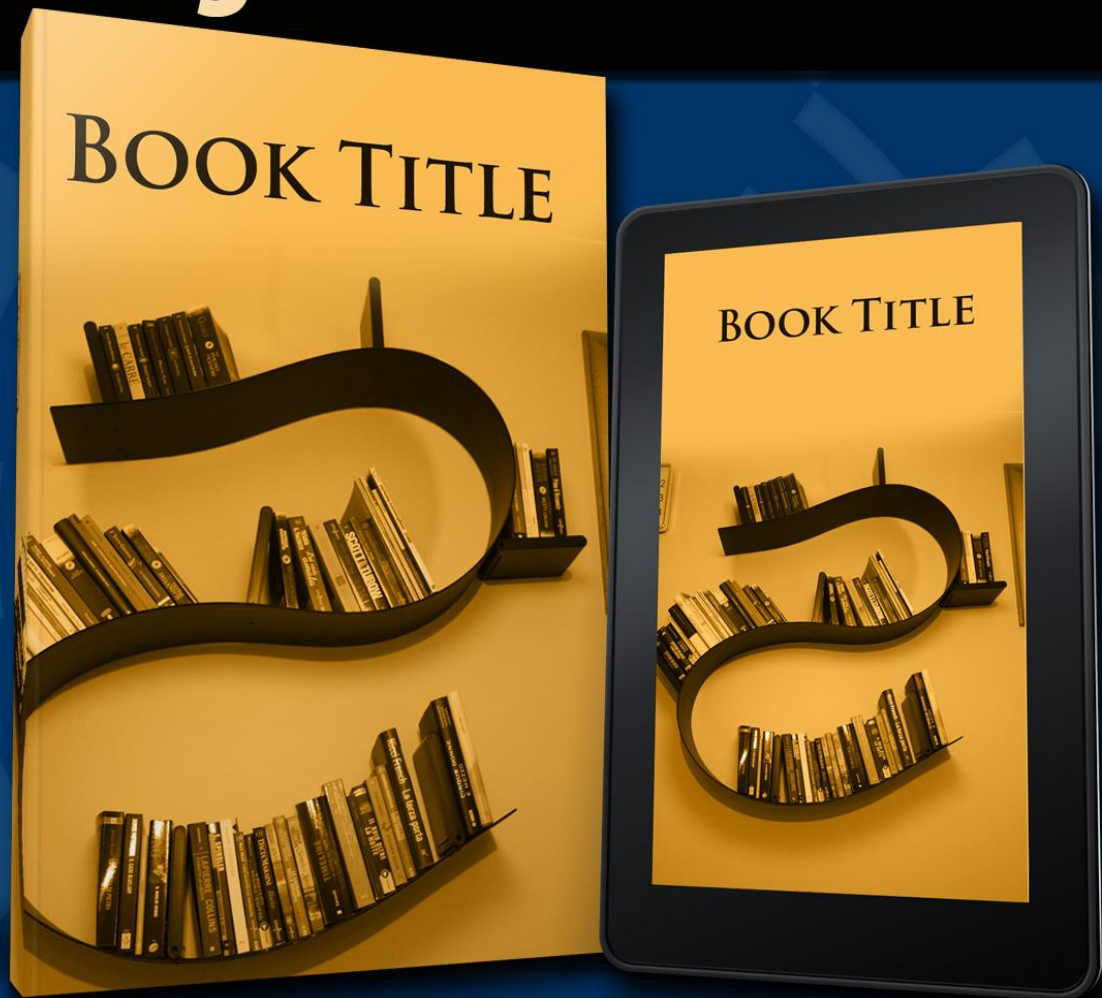


# Self Publishing a **BOOK**

## 10 Things You Should Know



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It used to be that self-publishing was called “vanity publishing”: And it was the way product fulfillment companies made money from failed or unskilled authors.

Nothing nowadays could be further from the truth.

Self-publishing has become an accepted mainstream form of communication and income generation. Now, more than ever before, getting published no longer hangs on the whim of one individual editor: The general public decides whose work is valid and whose is not.

The proof is in your sales.

But before you rush into self-publishing, confident that yours is a message whose time has come, there are ten key facts about self-publishing a book you need to know.

