SELF-PUBLISHING BASICS

Step-by-step guide to help you stay organised and cover all the necessary steps in your self-publishing journey.

852
PRESS

Helping you tell your story

We hope you find this guidebook informative and useful in your own self-publishing journey.

It maps the self-publishing process, the steps to follow with hints, tips, checklists, links to further resources, and questions to help you stop and think.

This guidebook has been prepared by education specialist and 852 Press director, Dr Julia Evans, and author of nine books, Richard Evans. It draws on over eight years of learning, personal experience, risk taking, and experimenting in traditional, hybrid, and self-publishing.

We created independent publishing company 852 Press in 2020 – our pandemic project – with the aim to create a streamlined process for cost-effective high-quality self-publishing so Australians can easily tell their story.

Please do contact if you need help in navigating any of steps outlined in this guidebook. Connect with us to share your news of your publication, we will help spread the word.

All the very best with your self-publishing journey!

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Disclaimer

852 Press and Richard Evans don't believe in get rich quick schemes.

Self-publishing achievement and success take hard work.

We have gone to our best efforts to present our knowledge and experience and provide up-to-date information, but this guidebook is far from complete in presenting everything related to self-publishing.

852 Press and Richard Evans cannot and do not make any guarantees about your ability to get results or earn any money with the ideas, information, tools, or strategies outlined in this guidebook or workshop. The information presented here might not apply, or be appropriate, to your project or circumstance.

Financial information presented here are estimates, averages, illustrative at time of printing and may not apply to your circumstance and strategy.

We encourage writers to seek professional legal, financial, tax and publishing advice. Nothing in this guidebook or workshop replaces professional advice.

852 Press and Richard Evans shall not be held liable for any loss of profit, money, or any other commercial damages from the choices and decisions you make.

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Before we start …

Types of Publishing Models

Self-publishing – You control everything, pay for all costs, and keep 100% of the rights and profits.

Traditional/trade publishing – Publishers 'buy' your manuscript (may pay an advance to the writer) taking on the responsibility and risk of covering all expenses and pay you a royalty from each actual sale.

Hybrid/publishing services – Where you enter an arrangement with a trade publisher or publishing consulting company and pay for select production, distribution, and/or marketing services. Depending on the model and services, expect to pay from $3,000 to upwards of $30,000+.

Three Stages of Publishing

1. **Production** – Preparing your manuscript for publishing including editing, design, legal and financial administration, and regulatory registrations.
2. **Distribution** – Getting your book printed and available on shelves and online for purchase or lending.
3. **Marketing** – Advertising, marketing processes, and ways to promote you and your book.

Types of Publications

Print on Demand (POD) allows you to print to order individual or small batch orders using digital technology eliminating the need for thousands of books to be purchased and stored in your garage.

eBook (electronic book) is a digital file that can distributed electronically and displayed on a screen (smartphone, iPad, or Kindle) like a printed book.

Audiobooks are a voice recording of your book, either narrated or performed (using different voices for characters and dialogue).

Did you know?

According to some internet sources, here are some statistics on self-publishing.

Self-Publishing Globally

The number of self-published books increased by 264% in the last 5-years.

300 million self-published books are sold each year, generating $1.25 billion.

Amazon is the biggest sellers of books worldwide.

7,500 books are added to Amazon every day.

30-34% of all eBooks sold are self-published and 85% of Kindle Unlimited eBooks are self-published.

1% of audiobooks on Audible are self-published.

Amazon pays $520 million in royalties to self-published authors each year.

Self-publishing platforms pay up to 70% of each book sold to authors.

67% of the top-rated, self-published books are written by women, compared to 39% of traditionally published books.

In Australia

2015-19 data indicates the Australian book industry generates $2 billion annually and sells 56 million books a year and produces ~22,000 new titles annually.

Educational books make up the largest share of the Australian book industry, representing over 41% of books sold followed by adult non-fiction books (27%), adult fiction (14%), children's books (8%) and all other categories (10%).

The Average Self-Published Writer

The average self-published book sells 250 copies with 90% of self-published books selling less than 100 copies.

The average self-published author makes $1,000 per year from their books with 33% making less than $500 per year and 20% reporting no income at all.

In 2022 on Amazon, more than 1,000 self-published authors made $100,000.

01 Overview of Self-Publishing & Its Advantages

Thinking about self-publishing your book? Fantastic! Self-publishing offers a fantastic opportunity to share your work with the world. However, it's crucial to dive into the adventure fully aware of the pros, cons, and everything in between.

Let's explore the journey of self-publishing together.

Advantages – Self-publishing puts you in the driver's seat, allowing you to maintain creative control and make decisions. You have the power to choose your own timeline, how much you want to spend, and enjoy higher royalty rates. It's all about independence and freedom.

Challenges – Like any worthwhile endeavour, self-publishing comes with its fair share of challenges. It requires following processes and having high attention to detail. You'll need to invest ongoing time, effort, and resources to make your book shine. It's a commitment, but the rewards can be worth it.

The Process – Self-publishing involves various stages, from editing and formatting to cover design and distribution. This guidebook walks you through each step, making sure you're equipped with the knowledge and the skills needed to navigate the process smoothly.

Preparation and Understanding – Self-publishing can be an incredibly fulfilling and rewarding experience. It relies on having a confident understanding of the process, good preparation, and an ongoing commitment to make your book stand out in the crowd.

