



The Professional Speaker's Guide to Book Publishing

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Why Write a Book?**
- 2 Where Do I Even Start?**
- 3 What Are My Publishing Options?**
- 4 Final Thoughts**
- 5 About The Author's Collaborative**



CHAPTER ONE



Why Write a Book?



Books are no longer simply books, they are branding devices and credibility signals—not to mention the reason their authors command large speaking or consulting fees.

**- Why Books Are The Ultimate New Business Card,
FastCompany, Sept. 2012**

With the rapid creation and adoption of social media networks, we have the platforms to both bombard and be bombarded with snippets of information at all hours of the day, rarely getting the opportunity (or brain share) to tell or absorb the whole story.

As a public speaker – a storyteller – the impact you make on your audience relies heavily on your ability to share the full breadth of information you have to offer, not just a piece of it. Like public speaking, writing a book gives you the opportunity to **break through the clutter** by telling your **whole story** to an audience who has your **undivided attention**.

But the value of writing a book goes well beyond that.

When you have a book behind your name, you:

- Reinforce the message that **you are an industry expert**.
- Establish yourself as **an even more marketable public speaker** to bureaus and corporate entities looking for speakers.

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- Create an **additional revenue stream.**
 - Have one hell of a **business card.**
 - **Ascribe the title “Author” to your name.**
 - Add a **new marketing tool** to your arsenal.





CHAPTER TWO



Where Do I Even Start?

Writing a book can be a daunting process. After all, we're talking about writing anywhere **from 30,000 to 50,000 words** (which translates into 120 and 200 book pages respectively). That's a lot – considering that at the completion of this sentence, you will have only read 281 words.



To help you organize, first start by asking yourself:

- 1) What goal(s) do you want to achieve by writing a book?
- 2) Who is your audience? Be specific. (i.e., professional women age 35-50). This will ensure that you're always writing in the right voice.
- 3) What is the purpose of your story – to inspire, to motivate, to educate, to inform, to move or connect emotionally?
- 4) What are the key messages you want to share in your book?

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- 5) What are some key differentiators between you (and the way you're telling your story) and others who have approached similar topics?
- 6) Try your hand at back-cover copy. If you picked your own book up in a bookstore and wanted the sneak preview, how would it read? *This does not have to be well-written – it is merely meant to inspire you and guide you down a path for content.*
- 7) What is the working title for your book? *This can be a VERY rough title.*
- 8) Are there any charts, tools, graphs or photos that you will be including to enhance the lessons in the story?



Once you feel comfortable with the questions above, you can start organizing your thoughts a bit better.

- 1) In this early stage, how do you see the chapters breaking down? There can be as many or as few as you want. (*You are not locked into this. It's just a starting point.*)
- 2) Once you've done a draft of your chapter organization, for each chapter, write the key words, points or phrases that you want to include.
- 3) Start filling in the content for each of the chapters you've identified.

As you work on your book, keep in mind that there are other components of the manuscript that will need to be incorporated into the final manuscript:

- **Foreword:** The foreword is the copy at the front of the book that someone (perhaps another industry expert) writes to sing praises about you, your book, or your ideas. In an ideal situation, this is written by an industry expert or influencer who is familiar with your work. The bigger the name, the bigger the reach of your book (and the more appealing the book may be to publishers, if you choose to go that route).
- **Biography:** Adding a short bio (and a photo) to your book is important because it further establishes you as the subject matter expert while giving your readers a sneak peek into the person behind the professional. The bio can either be added to the back cover (if there's room) or included in the final pages of the book depending on the length of the biographical content. We suggest roughly around 200-250 words for back cover copy.
- **Table of Contents:** Your table of contents will be loosely (or strictly, depending on how much you've changed from your initial thinking) based on the chapter breakdowns that you anticipated in the exercise you did in Step 1 of organization.
- **Copyright page:** This page is where readers would find legal, copyright, printing, listing and ISBN* information. This will be one of the last things you do in the self-publishing process.

** ISBN will be discussed below*

Note: Prior to this sentence, you have read only 811 words.



CHAPTER THREE

What Are My Publishing Options?

