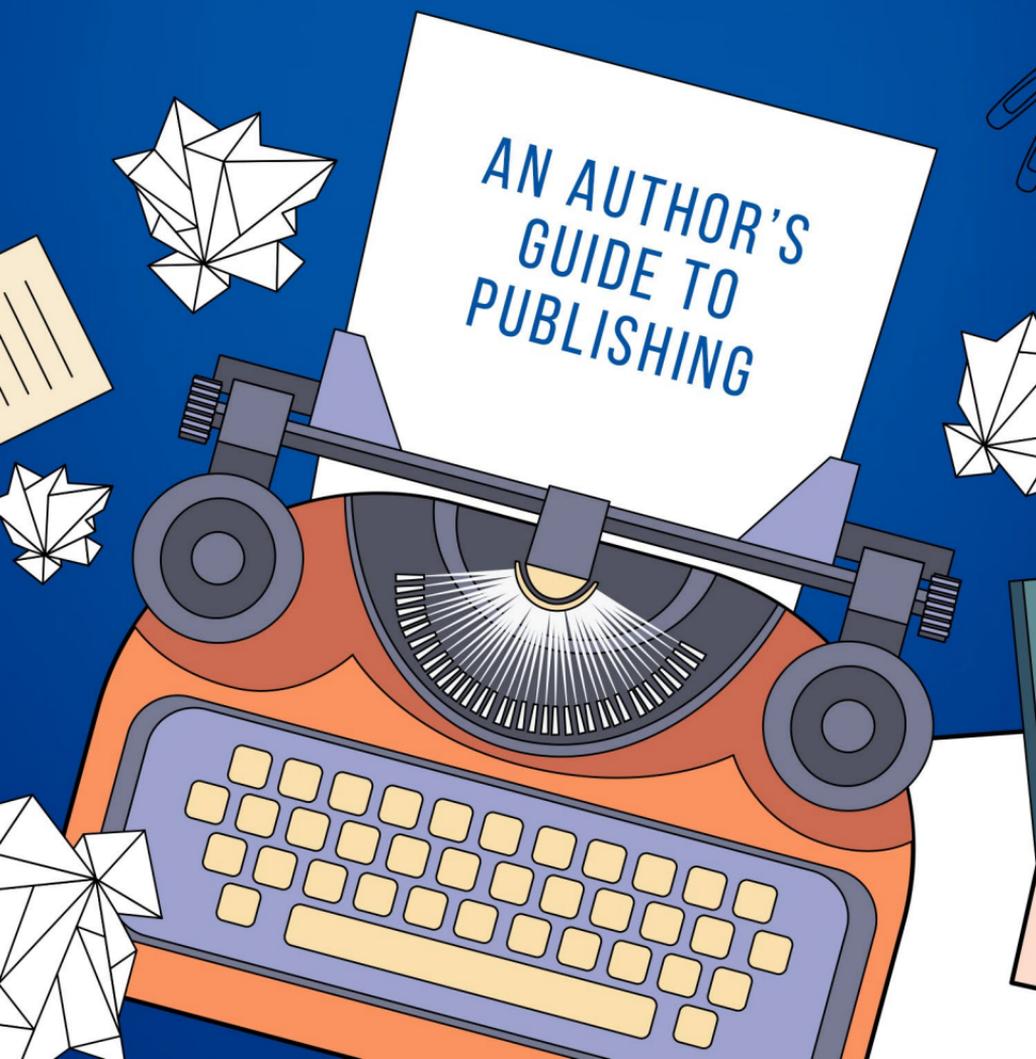


JD&J DESIGN

SELF-PUBLISHING FOR AUTHORS



SELF-PUBLISHING FOR AUTHORS

JD&J DESIGN LLC

Self Publishing For Authors

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Why we wrote this book

First of all, let me say congratulations, you have finished what so many people start only to shelve when things get tough. But unlike those who fall along the way, you have completed your manuscript and are now in the exciting position of getting it ready for publication.

And it's for authors like you that we created this short book, since 2013 we have helped many authors and as such gained a great insight into the self-publishing world, in the following pages we hope to pass on some of this knowledge and hope that you find it useful.

We have tried to layout the book in a logical order, but you can read it anyway you want, jump from section to section in whatever way suits you best, and if there is something you would like covered (but isn't currently), just get in contact with us at info@jdandj.com.

Thanks for letting us help with your publication and good luck!

Dave Roberts

Founder, JD&J Design LLC

Getting an Editor

Once you have completed writing your manuscript you should look at having a professional editor review it, this is a stage that some indie authors overlook, sometimes for cost reasons and in others for over confidence. However, being so close to a volume of writing can lead to a blinkered view with regards to the flow, construction and fine tuning of the work.

A good editor is not there to be a negative over-user of red ink, they should be able to help you in polishing your work to a higher level and thus give your book the best chance of shining when it's published.

But there are many editing services out there along with some freelance websites that offer editing to indie & self-publishing authors, you of course want an editor that's within your budget and also has the experience/talent to complete a great job for you.

So, what should you be looking for in your search for an editor?

Well first of all you need to understand the different types of editing services that are normally on offer.

Developmental Editing, this looks at the overall book itself and is more of a full-on edit, the book's structure and narrative will be edited along with analyzing and critiquing the narrative, plot, pacing and so on.

Copy Editing assesses the grammar, punctuation, consistency and overall mechanics of your book.

Proofreading is normally the next and the last stage in checking that all issues have been found and highlighted for correction.

Which type of editing service you choose will be down to your time frame and budget, but we would recommend that you plan ahead and ensure that your book is looked at thoroughly.

Once you know what type of edit you need you should start to look for editors to work with, but keep in mind doing the following:

- 1) Speak to other writers and find out which services they used and get honest feedback.
- 2) Send a one page example to potential editors to ask for their opinion.
- 3) When you send in a one page example, make sure you hide elements within the document to see if they can catch it.
- 4) Look at their experience and previous work, how many years have they been editing for? What genre do they work in? What are some of their previous books?
- 5) Do they understand your specific project?
- 6) Contact several editors to compare and contrast.
- 7) How many books per month does the individual editor normally work with, 3 to 4 should work, but if they're working on a dozen then you may want to look elsewhere.

Here are three of the more popular and highly rated editors that have great records and are chosen by a large number of professional self-publishing authors, you may want to check them out first.

Reedsy – They've been around since 2014 and have a large team of professionals, they've edited over 3,000 books and continue to help countless authors going forward.

<https://reedsy.com/>

NY Editors - They have worked with some of the biggest names in the publishing world and bring many years worth of experience from some of the biggest publishing houses in the world.

<https://nybookeditors.com/>

EDIT 911 – With all of their editors being PhDs, they have a great deal of knowledge to edit your book, on top of this they have edited over 30,000 books since 1999.

<https://edit911.com/>

Formatting

Before you submit your book for publishing, you need to focus on its formatting. This is a major component which is responsible for improving readability. Formatting makes a huge difference and poorly formatted books are hard to read.

The following are some book formatting tips which will improve readability.

1. Formatting Based on Genre

Fiction and non-fiction books have different formatting requirements so pay attention to the genre of your book. Additionally, the book's genre can also allow you to incorporate some design elements. If you never paid attention to the difference in formatting, you should pick a book and see for yourself. From the page indentation to the font, there is a noticeable difference.

2. Don't Hard Indent

Indenting the content can really help to show the start of a new paragraph. It also breaks the monotony of reading a large body of text. Indents are also largely used in fiction book formatting. When you're looking to add an indent, avoid using the tab button for it. Instead, go to the paragraph settings on MS Word and indent the paragraph with its help.

3. Focus on Font Readability

Apart from indentation, you need to ensure that your content is readable. Pick a font and a size which is pleasing to the eye

and makes your work look neat. Avoid picking fonts based on aesthetics only. Even Times New Roman is a good font to use.

Additionally, when working on your document, make sure the MS Page view settings is set to 100%. This gives you a look at the content from the neutral view. If the font is too small, pick a size bigger. Usually, 12 will do but some font types can be smaller and difficult to read, even with that font size.

4.Headers and Footers

Always include headers and footers, particularly if you are dealing with an eBook project. Even in print books, you'll find the title of the book or the chapter on the top right corner of the book. Including page numbers is a necessity and you'll hardly ever see a book without this important addition.

Moreover, pick header designs or footer designs which can add to the appeal of your book.

With the help of the tips mentioned above, you can not only improve readability but also enhance the overall appeal of the book easily.

However, if you would prefer someone else to format your manuscript, here are several companies that are very popular with indie authors.

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

<https://www.bookbaby.com/book-design/book-formatting>

<https://draft2digital.com/>

<https://ingramspark.pressbooks.pub/>

<https://integrativeink.com/interior-book-design>

Book Cover Sizes

If you're self-publishing a book, you will find a great selection of print on demand services to choose from, they'll offer varying options and services, but all of them will give you a path to getting your book in front of a reader.

From a design perspective (and by this, I mean your book cover design), each print on demand service will vary with regards to how the book cover is created, the size, margins, spine width, format and even color profile. As each service will print your book slightly differently, you will find that each option will need to be created differently too.

eBook Cover Designs

If we first look at eBook covers, they are normally always created using RGB color (as this is designed for the screen) and have resolutions from 72 ppi to 300 ppi (pixels per inch). Their difference can come in the dimensions of the image, if you look at the following covers, you'll see that the eBook design for Kindle (KDP) is narrower than the cover for LuLu.

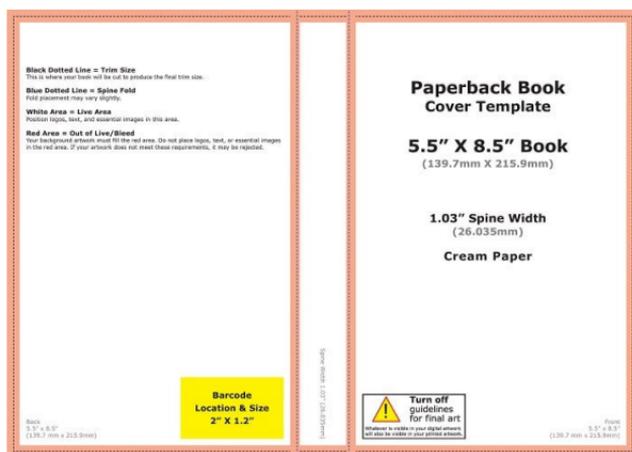
The dimensions vary slightly with KDP asking for their eBook covers to be 1600 x 2561 pixels, Smashwords and iBooks are both the same with 1600 x 2400 pixels working very well for their books, Nook eBook cover designs can be made to 1333 x 2000 and give a slightly wider feel to the design. However, Lulu's eBooks are a great deal wider in their layout ratio and are currently sized at 1224 x 1584 (making the layout feel a little more like a square).

So, which ever eBook publisher you decide to use, you should be aware of the impact that their format will have upon the book cover and it's layout, you may find certain elements within your design becoming cropped out of the image when publishing across multi formats.

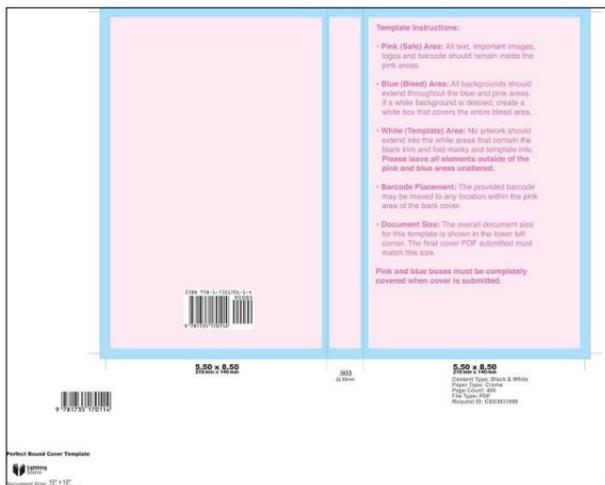
Paperbacks

The layout of your paperback will be a little more similar across the range of publishers, a book with a trim size of 6x9 via KDP will still be 6x9 when printed through Ingram Spark. However, the spine widths will differ (even with the same page count), you'll also find that the construction of the cover (especially if you are using their templates) will be different too.

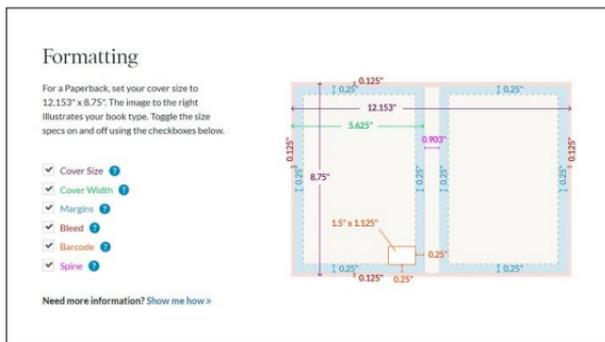
Below are three templates used by KDP, Ingram Spark and Barnes & Noble, the template for B&N being more of a guideline for constructing the book cover itself. But the main thing you should notice is how all three publishers have different spine widths for the same book, this is due to the paper stock used by each, and it will mean that if publishing through different POD services, you will need different cover PDFs for each one.



Template for KDP



Template IngramSpark

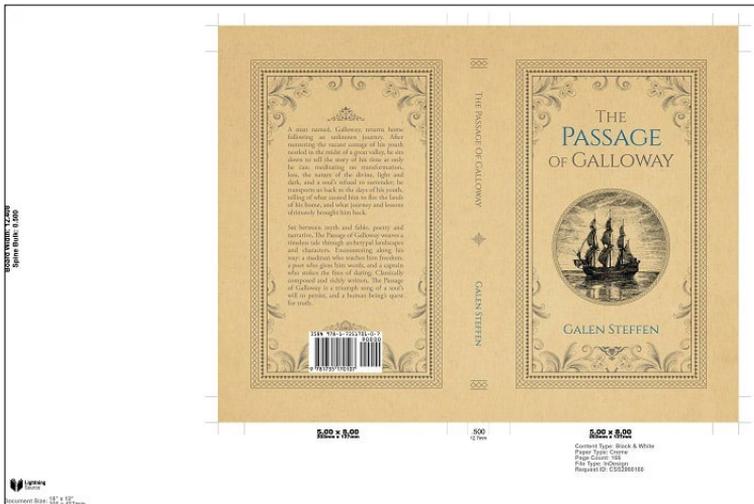


Barnes & Noble Template

Hard Backs

Currently, the most popular choice for indie authors to publish their book as a hard back is through Ingram Spark, they offer a wide range of trim sizes, the option for dust jacket and case laminate, they also offer the option of both, this is where the book has a dust jacket and underneath this the book has a case laminate cover.