Self-Publishing Success Stories

Michael Winkler

Grimmish first self-published book shortlisted for the Miles Franklin award in 2022.

“If you are genuine about writing a book that is the best it can be, you have to work hard. The job is slow, lonely, and without guarantee of any reward at the end. Rightly or wrongly, being a self-published author feels undignified. Second-best.

Kind friends might point to famous self-publishing success stories, be they literary (Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*, Proust’s *Swann’s Way*) or commercial (E.L. James’ spank-buster 50 Shades of Grey), but you still feel that you are on the B team.”

www.michaelwinkler.com.au

Mark Dawson

4 million copies sold stand-alone books and the John Milton Series.

“Self-publishing has enabled me to build the career that I always dreamed of having, with the ability to make decisions for my own books that larger organisations might not have necessarily taken. Traditional publishers print thousands of new titles every year, and there was always the danger that my stories would be forgotten — that proved to be the case, and, with no sales, there was no appetite for any more books from me.”

https://markjdawson.com

Caroline Peckham & Susanne Valenti

The Harlequin Crew, Zodiac Academy, and more.

Sisters Caroline and Suzanne started writing together in 2018 and have since produced more than 52 books. They have made 5 million book sales and have had 1 billion page impressions on Kindle Unlimited.

https://carolinepeckham.com

The Bottom Line

Let's talk about money. Self-publishing does require financial investment. What you end up spending wholly depends on the choices you make.

852 Press experience suggests you can self-publish a 90,000-word book for around $2,500 which includes (all average approximates from 852 Press' catalogue):

$1,500 Copy edit

$ 500 Cover design

$ 450 Typesetting

$ 50 ISBN

and then purchase copies from IngramSpark for approx. $9 – $12 per copy plus postage, printed in Australia and delivered within 7-days.

However, there can be some variances based on:

Editing services – Depending on your needs and the editor's experience, they may charge a set fee per 1,000 words, or an hourly rate of $30 to $120+ per hour.

Cover Design – Costs vary between designer, but you could have a good genre design for between $300 and $1,000+.

Internals and Typesetting – Costs vary between $250 and $1,000+

Add Ons

Professional manuscript assessment – Depends on provider, prices may start at $300 to $2500 for the assessment.

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) – Zero fees to set your account and upload book up on Amazon. The author purchase price for a standard 90,000-word book will vary but is on average $7.00 per book plus freight. Delivery times vary as most of the printing in done in America, so it is usually 18-day delivery.

IngramSpark – Zero fees to set up an account and upload paperback and eBook.

Author Website & Domain Name – Creating your own website, and having an easy to remember website domain name, can start from $300+.

Marketing Collateral – Costs for business cards, flyers, brochures, postcards, and pull up banners vary on quality and manufacturer and can start from $200+.

Digital Payment Device – For author sales, you may want to purchase a device that allows you to accept debit and credit card transactions. Devices start from $70+

Writer Warning!

There are many publishing consultants keen for your business.

They might offer all-inclusive publishing packages, set high expectations on the success of your book, and play to ego and lack of publishing knowledge.

Be wary, and buyer beware. Compare services and costs with other companies with what Amazon and IngramSpark can offer.

Amazon and IngramSpark's online libraries and resources centres are extensive and user-friendly, and they offer support for ISBNs, book internals and cover templates you can use.

If a deal sounds too good, then it probably is.

Reflection

It's important to understand your own motivations behind wanting to publish a book, as well as the potential outcomes and achievements.

These questions encourage self-reflection to help identify and manage your own expectations, strengths, and areas of developments.

Take a moment to check in with yourself and consider these questions.

Why do I have the desire to publish my book? What do I hope to accomplish?

What does 'success' look like for me and my book?

What are my existing strengths and areas of expertise when it comes to producing, distributing, and marketing a book?

How much can I financially afford and comfortably risk based on the potential costs involved in self-publishing? What am I prepared to financially lose?

What are the specific concerns or worries I have about self-publishing?

Am I prepared for the possibility that success will take time and may not happen? Am I open to accepting potential outcomes of not recovering costs, facing rejection or critique from distributors, retailers, and readers?

What could I do to prepare and address these possibilities?

02 Preparing Your Manuscript for Publishing

In preparing your manuscript for publishing there are some crucial steps of seeking expert advice and fine-tuning your work. While some writers may skip these vital phases, it's essential to understand why seeking advice is a game-changer for your book's success.

Let's explore how you can elevate your manuscript to new heights.

Seek Advice – As a writer, it's easy to get lost in your own words and ideas. Seeking advice from experts – such as editors, manuscript assessors, Beta Readers, and subject matter experts relating to your book – help you gain fresh perspectives and valuable insights. It allows you to step back and see your work from different angles, enhancing its appeal to readers. Even the greatest authors have relied on feedback to refine their masterpieces.

Unlock Your Manuscript's Potential – Embracing feedback and involving experts (particularly an editor) could ensure your manuscript shines with its full potential. Their expertise could help you fine-tune your plot, characters, dialogue, and overall storytelling. Together, they'll create a compelling reading experience that captivates your readers.

The Final Touches – Preparing your manuscript for publishing involves giving it the attention it deserves. This is your chance to polish and refine your work through a series of checks and reviews. It's an iterative process that may require multiple rounds of revisions. Embrace this opportunity to make your manuscript the absolute best it can be!

