseofdesign.com> (did FundsforWriters.com and CHopeClark.com)

<http://monkeycmedia.com/>

<http://www.outboxonline.com/>

<http://silverknightauthorwebsites.com/>

<http://smartauthorsites.com/>

<http://xuni.com>

<http://www.webdesignrelief.com/>

## Finding book reviewers online ( in addition to asking people to review):

<http://www.blueinkreview.com/> - good articles, but charges too much for a review – sign up for the newsletter for updates on self-publishing and getting reviews

<http://booklife.com>

<http://www.bookrevieweryellowpages.com/>

<http://www.midwestbookreview.com/>  
<http://www.netgalley.com>

### Options on Amazon

- **CreateSpace** – print books
- **Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP)**
- **KDP Select** – Enrolls you in Kindle Unlimited (subscription service) and the Kindle Library (for Kindle Prime members – no due dates). You publish your ebook only on Amazon
- **Kindle Scout** – Post manuscript. Readers determine success. Based upon activity, can be chosen for publication by Amazon Press.
- **Author Central** – free website for authors with books on Amazon (mine is at <http://www.amazon.com/C.-Hope-Clark/e/B007OVLE76/> )
- **ACX** – audio book side of Amazon
- **Amazon Giveaway Program** - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/giveaway/home>
- **Kindle Textbook Creator** - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html?docId=1002998671>
- **Kindle Kids Book Creator** - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html?docId=1002979921>
- **Kindle Comic Creator** - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html?docId=1001103761>
- **WriteOn** - <https://writeon.amazon.com/> - An online story lab for writers. A reading and writing community of works in progress





There's something about being alone with your thoughts that makes ideas **pop**. But, alone at home it can be hard to find answers. Find the **encouragement** you need to **keep the flow going**.

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- Character Development
- Editing Questions
- Publishing Advice
- and more!



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 Library Services administered by the  
 South Carolina State Library.*



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