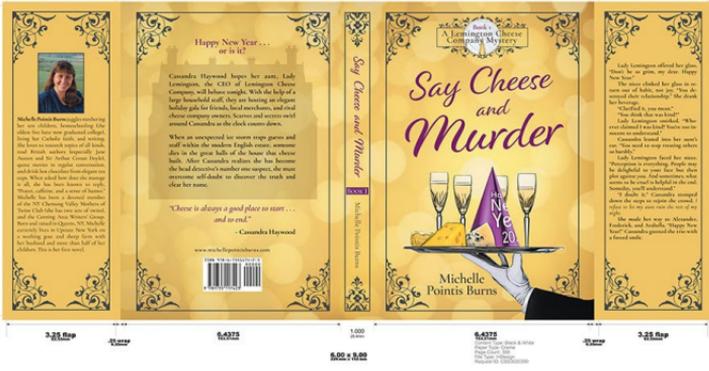
With a case laminate book, the cover extends past the edges of the book and is wrapped back around so that these edges fold onto the inside of the back and front pages and are glued in place (they are normally covered so that you don't see them once the book is printed).



Case laminate

With a dust jacket the layout is of course a great deal longer and you should take into consideration the use of the flaps (both front and back), these are normally used to add an author bio and add more detail for the blurb itself.

The only other thing to point out with using Ingram Spark (for any of their printed books), is that they place more restrictions with regards to ink levels. With off-set printing, the book cover gets printed using four plates (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black), if you were to print a page with all four of these plates at 100% output on each, then the outcome would be a completely black page and you would be printing at 400%. However, if you tried to print with much more than 240% output on all four plates the page would stay damp and end up smearing.



Dust Jacket Design

So, Ingram restrict the amount of ink to be used when printing their book covers to 240% max, this means that when designing the book cover, you need to reduce these levels within the PDF. This is something that most book cover designers are aware of and create designs for Ingram to these levels.

Even with their restriction on ink, Ingram's book covers always tend to print to a very high quality and we have always been impressed by their products.

Book Trim Sizes

When getting a book ready for publication you will have definitely heard the term ‘Trim Size’, this comes from the process of printing and actually creating the book itself, your book being printed on large sheets of paper which are folded, bound and then trimmed to the appropriate size.

And this leads on to a very good (and often asked) question, what should the trim size of my book be?

Well, it depends, there are some rules as to what the industry expects certain genres and topics to be printed as, but in these days of self-publishing those rules aren’t followed as much as they once were.

Mass Market Books – 4” x 7”

These are books which were originally produced quite cheaply and sold in places like airports (their small size making them great for travel, you also see them in supermarkets too), the size is most commonly used for fiction. In self-publishing you’ll find that companies such as Ingram Spark print at this trim size but Amazon’s KDP do not print this small.

Trade Paperback – commonly 5”x8” to 6”x9”

The name Trade Paperback is a term used to indicate a book which is larger in size than that of the Mass Market book. Trade Paperbacks tend to be the most ‘common’ size and work well for both fiction and non-fiction. The main differential between fiction and non-fiction Trade Paperbacks being the paper color within the

book itself, again, there is no set-in-stone rule, but you tend to find that most fiction is on cream paper and non-fiction upon white.

Workbooks & Manuals – 8.5”x11”

These are larger printed books and work well as they are the size of a standard letter sheet of paper, they give room for two columns of text with plenty of space for images and illustrations, they’re more likely to be printed in color and use white paper within (normally with a glossy finish).

Hardcovers – ranging from 5”x8” to 8.5”x11”

The smaller sizes tend to be more for fiction with the larger working better for non-fiction, workbooks and manuals, this goes for both Dust Jackets and Case Laminates / Case Wraps.

Sizes currently on offer through KDP are:

5” x 8” (12.7 x 20.32 cm)

5.06” x 7.81” (12.85 x 19.84 cm)

5.5” x 8.5” (13.97 x 21.59 cm)

6” x 9” (15.24 x 22.86 cm)

6.14” x 9.21” (15.6 x 23.39 cm)

6.69” x 9.61” (16.99 x 24.41 cm)

7” x 10” x (17.78 x 25.4 cm)

7.44” x 9.69” (18.9 x 24.61 cm)

7.5” x 9.25” (19.05 x 23.5 cm)

8" x 10" (20.32 x 25.4 cm)

8.25" x 6" (20.96 x 15.24 cm)

8.25" x 8.25" (20.96 x 20.96 cm)

8.5" x 8.5" (21.59 x 21.59 cm)

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

8.27" x 11.69" (21 x 29.7 cm)

Hardbacks (Casewrap) from KDP:

5.5" x 8.5" (13.97 x 21.59 cm)

6" x 9" (15.24 x 22.86 cm)

6.14" x 9.21" (15.6 x 23.39 cm)

7" x 10" x (17.78 x 25.4 cm)

8.25" x 11" (20.96 x 27.94 cm)

For Ingram Spark the trim sizes on offer are:

For Paperback Books:

4 x 6" (154 x 102mm)

4 x 7" (178 x 102mm)

4.25 x 7" (178 x 108mm)

4.37 x 7" (178 x 111mm) A
4.72 x 7.48" (190 x 120mm)
5 x 7" (178 x 127mm)
5 x 8" (203 x 127mm)
5.06 x 7.81" (198 x 129mm)
5.25 x 8" (203 x 133mm)
5.5 x 8.25" (210 x 140mm)
5.5 x 8.5" (216 x 140mm)
5.83 x 8.27" (210 x 148mm) A5
6 x 9" (229 x 152mm)
6.14 x 9.21" (234 x 156mm)
6.5 x 6.5" (165 x 165mm)
6.625 x 10.25" (260 x 168mm) (Graphic Novel)
6.69 x 9.61" (244 x 170mm) (Pinched Crown)
7 x 10" (254 x 178mm)
7.44 x 9.69" (246 x 189mm)
7.5 x 9.25" (235 x 191mm)
8 x 8" (203 x 203mm)
8 x 10" (254 x 203mm)

8 x 10.88" (276 x 203mm)
8.25 x 10.75" (273 x 210mm)
8.25 x 11" (279 x 210mm)
8.268 x 11.693" (297 x 210mm) A4
8.5 x 8.5" (216 x 216mm)
8.5 x 9" (229 x 216mm)
8.5 x 11" (280 x 216mm)
11 x 8.5" (216 x 280mm) Premium Color Only

And for Hardcover:

5 x 8" (203 x 127mm) Case Lam/Cloth/Jacket
5.5 x 8.5" (216 x 140mm) Case Lam/Cloth/Jacket
5.83 x 8.27" (210 x 148mm) Case Lam
6 x 9" (229 x 152mm) Case Lam/Cloth/Jacket
6.14 x 9.21" (234 x 156mm) Case Lam/Cloth/Jacket
6.69 x 9.61" (244 x 170mm) Case Lam
7 x 10" (254 x 178mm) Case Lam
7.5 x 9.25" (235 x 191mm) Case Lam
8 x 8" (203 x 203mm) Case Lam
8 x 10" (254 x 203mm) Case Lam

8 x 10.88" (276 x 203mm) Case Lam

8.25 x 10.75" (273 x 210mm) Case Lam

8.5 x 8.5" (216 x 216mm) Case Lam

8.5 x 11" (280 X 216mm) Case Lam

11 x 8.5" (216 x 280mm) Case Lam, Premium Color Only

Again, there are no rules that you must stick to at all costs, the publishing world is constantly changing and standards that were fixed at one point are now more fluid than they have ever been. However, the goal of your chosen trim size is to ensure that the reader understands what the book is, and that it makes the reading of the book a more pleasurable experience, so choose wisely.

KDP & Hardbacks

Focusing on paperbacks and eBooks has been good for KDP, but they have lagged behind other POD services with regards to hardbacks, for long time most author's first option would be either IngramSpark, Lulu or a smaller independent printer, and this is fine, but it always felt like KDP were missing a trick not offering the service themselves.

So, if we go back over the past 12-18 months they started a beta service for hardbacks, selected authors were offered the opportunity to print their book via KDP as a case-wrapped edition, numerous authors took them up on the offer and now the service has been rolled out to everyone, at last.

If you want to publish your book via KDP as a hardback, here's a few things that you should know.

Firstly, the book is a case wrap and does not have a dust jacket, this means that the cover gets printed onto the boards of the book itself, we're not sure if KDP will eventually bring out a service offering dust jackets, but currently it's just for case wraps, paperbacks and eBooks.

You will need a new ISBN for your hardback edition (as always, it's one per edition of your book).

The sizing options for a hardback is a little limited at the moment, currently they are offering the following five trim sizes:

5.5 x 8.5 in, 6 x 9in, 6.14 x 9.21 in, 7 x 10 in & 8.25 x 11 in

There are also some restrictions on page count with the minimum at 75 pages and the maximum at 550 pages, they support 34 languages for hardback and have the capabilities for both left to right and right to left text.

The book cover for your hardback will differ slightly from that of your paperback edition, technically the artwork gets wrapped around the edges of the boards and so it has to extend out further than that of a paperback. If you look at the diagram below, it shows the specifications for a book to be printed as a hardback.

kindle direct publishing
Bookshelf | Reports | Community | Marketing

Print Cover Calculator and Templates

To find out the exact dimensions of your cover, use the calculator. You can also download a template (PDF and PNG) to be used as a guide layer in your image editing software. [Learn more about cover requirements.](#)

Enter Your Book Information

Binding type

Interior type

Paper type

Page-turn direction

Measurement units

Interior trim size

Page count
 Number of pages in your formatted trim size
[Learn more about trim size and page count.](#)

#	Description	Width (in)	Height (in)	#	Description	Width (in)	Height (in)
1	Full Cover	14.514	10.417	6	Spine	0.375	9.235
2	Front Cover	6.197	9.236	7	Spine Safe Area	0.814	8.886
3	Margin	0.125	0.125	8	Spine Margin	0.062	0.062
4	Wing	0.391	0.591	9	Barcode Margin	0.25	0.575
5	Wing	0.394	10.417				

Image for reference only

Make More Money
Reach More Readers
[Learn More](#)

KDP Select Global Fund
since 2017
\$59.6 Million

Reach more readers through Kindle Unlimited
[Learn More](#)

KDP Community
Start new series and reach new readers.
Connect with editors and other authors.

KindleDirect Publishing
Free and print-on-demand.
Make money.

KDP
KDP worldwide publishing.
Make money.

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KDP Calculator

You'll see that the template they offer does have a similar feel to the ones used for their paperbacks.



KDP Casewrap Template

For distribution, currently they offer their hardbacks via Amzon. com - .co.uk - .de - .es - .fr and .it however, it's not available via expanded distribution at the moment.

The costs for printing is of course more expensive than that of a paperback, so you will need to factor in a higher market price for your hardback edition, if you check out KDP's [cost calculator](#) you can see the cost for your exact book, based on page count, interior paper and format, this is incredibly helpful to ensure you price your book correctly.

Now that this service is live, it's a very similar process to setting up a paperback within the KDP author's portal, you should see the option within your bookshelf and be able to add a new title, choosing hardback as the format.

Copyright Page

When you open up any book, you'll notice that a couple of pages in will normally be the copyright page, now, most of us will completely overlook this and go straight to the table of contents, introduction or chapter one, but as a writer this is something that you should be familiar with and definitely have within your own book.

So, what goes into this page and what details should go there?

Well for most books there are standard details which you should include, this can differ between non-fiction and fiction (and again with memoirs too), but you should give some thought to and ensure you have the details ready when preparing your manuscript for publication.

Here are some of the standard elements that you should consider:

One – Copyright

The first line of detail normally is quite simply letting your reader know that you have the copyright to the book, this normally reads quite simply as:

Copyright © Your Name Here, 2020

It shows the word 'Copyright' the copyright symbol, your name and then the year of publication.

Two – All Rights Reserved

This part of the page indicates that the copyright holder reserves all rights to reproduce the book or elements within the book. You can simply place the words ‘All rights reserved’ or expand upon it, as below:

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form either by electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review.

Three – Disclaimer

This element is proving popular with most authors and again, is something you should also consider, here are some basic examples, but we would recommend seeking legal advice before you add yours to your book:

For fiction books, the disclaimer looks similar to the following: This is a work of fiction. Characters, Names, incidents and locations are the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is completely coincidental.

For Non-fiction books the disclaimer looks similar to the following: The publisher and author are providing this book and its contents on an “as is” basis and make no representations or warranties of any kind with respect to this book or its contents. The publisher and the author disclaim all such representations and warranties. In addition, the publisher and the author assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or any other inconsistencies herein.

Again, we would advise seeking further legal advice regarding your disclaimer, for example, a disclaimer for a book on new age thinking will be very different from that used in a book about fitness and diets.

Four – Edition

Here you should state which edition this specific copy of the book is and the year of publication

Five – Credits

Here is where you acknowledge the people and services that helped to produce your book, you'll also need to have certain copyright notices placed here too, these will be for any copyrighted images, artwork, illustrations, excerpts from other material and forewords etc.

Six – ISBN & LCCN

Your ISBN (International Standard Book Number) should be printed next followed by the LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number) should you have a LCCN.

Seven – Publisher details

Here is where you'll add the details of who published your book, if your self-publishing (even if you're using KDP or Ingram Spark) this will be your details, please note that you don't necessarily have to place your address here if you don't want to.

Eight – Website and contact details

At the very bottom of the notice you should use the space for your author website and contact email (it's worth keeping social media addresses to your bio and not on the copyright page).

So putting it all together, here is an example of how a copyright page can look:

Copyright © John Smith, 2020

This is a work of fiction. Characters, Names, incidents and locations are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is completely coincidental.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form either by electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review.

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Foreword by Jennifer Roberts

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www.jdandj.com

ISBNs

If you're publishing a book or have already done so you will need an ISBN beforehand, these ISBNs are something we see upon the back of every book, but we tend not to pay that much attention to them, that is until we need to organize one for our own book.

Well the ISBN or International Standard Book Number is a 10 digit or (more recently) a 13 digit number which identifies each and every book for libraries, book sellers and publishers. Originally it started off with a nine digit number in the late sixties which changed to 10 and then just over ten years ago they increased the digits to thirteen to keep up with the increase in publishing.

The standard ISBN will tell you a lot about the book and its author, it will of course tell you the title, the author, the genre, location of the publisher and format of the book itself.

When you look at an ISBN the numbers normally look something like the one below



If we use the above example ISBN, you can see how the number breaks down (it is of course the same for other ISBNs too).

978 - The number starts with 978, this shows the number actually is an ISBN (currently the ISBN can only start with either 978 or 979).

1 – This represents the language of the book (1 being English).

9994970 – This represents the publisher or imprint.

2 – This represents the edition and format of the publication.

6 – This is the check number and validates the reset of the number, it being calculated using a modulus 10 system.

The ISBN is normally found on the back page of printed books and on the inside flap of a dust jacket (for dust jackets, it is common to see them on either the front or rear flap and also the back page). As part of the ISBN you will also normally find a bar code for the price of the book, the bar code of the book is made up of a five digit number which indicates the currency (with the first digit) and then the value of the book with the following four digits.



The bar code above begins with 5 with is for the USA and a cost of \$27.99.

So, you will need an ISBN to publish your book, if you use Amazon's KDP they will give you one if you publish with them, however, their version is only good for their platform and if you want to publish your book anywhere else you will need to purchase your own ISBN. It stands to reason, that the publishers who give you an ISBN for free will restrict you to using their channels for publication.

What you need to be aware of is how many ISBNs you may need, you will need one per format and if you take the free ones given by some publishing services you'll need to buy regular ISBNs for the publishers where you need to provide your own. This can leave you in the position of having one paperback edition that has two separate ISBNs.