The 852 Press method

852 Press has created a manuscript method that encourages writers to:

8	Expect to complete eight drafts and edits of your manuscript. This is the fine-tuning process making your manuscript the best it can be.
5	Gather and reflect on at least five different Beta Reader perspectives, feedback, or formal assessments on your manuscript.
2	Involve at least two experts, with one being an editor and the other a subject matter expert to ensure your story is accurate or plausible. By doing so, you'll benefit from professional guidance to shape your manuscript.

ACTIONS

☐ Create and regularly save a **digital formatted copy** of your manuscript. Your final manuscript needs to be an editable, digital copy with at least 12-point in a serif font (like Garamond or Times New Roman), and minimum 1.5 line space. Always save your manuscript and have a back-up copy saved externally from your device (you can save it on a USB or email it to yourself).

☐ Establishing a small group of friends, family, or writing groups as **Beta Readers** – people who can read early drafts of chapters or the entire manuscript and provide fresh, reader-centric perspective and feedback.

☐ Consider commissioning a **manuscript assessment** to receive independent, professional evaluation on plot, character, point of view, pace, writing style, narrative, dialogue, presentation, length, use of research, readership, marketing, or publishing possibilities. Many Australian state writers' associations have an assessment service, and you don't have to live in the state or be a member to access the service. The price is usually based upon word count.

☐ Get your manuscript **professionally edited** by completing one or all of the following:

Structural and developmental edit to examine overall structure and the organisation of flow and logic, and the content and ideas.

Copy edit to review readability, clarity, accuracy, and consistency of style and tone.

Proofread checking for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting errors. At the very minimum, have your manuscript proofread.

To find a professional editor in Australia visit the Institute of Professional Editors:

www.iped-editors.org

03 Book Design & Cover Art

We actually do judge a book by its cover …

As a self-published writer, the responsibility of delivering a high-quality book falls squarely on your shoulders. Let’s explore the power of a stunning cover and flawless formatting and understand why investing in these elements is a crucial step toward success.

Crafting a Visual Masterpiece – When it comes to self-publishing, your book's cover is the gateway to its soul. It's the first impression that entices readers to explore further. Ensure that your cover design is not just eye-catching but also perfectly aligns with your book's genre, themes, and target audience. A well-designed cover has the power to grab attention, evoke emotions, and make your book irresistible.

Navigating with Ease – In addition to a captivating cover, proper formatting plays a significant role in enhancing your readers' experience. Whether it's an eBook or a printed copy, ensuring that your book is formatted correctly allows for seamless reading across various devices. It makes the content easily digestible, and a breeze to navigate through chapters, sections, and paragraphs. By optimising internal design and formatting, you create a reader-friendly experience.

The Visual Appeal Advantage – A visually appealing book cover and well-formatted content are not just about aesthetics. They hold the key to attracting potential readers and increasing the likelihood of turning them into avid fans. When your book looks professional, it establishes credibility and signals that you've invested time and effort into producing a top-notch product.

Investing for Success – Your book cover and formatting are not areas to cut corners or sacrifice quality for saving costs. In fact, it's quite the opposite. Investing in a professional cover design and ensuring impeccable formatting are vital steps that significantly contribute to your book's success. The rewards far outweigh any initial investment, as they pave the way for increased visibility, reader engagement, and ultimately, a potential thriving readership.

Your Cover

Hire a professional designer – Professional cover designers have the skills and experience to create a cover that is visually stunning, eye-catching, aligned with the genre and the theme of your book, and appeals to your target reader.

Use high-quality genre-aligned images – The cover should reflect your genre and theme of the book. Using high-quality images will make it look more polished and professional.

Use typography effectively – The typography (text, hierarchy, and font) used on your cover should be easy to read, provide a hook to entice readers, and aligned with your book's theme.

Make sure the cover is legible in small sizes – The cover of your book will be displayed in various sizes online, make sure that the title, author name and images are legible and clear event in smaller sizes too.

Top tips!

- ✓ Professional cover designers will provide drafts for your feedback. As part of their scope of work ensure you receive an image file of the cover you can use for promotional purposes (such as book reveals and social media tiles).
- ✓ Your cover page can include the title and subtitle, author name and author descriptor. If the book is part of a series, include the book number in the series (for example, *DUPLICITY Episode Two of the Democracy Series*).
- ✓ On the spine, ensure the title and your name are centred and easy to read. If it was on a retailer's shelf or library, would it be easy to find?
- ✓ On the back cover include your book's elevator pitch (short sharp summary about your book), ISBN and related barcode (professional cover designers do this for you), reader reviews about the book or you in general, your website or QR code to your website.

Your Internals & Typesetting

Choose the correct file format – For paperbacks being uploaded to Amazon or IngramSpark (more on these soon), your digital file needs to be PDF.

The most common file formats for eBooks are EPUB and MOBI. EPUB is the most widely supported format, and it is recommended for books that will be sold on multiple platforms. MOBI is used mainly for Amazon Kindle books.

Use a professional book formatting service – These services will help format your book correctly (such as the copyright page, contents, chapter headings, page numbers, and postscript copy) and ensure that it looks professional. They can also help you to ensure that your book is compatible with various devices and platforms.

To note, professional book formatting services will prepare the digital file (PDF for paperback, EPUB for eBook) needed to upload to Amazon or IngramSpark. Your cover file is uploaded as a separate file.