Typically, when prospective authors think of writing books, they think of being published through major publishing houses like Penguin Random House, Macmillan, and HarperCollins. The reality is that these types of publishers are swamped with manuscripts and seldom (if at all) accept unsolicited submissions or submissions from un-agented writers.

The good news is that, given technology, authors have many ways to get their books out to the public these days, so you don't have to rely on the big names to bring your book from possibility to profitability.

Major Publishers

Your best entry into a major publisher is through an agent. But agents aren't always eager to take every prospective author who comes their way. Their business is to sell you, of course, so they want to make sure they're taking on candidates who are close to a sure thing for getting picked up by a publisher.

One of the biggest things that both publishers and agents are looking for is a built-in sales channel.

They will look for things like:

- 1- The size of your social media presence. Many agents (and publishers) are reluctant to speak with you if you don't have a minimum of 20,000 followers on at least one social media channel.

2- Who's in your inner circle that can help promote the book. Are you connected with some influencers who would either promote your book or provide a review (or even better, the foreword!)?

3- Whether you're a public speaker and how big are your audiences – can you sell your books at events?

4- Whether you are member of industry associations that would be a resource for spreading the word about your book.

5- Do you have your own website, publication or podcast? If so, how many visitors do you have and how often do you release new information?

If you cannot **wow** with these answers, then going the major publisher route may not be a good option for you.

Don't be discouraged though! **Small Press** publishers are also an option. These publishers often take a larger number of first-time and un-agented authors, but they tend to focus on very specific niches and release fewer publications per year.



Two of the best things you can do to find a small press publisher is:

1- Purchase the most recent edition of The Writer's Market. This book is basically the bible of all publishers for all genres and you can search the index by book type. Not only does it give you details about each publisher (requirements, genres it covers, what percentage of new writers it takes, etc.), but it also gives you insights for writing a great query letter! You may be tempted to buy an older edition of the book, but don't. The publishing industry changes and merges so fast, it's not worth having anything other than the most current edition. And then we suggest double checking on the internet for any recent changes they have made to their submission process.

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2- **Go to the book store** (online or brick and mortar) and see what publishers have published books like the one you intend to write. These should be books that are similar in topic and in tone, but you'll have to be able to sell them on how you're different. Once you have that list, you can go back to the Writer's Market and verify each publisher and their submissions guidelines.

But here's the big **caveat emptor** – BEWARE the ***vanity press!***

There are certainly companies and professionals that provide top quality publishing related services to self-published authors – such as editing, cover design, marketing, and project management. However, the industry is also rife with unscrupulous outfits that try to take advantage of writers and authors who are eager to see their book in print by charging exorbitant prices for sub-par services.

Vanity publishers, or vanity press, have been around the publishing industry for decades. The term “vanity” is derived from the idea that the author is merely having their book published for their own gratification, and not because a publishing company has bought their manuscript.

With vanity press, the author not only pays for some of the production costs, but typically must purchase copies of their books in large numbers as part of the deal. This is when you hear about a relative or co-worker has “a garage full” of their books that they’ve paid for up front and are now desperate to sell.

The terms vanity press, subsidy press, and hybrid publishing are used to describe similar services – and they are generally negative terms to describe predatory companies that position themselves as either a publishing company or self-publishing service but are primarily making their profits not from book sales, but from the authors who are buying their services — and their own books!



Some signs that you may be dealing with an unscrupulous “publishing company:”

1- They require you to purchase a specific number of copies of your book. They may even try to tell you that it’s part of what you need to do as an author to promote your book.

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2- The information on their website is difficult to verify – and it may be hard to determine who owns the company or is running the operations.

3- They mention a “hybrid” process by which you as the author share the production costs. To be clear, in these cases, “production costs” do not include professional services such as editing or cover design. They are purely fees to produce your book.

Now, you may be thinking, *isn't this same as self-publishing* (and in fact some of these predatory companies may try to convince you that they are the same thing,) but there are some huge differences. The main, crucial distinction between vanity press and self-publishing is that as a self-publisher, you – the author – are in control and are the one reaping the benefits of book sales.

Is Self-Publishing for You?

As a self-published, or independent, author, it also means you're responsible for hiring (and covering all costs for) your own professional editors, designers, cover artists, and proofreaders to end up with a high-quality publication. With true self-publishing resources such as Amazon's KDP, there are no costs to publishing your book and it's available for print on demand as long as you keep your book on Amazon. Other true self-publishing resources include companies such as Smashwords, which focuses on e-books.