Having a free ISBN can sometimes be a reason for a traditional book store not to stock your book, the free ISBN will identify the on line print-on-demand company as your publisher, and this can get in the way of growing the possible reach of your book. However, if you plan to do all of your marketing through the likes of Amazon alone, then it may not be that big a deal to you. Just remember that if you do use your own ISBNs you can change a great deal more of the data about your book assigned to them.

So how do you get an ISBN?

In the USA you need to purchase your ISBN from [Bowker](#) and the UK is from [Nielsen](#), all other countries can be found through the International ISBN Agency <https://www.isbn-international.org/>

You can only use an ISBN once and don't need separate ones for different countries, you do (as we mentioned earlier) need one ISBN per format, so the same novel would need separate ones for the eBook, paperback and hardback versions of the book.

Currently you can buy ISBNs singularly or in batches of 10, 100 or 1000.

The latest prices are

1 = \$125

10 = \$295

100 = \$575

1000 = \$1500

The most obvious choice for buying is as a batch of 10, this covers your eBook and printed books, it also gives you options for the future for any new editions/publications (most authors will publish more than one book in their career).

Writing a blurb for your book

Writing a blurb for the back of your book can be a very time consuming task, we've known authors take weeks and even months to write, rewrite, tweak, update, edit and finally publish a blurb which is no more than 250 – 300 words.

And although this text is less than a standard page within your book, it's importance in sales is so key that it is worth every minute of your time, ensuring that you have a highly polished and effective back page.

The first thing to remember about a blurb is that it does have a job to do, and this is to convince the reader to buy your book.

Keeping this in mind, there are elements within a blurb which you should consider, these will alter depending upon whether the book is a work of fiction or non-fiction, but remembering that either way each is still a sales tool will help.

Here are our tips on perfecting a great blurb for your book.

Blurbs for Fiction

- 1) Research your genre first and foremost, a quick browse on Amazon will allow you to see bestselling books from professional authors and large publishing houses which have nailed the blurb, reading several of these will always help before you start on yours.
- 2) Focus in on your target audience and write with them in mind, trying to be too broad will result in a bland uninteresting blurb which will appeal to no one, it needs

- to be specific to your genre and written in the same tone.
- 3) You should introduce the main characters within your book, this doesn't have to be the complete history of them, but it should tell your reader enough as to whether they want to read more about them within the context of your book. If a reader can relate to your characters and are intrigued, you stand a greater chance of selling the book.
 - 4) Hit the reader with a hook, it shouldn't give away spoilers, but it should set the stakes for the book itself, for example, it should state what the main character needs to achieve and the outcome if they don't.
 - 5) Make you reader aware of where and when the story is taking place, giving them something tangible to immediately imagine increases the likelihood of them wanting to read further, setting the scene, environment and stage of the book.
 - 6) Be concise with your blurb, the danger with any form of advertising is in trying to say too much, you obviously want to shout about how great your book is, but if you bombard your reader it will work against you. Keep the blurb to around 250 words max, if possible, slightly shorter.
 - 7) Bio, if you want to tell your reader about yourself as a fiction writer then keep the bio to a page within your book (the reader will normally expect to see this at the back of your book), your bio is more of a sales tool for non-fiction.
 - 8) Have one or two positive quotes from legitimate sources, preferably people within the genre with recognizable names.

Blurbs for Non-fiction

- 1) As with fiction, research your area and see how the best sellers are presenting their blurbs, again, this will help with inspiration and give an understanding of how the genre is represented.
- 2) Create a headline which tells your reader what they stand to gain by reading your book, it needs to be punchy and generate intrigue, for example 'Your six figure life awaits' (for a book on generating income), keep it specific to your topic and keep it concise, one or two lines are enough.
- 3) Tell them what the book is about and who it is written for, and again, keep it concise, it should explain the subject matter and its target audience, for example, if you've written a book about meditation, it should give details on the practice and then the type of person who would benefit from buying this book (as with all books, it's worth remembering that not everyone will want to read your book, this is not meant to sound harsh, but just to get you to understand that by being specific with your readers you increase the chance of higher sales figures).
- 4) Tell your reader how they will benefit and what they will gain by reading your book, this is best done with the use of bullet points, you can make the statement: 'By reading this book you will learn how to:' and then below list 5 – 10 points. This won't always work for every non-fiction book, if your book is a historical account of WWII then you should concentrate more upon the content of the book, explaining the period it covers along with insights you will learn/gain by reading the book. Again, you need to make clear how your specific reader will benefit from investing their time in your book.
- 5) Use a short bio to tell the reader why you are the right person to have written this book, if you were about to buy a book on brain surgery, one was written by a celebrated brain surgeon with 30 years-worth of experience and the other by a researcher who had simply studied the subject, which book would you be more inclined to purchase? By

telling the reader about yourself and why you are qualified within your genre, you further cement the idea that this is valid book and worth reading.

- 6) Use quotes. Quotes from respected people within the field of your book are incredibly important, they show to reader that the book is genuine and lend validity to it.
- 7) Profile image, this is not the most important element, but if you do want to add a profile picture make sure it's professionally taken and in a relevant setting. For example, if you have written a business book, your image should be in a relevant business setting wearing the appropriate clothes, if your book is on cooking, then an image of you in the kitchen wear chef's whites would be more apt.

Getting an Agent

If you are trying to get your book published through the more traditional means of an established publishing house, you may find it incredibly hard to get it read by an editor if you're *'going it alone'*. Most publishers rely upon literary agents bringing them manuscripts, these agents will have developed relationships within the publishing world, have specialized within just several specific genres, have their fingers on the pulse of current trends and understand how to best shape a book for an audience.

So, finding and working with a literary agent will give you a massive advantage when publishing your book, it will help in giving a clear path to not only polishing your work to its most professional version, but also with opening doors to the relevant parties who can make it a success.

Understanding you need an agent is one thing, getting one (a good one) is another.

The good news is that agents do in fact need authors, without authors they wouldn't have a job of course, however, most agents get inundated with emails, letters and manuscripts from hundreds of authors every day, so you have a lot of competition even in getting an agent to represent you.

But first, you need to find an agent.

You may or may not already know people within the publishing world, so you might want to ask those you do know if they have any contacts or recommendations. However, if you don't get any luck here, don't worry, there are other ways to find agents

Firstly, you could try several publications which are more dedicated towards the publishing industry, books such as [Jeff Herman's Guide to Book Publishers, Editors and Literary Agents](#), [Writer's Market](#) and/or [Guide to Literary Agents](#) both by Robert Lee Brewer are certainly good places to start.

There are also many websites which will give you the details of agents, sites such <http://aaronline.org/>, <https://www.publishersmarketplace.com/> and also <https://agentquery.com/default.aspx> are three sites which have used by many authors and are certainly worth taking a look at.

Many agents also attend book and literary festivals along with writer's conferences, these are great environments for authors and are well worth going to (even if you're not looking for an agent), however, it should give the chance to meet with an agent or listen to a talk given by one, this information is invaluable.

You can also look in books which are in your own genre, many will have details within their acknowledgments section, some will list their agents.

Social media is another way to find agents, it can also help give an understanding of their personalities and which would fit your style of writing best.

Once you have a list of agents who are relevant to your genre, you need to start reaching out to them.

But first things first, before you reach out to anyone, your book has to be finished and highly polished, if you send a manuscript (or chapters of one) which are incomplete, in need of editing and full of typos, your chance of success will be zero.

So, before you do anything, get your book edited, proofread, and refined to its absolute best.

Check each agent you plan to contact to ensure that you are doing so via their preferred method, for example, if they only accept applications by email, don't then send a 500 page manuscript printed on letter sized paper through the mail.

You should then send a query letter, this needs to be professional and be a one page pitch for you and your book, you'll also need to include a synopsis for your novel which should be no more than one or two pages in length. For non-fiction, these synopses are a little more in-depth and should be more substantial in length.

You should also include a chapter of your book, for fiction it is recommended that you send the first chapter, with nonfiction you can send any.

Please remember that most agents will not accept a full manuscript being sent to them at first, send a query letter with samples, when in doubt, always refer to the agent's own submission guidelines.

Be prepared for rejection, the best authors in the world have had to deal with this, it is normal, however, if you have sent out hundreds of applications/query letters and you're still not getting anything back, you may want to go to your editor (or a new one) and get it reevaluated for any additional revisions it may need.

Getting Reviews for your book

When we want to buy a product these days we always look for reviews to see how others found it, and a book is no different, a great review can work wonders in helping the unsure reader make the decision to purchase your publication and not another.

Reviews themselves can and should be used in several locations too, when most people think of reviews for a book they think of its Amazon's sales page, the gold stars and the comments left by people who have already bought the book. But there are other places to use your reviews and (most importantly) several different ways of getting reviews.

Let's look at how you can get some reviews first.

One – Promote your eBook

Giving your eBook away for free as part of a promotion can be a great way to increase your downloads, the more people who get to read it will eventually lead to an increased chance of reviews. This can work incredibly well if you have a series of books, making the first in the series permanently free will not only help with obtaining reviews, it will also help in selling the other books in the series.

Two – Ask the reader

You will have noticed that in the back of most books you'll see a call to action for the reader themselves, this is a polite request asking the reader to leave a review on line of your book, this works incredibly well in eBooks, here the request gives a link to

the book's sales page, making it incredibly easy for the reader. But even with a printed book, you can still have a page which politely asks the reader to leave a review, it's best to have this just after the final page of the book, once they've read 'The End' the next page asks for their review (include a picture of the book and make it stand out).

Three – Use your website & mailing list

Any serious author these days will have a website (if you don't have one yet, it really is worth considering), your website is your platform to the world and gives you the opportunity to self-promote, inform and engage with your readers. Again, you may need to offer something for free (maybe a chapter of your latest book or even a complete book) in exchange for their email address. Once you build a mailing list you can send out news, promotions and even sneak previews of new books, just make sure you ask for a review in return.

Four – Beta Test your book

Opting for a 'soft-launch' where you only promote the book to a select few is more common than you may realize, the purpose of this is to fine tune the book and get feed-back, some of this feed-back may then be usable for a quote, but it's really important that you get honest feed-back that you can then act on, the most successful films do this with test audiences and you should do the same with test readers.

These test readers could be part of on line authors groups (such as Goodreads), they could be readers who you engage with through your author social media channels or they could be people who are part of your mailing list. This process can take several months to complete, so you should be patient, but it really is worth taking the time to complete, it can really help with the editing, proofing and promotion of your book and really doesn't cost much to do.

Five – Give your book to people of influence

This could be as simple as sending out free copies to book bloggers in return for a review/quote, you may send a copy to someone you admire and has relevance to your subject and genre. The key is in doing some research, if you are going to send your book to a prominent Blog writer or Vlogger, make sure that they actually review books that are in your own chosen genre.

Six – Use Social Media

Engaging with your audience via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other channels is a great way to self-promote and also get to know those who read your work, the main thing to always keep in mind is that it should not just be about promotion, you do need to have a conversation/interaction with your followers, it should be fun and engaging.

When done correctly, social media is a great platform to ask for reviews and promote free (or discounted) books, but again, just don't go overboard with non-stop adverts.

Seven – Using paid services?

Yes, you can buy reviews and there are plenty of people on freelance and independent sites who are more than happy to write one for you. But, you do have to consider the ethics and feedback of what you may be about to buy, some services will simply put your book in front of readers who are happy to leave reviews, this is a little better, but if you have a review which when quoted shows where it came from, then your reader may not trust its validity. Given the choice, it may be better to look for more organic reviews first.

Once you have some reviews, where do you place them?

One – Your book cover

A great review is always worth placing upon the cover design of your book, for most books the quote/s are placed upon the back page, normally above the main blurb, this is so that the reader is hit with it prior to reading anything else. Depending upon the design and available spacing, you may also want to consider placing a small quote upon the front page too, this works really well if it's relatively small and of course punchy/positive (remember, it is a sales tool for your book).

Two – Your Book's Sales Page

When you upload your book to Amazon, it will allow you to add a detailed description about the book itself, in a lot of cases this is where an author will simply copy and paste their book's blurb. It is of course worth taking your time with this page as this does become a sales tool for your book and should be approached with some serious thought, but along with the description you can of course add a quote, adding this just above the description of the book will add some gravitas to your page and help in the book's promotion.

Three – Your social media

A quote will also look great when placed upon the social media banners for your author's profile pages, you'll normally have a banner which has artwork and your book on, you should consider adding a quote to it too, just don't over-crowd the banner.

Four – Your Website

You should definitely have your quotes placed throughout your website, make sure that they stand out as quotes and have them upon all of the relevant pages, in most cases the quote will be in a different style font or placed within a quotation box, the website should also give you more room to publish multiple quotes.

Five – In Print

If you are making any promotional materials such as posters, business cards, bookmarks, flyers, t-shirts and other give-a-ways, make sure you include a good quote within the designs, again, this is another great opportunity to sell your book, so use it.

Advertising your book on Amazon

It's no secret that Amazon is most author's 'go-to' when it come to a platform to sell their books, its reach is massive, and it's trusted by millions of us for our online shopping, so once your book is published and ready for sale on their platform, is there anything else that we can do to increase sales?

Well this is where their own Advertising comes in, you can place ads upon their site to promote your own book, depending upon your budget, you can now give your book a boost and reach more readers that simply uploading and hoping for the best.

One – Check eligibility

You will need to ensure that your book meets their requirements for advertising, they have two policies to consider:

<https://advertising.amazon.com/resources/ad-policy/en/creative-acceptance>

<https://advertising.amazon.com/resources/ad-policy/en/book-ads>

Most of it is obvious, but it is still worth taking the time to go through before you proceed.

Two – Getting your page ready

When customers click on your ad they'll be taken through to a product detail page, here you will need to check to ensure that you have enough detail and that everything is correct too. You should consider a descriptive title along with precise details, use a professional book cover image and ensure that any quotes or claims can be supported.

Three – Creating an Advertising account

First, you'll need to go to your [Amazon Bookshelf](#) and then select the book that you'd like to promote, you'll see a button on the right which says 'Promote and Advertise' click on this.

On the next page you'll see the option for 'Run an Ad Campaign', there's a drop down menu which will allow you to select your chosen country to advertise in, once selected you can continue by clicking on 'Create an ad campaign'

Four – Choosing your ad type

There are two options here, Sponsored products and Lockscreen Ads,

With Sponsored Products you'll be able to advertise your eBook and paperback, these are targeted through keywords and will appear with search results on desktops and mobile devices, Amazon currently recommend this as the best way in getting started with advertising with them.

With Lockscreen Ads you can only advertise your eBook, these ads appear on Kindle e-reader devices and Fire Tablet lockscreens, they are very specific in their targeting but again, are limited to those devices and eBook titles.

Five – Creating your ad

If you select Sponsored Products you'll go through to the next page where you'll set up your campaign, the complete set up guide for this can be found on Amazon's site at the following link:

<https://kdp.amazon.com/help?topicId=G201506330#GKLSYGFS2YD33FER>

Here you'll set up a campaign name, organize a portfolio for your campaigns, set a daily budget for your advertising, set start and end dates and also specify your target keywords.