Be consistent with layout and typography – This will make it easier for readers to navigate the book and will make it look more professional.

Use high-resolution images – If you are using photos, graphs, maps, images, illustrations, or icons in your book, ensure they are relevant and high-resolution for best results.

Test your book on different devices – Ensure your book looks and functions correctly across a range of digital devices and even print a copy to review first. This will help you to identify and fix any issues before you publish your book.

Top tips!

- ✓ Getting the copyright page correct is important. It needs to include a range of details to assert your ownership of the materials and other standard information.
- ✓ On average there are 34-lines per page in 12-point font and 1.4-line spacing, and 26-lines per page in 16-point font for large print books.
- ✓ One of the most important parts of the page are the margins. The ‘negative space’ around the text gives the readers room to hold the book without covering the words and ensure the inside text doesn’t sit too close to the binding.
- ✓ At the end of the book, consider including preview chapters of another book you have written, or use the pages to include a note from the writer or acknowledgements, contact information, or even an invitation to leave reviews.

Are you planning on selling your book?

If you want to sell your book in Australia or around the world, it is best practice to secure a unique identifier, an **International Standard Book Number (ISBN)**.

A 10-digit ISBN is needed for each edition and format (POD, eBook, audiobook) of your book. The ISBN is included on the book cover and internals, on the copyright page.

ISBNs are not mandatory, but they are used internationally across the book trade and library sector to increase the discoverability of your book.

ACTIONS

☐ If you are planning on selling your book you may want to **purchase ISBNs**. You can buy them as a single number or in a batch if you are planning on publishing more books. Visit Thrope-Bowker's website to purpose ISBNs and barcodes:

www.myidentifiers.com.au/identify-protect-your-book/isbn/buy-isbn

☐ **Research top selling books in your genre**. Have a look at their covers, the images and typography used and similar to them all. See what the internals look like and how the chapters are laid out.

☐ Explore **free resources and price compare services** provided by publishing consultants. Lead examples include:

Reedsy https://reedsy.com

The Book Designer www.thebookdesigner.com

☐ Source a professional to complete your **internal design and typesetting**. There are several online marketplaces where you can search for contractors based around the world. When sourcing a contractor give them a clear, detailed brief (such as 'format internals for a paperback book in PDF to be uploaded to Amazon' as English might not be their first language) and ask for examples of work they have done before you confirm the order.

See these online marketplaces for typesetting contractors:

Freelancer www.freelancer.com

Upwork www.upwork.com

Fiverr www.fiverr.com

☐ Source a professional to complete your **book cover**. Having a clear, well-developed brief for the designer is important and will help with the back-and-forth of design development. Provide links or samples of other covers you want to designer to strive towards.

See these online marketplaces for book cover designers:

Illustrationx www.illustrationx.com/styles/book-covers

The Illustrators www.theillustrators.com.au/book-cover-designer

04 Publishing Options

Let's now delve into the exciting realm of publishing services and explore the different methods available to bring your book to life.

In this section, we'll review two popular options: Print on Demand (POD) and the advantages of working with global POD printers and distributors Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) and IngramSpark.

Get ready to discover the possibilities and find the perfect fit for your book.

Print on Demand (POD) has revolutionised the publishing industry, offering writers a cost-effective and efficient way to produce physical copies of their books. With POD, books are printed as they are ordered, eliminating the need for large print runs and excess copies stored in your garage and elsewhere.

POD provides flexibility, affordability, and the ability to fulfill orders worldwide without the burden of storage and shipping logistics. It's a convenient choice for self-published writers looking to make their books available in physical form without significant upfront costs.

852 Press works with KDP and IngramSpark.

In utilising these platforms, we work on leveraging each platform’s strengths and maximising our book catalogue’s discoverablity and availability in both digital and physical formats.

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP)

KDP is part of Amazon's platform. KDP offers a comprehensive self-publishing solution for writers allowing you to easily upload your book file, publish your book in both eBook and print formats, and the great benefit of promoting your book on Amazon and Kindle reaching millions of readers worldwide.

In registering a KDP account you get access to seamless integration with Amazon's vast marketplace, competitive royalties, and access to promotional tools like Kindle Unlimited (offering your eBook for free for a locked period) and Kindle Countdown Deals.

Your KDP account provides a user-friendly system and dashboard data and sales reports, royalty payments, and robust support and resources for writers at every stage of the publishing process.

IngramSpark

IngramSpark is a popular choice for writers seeking wide distribution and print options that reaches beyond the Amazon ecosystem.

IngramSpark offers a professional-grade self-publishing platform that allows you to produce both eBooks and print books. They provide an extensive distribution network, making your book available to retailers, libraries, and online stores globally.

Working with IngramSpark grants you the flexibility to distribute your book beyond Amazon, potentially reaching a broader audience and maximising your book's discoverability.

Your IngramSpark account provides sales data, royalty payments, resources, and access to a responsive help centre.

Top tips!

- ✓ Amazon is the number one global website for book sales. KDP gives you access to Amazon and Kindle's vast customer base, promotional opportunities, seamless eBook and print publishing, and allows for those sought after Amazon reviews.
- ✓ IngramSpark expands your distribution reach, opening doors to traditional bookstores, libraries, and global markets.
- ✓ Don't know which one to choose? Ultimately, it will depend on your publishing goals and target audience.

  Only want to publish for friends and family? Just go with IngramSpark. You can purchase as many copies as you want and keep your book 'hidden' from public purchase.