Am I really an author if I self-publish?
YOUR NAME HERE

“Am I really an author if I self-publish?” you may ask.

Absolutely!

In 2017, for the first time, the number of self-published titles in one year crossed the one million mark ([The Number of Self-Published Titles Cracked 1 Million in 2017](#), Publishers Weekly).

So, more and more people are getting their entry into publishing by doing it on their own.



What Popular Movies Started As Self-Published Books?

- Still Alice
- Fifty Shades of Gray
- The Martian

Even the classic story, “A Christmas Carol,” by Charles Dickens was first a self-published book (though times were different then and it certainly wasn’t as easy as it is today)! Authors Mark Twain and Beatrix Potter were also self-published.

So the great thing about self-publishing is that it puts everything (even after the writing) into your hands. But it also creates a lot of challenges. There’s a lot of ground to cover to take your book from a Word document to a book that’s ready for print.

While you can certainly manage some of these steps on your own, time and skill may prevent you from doing it without help.

Editing – It doesn’t matter how good of a writer you are or how many times you read your manuscript, you’re going to miss things – tenses will be wrong, punctuation will be out of place, and word choices can always be improved. Just as a psychologist often has a psychologist, an editor often has an editor. If you know an editor, contract that

person out for reading your manuscript. If you don't have someone in mind, there are plenty of resources available for hiring these resources. In addition to online resources like Fiverr or UpWork that allow you to find and hire freelance editors, there are plenty of editorial companies that you can hire to review your manuscript.

Formatting – Think about any book that you've read lately... it doesn't look at all like the size 10 serif (Times New Roman) or sans serif (Arial) font that you see when you're typing in a word document. The pages are stylized, complete with a copyright page, table of contents, page numbers and chapter numbers and names, to name a few. A formatter will take your manuscript and lay it out as a book for you, so it no longer just looks like a Word doc. We recommend getting the book formatted for both print and ebook. Like editing, if you know someone who can format books (note that this *is* a specific skillset that requires special software), then hire that person to do it. But if you don't, you can again turn to resources like Fiverr or UpWork to hire a freelancer. Or, you may find that companies that offer editorial services also offer formatting services. Once the book has been formatted, you will want to go through it with a fine-tooth comb to ensure that the paragraphs and sentences are falling where they should be and that you haven't missed any typos along the way.

Cover Design – We've all heard the saying, "You can't judge a book by its cover," but isn't that the thing that really makes us decide to pick up a book and read it? The cover should be

powerful enough to pique the reader's interest by giving a glimpse into what the book is about. In fact, some studies show that the cover affects book sales- changing a cover to a more striking or relevant design has in some cases increased a book's sales by as much as 50%!

The cover includes the imagery and titles on the front cover, plus the spine and the back-cover copy, imagery, author photo (if appropriate) and barcode. If you know a good designer, by all means, commission them to do your cover; however, it is important to note that there are VERY specific guidelines for creating a cover, as well as strict licensing requirements for images, artwork or photos. This includes obtaining licensing permission for your author headshot, if you've used a professional photographer. However, if you are hiring someone who's not familiar with this process, you can go to Kindle's self-publishing tool for specifications. If you don't have a designer on hand, Kindle does have a design team that will get your cover done, or you can look for someone on Fiverr or Upwork. You may also want to try a site like GoOnWrite.com – that allows you to choose from templated cover designs or create something customized.

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barcode associated with that number. You will need a unique ISBN number for each medium (print, ebook) your book will be available in. We recommend purchasing your ISBN number(s) through Bowker.com. Once purchased and assigned to your book, you will need to provide the ISBN number and barcode to the formatter and the cover designer who will drop that information into your book/ebook where appropriate.