With the ad format, you can chose to launch a campaign with or without custom copy, custom copy is worth taking the time to create, but please note, at the time of writing, this is only available though the .com version of their website.

Once you have selected the books you want to advertise, you'll move on to entering keywords and bidding. Bidding is where Amazon run auctions to determine which ads they'll show, ones which are selected have to meet Amazon's minimum criteria, you can view the video below which gives details of bids and advertising.

There is also more info on the strategies and set of bidding at their [bidding set up help page](#).

Six – Previewing your ad

Once everything has been set up, you'll be able to review and check that everything is how you want it, take your time and ensure that you're happy with everything before submitting.

Seven – Submitting your ad

Once submitted, your ad will be checked by Amazon within 72 hours, they will check to ensure that the ad meets their requirements. So, before you submit, make sure you check for grammatical errors, that any claims you make about the book are true and that any images you use are appropriate and not offensive to any audience.

Where else to promote your book

Promoting your book can seem a little daunting, where do you start? Who do you use to plug your book? And how much will it cost? The good news is that there are plenty of options available and a wide range of price points to suit most author's needs.

Over the past few years many websites have sprung up which offer platforms to advertise your book to an audience, this is great for both the reader and of course the author who wants to put their book in front of them.

Here we have a list of some of these sites that you should consider, some are free and others charge, it's also worth considering using multiple sites and staggering your promotions so that you always have something out there promoting your work.

One – [BookBub](#)

This is one of the more well-known book promotional websites and is very popular with countless authors. It works by sending out daily emails to its subscribers where it promotes books to them, they send featured deals in this email which you can pay to have your book be within (the featured deals however are expensive, many authors paying thousands of dollars to use, but, it will put your book in front of a massive audience too, and lots of authors have had great results using this).

They also run ads within their website and within the email, these are a lot more reasonable and are very popular with the majority of authors, you can also schedule when the ads will run and set budgets.

Two – [Book Bongo](#)

This service is from free up to \$199.99, their free offer is dependent upon them liking your deal and is essentially them posting it upon their website and social media. Their top package however includes a video to promote your book, this you can then download to use yourself, it gets uploaded to their social media channels, YouTube page and is featured in their weekly mail-out.

Three – [TCK Publishing](#)

You can apply to have your book included within their own book deals newsletter which goes out to over 20,000 readers, they do have stipulations about the quality of the books which they promote (4 star reviews and be on promotion at \$0.99 for the days requested to promote).

Four – [Many Books](#)

They have three packages which are \$29, \$39 and \$79, you can choose to promote your book on their website, newsletter and/or blog, they state that their newsletter has 175,000 active subscribers, they have 500,000+ monthly website views and guarantee 500 downloads from their middle package.

Five – [Free Booksy](#)

Great if you are promoting your book for free, this service covers a broad range of genres and sub-genres too. They feature the books on their homepage, their daily email and promoted upon their Facebook page (which they quote as having 300,000+ fans). Pricing starts from \$30 and varies dependent upon your genre.

Six – [Book Goodies](#)

They have a free option where your book will be posted to their website for six months and also posted upon their social media channels, however, the free option won't get your book included within their newsletter.

Their chargeable advertising currently starts from \$49 and goes up to \$399, this can get you a feature for up to eight weeks on their home page along with inclusion to their email letter and of course social media.

Seven – [Book Gorilla](#)

Pricing here starts from \$40 and varies based upon your book's genre, it's also just for Kindle, having a reach of 350,000 followers on a range of platforms which includes their email and social media, they also give a great breakdown of reach by % (which is very helpful).

Eight – [Author Ad Network](#)

With this service your book will be featured over several book promotion websites for a limited time, your book will also be posted upon their social media channels too (namely Twitter & Facebook), pricing starts from \$129.

Nine – [Digital Book Today](#)

This is where you can add your free Kindle eBook to their list of 'the top 100', updated weekly a regular listing is free (but your book will gradually slide down the page), they also have options from \$30 to featured and stay in the top section of their site for a limited time.

Ten – [Book Lemur](#)

Pricing starts from \$25 and is based around genre, there's also additional fees if your book is not free to your readers (they want to offer free and discounted books to their own subscribers). Currently they have 16,000+ active subscribers and over 8,700 Facebook followers.

20 Further ways to promote your book

Book promotion as a self-publishing author is relentless, if you want to make your book a success (and why wouldn't you?), you will need to keep chipping away at it regularly. The good news is that there are plenty of things that you can do, some may require an investment of funds and others are free, but either way, self-promotion on a consistent basis is the key to success.

So, what can you do to self-promote right now? Here are our top ideas to get you started.

- 1) Advertise on Amazon, it is very easy to do and it gives a great deal of control with regards to how much you spend, you can get your book in front of so many more people and increase sales. You can read more on this with our earlier post on [Advertising with Amazon](#).
- 2) Use social media wisely and don't over promote, the best mix is 80% interesting posts and 20% advertising, engage with others, join in with discussions, use polls, create groups and have fun with it, after all, it should be social.
- 3) Create promotional banners for the top of your social media pages, creating a look across all of the platforms you use online which shows that you are a serious author.
- 4) Create videos, having a YouTube channel where you discuss your genre and tips for authors is a great way to increase your exposure.
- 5) Use Instagram, this site is so popular and so easy to use, but keep the images professional and supportive of what you are trying to achieve as an author.
- 6) Run free promotions for your eBook on Amazon, prior to this make sure you self-promote through social media

and on the many ‘free eBook promotion’ websites that are out there.

- 7) Get reviews, make sure your friends and family get copies and give a review in return, you can also leave a call to action at the back of the book (again, asking for a review if they liked your book), email book bloggers asking them to review it, look for groups on Goodreads to help.
- 8) Run Facebook ads, these are highly targeted and give great control along with reporting.
- 9) Run ads on Twitter, again, they give great control and allow you to reach a specific audience.
- 10) Create your own website, there are many great ‘build-your-own’ website providers such as Weebly and Wix etc. Here you can create a platform for your book and sell directly to your audience.
- 11) Create a blog and update it regularly, WordPress must be the world’s most popular option for this, although if you have your own website you should be able to add a blog too. This is a great way of building an audience and advertising (just remember to keep ads to a min).
- 12) Check out on line forums such as KBoards, here you can interact with other authors and self-promote your book.
- 13) Guest post on other writer’s, publisher’s and genre/industry related blogs, ensure you get in touch first, many websites will welcome great articles, but be polite and courteous if they decline.
- 14) Start your own niche podcast, this can be great if you write within a very specific genre, the world of podcasting is opening up and some authors are making a great income from the advertising that it can bring. But be aware, like publishing a book, it takes time, dedication and work.
- 15) Go to book fairs and trade shows, here you’ll be able to meet with people from the industry and fellow authors, you can make great contacts as well as sell some copies.
- 16) Build a mailing list, make sure you check the current legislation for where you are on doing this correctly, but it is a proven way to connect and self-promote your book.
- 17) Offer something for free in order to get more subscribers

to your mailing list, this may be an earlier book or the first chapter of your new one.

- 18) Include this offer for either a free book or chapter with a link in the front and back of your eBooks, when a viewer clicks on the 'Look Inside' option on Amazon, they may well sign up too.
- 19) Promote your book and any offers on BookBub, make sure you follow their guidelines and submit as often as they allow in order to have a chance of becoming one of their feature deals.
- 20) Create a video/book trailer, admittedly these can be very costly, but there are options with using stock video footage and there are plenty of tools available to edit and produce a great trailer.

IngramSpark

Out of the vast array of publishers for indie authors, Ingramspark is one of the key players that you will (or should) have heard of. Ingramspark is owned by Lightning Source (a company with operations in the US, UK, Europe, and Australia) and was started back in 2013, since then Ingramspark has published well over 7 million books and currently has over 4,000 new books added to it daily, so, it's safe to say that it's big within the self-publishing world.

And when we say big, we mean big, Ingramspark currently has the largest distribution of books in the US, they distribute to over 40,000 retailers and libraries globally along with making your book available to Amazon, Kobo, and B&N, so you could reach a very wide audience using their services.

So, what does it cost to use Ingramspark?

Pricing starts from \$25 per title for eBooks and \$49 per title for print (however, if you currently upload both at the same time it's just \$49), but you will need to purchase your own ISBNs for each edition of your book (something which KDP offers free versions of).

One of the great things about Ingramspark is their options for print, they offer both paperback and hardback, with the hardback choices including case laminate and/or dust jacket, we have also noticed that the actual print and finish quality of each book from Ingramspark is normally very high (when compared with some other print on demand services, their finished product really shines).

How much money will you make from selling with Ingramspark?

Of course, this will depend upon the cost to produce and distribute your book along with any discount you may offer, one good thing is that Ingramspark have a calculator upon their website which enables you to work out your compensation based on page count, trim size, format, price, and discount, although if you compare to KDP, it seems to be slightly more expensive (but then you do have the larger distribution). You can use their calculator [here](#)

Why use Ingramspark?

If you are planning to focus on pushing your book through the more traditional brick-and-mortar bookstores, Ingramspark is a great choice as it has the distribution channels you'll need, if you also want to publish in hardback, it has a great choice of print options available too.

However, if you plan to focus predominantly on Amazon, then KDP would be your better option (paperback and eBook only), as you would be going directly with Amazon themselves, you'll find the fees to distribute would be lower and it also seems that Amazon give preference to their own KDP books first (within Amazon's sales algorithms).

Ingramspark are still a great choice for authors and will give you access to huge distribution channels, which let's face it, is why you are publishing in the first place, you want people to buy your book, but it is also worth considering the use of Amazon's KDP in tandem with Ingramspark, yes you will need to buy ISBNs, but it will help get your book in front of as many people as you can.

Kindle Direct Publishing

For many authors the easiest way to self-publish is via KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing), being Amazon's publishing wing, first launched in 2007, KDP has grown rapidly and allows an author to publish both eBook and paperback from one place (they have recently been trialling hardback books with a beta service aimed at selected authors, so we'll have to wait and see if this becomes a standard feature of their current service).

You can also publish quite a wide variety of content via their service, publications such as the obvious fiction and nonfiction, but also book series, comics, cookbooks, journals, poetry books, and textbooks, are some of the other books published.

Having an account with KDP is free and uploading your book to publish with them is free too, the charges/cost to publish comes when you actually sell a copy of your book, carrying on with the free stuff, they also offer a free ISBN (however, the ISBN will lock them in as the publisher and you can only use it on their platform, so if you want to publish via Ingramspark or another POD service, you'll need a new ISBN).

Once you have an account with Kindle Direct Publishing, it's fairly straight forward to upload both your eBook and Paperback ready for publishing, they accept Word documents but recommend that you upload your manuscript for print as a PDF, here are [KDP's guidelines](#) on how to do this correctly.

For eBooks, their preferred format was in MOBI, however, this has recently changed and now they only accept MOBI for fixed (non-reflowable) eBooks. Their preferred format is EPUB (which

is great, as virtually every other ePublisher uses this) along with Word doc/docx and their own KPF format (Kindle Create). [Kindle create](#) is Amazon's own free to download software which you can use to format your own eBook ready to upload to KDP, having used it in the past, it is relatively straightforward and great if you are on a budget.

So how much do you stand to earn from using Kindle Direct Publishing?

The royalties do vary between eBook and Paperback, for eBook the options you have are either 35% or 70%, each option does come with its own stipulation, so at first you may think of opting for the 70% royalty, but there are restrictions on [minimum and maximum pricing](#) and the book must be enrolled in Amazon's KDP Select. For the 35% royalty there are fewer restrictions and the entry price point for your book is lower (which is great for promotions).

The royalties for paperback books are fixed at 60%, the royalty is taken from your list price of the book and then printing costs are deducted from it, however, if you enable [Expanded Distribution](#) then the royalty drops to 40%.

KDP Select, what is it and do I need it?

KDP Select gives Amazon the exclusive rights to sell your eBook, this means that your eBook will only be available to purchase through their platform alone. So why would you want to do this? Well, if you want the 70% royalties this could be the option for you (with Kindle being the number one seller of eBooks, you still have a great distribution even if you go exclusively with KDP).

KDP Select locks your eBook in for a minimum of 90 days, so after this period you can opt back out and use another platform to publish your eBook through.

What about Expanded Distribution?

This makes your printed book available to booksellers, distributors, and libraries, this doesn't mean that your book will end up in every bookstore on every street corner, it means that these channels can order your book should they wish to carry it. If your book starts selling well and you are promoting it to a large audience, this could be a great option to increase its reach. However, there are a few more stipulations about what is excepted and what isn't, for full details take a look at the information on [Expanded Distribution here](#).

Kindle Direct Publishing is a great way to get your book published (especially if you are on a budget), their service is quite easy to use and their guides/services to help authors are very useful too, being that they are part of Amazon you know that they are certainly here to stay and for many, they're a great option to get your book published.

Draft 2 Digital

You will have certainly considered using the likes of KDP, IngramSpark or Lulu to print and distribute your book, but have you also considered Draft2Digital as an option for your book?

D2D are a print on demand company that have been in operation since 2012 and are based out of Oklahoma City, and like many of the other operators they distribute to the major channels you'd expect from a publishing service, channels such as:

Amazon, Apple Books, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Tolino, OverDrive, Bibliotheca, Scribe, Baker & Taylor, Hoopla, Vivlio and Borrow-Box.

The fees for Draft2Digital are taken as a percentage of around 10% from each book you sell with stores taking around 30% so you keep around 60% for each eBook, for printed books they state that each book makes around 45% of the list price minus the base printing cost, but there are no upfront charges for their services, and they only get paid if you sell a book.

They offer free templates to help you format your book ready for print and eBook, here they state that even if you don't publish your book with them, you can keep the interior files for your manuscript.

A great feature about their operation is their customer service, as many authors know, getting in touch with some of the bigger POD services can be really tough, D2D offer US based customer support phone lines making it easier to talk to a human with any issues.

Like KDP they offer a free ISBN for your book, but this will show D2D as the vendor with the ISBN recording agency, and it also restricts the use of this specific ISBN to just D2D (so you would not be able to publish your book via KDP using their ISBN), however, you can of course use your own ISBN if you choose to purchase them separately and use without this restriction.

So, what print sizes do they currently offer? Well, they are a little restrictive in that regard and currently only print in perfect bound paperback books, however, the sizes they print books at are for the most common trim sizes: 5x8', 5.25x8.5', 5.5x8.5", 6x9", 7.5x9.25" and 8.5x11" which will cover most author's needs.

They also offer a service called Books2Read, this is a website aimed at helping readers find their next great read, it keeps them up to date with what their favorite author is doing, discover new books and where to purchase the book. This along with a universal book link which takes anyone who clicks it to a Books2Read landing page showing you exactly where you can buy copies of that specific book.

So, although Draft2Digital may not be the biggest print on demand publishing service on the block they do offer some great options for authors, they very much pride themselves in being an indie company which looks after their authors and delivers on customer service. Their choice of print sizes and formats is smaller than others, but without any upfront fees, they are certainly worth consideration.

Lulu

So, who are they? Well, founded by Bob Young in 2002, Lulu is an on line print-on-demand, distribution and self-publishing service, currently based in North Carolina. They have published millions of titles and offer authors a wide range of formats for their books.