  Want to sell your book? Consider KDP and IngramSpark's distribution reach, pricing, royalties, and promotional opportunities when making your decision.

You Need to Legally Deposit Your Book

Under Australian law, any book published in Australia (even self-published just for friends and family) needs to be deposited with the National Library of Australia.

The **National Library of Australia National eDeposit** is an online platform where you can fulfill your national and state legal obligations by submitting a digital copy of your book and a cover image.

'Legal deposit' ensures that material published in Australia is preserved for current and future generations and enables libraries to provide access to a complete collection of the nation's published heritage (via Trove).

Also, by legally depositing your book you can make it available as an eBook to Australia's library network.

ACTIONS

- ☐ **Determine your publishing goal**. Are you just publishing for friends and family, or are you planning on selling your book?
- ☐ **Do your own research** on KDP Direct and IngramSpark to learn more about their individual features, benefits, and costs.

  KDP https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G200634280

  IngramSpark www.ingramspark.com
- ☐ Explore the requirements to **set up an account** with KDP Direct and/or IngramSpark:

  KDP https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G200620010

  IngramSpark https://myaccount.ingramspark.com/Account/Signup
- ☐ Once you have uploaded your book files to your chosen platform, **order a small print run** (say, 3 to 5 books) to see how long it takes to arrive and to review quality before you fully launch your book. You can make changes to the digital files if the quality of the book doesn't meet expectations.
- ☐ When you are happy with the quality of the printed book, **legally deposit your book** with the National Library of Australian National eDeposit (NED). Set up a free account and upload the EPUB digital file of your book and book cover image to your NED account:

  National eDeposit https://ned.gov.au/ned

05 Book Sales & Distribution Channels

If you are planning on selling your book, welcome to the exciting world of distribution and sales.

In this section, we'll unravel the mysteries surrounding the distribution of your book and how to make it available to eager readers. Distribution may seem daunting at first, but with the right mindset and strategies, you can navigate this landscape with confidence and pave the way for your book's success.

Let’s discover how to unleash your book's potential, reaching readers far and wide.

The Importance of Metadata for Selling Your Book

Your book metadata powers online discovery and sales.

It’s used by online algorithms to understand what the book is about and determine if and where on the list your book comes up in search engines.

Your book’s metadata helps your online discoverability.

Let's explore the crucial role of metadata and the significance of having effective copy before publishing your book. Ensuring your metadata is accurate, compelling, and optimised can make a substantial difference in attracting readers, increasing visibility, and boosting sales.

So, what are the key elements of metadata and how do they play a vital role in the success of your book?

See the next page for a list of data commonly collated to form your book’s metadata.

What data is included in my book's metadata?

1. **Title, subtitle, series information, and ISBN.**
2. **Cover image.**
3. **Book dimensions** of page numbers (paperback and eBook) and physical size (height, width, thickness) and unit weight.
4. **Book description (short and long synopsis and log lines).**

   A well-crafted synopsis serves as a powerful marketing tool. **The short 100-word synopsis** offers a concise and captivating summary of your book and highlighting the unique aspects of your story. A **longer synopsis** provides a more detailed overview, allowing readers to delve deeper into the plot, characters, and themes.

   In addition, **log lines** are concise one or two-sentence summaries that capture the essence of your story. Think of them as attention-grabbing hooks that entice readers to delve into your book. A well-crafted log line captures the core conflict, main characters, and unique elements of your story, leaving readers curious and eager to dive in. It's a powerful tool for generating interest and setting the tone for your book.
5. **Pricing.**
6. **Keywords, topics, and phrases.**

   Keywords are essential for discoverability in the vast global ocean of books.

   They are specific words or phrases that reflect the themes, genres, and elements of your book. By selecting the right keywords, you enhance your book's visibility in online searches, positioning you to reach the top of the search results list. Thorough keyword research can ensure your book reaches the intended audience and perhaps increase the chances of attracting interested readers.
7. **Genre/subject codes and categories.**

   Accurately selecting the right categories and genre for your book is vital for positioning it in the right market.

   Proper categorisation using the global Thema and BIASC coding systems helps readers find your book when browsing specific genres or sub-genres. It also increases your chances of ranking in relevant bestseller lists and gaining exposure to readers actively seeking books within your niche.

   Choosing the appropriate categories and genre ensures your book is visible to the right audience, maximizing its potential for success.

   Learn more about Thema and BIASC:

   Thema: https://ns.editeur.org/thema/en

   Book Industry Standards and Communications (BIASC): www.bisg.org/complete-bisac-subject-headings-list
8. **Links to Amazon 'Look Inside' free previews and equivalents.**
9. **Book reviews from professionals and general readers.**
10. **Author information.**

    Your author bio is your chance to connect with readers on a personal level and establish credibility. The short author bio should be a brief and engaging introduction, highlighting your achievements, writing style, and passions. The long author bio allows for a deeper dive into your background, experiences, and inspirations. Crafting compelling author bios helps readers forge a connection with you and potentially builds trust, making them more likely to explore your work.

Where do you use your metadata?

Use your metadata in your Amazon and IngramSpark author and individual book pages, in your own website, and social media.

You can also register your books on two main online platforms used by distributors, retailers, and libraries – the **Australian Publishers Association's Title Page** (Australia) and **Nielsen's Title Editor** (international).