Upload - Once you have the entire book formatted with the cover, you will need to go into a self-publishing tool. The cover will be uploaded separately from the actual formatted manuscript. Having successfully loaded it to the site, you will need to request a proof – this can be either digital or hard copy. No matter how many times you’ve already gone through your manuscript, go through the proof VERY carefully, because this is the last time you’re going to see it before it actually prints. If everything looks good, you’re going to submit the book to be released to the public (and available on Amazon, for example, if you use Kindle’s self-publisher).

eBook - Though having an ebook version is not required, it is recommended. Think for a moment if you’re writing a business book. Your audience may be on the road a lot and may lean more toward reading your book on their device rather than in hard copy. As mentioned above, the ebook *does* require its own formatting and its own ISBN number.

*** Something to consider with ebooks ... unlike printed copies of a book, readers who purchase the ebook won't have the opportunity to fill out answers to the learning exercises you may have included in the print version. For that reason, you can certainly still include those exercises in the ebook, but there is no need to include space or lines for writing answers. ***

Sounds like a lot, right? The good news is that there are companies you can hire to do all the self-publishing legwork (editing, formatting, cover, ISBN, upload, proofing, etc.) for you if this all seems like it will take more time than you can commit to.

Still not sure how you want to publish?

There's no right or wrong answer for whether you try to go through a publisher or self-publish/publish independently. It really all depends on your goals. The table on the next page shows the pros and cons of the different publishing options available to you.

Publisher Type	Pros	Cons
Publisher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built-in book marketing • Major bookstore distribution • Schedules book tours/signings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slimmer odds of being published • May only be allowed to submit to one publisher at a time (depending on publisher) • Lag time between submission and notification • No control over price or share of revenue • No book purchase requirement (see vanity press above)
Self-Publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You control turnaround time • Creative control • You set the price • Order printed book copies as needed, at cost • Launch schedule is based on your own priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything is in your own hands, need to hire appropriate resources • Distribution is limited to your own channels (plus Amazon, Kindle) and your own marketing



CHAPTER FOUR



Final Thoughts

Whether or not writing a book has always been on your bucket list or a new-found business need, it is well worth the time and effort – as long as you haven't set “making a million dollars from my book” as your goal.

Truth is, few authors can retire on their book sales. Here's the reality:



A typical book author barely makes more than minimum wage. You receive an advance and 10% royalties on net profit from each book. If your book retails at \$25 per copy, you would need to sell at least 4,000 copies to break even on a \$5,000 advance.

[How to Really Make Money as a Book Author \(Even If You Don't Sell a Single Copy\)](#), Danny Iny, Inc.

Writing a book is liberating and the feeling of awe that you get when your first box of books is delivered to your doorstep is ... positively exhilarating!

Is that enough to make it worth it? No, probably not.

BUT, according to Danny Iny, “You'll make money as an author, not from the sales of your book, but from the relationships you create with your books.”

We cannot stress that enough.

So, if you're going to do it, do it right – especially if you're going the self-publishing route.

1- Know that writing a book takes time and commitment.

Writing your book is a labor of love, time and attention. We always recommend setting a realistic hard completion date and dedicating at least a few hours each week to writing and organizing. If you dedicate just one day a week to writing your book, you can feasibly finish the writing part of it within three to five months.

And we get it, sometimes you're just not in the mood to write. That's okay, just make sure the book is moving forward in one way or another. When writer's block hits, we often recommend thinking about other parts of your book – writing down some cover concepts or marketing ideas is sometimes just what you need to get your creative juices flowing again!



Pro-tips for staying committed to writing your book:

Record your thoughts. Sometimes writing ideas come at inconvenient times when there isn't a pen or paper (or computer) in sight. Don't lose that thought! Use the notes feature on your smart phone or tablet to record your thoughts for later.

A Ghostwriter will write your book *for you* under your name only. Through regular meetings and information exchanges, the ghostwriter will create your book in your voice and tone. When looking for a ghostwriter, be sure to sit down with them (in person or virtually) to ensure that you are comfortable with the person and their reliability.

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Pro-tips for staying committed to writing your book:

Accountability partners. If you're truly committed to writing your book yourself, think about taking on an accountability partner who will hold you to your deadlines regularly and will be available to talk through any issues you're encountering during the process. Knowing that there is someone who, every week for example, is waiting for content from you and is ready to hop on a call to discuss it with you is the best way to ensure that you're sticking to your deadlines.