Lulu offer several services to authors:

[Lulu.com](https://www.lulu.com)

This is for print on demand self-publishing and is free to use, there are no minimum orders, you sell your book via Lulu's own [bookstore](#) and their global distribution channels (which include Amazon, Ingram and Barnes & Noble), you also retain 80% of your book's **gross** profit.

Currently this service offers a free ISBN (for projects with global distribution, sold through Lulu.com, Direct and print API), Lulu.com also works if you just want to publish as an eBook only.

[Lulu Direct](#)

This is for those who are selling their own book themselves, Lulu have created an app which will work with your Shopify website, so you can make order fulfillment a great deal easier.

The service is free to use, customer data will still be retained by you. You can have your own labeling and there's no inventory management to worry about. It's great if you are starting your own publishing imprint and want to sell your book (or series of books) away from just Amazon via your own Shopify website.

Lulu API

Aimed at publishers or businesses that want to sell their own books via their own websites, this service is free to use (and like Lulu Direct) you retain your customer details, don't have to deal with inventory and keep 100% of the **profits**.

One thing about Lulu is that they offer some great options for formats of printed books/products, from standard paperbacks to hardcovers (casewrap and/or dust jacket) to photo books, comic books, magazines, year books and of course eBooks.

They also offer a decent range of trim sizes, starting at 4.25in x 6.875in (Pocket Book) and going up to 11in x 8.5in (Calendar), along with the sizes, you'll have options for perfect bound, coil bound and saddle stitch (format dependent of course).

The interiors give you the options you would expect, standard B&W and premium B&W, the same goes with their color interiors, the premium versions being better suited for books with higher res and larger images within them. They offer paper stocks of 60# cream, 60# white, 80# white and 100# white, again, these are format dependent.

Distribution with Lulu

Lulu's distribution connects your book for print to Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Ingram, your eBook is distributed to Amazon, Apple, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Scribd, Google, and Libri. As you can see, Lulu seems to connect you with the major outlets where you would expect to see your title.

Lulu does have stipulations as to what books can be part of their global distribution, so it is well worth taking a look at their [guide](#) to ensure your book will be fine.

Bulk buying with Lulu

If you want to order lots of copies of your book, Lulu does currently offer [discounts](#) for bulk buying, if you're purchasing between 100 to 499 copies you'll get 5% off, from 500 to 999 copies 10% off and over 1000 copies you'll receive 15% off of the price.

Smashwords

Smashwords was founded back in 2008 by Mark Coker, after failing to publish his own book, he wanted to create a platform which would give indie authors more control (and freedom) when it came to getting their own work published. Since then Smashwords has grown from just a handful of authors to hundreds of thousands of authors, it's even had some of its titles go on to become New York Times and USA Today best sellers, not bad.

The main thing you will notice if you consider using Smashwords is that they just publish eBooks, (so if you are looking to publish in print then you will want to look elsewhere), their books can be read using online eReaders or downloaded to you own device such as a Kindle, Nook and iPhone (along with other devices too).

They do distribute to Apple books, their website states that this is to 51 countries, B&N, Kobo, some public libraries (via OverDrive), Scribd, Libri, Gardners, Baker & Taylor and of course their own Smashwords library too.

Smashwords also offers some free services for their authors, things such as ISBNs, an author profile page, eBook conversion from a Word document, unlimited updates to your book and its meta data, sales reporting, and a host of marketing tools.

How much will it cost?

Currently Smashwords is free to use, they pride themselves on having no hidden fees, listing fees, setup or conversion fees (they make their money from a commission from each sale of your book, which is fair enough).

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Your book will be published via Smashwords through a non-exclusive license, this means that you retain all of the ownership rights to your book and are free to publish your book elsewhere if you want to.

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Smashwords also has their '[Smart Author Podcast](#)' which gives you a step by step guide to publishing and marketing your book, which is well worth a listen (especially if you're a new author).

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Ultimately this is of course up to you, also, you may want to check the exclusivity of anywhere else that you may be published currently (or want to publish in the future, just because Smashwords is non-exclusive doesn't mean that other publishers

are not). However, they are free to use, offer great returns on sales and have grown well over the past few years since 2008, their distribution is good too. So with this in mind, you may want to give strong consideration to Smashwords for your eBook.

Barnes & Nobel

In the publishing world, Barnes & Noble is a big name that most people will have heard of, and at some point, visited one of their brick & mortar stores or browsed their website at least. But would you consider self publishing with them too?

Well, they have offered the service for self-publishing authors for many years now, and being one of the big players they have a huge customer base and distribution channels for publishing, so many authors have successfully launched their book using their service.

One element that B&N shouts about to self publishing authors is their royalties, currently they offer up to 70% royalties on eBooks with their margin being 30%, and when you look at printed books, the royalties are 55%, the example B&N offer is as follows:

A printed book with a retail price of \$13.99 – Retail & Distribution cost of \$6.30 = \$7.69 (which is your 55%) the minus their printing costs of \$4.57 = \$3.12 (net author royalties).

There are also no upfront fees charged by B&N and they payout royalties every 30 days.

Many authors who have published via Barnes & Noble seem to be impressed with the print quality of their books, the general consensus is that the finish of each book is better than that of KDP for example, however, their turnaround time for excepting your book does tend to be a lot slower than KDP.

But like the other big print on demand publishers, B&N do offer the option of printing your book as a paperback, Hardback case wrap and/or dust jacket, with the option of 50lb white/cream or 70lb white paper stock for the interior.

Publishing via B&N will make your book available from their website and Nook eReaders, it will also be available to order within their stores too (although seeing a printed copy of your book actually upon a shelf inside will be less likely).

However, if you do publish with them, it will make your book ineligible for options such as Amazon's KDP select.

Barnes & Noble self publishing do offer marketing solutions for their authors, highlighting emerging and established authors in their monthly collections online, their emailed newsletters and promotional offers which are exclusive to their readers.

Pros of publishing via Barnes & Noble:

- Free to set up
- Royalties of 70% eBook and 55% Print
- Great print quality for your paperback or hardback
- Promotional services for your book
- Royalties paid 30 days
- Sales tracking and reports

Cons:

- You won't be able to sign up for KDP select
- Many readers first port of call for purchasing a book is Amazon,
so why not be exclusive to them?
- Authors have complained about the lack of support from B&N

Overall, B&N is still worth considering, we've worked with authors who publish via several POD services and forego

the exclusive options given when you lock into just the one publisher, it's likely that you won't see your book upon the shelf of your local store, but with the free set up, 55% & 70%, maybe you should have a look all the same?

Publishing as just an eBook

It has never been easier than it is today when it comes to self-publishing your book, and this is especially the case when it comes to eBooks, they're still a highly popular way to reach an audience and in most cases more flexible when it comes to promotions (and this can really help in raising awareness along with promoting your other titles).

The good thing is that there are plenty of places (other than the key players) where you can self-publish your eBook, this gives you more choice and flexibility, which can only be a good thing. Here we have some eBook publishers that you may or may not know about.

[KDP](#)

No surprises that KDP are on this list, being Amazon's publishing wing they offer a free to use service which gives authors up to 70% royalties on their book sales, their service is easy to use, popular and of course works seamlessly with Kindle and Amazon.

[Ingram Spark](#)

One of the other most popular print on demand publishers used by indie authors, they have great distribution (Amazon, Apple, Kobo and Barnes & Noble) and compatible for pretty much every eReader available, their prices start from \$25 per title.

[Nook Press](#)

Nook (if you don't already know) is the eBook service and device from Barnes & Noble, their service is currently free to use and works beautifully with their Nook eReaders and on any device that has the free Nook app

[iBooks](#)

This service is from Apple and makes your eBook available through their iBooks Store, if you have a Mac then you can simply download the iBooks Author app where you can edit and prepare your book for their platform.

[Google Play – Books Partner Center](#)

Google's eBook publishing service allows your book to be available on Android devices and from Google books, their website allows you to upload your work and set which countries you want to sell to (currently from a list of just over 50), you can of course set your own prices too.

[Smashwords](#)

A great service which allows you to sell your eBook through a variety of other platforms along with their own Smashwords store, they currently distribute through Apple Books, B&N, Kobo and Scribd, offering 80% commission from sales through their own store and 60% commission from sales in the others.

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They currently sell their books through Lulu, Amazon, B&N and even Ingram, free to set up and they have some great training videos and downloads to help with the process

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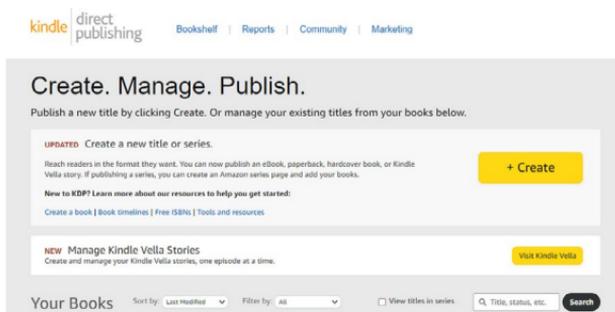
How to upload your book to KDP

One of the most popular print on demand services today is KDP, being part of Amazon it has a massive distribution and free to upload your book to, which is another reason why so many indie authors chose Kindle Direct Publishing.

However, a common question we get asked is, ‘how do I upload my book to KDP?’, well it’s easier than you may think (and if you’ve done it before, you’ll agree, however, if you haven’t yet uploaded your book, here’s a quick guide which you may find helpful.

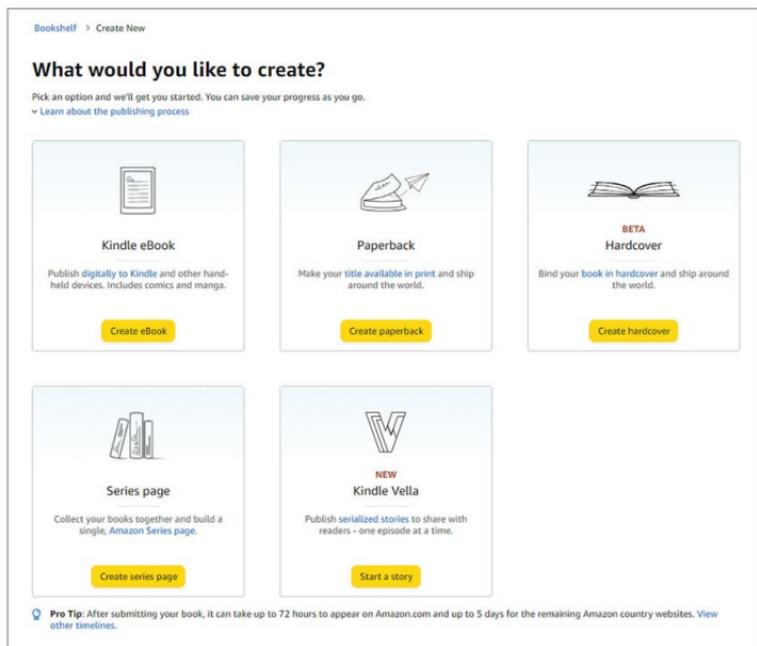
First, go to [KDP](#) and create your own account, it’s free and doesn’t take long to get up and running.

Once you have an account, each time you log in you’ll arrive at the ‘Bookshelf’ page, here you can create your first book and it will also show you the titles of books which you have already published via KDP.



To create a book, click on the +Create yellow button.

The next page will ask what type of book you are creating, for this example we'll look at a paperback, so click on the 'Create Paperback' button.



Now you'll get to the part where you'll enter some details about the book itself.

Paperback Details 1 In Progress...	Paperback Content 1 Not Started...	Paperback Rights & Pricing 1 Not Started...
Language Choose your paperback's primary language (the language in which the book was written). Learn more about languages supported for paperbacks. <input type="text" value="English"/>		
Book Title Enter your title as it appears on the book cover. This field cannot be changed after your book is published. Learn more about book titles. Book Title <input type="text"/> Subtitle (Optional) <input type="text"/>		
Series If your book is part of a series, add series details so readers can easily find the titles on a single detail page. (Optional) Learn more Add your title to an existing series or create a new one. Linked formats for this title will be automatically added to the series once setup is complete. <input type="button" value="Add series details"/>		

Language

The first question it asks is about the language of the book, KDP supports 37 different languages for print and a further 7 for eBook alone, you can see the full list [here](#).

Book Title

Next it will ask for the title and subtitle of the book, KDP does have [guidelines](#) on what can and can't be used for titles, so it is worth taking note prior to settling on a title.

Series

The third option is for a series of books, you don't have to have the series complete to select this, it can help with readers finding your book, so if you are publishing a series, this should be selected (you can see more on series with KDP [here](#)).

The screenshot shows a portion of the Amazon KDP book creation interface. It is divided into four main sections:

- Edition Number:** Includes a sub-header "You can provide an edition number if this title is a new edition of an existing book. What counts as a new edition? ^" and a text input field labeled "Edition number (Optional)".
- Author:** Includes a sub-header "Enter the primary author or contributor. Pen names are allowed. Additional authors can be added in the Contributors field. This field cannot be changed after your book is published. Learn more about authorship." and a section titled "Primary Author or Contributor" with five text input fields: "Prefix", "First name", "Middle name", "Last name", and "Suffix".
- Contributors:** Includes a sub-header "If others contributed to your book, you can add them and they'll be listed on the Amazon product detail page. For multiple authors, they'll appear in the same sequence as you add them below." and a section titled "Contributors (Optional)" with a dropdown menu labeled "Author", five text input fields for "Prefix", "First name", "Middle name", "Last name", and "Suffix", a "Remove" button, and an "Add Another" button.
- Description:** Includes a sub-header "Summarize your book. This will be your product description on Amazon, so customers can learn more about your book. How do I format the description? ^" and a rich text editor with a toolbar containing icons for Bold (B), Italic (I), Underline (U), Bulleted List, Numbered List, and a "Format" dropdown, along with a "Source" button.

Edition Number

Scrolling further down the page and you'll come to the edition number, so what is an edition number? KDP lists it as follows:

An edition is a particular version of a book. The edition number tells readers whether the book is an original version or an updated

version. If this is the first time you have published this book, enter the numeral 1. If the book was previously published and the version you are publishing contains significant changes, enter the numeral 2 (and so on).

Author

Next, you'll enter the Author details (note, this cannot be changed once you have published the book)

Contributors

Under the author is the box for contributors, this gives you options for adding editors, illustrators, forewords, and you can add to this (let people know who designed your book cover).

Description

The Book Description box is well worth taking your time with, here you'll add a description of the book that Amazon shoppers will read to learn more about it, so it needs to be captivating and focused on your potential reader.

KDP offer [a guide on how to write a book description](#), it's well worth checking out before your start, so if you need time, go to the bottom of the page and click on the 'Save as Draft' button, you can then come back and finish off once you are happy with your book's description.

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Categories

Choose up to two browse categories. Why are categories important? ▾

Large print. What is large print? ▾

Adult Content

Does this book contain language, situations, or images inappropriate for children under 18 years of age?

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 Yes

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Here you have two options for your book, the first is that you own the copyright and hold the necessary publishing rights (as KDP put it: Choose this option if your book is under copyright and you hold the necessary rights for the content being published).