Effective metadata, including captivating synopses, compelling author bios, attention-grabbing log lines, well-researched keywords, and accurate book code categorisation, is the key to unlocking your book's potential in the competitive publishing landscape.

By investing time and effort in crafting effective metadata, you could increase your book's discoverability, attract interested readers, and set the stage for enhanced sales and recognition.

Don't underestimate the power of metadata.

Embrace the opportunity to optimise your book's metadata, ensuring it shines in all the right places. With effective metadata, your book will stand out, capturing the attention it deserves in the vast world of publishing.

Top tips!

- ✓ We recommend you create a master metadata document for each book for own use, to keep all this important title information in one place.
- ✓ Use your metadata in your Amazon and IngramSpark author and individual book pages, on your own website, and social media.

Where and How Do I Sell My Book?

When it comes to distribution in the Australian marketplace, it's important to acknowledge the challenges that self-published writers often face.

There are five main distribution channels – retailers, wholesalers and distributors, digital distribution, libraries, and direct sales from the author.

Retailers in Australia generally prefer working with traditional publishers and may perceive self-published books as second-class or lacking the quality control associated with major publishing houses. However, it's essential to note that there are exceptions to this perception.

Retailers are in business to make money and typically prioritise partnering with established reputable publishers who provide competitive pricing, marketing support, and promotional opportunities to sell books.

Retailers typically expect a 40-50% share of the Recommended Retail Price (RRP) and may also require a guaranteed return for unsold stock.

As a self-published writer, breaking through this barrier may require exploring alternative distribution methods and demonstrating the quality and marketability of your book.

One approach is to work with **wholesalers and distributors** who can help you reach retailers. These intermediaries have established relationships with retailers and can assist in getting your book on their shelves.

However, it's crucial to be aware that wholesalers and distributors usually require a significant share, typically 60-70% of the RRP which they share with the retailer.

While the traditional retail route may present challenges for self-published writers, there are alternative avenues worth considering.

Local independent bookstores, for instance, may be more open to working directly with self-published writers, provided there is a compelling offer on the table. Building relationships with independent stores, hosting local author events, and offering attractive payment terms can help secure placement and increase visibility.

In addition to physical retail, it's crucial to embrace **digital distribution** channels, such as online marketplaces and eBook platforms.

Platforms like Amazon Kindle, Apple Books, Kobo, and Google Play offer opportunities for self-published writers to reach a wide audience and bypass some of the challenges associated with traditional retail. Leveraging these platforms allows you to directly connect with readers and increase your book's discoverability.

Breaking through the distribution barriers as a self-published writer requires persistence, creativity, and a focus on quality.

Investing in professional editing, cover design, and formatting can help elevate your book's appeal and position it as a competitive contender.

Building an author platform (your website and social media), engaging with readers through social media, and seeking opportunities for reviews and endorsements can also contribute to gaining recognition and increasing sales.

While the traditional retail landscape may pose hurdles, it's essential to explore all available distribution channels and leverage the digital landscape to your advantage.

By adopting a multifaceted approach and focusing on quality, marketing, and reader engagement, self-published authors can break through and find success in the Australian market.

Book Wholesalers & Distributors

Book wholesalers and distributors (such as Booktopia and John Reed Books in Australia) play a crucial role in the publishing industry, acting as intermediaries between publishers or authors and retailers. Their primary function is to ensure that books reach a wide network of retailers, making them available for purchase by readers.

Wholesalers and distributors usually require a significant share, typically 60-70% of the RRP.

Here are some key services that book distributors generally offer to writers:

Distribution Network – Distributors have established relationships with various retailers, including bookstores, department stores and supermarkets, online marketplaces, libraries, and specialty retailers. They leverage these connections to get books placed in physical and online stores, maximising their availability to potential readers.

Order Fulfillment – Distributors handle the logistics of fulfilling orders. They manage inventory, receive and process orders, and coordinate shipping and delivery, ensuring your books are stocked and replenished as needed.

Sales and Marketing Support – Distributors often have dedicated sales representatives who actively promote books to retailers, pitching titles, arranging meetings, and negotiating terms. They help generate interest and secure placement for books in physical stores and online platforms.

Warehousing and Inventory Management – Distributors have the infrastructure and resources to store and manage inventory on behalf of publishers or writers. They handle stock levels, reordering, and tracking, ensuring that books are readily available for distribution and sale.

Returns Management – Book distributors handle returns from retailers, which is an important aspect of the publishing business. They process returned books, assess their condition, and facilitate refunds or replacements as per the agreed-upon terms.

Financial Management – Distributors handle the financial aspects of book sales, including invoicing, payment collection, and royalty reporting. They ensure accurate and timely accounting, making it easier for authors to track their sales and earnings.

Market Insights – Distributors have access to market data, trends, and insights, which they can share with publishers and writers. This information helps inform decision-making, such as pricing strategies, marketing campaigns, and identifying opportunities for growth.

Writer Beware!

It's important to note that the specific services provided by distributors can vary depending on the distributor and the nature of the publishing agreement. Some distributors may offer additional services, such as marketing campaigns, author events, or digital distribution to eBook platforms.

Collaborating with a book distributor can provide writers with wider distribution reach, increased exposure, and more efficient management of the logistical aspects of book sales.

It is essential to carefully evaluate and negotiate the terms of the distribution agreement to ensure it aligns with your goals and interests as a writer.