- 1. Print or Digital?** – It is essential to choose not only the right marketplace, but the right delivery method. What this is will depend to a great extent on your target market – and how well you know their preferences, as well as purchasing habits and learning styles.

Nowadays when people say “digital”, they often mean “an eBook” but in the publishing world, “digital” usually means something quite different. In the publishing world, “digital” refers to a specific method of hard-copy delivery based on laser printing. So properly speaking, the choice ought to be “digital or litho”. The methods are two different methods: The end result is the same – a hard-copy book, that people can physically pick up and read.

Litho printing is the traditional method where actual inks are used – the type of printing that’s been around since printing was first invented.

Litho is more cost-effective when you’re planning to produce multiple runs in the thousands. Set-up for a printing run is costly and time-consuming, but these costs are offset by the volume of finished books produced.

Digital printing is more cost-effective when you are planning a small run: It’s more like high-quality photocopying but although the cost per page may seem higher than litho printing, you don’t have the astronomical set-up costs for a press. Product fulfillment

companies that offer to print out copies of your book only when an order is made use digital printing.

- 2. Making the Most of Your eBook** – You’ve heard the old expression: “There’s more than one way to skin a cat”: Well, there is definitely more than one way to publish a book.

With the advent of mobile Readers such as Kobo and Kindle, more and more people are choosing to download eBooks (which they no longer think of as “eBooks”).

Even the die-hards, who have complained bitterly that mobile Readers such as Kobo are too small, have lowered their resistance since discovering they can download eBooks onto their much-larger iPads.

Kindle in particular may be your best format for your book. It was created and is controlled by Amazon.com, arguably the most popular and largest online marketplace in the world. And thanks to Categories and cross-promotion between their regular book section and the dedicated Kindle section, your books can be found by millions of people.

You can also choose to sell your book via Amazon in Kindle eBook format or as hard copy, delivered to their door.

Yet another option: Presenting your book on a DVD or CD. This is surprisingly easy to do, if you use a product fulfillment service such as [Kunaki](#). It works like this: You sign up for an account, download their software program onto your computer, insert your book file, choose a cover image from their suggested selection (or add your own), preview it – and upload.

Within hours, your first copy can physically be produced and sent out to your first customer. And there are no minimums – this is a strictly “per order” service.

It takes about three business days for your finished book on CD to reach your customer and the result is high quality.

If you want a physical, bound version of your book, [Lulu](#) offers a similar service.



Best of all, you don't have to guesstimate how many copies you're going to sell – or run out of copies – or be left with a surplus and massive printing costs.

- 3. Be prepared to invest major time and effort into your first project** – Contrary to what “Publish Your Own eBook” course creators may blithely tell you, self-publishing is a major project.

Think about it: You're taking on multiple roles...

- Editor
- Production Manager
- Proofreader
- Project coordinator
- Advocate
- Printer Liaison
- Publicity and Promotion Specialist

Don't assume you will be able to hand over your book to your printers and pick up the perfectly finished project: It's guaranteed they'll have multiple clients, some much “bigger” than you with an investment of way more cash. They'll be driven to churn things out

on time. And in your fine print, it may even say that you are responsible for checking everything.

This includes checking up on variables such as:

- Are they using the correct font and font size?
- Are all the margins the same?
- Is the paper stock consistent throughout each run?
- Are proofs going to be ready on time?

And many more questions.

Learn as much as you can about the publishing business – particularly your chosen delivery system.

4. **Don't join the herd** – An astronomical percentage of self-published authors are trying to “make money fast” and don't take the time to thoroughly research their self-publishing project. Almost no time is spent on analysis and costing, nor do countless would-be authors research and plan for specific goals.

**The bad news** is that you now have a flood of competition in such platforms as Amazon or Indie publishing.



**The good news** is that you can give yourself a significant edge by not rushing; by methodically proofing, copy-editing, using professionals with proven portfolios and references if you outsource and by keeping on top of your contract – as well as following up

with customers, if you've used a per-customer-type product fulfillment company.

- 5. Be prepared to spend fifty percent of your self-publishing time on marketing and promotion** – Once your book is in print, it is highly unlikely that your publisher will market it for you (no matter what they say!) Oh, they may drop off copies at book stores... but that isn't marketing.