And the second is that your book is Public Domain work, (as KDP put it: Select this option if you are publishing a public domain book. Keep in mind that the duration of copyright varies between countries/regions. So, if your book is in the public domain in one country/region but not another, you must identify your territory rights accordingly.) You can find out more from KDP's site [here](#)

Keywords

Keywords are what will help readers find your book, so it is well worth taking your time to get these right, take a look at page 100 in this book which gives details on how to select the right ones.

Categories

You can currently choose two categories for your book, again, this will help readers find your book, so take your time and select the most appropriate ones for your publication.

Adult Content

Here you will select whether your book is appropriate for people under or over the age of 18.

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Publication Date Enter the date on which your book was first published. Leave this blank if you are publishing your book for the first time. How is my book's publication date determined? ▾

Publication Date (Optional)

Your "Live on Amazon" date will be used

Print Options The default options selected below are based on the most common selections. How will printing cost be calculated? ▾

Ink and Paper Type
What ink and paper types does KDP support? ▾

Black & white interior with cream paper
Black & white interior with white paper
Standard color interior with white paper



Print ISBN

Here you can either upload your own ISBN or use one of KDP's free ISBNs, now there are pros and cons to using either, KDP have an article listing everything you may want to know [here](#), so, take your time to decide prior to moving forward.

Publication Date

If you are publishing for the first time many authors will leave this blank, or if you are planning a future launch, you can select the date in this box, KDP have this to say about publication dates:

Your publication date is the date on which your book was first published. You cannot change it after publishing your title. If you leave

this blank, KDP will automatically use the date on which your book goes live (i.e. it is available for sale) on Amazon.

Print Options

Again, another important section for setting up your book, here you'll let KDP know the size, paper choice and trim selection for your book.

Ink and Paper type - KDP books can be printed in black and white, standard color, or premium color. Standard Color offers a good balance across price and quality, but is not available in the Japan and Australia marketplaces. Premium color provides a more vibrant, crisp color. You can find out more about Paper Type [here](#).

Print Options

The default options selected below are based on the most common selections. How will printing cost be calculated? ▾

Ink and Paper Type

What ink and paper types does KDP support? ▾

Black & white interior with cream paper
Black & white interior with white paper
Standard color interior with white paper
Premium color interior with white paper



Black & white interior with white paper

- Typical for nonfiction
- Paper weight: 55 pound, 90 grams per square meter

i You cannot change your interior & paper type after your book has been published.

Trim Size

What is a trim size? ▾

5 x 8 in 12.7 x 20.32 cm	Select a different size
------------------------------------	-------------------------

i You can not change your trim size once your book has been published

Bleed Settings

What are bleed settings? ▾

No Bleed	Bleed (PDF only)
-----------------	------------------

Trim Size – This is the size of the book once it's been printed

and cut to size.

Bleed Settings – This is an area (normally 0.125in) on the outer edges of the book which is trimmed off when the book is cut to size, these areas are not usually required for books which just have text alone, but where you have graphics/art/images which go to the edges of the page, you normally extend them so that when the book is cut, you don't end up with white lines along the outer edges. You can find out more about bleeds [here](#).

Paperback cover finish
What is a cover finish? -

Matte Glossy

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In a time when social distancing is the new norm and fear is all over the news, we all need some comic relief to take our minds away from the stress of the current situation.

Stop Buying All The Toilet Paper takes a comedic and ridiculous look at how a complete idiot would make their way through social distancing. Filled with Top Ten lists on making the most of the situation, this hilarious book tries to see the light when we need it the most.



STOP BUYING ALL THE TOILET PAPER

A complete idiot's way of getting through Social Distancing



D. ROBERTS

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Territories Select the territories for which you hold distribution rights. Learn more about distribution rights.

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Pricing, royalty, and distribution Enter the list price you'd like to sell your book for. Your book will be distributed in the marketplaces listed. You also have the option to make your book available to bookstores and other distributors, reaching readers beyond Amazon. How does pricing and royalties work?

Marketplace ▾	List Price ▾	Printing ▾	Amazon ▾		Expanded Distribution ▾	
			Rate ▾	Royalty ▾	Rate ▾	Royalty ▾
Amazon.com	\$ 5.99 USD Min. \$5.38, Max. \$250.00 ▾ Base all marketplaces on this price	\$2.15	60%	\$1.20	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 40%	\$0.09
Amazon.co.uk	£ 4.58 GBP Min. £2.85, Max. £250.00 ▾ Based on Amazon.com	£1.70	60%	£1.05	<input type="checkbox"/> 40%	£0.13
Amazon.de	€ 5.39 EUR Min. €5.17, Max. €250.00 ▾ Based on Amazon.com	€5.77 incl. DE VAT €1.90	60%	€1.33	Not offered in this marketplace	
Amazon.fr	€ 5.39 EUR Min. €5.17, Max. €250.00 ▾	€5.69 incl. FR VAT €1.90	60%	€1.33	Not offered in this marketplace	

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Select where you have the rights to distribute your book, you can choose either worldwide or individual territories, you can find out more from [KDP about Distribution Rights here](#)

Primary Marketplace

Select where you expect the majority of your book sales to be from.

Pricing, Royalty and Distribution

Here you'll select the price of your book for where it's being sold

and the royalties you will get in return, KDP have two options for royalties of either 35% or 70%, KDP also have a useful [guide on pricing](#) that is worth taking a look at. It is also worth looking at what other books within your genre are doing with regards to price, getting that sweet spot for price can sometimes feel a little trial and error when first publishing, so do your research first.

Amazon.se	kr 101.46 Min. kr32.12, Max. kr2500.00~ Based on Amazon.com	SEK	kr107.55 incl. SE VAT	kr19.27	60%	kr41.61	Not offered in this marketplace
Amazon.co.jp	¥ 1282 Min. ¥667, Max. ¥30000~ Based on Amazon.com	JPY	¥1410 incl. JP VAT	¥400	60%	¥369	Not offered in this marketplace
Amazon.ca	\$ 13.03 Min. \$4.70, Max. \$350.00~ Based on Amazon.com	CAD	\$2.82		60%	\$5.00	Not offered in this marketplace
Amazon.com.au	\$ 14.57 Min. \$7.48, Max. \$350.00~ Based on Amazon.com	AUD	\$16.03 incl. AU GST	\$4.49	60%	\$4.25	Not offered in this marketplace

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Finally

Once you are happy with everything, click on the yellow button ‘Publish your paperback book’.

This will take you back to the bookshelf page and let you know that your book is in review with KDP, this process normally takes around 72 hours (or less), KDP usually emails you to let you know once it’s live, but it’s worth logging back in and checking.

Publishing as an Audio Book

It's become very clear to see that the trend for publishing your book in audio book format is gaining momentum, with global sales of audio books increasing in 2017 by 22.7% (in 2016 their sales had increased on the prior year by 21.5%), it's obvious that there is an opportunity for the author and/or publishing house.

The statistics of these sales are quite interesting too, they show that 54% of listeners are under the age of 45 and tend to listen to an average of at least 15 audio books per year, they were also reading a small amount of physical books each year too (great news for the author). The most popular genres being Mysteries, Thrillers, Suspense, Sci-Fi and Romance.

So, publishing in audio book format makes complete sense for most authors, it enables you to reach a growing audience who is also happy to buy and read physical books, as well as consume more audio books than most read in an average year.

What is also great about the audio book is that there are less of them than printed books, which means you have less competition, this for the indie author is a great news.

Right now this format is still something which many self-publishing authors dismiss, their objections being around how to actually create one, most people won't have the time or inclination to read the book themselves and won't know how to technically create the audio format either.

If you are a little more tech-savvy then you can of course record yourself reading the book, for some listeners this makes the whole

experience of your book far more personal, this can work very well for non-fiction but can be harder for books with a large volume of dialogue.

The downside to recording the book yourself is that unless it's recorded to perfection it can come across as slightly cheap and in the worst case unprofessional.

But there are services available which can do all of this for you, the most popular one being from Amazon called ACX, here you can get everything you need to turn your book into an audio and for far less than you might expect.

The time frame to record your book will vary depending upon the voice artist who is reading your book, ACX give an average of 9,300 words per hour, this means that a 300 page book could take between 9 – 11hrs to actually read, on top of this will be the edits and engineering of your book, so you may wait a couple of weeks before you have your completed audio ready for publication.

As we mentioned earlier, this format is currently still growing at a very fast pace, lots of the big-name authors and their publishing houses have fully embraced audio books and now self-publishing authors are doing the same. It seems to be the same position publishing was in when eBooks first came out, the early adopters run with the format and technology first, then others follow.

There are certainly plenty of opportunities for the indie author in this space, some great services to get you up and running and a market place to sell to, if you are thinking about converting your book to audio maybe now is the time.

Consistent Branding for Authors

Most authors understand that to reach as many readers as possible (and especially now with social distancing) you must embrace the various channels available to you on line. Social media is of course key and will be the first line of attack for lots of authors, but this will be followed by a website, blog, YouTube/steaming channel and you can even look at starting your own Podcast (it's easier than you may think).

With these multiple avenues to reach readers you must show continuity, it looks unprofessional if your Twitter page has a different profile image and banner to that of your Facebook page and/website, both should match, the same goes for your other social media channels and complete digital footprint.

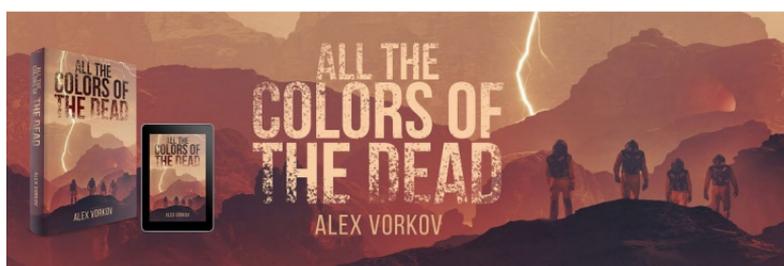
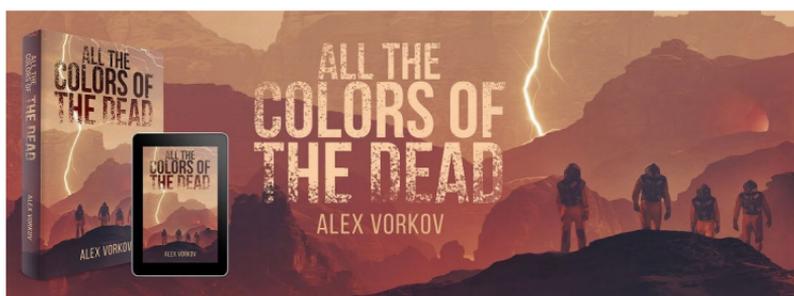
As a design team we create both book covers and promotional designs for many authors and publishers, and what we are seeing is a huge increase in authors taking a professional stand with regards to the way that they are represented on line. More and more authors want to be seen in the same light as the big names within the industry, ensuring that they are taken just as seriously in a very crowded marketplace.

More self-published authors understand that to become successful when publishing a book, it takes more than just luck, it takes planning, hard work and dedication. Having a consistent image for your book and for you as an author is a big part of selling both to your audience.

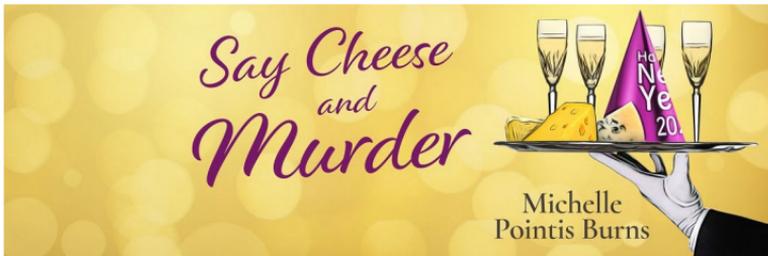
The first thing that you may want to consider are the banners for your social media channels, the most popular pages will be

Facebook and Twitter, the dimensions do change from time to time and it's always worth checking with the respective channels to ensure that your banner is sized correctly. But you should take the artwork from your cover and theme the banners accordingly.

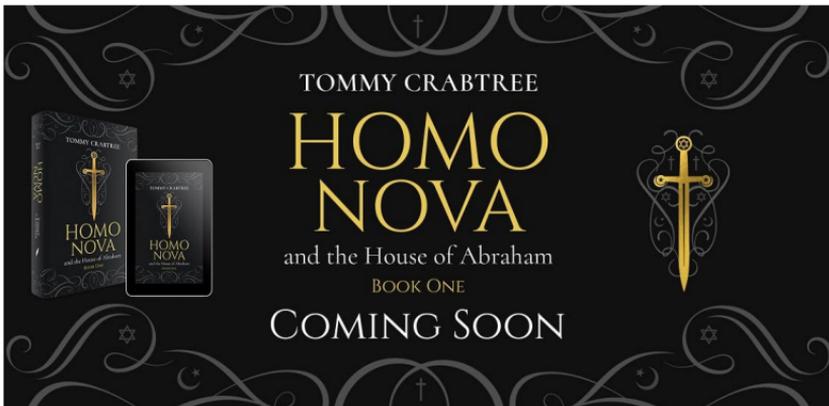
If you look at the example below, you can see that the banners for both Twitter and Facebook tie in very nicely to the book cover design, in this case you also see a 3D image of the book (which again shows consistency).



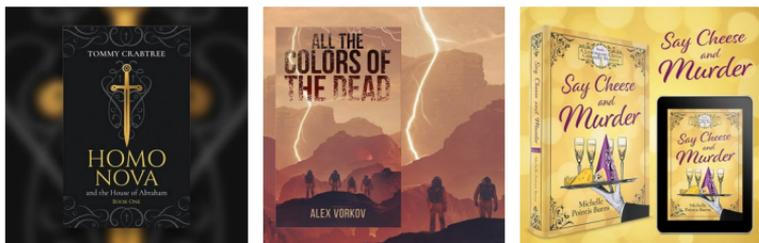
In the next example for Twitter and Facebook, the artwork from the front page of the book cover has been worked into the banner designs, it doesn't have the image of the book, but it gives the reader everything they need to make the connection and see that the author has a professional page.



These next designs show a banner that you would use in either a website or when advertising the book through social media etc. it clearly represents the book and ties into the social media pages, again, this gives a clear and professional image to your reader.



The next three images show Instagram posts for the same three books, as before, they all clearly tie into the other platforms as well as the book covers.



For the website there are GIFS and banners (again, these many vary in size depending upon your website) they key is that they represent the book and clearly show continuity between your social media channels and book.

Paying attention to these elements when building your brand as an author is really important, to be successful in what is essentially a small business takes time, but also a professional and suitable image that you present to your readers.

Courses for authors

Improving your skill set when needed is a great use of your time and resources, it helps you to level up and become a more efficient and productive author/writer. But like most of us, you won't necessarily know too many world-class experts within the industry, so enrolling in an on line masterclass is the best option.

And luckily enough, there are plenty of great course for every writer to choose from.

Here are Five course providers that you should be aware of.

One - [Masterclass](#)

Here you can learn from writers such as David Sedaris, Shonda Rhimes, Malcolm Gladwell, James Patterson, Margaret Atwood and many more. This streaming platform gives you access to hundreds of hours of videos from the very best in writing (and many other fields too), the annual cost for membership is \$180 and gives you access to the videos and downloadable workbooks.