Retailers

Retailers have certain expectations from writers when it comes to pricing and marketing support.

Here's an overview of what retailers generally expect:

Pricing – Retailers expect writers to set reasonable and competitive prices for their books. Pricing plays a significant role in attracting readers and driving sales. Retailers prefer writers who understand the market and price their books accordingly. It's important to strike a balance between profitability for yourself and affordability for the readers.

Retailers expect a commission between 40-50% of the RRP and the option to return unsold copies at no cost if they don't sell within a specific time.

Cooperation with Retailer Policies – Retailers will have specific policies and writers are expected to be aware of them and comply. This includes understanding the retailer's return policy, offering appropriate discounts or promotions as negotiated, and adhering to the terms of sale agreed upon with the retailer.

Retailers prefer a consignment/Sale or Return (SOR) agreement with self-published writers, where you provide books for free for a set time, you get paid once books are sold, and unsold stock is returned. The other option, firm sale, is rare with self-publishing where the retailer buys the book from you with no returns.

Professional Presentation – Retailers expect writers to present themselves and their books professionally. This includes having a well-designed and visually appealing cover, high-quality formatting, and error-free content and a professional presentation extends to the quality of your website, social media, and email accounts. You are selling you and your book, and a polished professional presentation demonstrates your commitment to delivering a high-quality reading experience which retailers appreciate.

Marketing Support – Retailers value writers who invest time and effort in promoting their work, as it increases the likelihood of sales and attracts reader attention. While traditional publishers often provide marketing support, self-published writers are expected to undertake an active role in promoting their own books. This includes building an author platform (website and social media), marketing collateral and flyers, engaging with readers through social media and book websites, attending book signings and events, and seeking opportunities for media coverage or book reviews.

Writer Engagement – Retailers appreciate writers who actively engage with their readership. This can involve participating in author events, book club discussions, or Q&A sessions. Retailers recognise the value of writers who establish a personal connection with readers, as it fosters loyalty and encourages repeat purchases.

It's important to note that retailer expectations may vary, and it's essential to establish clear communication and understanding with individual retailers.

Building positive relationships with retailers involves mutual respect, professionalism, and a commitment to collaborative success.

By meeting retailer expectations in terms of pricing and marketing support, authors can enhance their chances of securing favourable placement, gaining retailer support, and maximising sales opportunities.

Case In Point: Mathew Reilly

Matthew Reilly is a remarkable success story that demonstrates how self-published authors can break through the barriers of traditional retail and achieve widespread recognition.

Reilly's journey began when he self-published his first novel, *Contest*, at the age of 19.

Despite facing initial rejection from traditional publishers, Reilly took matters into his own hands and self-published his book.

With sheer determination and relentless self-promotion, Reilly managed to capture the attention of readers and generate significant buzz around his fast-paced, action-packed storytelling. His books garnered a devoted fan base, and the word-of-mouth excitement caught the attention of major publishers.

Reilly's breakthrough moment came when he secured a publishing deal with Pan Macmillan. His debut novel, *Contest*, was republished by Pan Macmillan and gained widespread acclaim.

Since then, Matthew Reilly has become one of Australia's most beloved and New York Times best-selling authors.

His adrenaline-fueled thrillers, including the *Scarecrow* and *Jack West Jr.* series, have captured the imaginations of readers worldwide, earning him a dedicated following and consistent placement on bestseller lists.

Reilly's inspiring journey highlights the power of self-belief, perseverance, and the ability to create a buzz around your work. Through strategic marketing efforts, engaging with readers, and delivering high-quality storytelling, he defied the odds and broke through the barriers that many self-published authors face.

While every author's path to success is unique, Matthew Reilly's story serves as a testament to the possibilities that exist for self-published authors.

http://matthewreilly.com

Libraries

Libraries play a significant role in the distribution and revenue generation for writers, and distributors who serve libraries and prioritise quality publications.

Major distributors servicing Australian libraries, such as ALS Library Services, James Bennett, and Peter Pal, offer opportunities for writers to have their books included in library collections.

To work with library distributors, you would typically submit your book to them for consideration. Once your book is added to their catalogue, the distributors actively promote it to their clients and place orders directly with you. As the author, it becomes your responsibility to organise and fulfill the orders, including the provision of a GST compliant invoice for payment.

Library distributors generally expect a discount of at least 40% of the RRP.

Additionally, writers have the option to approach individual libraries directly, offering a discount of 40-50% of the RRP for their book purchases. This allows writers to establish relationships with specific libraries and expand their presence in local communities.

Registering your books with the **Australian Lending Rights Scheme** is another beneficial step if your books are available in libraries.

The scheme compensates writers for income lost due to the free multiple use of their books, including eBooks and audiobooks, in public and educational lending libraries. To qualify for compensation, writers need to achieve a minimum of $100 in lending right fees annually.

Libraries provide a valuable avenue for reaching readers, fostering discoverability, and participating in programs that support writers will greatly help generate income through sales and lending right fees.

Author Sales

As a writer, you have the freedom to explore various avenues for direct sales, giving you the opportunity to connect directly with readers and maximise your book's reach.

Here are some ideas to consider when selling your books:

In-Person Events – Participate in events, festivals, markets, and community gatherings where you can showcase and sell your books. Set up a booth or table, engage with potential readers, and offer signed copies or personalised messages. These face-to-face interactions can create memorable experiences and foster a strong connection with your audience.