2- **Know Your Timeline.** If you're self-publishing your book, the time you start organizing/writing your book to the time it's released can take six to eight months when you factor all the necessary components in. Reverse engineer a timeline starting with when you absolutely must release your book and then factor in the other requirements to come up with the date by which you *must* turn your manuscript over to the editor. You will have to work out the exact timeframes with the freelancers you have contracted to help you, but you will ultimately have a **formula** that looks like this to get to the date by which you must complete your manuscript:

Goal Release Date

(Goal Release Date) – (1 week – upload/proof) = Publisher turnover date

(Publisher turnover date) – (1-2 weeks) = Cover design turnover date

(Cover Design turnover) - (6-8 weeks – editing formatting) = **Final manuscript delivery date**

3- **Know the Financial Commitment.** Self-publishing does come with a cost, but it's a cost that is in your control. If you're going to hire separate people and companies through companies like UpWork and Fiverr to do the editing, formatting, cover design, etc., the cost tends to be cheaper, but can become a management headache. After all, you'll be responsible for staying on top of each of those resources to ensure they're meeting their deadlines without sacrificing quality.

A slightly more expensive, but perhaps more manageable option, is to hire a company that will efficiently manage all of the publishing requirements on your behalf. For these companies, you would be responsible for paying for the costs of service, but the book and everything that goes along with it belongs to you and is in your control.

4- **Don't Forget to Market!** Books don't sell themselves. Nor do the relationships that you hope to build from these books. Don't forget to include things like book release parties, advertising, mailers, social media, email, etc. when you budget both money and time. Marketing, PR and event planning companies are always available to hire, but there are also some low- or no-cost options you can take advantage to at least get you started down a marketing path:



Pro-tips for marketing your book:

Look for venues for a book signing/launch party that may be willing to donate their space. These may be hard to find, but in some cases, even a restaurant would be willing to let you use the space as long as you commit to buying a certain amount of food.

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Pro-tips for marketing your book:

Social media is free! Though you can certainly pay small amounts of money to boost your social media advertisements, use as many of your channels (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) to spread the word about your book. Include the link to your book on Amazon. You may also want to start a Facebook group to build a following and engage them in the work you're doing.

Now get to it! The title "Author" awaits you!

And if you're keeping count, by the end of this sentence, you've read 4170 words.



CHAPTER FOUR

About The Author's Collaborative

***The Author's Collaborative** is a group of industry experts in writing, editing, publishing, design, marketing and public relations services who work together to bring your book concept from possibility to profitability.*

***Beth Tancredi** (BethTancredi.com) has spent the last 20 years working in broadcast, print and digital media, financial services and health care. In 2016, Beth began blogging, and a year later, she published her first book, **Pursuing My Wonderful**, that compares the steps taken to turn her passion into a business to post-divorce dating. She also co-authored **The Truth Behind My Trident: Overcoming Life and Business Obstacles the Navy SEAL Way**, with Phillip W. Koontz. She continues to work with clients to build their value proposition by crafting their stories into non-fiction business books.*

***Mary Ellen Landolfi** and **Stacy Reagan**, co-founders of **The Write Room, LLC**, (TheWriteRoom.com) have been helping independent authors navigate the self-publishing process since 2011. They've worked with authors in the areas of health care, wellness and nutrition, self-help, motivation, and business consulting. They co-authored the book, **The Real Fountain of Youth**, with fitness expert and TV host Eraldo Maglara. Stacy has an extensive editorial background in the medical field. Mary Ellen's content writing experience includes ghostwriting for executives and leadership experts and PR writing.*

***Ingaro Designs** is a multi-disciplined design studio owned and operated by Carol Ingaro (IngaroDesigns.com). Her dedicated digital and print design team specializes in creating captivating book cover designs and further supports small businesses and solopreneurs with creative marketing solutions that won't cost a gazillion dollars.*

*Because every industry receives information in physically and intellectually different ways, The Author's Collaborative combines our own **marketing and public relations** experience with hand-picked industry experts to create an impactful and cost-efficient communications strategy to promote your book and build sales.*

Questions? You can reach us at theauthorscollaborative@gmail.com or message us on [Facebook](#).

Ready to learn more?

To find out how The Author's Collaborative can help you with the independent publishing process, contact us for a free consultation, no matter what stage you are in writing your book.

Find us on [Facebook](#)