That's like sending one thousand letters to random websites asking if they'll publish your link... then never following up to see if there were replies.

Face it – Ninety-nine per cent of publishers are in it for one reason alone: To make money. (The other one per cent usually don't survive the first year or two.) If you're J. K. Rowling and they think your book is going to hit the New York Best Seller's List, they'll invest in promotion... but if this is your first book and especially if you're marketing it to a highly specialized niche, it's going to be all up to you.

So familiarize yourself with the best way to promote your own books – as quickly as possible.

Have a plan before your book ever goes to print!

- 6. Outsource as much as you can to professionals** – If you have the budget, you can save yourself priceless time and avoid fatal blunders by outsourcing all aspects of your self-publishing venture to professionals who specialize in the area you're outsourcing. For example, instead of spending hours, days or weeks learning to manipulate graphics programs, hire an expert eCover creator for your eBook. (There are ones to fit every budget.)

Or hire an editor who specializes in copy editing to ensure that your grammar and formatting are consistent.



Providing you fit tasks that you outsource to your budget and overall publishing plan, it can both save – and make – you money, in the long run.<sup>1</sup>

- 7. Don't sign up with the first self-publishing company you check out** – Research and get quotes from several. Make a spreadsheet and compare what's included... and what's not.

When you've narrowed your choices, check out and contact published authors for your top three contenders. Ask around. Were these publishing fulfillment companies or printers difficult to deal with? Did they return phone calls? Acknowledge and correct errors?

- 8. Don't wait till your book is in print or shipped off to the first customer before you discover the errors** – Such as... the fulfillment company or printer missed page 43, used the wrong cover photo or mis-numbered the pages, totally de-valuing your footnotes and references: Ask for and make sure you get galleys (mock-ups of finished pages) along the way.

If you're producing your book on DVD or CD, make sure you choose a fulfillment company that agrees to send you a sample DVD or CD on upload.

- 9. Know what subsidy presses are** – and what they can (and won't) do – before you decide this is the route to go.

A subsidy press is what people use to call a “vanity press”. You hand over your money, relinquish control, and they spit you back a book.

Nowadays, some subsidy presses give fair value for your money... and some still followed the time-honored model of scamming the clueless client.

One way to tell if you're dealing with a reputable subsidy press? They won't hit you with a torrent of “add-on” services.

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<sup>1</sup> (But be wary of letting the self-publishing company of choice sell you complete package deals in which they do “everything” for you. That's where there's a real danger your costs will over-run – and you'll still have to do significant marketing and promotion.)

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Again, review any contracts, quotes or estimates with a fine tooth-comb. In fact, hire a publishing lawyer, if you can afford it. (This might be the best precaution you could ever take, since subsidy presses are not cheap.)

- 10. Get familiar with Preditors and Editors™** – This online watchdog organization has made it a life's work to warn would-be authors about scam-artists agents, subsidy presses and online publishing companies. Before putting out an inquiry to a company, check Preditors and Editors™' [database](#).



**Preditors and Editors™**

A guide to publishers and publishing services for serious writers since 1997.

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**Some General Rules for Spotting a Scam Publisher**

- Openly advertises for writers in print or online publications or both.
- The publisher claims that it's seeking to publish first-time authors.
- Openly claims that it's not a vanity or subsidy publisher.
- Claims that it has a new business model that will bring success, but never explains why successful publishers aren't utilizing it.
- Claims that the established publishers and published writers are trying to block new writers from being published.
- The publisher gives no or very low advances for books it buys. When it claims to have given higher advances, it never reveals the names of the authors who received those higher advances so the publisher's claim can be verified.
- The publisher's books are rarely in any bookstores, particularly the large chain stores that carry books from just about all reputable commercial publishers.
- The publisher's books have never been seen on a bestseller list published by a reputable source such as the New York Times, especially when said publisher claims to be large.

This simple precaution can save you a lot of grief and heartache!

The bottom line? Whether you want to “make money fast” or you’re more concerned with getting a message out there (and you don’t care how long that takes)... you will increase your chances of success significantly if you learn not just these “10 things” but *everything you can* about the self-publishing industry.

To your publishing success!