Two – [Udemy](#)

Udemy is a large on line course provider which has over 155,000 courses for you to choose from, its selection for writers and creatives is huge and offers training in everything from creative

writing to how to market and sell your book. Udemy has regular sales on its courses and offers prices from free upwards.

Three – [ProWritingAid Academy](#)

This academy gives self-paced courses along with live training workshops (these take place at least twice a month), along with this there are 30 day writing challenges and writing exercise daily. They have a selection of expert courses tailored towards writers and authors, most of which are \$199.

Four – [Mark Dawson](#)

Mark Dawson's Self-Publishing formula is well known within the writing world and trusted by countless authors, on offer are lots of courses specifically created for authors who want to be successful within the publishing world, and for this reason it tends to be more expensive than most other course, however, the feedback from most who enroll is superb and what you gain from taking the course outweighs the price (do keep in mind that the course open only several times a year, so this is one to keep an eye on).

Five – [Six Figure author coach](#)

Created by Rebecca Hamilton, these courses have helped countless writers achieve their dream of becoming not just full-time authors but authors earning thousands every month (hence the website's name). The site offers a wide range of courses with prices ranging from \$199 to \$4997 (they do offer monthly payment plans too).

Organizing an author website

You'll have a good understanding of just how much work goes in to publishing and then promoting your book, recent reports also show us that self-publishing has increased year on year, and there are now 2,000 plus books being self-published each an every day in the USA alone.

As an author you will find yourself in a very crowded market place (and one that continues to grow), so marketing your book and having a platform to reach a larger audience has never been so important.

The platforms that the majority of authors will initially use will of course be within social media, creating pages through Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram are most author's first steps, the great thing is that they are free to set up, they're established (as in, most people will have access to these platforms and know how to navigate them) and they have some great options to promote and use paid advertising.

But social media should not be your only tool when it comes to promotion, having a presence upon a platform that you can control to a greater level and is completely branded to match your books and you as an author is crucial. It shows that you are a serious author and that your book should be viewed in the same light as those from the bigger publishing houses.

Remember, these big-name books are still your competition, if your branding/theme/design of your book and its advertising looks cheap and poorly made, people *will* make the assumption that the content of your book is just the same.

Of course, these big-name authors all have websites and before you go off and start yours it's worth checking out their sites first. Stick to the authors who you admire and preferably are within the same genre that your book is written in. A couple of hours research first will give you a good idea as to the standard your website will be judged against.

Okay, once you have viewed several professional author's sites you may think to yourself that creating a website that looks that good is out of your skill set, or that you don't know how to write code and wouldn't know where to begin, or that you may not have the budget to pay a designer and web developer to build a website for you. Don't panic! There is a way you can get a great website and not have to pay a fortune, hire a developer or learn how to code.

There are plenty of build your own website services available now which take the hassle out of creating a website, these tend to be based on using pre-designed templates where you drag and drop elements into the page to personalize to your own taste. They are incredibly easy to use, cheap, reliable and enable you to have a professional looking website with a domain name unique to you. What's more, you can also have an email address which is just as professional (not the usual *yourname@gmail.com*).

Your website will give you the option to engage deeper with your readers, you can promote offers, downloads and events, it will give you the opportunity to host your blog and also give another way for your readers to contact you (should you wish), your website should be a platform to promote, inform and engage, all of this within a professional environment which highlights you as a professional author.

So, the next step is looking for a service to build your website, here are three of the most popular website building services that you may want to take a look at first.

- 1) [Squarespace](#) – A very well-designed interface for the user with some great themes and templates. Pricing starts at \$12 for their personal website plan and goes to \$18 with their business plan (this gives more options for the user and allows you to sell products, which you may want to consider if you plan to sell your book directly).
- 2) [Weebly](#) – An incredibly easy to use platform with some beautiful themes and templates for the user. Pricing starts at \$12 for their Pro package and then goes to \$25 for their business package, this offers loads in the way of marketing and selling goods on line (again, great if you plan to sell your book directly).
- 3) [Wix](#) – Intuitive site building service which offers lots of templates for the user, straight forward to use and very popular. The prices start from free but uses one of their own domain names (not really what you'll want for your website), their regular packages start from \$11 and go up to \$29.

How to select keywords for Amazon

We all know that KDP Publishing is one of the most popular ways to bring your book to market and upon one of the largest online retail platforms (especially for books), add to this it's cost-effective publishing model and it is easy to see why so many authors use KDP.

However, with so many authors publishing this way, the competition to get your book in front of a reader can be a challenge, so, getting it set up upon your KDP bookshelf from day one is crucial.

Amazon place weight upon their keywords and apart from factors such as sales history and their 'best sellers rank', keywords will play a vital role in getting your book in front of a searching customer.

So, first of all, where do you add keywords?

When you're logged into your KDP account and in the set-up section for your book, on page one and towards the bottom of this page, you will find the keyword section, here there are seven boxes for your choice of keywords.

Knowing your audience.

A fundamental part of choosing good keywords is having a clear understanding of who your audience is, for example, if your book is about meditation, then you know that people who may be into the self-help genre, new age spirituality, wellness and mindfulness would be interested in your book, so targeting these readers with

keywords which include themes such as ‘meditation for wellbeing and mindfulness’ would be better than simply ‘self-help nonfiction book for adults’.

Understanding your book’s audience is key and will really help in choosing your keywords, so try to stay away from being too broad in who you think may want to buy the book, even the world’s biggest sellers are NOT for everyone.

Next, make a list.

You know your book and its synopsis better than anyone, make a list of every keyword that is relevant to your book and try to include everything you can think of, now, you are not going to use them all, but it will help in creating your final choice.

Research your list.

The great thing about Amazon is the way it tries to help you when you’re searching for an item, you’ll notice that when you type something into the search box, it tries to pre-populate the box for you, you’ll see a list of common search terms pop up so that you can choose the relevant one for yourself.

If you select ‘Books’ from the grey dropdown box first (just to the left of the search box), you can then start to type in your freshly created keywords to see how they come up, from here you can either omit them completely or adjust (depending upon how they appear in the search box). Remember, Amazon gives you these options based on popular search terms.

When you click on a term from the search box, Amazon will show you how many results there are from that specific search, so, looking for ‘Historical fiction’ shows 70,000 results, however, if you become more specific (relevant to your book of course), and change it to ‘historical fiction civil war era’, the results show just 2,000 books, which is a massive difference to the first search and making it easier for you to climb up within this specific term.

Again, this is where typing your keywords into the search box and refining them will help your book.

There are keywords which won't help and Amazon are clear on some of those, things like making bold claims of your book being the 'best ever' or terms which misrepresent your book, KDP has a zero tolerance of this and so it's best avoided.

Other keywords to avoid are information that's already covered in your book's title, date sensitive statements such 'available now', variations on spacing and capitalization of the same word, and using KDP's program names, check out the full list for their exact specifics.

How long should your keyword be?

Long tail keywords can help, but as long as you don't go crazy, a long tail keyword will be a short phrase related to your book, so, 'historical fiction civil war era' would be useful, however, filling out each keyword box with sentences should be avoided, a mixture of a couple of long tail keywords and some shorter ones seems to be advisable.

Monitor, monitor and monitor.

The most important thing about keywords is to review them and their performance, once you have selected your keywords and published your book with them, monitor your book's performance to see how they are affecting your sales, you can always go back and adjust accordingly, remember, the marketplace will change, as such, you will have to adjust these keywords over time.

How to select the best categories for Amazon

A key element of setting your book up within KDP publishing is in choosing the correct categories for your publication, this option is within the upload process and is on the first page of the set-up process just below the section on keywords.

So why should you research your categories first?

Because when you select the right categories for your work, it can make the difference on how many people find and buy your book, it can also make your book an Amazon best seller, so it really is worth taking your time on this and getting it right from the get-go.

Why would you worry about being a number one best seller on Amazon?

Well, it depends upon your goals as an author, it can look great upon your website and social media channels, however, you can still sell 60-70 books a day and (in some categories) you'll not become a best-seller, then in another category sell 5-10 books and become a best seller.

ABSR and what you need to know about it?

The Amazon Best Seller Rank is the position your book will rank within a specific category, if you look at the bottom of a book's sales page, you'll see the product details for the book which include the ABSR.

This rank is what Amazon will give your book based on the sales and downloads that it's had over a specific period of time. The top ABSR is how your book compares to the other books on the website, then the other ranks below this is where your book is placed within your chosen sub-categories.

You may be asking yourself, how many books do you need to sell to have a paperback in the top 100 on Amazon's overall best seller list? Currently you'd need to sell a whopping 300 books per day or 1000 eBooks per day, great if you can hit these figures, if not, then focusing on your other categories will be useful.

Time to look for categories

First you should go to Amazon's bookstore, here you can search for books that are similar to yours and go straight to their product description, you'll be able to see the categories that they are using, and with an hour or two of research, you'll be able to get a list of categories which will match your book too.

Take your time here, Amazon have over 15,000 categories and sub-categories for authors to utilize, so looking at best-sellers, top 100 lists and same genre books will give you great options for your book but do make sure that the categories you choose are relevant to your own book and its audience.

Getting more categories for your book

Amazon currently offer just two categories for your title when you're setting it up on your KDP bookshelf, but you can have up to 10 of them, you just have to apply for them, and the good thing is that this is quite easy to do.

Firstly, login to your KDP account and go to the very bottom of the page, in small lettering you'll see 'Contact Us', click on this link and you'll be taken to the 'How Can We Help' page, from here you'll click on 'Amazon Store & Product Detail Page', you then see a drop-down option, select 'Update Amazon Categories'.

Here you'll add the details for your additional categories and once ready, click 'Send Message' (yellow box at bottom of screen). You can see more on Amazon's categories page, they also have a helpful video which is worth taking a look at: <https://youtu.be/yfs9b372lf4>:

What is Expanded Distribution with KDP?

We all know that KDP is part of Amazon, and as such is one of the biggest online platforms for a self-publishing author, even if you are choosing to sell the book in person yourself, you'd still be crazy not to have in on their bookshelves too.

When you upload your book to KDP, you'll see on the final third page of the process (which is for Rights & Pricing), in the section for Pricing, Royalty, and distribution, in the far-right section there is a check box labelled as 'Expanded Distribution', you may have wondered what this is, and should you enroll your own book into it.

So, first of all, what is Expanded Distribution?

Expanded distribution makes your book available to book distributors in the USA and UK, from these companies, book sellers and libraries purchase books that they will have in their shops or libraries, (although booksellers and libraries from around the globe can also purchase from these USA/UK distributors too).

This allows your book to be made broadly available outside of Amazon, however, it is worth noting that by just enrolling into Expanded Distribution you may not necessarily have your book picked up by a distributor, bookstore, or library, KDP also mention that they do not list or provide the details of which bookstores/libraries purchased your book.

What are the requirements to enroll?

It's open to all KDP publishers but the book has to be available on Amazon.com or Amazon.co.uk, the other requirements are set by the distributors, the full list can be found at KDP Expanded Distribution Requirements please check for the full list, below are some of the highlights.

- Your book must have an ISBN (one purchased by you or the one given by KDP and NOT another POD service).
- The book can't have frequent lined or blank pages, books like journals, planners, notebooks etc.
- Books which summarize or give insight into another book without permission aren't accepted.
- Books which need a great deal of ink within their pages to print aren't accepted.
- No Public domain content books.
- No Adult coloring books (UK only)
- No Poorly translated content.
- No Excessively reused content.
- No Re-branded or re-released content which has significant changes to the metadata
- Certain languages such as Hebrew, Yiddish and Japanese aren't accepted.
- You must have clicked in the check boxes (page three of the upload process) for both Expanded Distribution in both the US and UK.

The trim size of your book can also affect whether your book can be accepted too, see the chart on the next page which shows which can and which cannot.

Trim Size	Black ink and white paper	Black ink and cream paper	Premium color ink and white paper	Standard color ink and white paper
5" x 8" (12.7 x 20.32 cm)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
5.06" x 7.81" (12.85 x 19.84 cm)	Yes	No	No	Yes
5.25" x 8" (13.34 x 20.32 cm)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
5.5" x 8.5" (13.97 x 21.59 cm)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6" x 9" (15.24 x 22.86 cm)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6.14" x 9.21" (15.6 x 23.39 cm)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
6.69" x 9.61" (16.99 x 24.4 cm)	Yes	No	No	Yes
7" x 10" (17.78 x 25.4 cm)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
7.44" x 9.69" (18.9 x 24.61 cm)	Yes	No	No	Yes
7.5" x 9.25" (19.05 x 23.5 cm)	Yes	No	No	Yes
8" x 10" (20.32 x 25.4 cm)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
8.25" x 6" (20.96 x 15.24 cm)	No	No	No	No
8.25" x 11" (20.96 x 27.94 cm)	No	No	No	No
8.25" x 8.25" (20.96 x 20.96 cm)	No	No	No	No
8.5" x 8.5" (21.59 x 21.59 cm)	No	No	Yes	Yes
8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

So, what about royalties for books sold via Expanded Distribution?

The royalties are 40% of the book's list price effective at the point of purchase in the distribution channel at that given time, then minus the appropriate taxes, withholding and printing costs.

When you select this option in the pricing page, KDP will work out the royalty per book based on the list price you have set and show it on the far right under Royalty, again, this will only show for the US and UK section of that page.

Reporting and payments take 30 days after the end of the month that the sale was made in, and 60 days for the payment (again, after the end of the month that they have reported the sale).

How long will it take for your book to be available to booksellers and libraries?

Once excepted it can take up to eight weeks, but please note, even though it's available through this channel, it doesn't mean that the book will be ordered by bookstores and libraries. It's also worth noting that currently hardbacks are not eligible and in some cases the paperback may be printed by a third party.

Is it worth opting for expanded distribution?

If you are only going to publish your book via KDP and expect the majority of your sales to be via Amazon, then yes, however, if you are selling your book via other channels like IngramSpark, Barnes & Noble etc., then probably not.

The reason being is that opting for it will normally make your book available via these other channels, however, your royalties can be lower. So, if you are planning to upload and promote your book via a multitude of other channels, then it could be better not to opt in on this.

Kindle Deals and Prime Reader Promotions

You may or may not have seen that KDP offer a way to nominate your book for two of their eBook promotions, these being Kindle Deals and Prime Reading promotions, and if you are looking at every option in getting your book in front of as many readers as you can through KDP, it may be worth nominating your own book.

First of all, what books are eligible for nomination?

- The book needs to be an eBook
- Not adult content
- The eBook has to be available to purchase in one marketplace where the primary language is the same as the title's language.
- Then, for the Kindle Deals, the book has to be enrolled in the 70% royalty option (for the US only)
- For Prime Reading, your eBook needs to be enrolled in KDP select.
- So, it may be worth considering these promotions if you are choosing KDP Publishing as your primary channel for publication.

Now let's look at what the two promotional deals are.

Kindle Deals

This is where limited time deals are on offer for eBooks, these promotional deals can last from one day up to several weeks, the reader will see both the regular price and the discounted (on the eBook's page).

When you nominate your eBook into the Kindle Deals promotion, your eBook may be eligible for featured placement within the Kindle Store or additional email marketing, both of which could be highly beneficial to a self-publishing author.

KDP Publishing recommend nominating your most popular eBooks that have been available for at least 90 days, and that are priced between \$2.99 and \$9.99 (and that they have not been on a deal for the last 90 days).

Prime Reading

If you are a Prime Member on Amazon, then you may have already taken advantage of Prime Reading, this service offers unlimited access to a changing selection of eBooks, audio books, magazines and even comics (they also offer one pre-release from the editor's pick each month), so if you love reading it has a lot to offer.

This nomination offers the chance of getting your book in front of Prime Reading's most engaged readers. Your book will remain available for normal sales and royalty earnings during the promotional period. You do need to have the book enrolled in KDP Select for this promotion.

So, what are the other details you need to know about these programs?

Well, you can nominate two eBooks at a time for Kindle Deals and one for Prime Reading, KDP are also clear to point out that just by nominating your books, it doesn't guarantee enrollment into the programs. If you are selected, they will contact you to confirm this.

Nominations expire after 90 days, if you haven't heard anything from them after this time, then your eBook was not selected. They do have an auto renew option, so you can choose to re-enter your books or choose another title to nominate instead.

As mentioned earlier, the Kindle Deals promotion lasts from one day to several weeks, the Prime Reading promotion/program lasts from 90 – 180 days.

Nominations cannot be cancelled, however, if your book is nominated you can choose to either accept or decline the offer.

How do you nominate your eBook?

First of all, log into your KDP account and go to the fourth tab which is the 'Marketing' Page. If you scroll down to the bottom of this page, you'll see the box for nominating your eBooks.

Kindle Deals is on the left and Prime Reading is on the right, just click on the yellow 'Nominate a book' button for the promotional option you would like to put your eBook forward for.

The next screen will show you the titles that are eligible for the promotion, select the specific book you want to nominate, now click continue, it will default that the nomination will auto renew after 90 days, so if you don't want this, uncheck the auto renew box. Now click 'Nominate book' and your book will be nominated for the program, you'll get confirmation if successful within the 90 period.

Author Central Page on Amazon

If you are publishing your book through Amazon KDP, you may have heard of Author Central, this is a service that Amazon KDP have created specifically for their self-publishing authors, it's a platform where you can share details about yourself and your books to your readers.

Once you connect your books up to your new author central page, you'll see the Author Home page, this page shows you the books that you have linked and allows you to add an author profile and photograph, this your readers will see when they view your details (from the link which will be by your book on Amazon's sales page).

Adding a profile image and bio are very easy to do, make sure that your profile image is professional and fitting with your image as an author (within your chosen genre), also, that your bio is interesting, tells the reader a little more about you and is relevant too, Amazon KDP recommend keeping this to no longer than 1,000 characters.

You also have the option to add your profile in different languages, so for those authors publishing in various locations, you can connect to a reader in their own language.

Once you've uploaded your profile image and bio, it should take 1 to 2 days to appear upon Amazon's website.

Your author page can also have a unique URL, on the profile page (on the right of the screen), you'll see an option for creating a unique link, simply click on the 'create link' button and then choose your desired link details.

Another great option for engaging with your readers is with blog RSS feeds, Amazon KDP allows you to share RSS feeds to your own blogs, this enables you to have links from your Author page back to your blog, this is great to help drive traffic to your website and keep your readers updated.

Below the option of linking your blog is a button to add photos and videos, here you can share images (jpg, png and gif) along with videos (avi, flv, mov, mpg, wmv and mp4, all under 500mb). This allows you to share updates of events, news, interviews, book trailers and promotional images to your readers.

Getting back to the four options at the top of the Author Central Home page, the third option is for your books, here you'll find details of your currently linked titles and it will give the option for you to add further titles to your page.

The fourth option is the 'Reports + Marketing', this is a great page for authors as it shows you details of your book's Amazon Best Seller's Rank (ABSR), here you can see where your titles are currently ranked within the sales of books upon Amazon, it will also show you the historical rankings too, so if you are promoting the book, it's good to track it's performance in this area too.

here are also further reporting options to show your book's weekly sales report and customer reviews for your specific titles.

Looking to the bottom right of the report + marketing page, you'll see a link to Amazon Advertising, here you can create specific advertising campaigns for your titles, we have an in-depth article on Advertising with Amazon KDP on page 44 of this book which is well worth checking out before you start.

For readers, Author central allows them to 'follow' an author, giving a button next to the Author page or book's detail section, then giving updates on your existing or new book (release dates, pre-order etc. subject to eligibility), again, it's a great way to keep your readers updated.

So, is it worth signing up for an Author Central account for your books?

Yes, it is, it's free to set up and a great way to engage with your readers, it also gives you the opportunity to monitor your book's performance and links to Amazon advertising so you can further promote your books should you want to.

What is an ARC book?

In the world of self-publishing, you may have seen authors sending out ARC books and thought about doing so yourself, but what are they and what are the benefits of having ARC editions created?

Okay, ARC Books are Advance Reading Copies of your work which you will send out to a select group of readers, in return they should give you an honest review of the book itself, they get a free book, you get a review (and hopefully additional feedback).

But is it worth using an ARC book for your work?

This is entirely down to your goals as an author, if you are publishing for the kudos of getting your book into print and this alone, then sending out ARC books to readers is probably not worth doing. However, for most authors, they want to ensure that their work is highly polished, well received and is given the best chance of success possible, and in these cases an ARC book can help.

Should an ARC book be different to the final published copy?

If you look at the book cover design, then the main difference here is normally the line 'ARC Copy, not for resale' placed upon the front page, of course, this would be removed in the final edition of the book. Inside you occasionally see the line 'ARC copy – not for resale' within the header of the book's pages (although not always), but the actual manuscript would normally stay the same.

In some cases where feedback consistently tells you that changes are needed, then you should look at adjusting and re-testing the new version of the book, so, you may have some differences

between the ARC version and the completed final copy (but if you have had the book edited and proofread prior to the ARC version, you shouldn't have to make changes to the main copy itself).

It's worth remembering that the main goal of the ARC book is to gain quotes and publicity for you.

Once you have your files ready for the ARC version of the book, you can normally upload and order additional copies of the book from your Print on demand publisher, the price of these will vary depending upon the printing costs of your specific work.

You should also send out eBook versions of your ARC book too, again, make sure you have 'ARC copy – not for resale' as a disclaimer, the eBook version is a lot easier to send out to readers and you won't have any mailing fees here.

Sending out printed copies of your ARC book is where you should compare your journey as an author to that of running a small business, investing money into the publishing and promoting of ARC copies is investing back into you as an author. Having great quotes upon the book's cover and your marketing materials can and does help countless authors when it comes to selling their work to new readers.

Once you have your ARC book ready, where do you send it?

There are plenty of ways for authors to get their books in front of readers, one popular service is Bookfunnel, they offer promotional services specifically for authors, and have options to get ARC copies out to readers, with monthly plans that start from under \$5 a month, they are used by many and well worth a look.

Other places to look for readers to review your book are on sites like Goodreads, Reedsy, and Kirkus, most authors will have heard of these sites, and they are trusted by many within the publishing world.

Where else can you give out copies of your ARC book for reviews?

If you have your own author's website, you'll know that this is a great place to connect with your readers, holding competitions here can really help, you could give away a certain number of copies in return for reviews, or you could use the book to grow your email list, or even as a gateway for your reader into a series of your other books.

Social media is another great way to reach readers, advertising on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram is easy and far more cost effective than it's ever been, you can give away a small number of copies, asking followers to like and share the posts to others they think would like to read it.

Podcasts are growing at an incredible rate, and whatever you're into, there's a podcast dedicated to it, so search out those within self-publishing, with a little research you can see if they accept submissions (they all have active social media pages) and send them a copy.

Book bloggers and reviewers, there are readers out there who have dedicated their time to reviewing and blogging about great books like yours, they're also very niche in what they review (so we're not going to give links to specific bloggers here), but a quick search online will give you those who are specific to your genre and can help with reviewing your book.

Give your ARC book to friends and family, essentially everyone you know should be given a copy of your book, hopefully they'll read it, and if you're lucky, they'll give you a nice review/quote.

Do you send your book to well know authors/public figures?

Probably not, but with this you must use common sense, many famous people or individuals who are well respected within their own fields get sent so many products to endorse, in the end they

don't touch any of them (and you can't blame them for this). So, if you do decide to send a big name your book, show respect, be courteous and if it is rejected (or you don't hear back) be respectful about it.

In conclusion

ARC books can be a great tool for authors, use them as a promotional tool to gain reviews, interest and create excitement around your work as an author, when done right, they can really help self-publishing authors.

What is KDP Select?

As an indie author the self-publishing process can seem like a long and daunting road, from the moment you finish writing your manuscript you are faced with countless choices on how to bring this masterpiece to the public. Selecting editors, proof-readers, formatting, book cover design, advertising and of course, a printer or print on demand service, it can seem endless.

Being one of the industry leaders, KDP is a very popular choice with self-publishing authors looking to utilize the publishing wing of Amazon for their own book. And being part of Amazon, it does give you a large reach to wide range of readers in multiple countries.

If you have decided to use KDP for your book, then you will have noticed an option they offer with KDP select. So, what is KDP select and is it work signing up for?

Okay, KDP Select is a program where you opt to sell the digital edition of your book exclusively via KDP for a 90-day participation period, this means that your eBook cannot be sold anywhere else (that even includes selling it on your own website or blog), you can see the full terms for the fine details.

After this 90-day period you can choose to auto-renew or leave the program, what's great is that your printed version of the book can still be sold via KDP and can also be sold via any other distributor while enrolled in KDP select, again, KDP select is just for your digital version of the book.

Why would you enroll in KDP select?

Well, the first benefit is it makes the book available through Kindle Unlimited, this being a subscription program allowing users to read as many books as they like (and of course, your eBook will still be available to buy as normal). It also makes the eBook available to borrow to many international readers.

This can help in the ranking of your book, and you can also earn royalties from Kindle Unlimited, these royalties are paid on a per page read basis, so the more of your book that gets read, the more you can earn.

Earn 70% royalties on eBooks sold to readers within certain countries.

The program is also free to join and gives you great promotional tools to sell more books, promos such as countdown deals, free book promotions and Amazon's literary contest.

Calculating royalties

These come out of KDP's select global fund each month, this is based on multiple factors which include exchange rates, customer reading behavior, and subscription pricing. Author's earnings are then calculated by their share of total pages read (up to 3,000 pages per title).

The example KDP uses is of a total fund of \$10 million for a month with 100 million pages actually read, if this were the case, then:

An author's eBook with 100 pages which was borrowed and read completely 100 times would earn \$1000, calculated as follows: 10 million (KDP total fund) x 10,000 (total pages read for this author) ÷ 100 million (total pages read via KDP select)

However, an author's eBook which had 200 pages and was only read halfway through on average would earn \$1,000, again, they

base payments on pages read. You can see their in-depth details on royalties [here](#).

How do they calculate pages read of your eBook?

They use a system called KENPC (Kindle Edition Normalized Page Count), this calculates a count using standard formatting settings for font, line height and line spacing etc. non-text elements such as images, charts, graphs illustrations will also go towards page count. The system has been created to work across all devices and user settings upon those devices, all geared towards giving a more accurate count for each book and author.

So, is it worth joining?

If you are only selling your eBook via Amazon, then yes, however, if you are planning to sell the eBook via multiple other websites (including your own) then KDP select may not be for you.

KDP Select does offer some great promotional tools and benefits (along with having your book on a platform with a massive reach with Kindle Unlimited), it is certainly worth considering, even if you only use it for the 90 days.

Remember...

Every single author knows the struggle it is to get their work published through either an agent or directly with a publisher, countless manuscripts get sent off and then the barrage of rejections come flooding back (that's if you're lucky enough to even get a straight No). But you are not alone, almost every successful author went through the very same, but what's encouraging is that with perseverance they finally broke through.

So, if you're trying to get your book published, don't give up, keep going and take solace that you're not alone, here are the top twenty best-selling authors who showed that anything is possible!

1. J.K. Rowling – Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. The multi-million selling book, film and huge franchise that it has now become was rejected by 12 publishers before finally being picked up (and even then under the strong advice of the publishers daughter who adored it).
2. Beatrix Potter – The Tale of Peter Rabbit – It was after being rejected by seven publishers that Beatrix Potter went ahead and published the book by herself, she went on to sell over 140 million copies worldwide.
3. Stephenie Meyer – Twilight – Out of the many copies of her manuscript she sent out it was only one that wasn't either rejected or ignored by publishers.
4. Stephen King – Carrie – King received thirty rejections for his manuscript and he was about to give up, tossing

the novel into the trash his wife fished it back out and forced him to continue, going on to success and acclaim within his genre.

5. George Orwell – Animal Farm – The well renowned book was rejected by publishers with Orwell being told that the market didn't have a place for 'animal stories' and that it was an unconvincing story.
6. Margret Mitchell – Gone with the wind – The book which went on to become one of the most successful films of its time, but it was originally rejected over 35 times before finally being published
7. Robert M. Pirsig – Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance – For sheer determination you have to admire Pirsig, being rejected 121 times would have stopped many.
8. Jack Canfield & Mark Victor Hansen – Without doubt, Chicken Soup for the Soul, is one of the best-selling books within the self-help genre and hugely popular in the mainstream too, but this book was initially reject over 120 times.
9. Frank Herbert – Dune – Before going on to sell over 12 million copies world-wide this best-selling sci-fi novel was rejected by over 20 publishers before success.
10. John Grisham – A Time To Kill – This highly popular book and author first was rejected by over 15 agents and 12 publishers prior to being taking on by a publisher
11. James Joyce – The Dubliners – The classic work of literature was rejected 22 times before being published and becoming the well-known book it has become

12. William Goulding – Lord of the Flies – Goulding’s manuscript was rejected over 20 times with it being describe as ‘rubbish & dull’.
13. Anne Frank – The Diary of a Young Girl – It’s hard to believe that this powerful book was rejected by over 15 publishers before going on to be the renowned title it now is.
14. John Le Carre – The Spy who came in from the cold – Le Carre faced many rejections but he was also told that ‘he didn’t have a future’ with his writing.
15. Tom Clancy – The hunt for Red October – The thriller was rejected by 12 publishers before going on to be a best seller and subsequently turned into a popular movie.
16. Rudyard Kipling – The Jungle Book – The now popular book and Disney film was rejected many times with Kipling being told that he didn’t understand English.
17. C.S Lewis – The Chronicles of Narnia – The winner for determination goes to C.S. Lewis, it is reported that he was turned down over 800 times before selling anything to a publisher, his book going on to sell more than 100 million copies.
18. Vladimir Nabokov – Lolita – Having sold more than 50 million copies since its release, the book was originally rejected by all the major publishers, Nabokov even had to travel to another country and start with a limited print run before going on to worldwide success.
19. Yann Martel – The Life of Pi – Having been rejected by so many publishers, Martel was finally published in Canada successfully with the book becoming an award-winning film too.

20. L. Frank Baum – The Wonderful Wizard of Oz – This popular book and hugely popular movie was rejected over and over again, but again, with determination Baum finally got a deal and the rest is history!