Online Platforms – Utilise online platforms such as your website, social media, and eCommerce platforms to sell your books directly. Create an online store where readers can browse and purchase your books with ease directly from you. Showcase your author brand, provide enticing book descriptions, and offer secure payment options. Learn more about online marketing techniques to leverage its power to drive traffic to your website and potentially generate sales.

Digital Payment Devices – Consider purchasing a digital payment device, like a Square reader or other similar tools (available at Officeworks) to help facilitate credit and debit card payments during in-person sales events. This enables you to offer convenient payment options to customers who may not have cash on hand, enhancing their purchasing experience.

Bundling and Special Offers – Create attractive bundles or special offers to entice retailers and readers to make a purchase. For example, you could bundle your books together at a discounted price or offer limited-time promotions, such as signed copies or exclusive merchandise. These strategies can incentivise retailers and readers to buy more and increase your sales.

Author Website – Build a professional author website that serves as a hub for your books, author information, and updates. Utilise your website to showcase your books, share engaging content related to your writing process, and provide an easy way for visitors to purchase your works directly. Include compelling calls-to-action and clear instructions on how to make a purchase.

Email Marketing – Develop an email list of interested readers and leverage email marketing strategies to promote your books directly. Send regular eNewsletters featuring new releases, exclusive discounts, author updates, and behind-the-scenes content. By nurturing your email subscribers, you can cultivate a loyal fanbase and drive direct sales.

Collaboration and Cross-Promotion – Partner with fellow authors, influencers, or relevant businesses to cross-promote each other's work. Collaborate on joint promotions, bundle offers, or guest blog posts to expand your reach and tap into new audiences. This collaborative approach could lead to increased exposure and sales opportunities.

Remember, direct sales provide you with greater control over the selling process and enable you to establish a direct connection with your readers.

Embrace these ideas, adapt them to suit your unique author brand, and explore additional creative strategies to enhance your direct sales efforts.

By thinking outside the box, and continually working on your sales and marketing activities, you can build a loyal readership, boost book sales, and create a sustainable income stream.

Reflection

We've covered a lot of ground so far.

Take a moment to check in and consider these questions.

What is my instinct telling me about self-publishing distribution?

Do I truly have the willingness and ability to sell myself and my books to distributors, retailers, libraries, and the public?

What are my strengths? What can I do well?

What are my areas of development? What are the gaps in my knowledge? What skills do I need?

ACTIONS

- ☐ Create a **master metadata document** for each book for own use, to keep important title information in one place (see page 19 of this guidebook for what it should include).
- ☐ For your metadata, source the **genre/subject codes** for your book:

  Thema https://ns.editeur.org/thema/en

  Book Industry Standards and Communications (BIASC) www.bisg.org/complete-bisac-subject-headings-list
- ☐ Research and determine your **distribution plan** (wholesaler and distributors, digital distributors, retailers, libraries, and direct author sales) and source pricing, terms, and conditions information to help make your decision.
- ☐ Confirm your **pricing, discount, and supply strategy** for retailers and libraries – what is your Recommended Retail Price? What discount are you prepared to offer retailers and libraries? What are your supply terms and conditions for retailers – do you offer free postage, free returns for books not sold?
- ☐ Develop a **promotional information kit** for retailers and libraries on your book, a one-page flyer that includes book information, about the author, about the story, and themes explored in the book.

  See 852 Press example:

  www.852press.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/852-Press-The-Mallee.pdf
- ☐ **Create your own contact database** of retailers and libraries you want to sell your book to. Find their websites and publicly available contact details and make an approach.
- ☐ For greater visibility with retailers and libraires, consider registering your book on these **two main online platforms** (fees might apply).

  Australian Publishers Association's Title Page https://publishers.asn.au/Web/Web/Our-Work/About-TitlePage.aspx

  Nielsen's Title Editor www.nielsentitleeditor.com/titleeditor
- ☐ Submit your book for consideration to **major bookstore groups**. In Australia these groups are Berkelouw Books, Booksellers Choice Group, Collins Booksellers, Dymocks, Harry Hartog, Leading Edge Books, QBD Books, Readings, Robinsons Bookshop, and WHSmith.
- ☐ Submit your book for consideration to the **major library distributors**:

  ALS Library Services www.alslib.com/authors

  James Bennett https://bennett.com.au/publisher-services

  Peter Pal www.peterpal.com.au/index.php/self-published
- ☐ If selling to libraries, email the **Australian Lending Right Scheme** to create your account and receive annual lending right payments:

  www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/australian-lending-right-schemes-elrplr
- ☐ Establish an **author online platform**. Purchase a website domain name and create an author website (fees apply), or create a free social media account (Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok) for you, as an author, or for your book.
- ☐ Consider purchasing a **digital payment device** that will allow you accept debit and credit card payments for book sales.

06 Setting Prices & Understanding Tax

When setting the price for your book as an author, it's essential to consider various factors and ensure compliance with the Australian tax system.

Here's a summary of what you should consider:

Cost Analysis – Do you know how much it actually costs to publish and distribute a single book? Conduct a cost analysis to determine the expenses associated with producing and publishing your book. Identify every item and services you paid for in developing and publishing your book such as editing, cover design, formatting, printing, distribution, postage, and marketing. Take into account both direct and indirect expenses to determine a reasonable price that covers your investment and allows for a profit margin.

Market Research – Conduct market research to understand the pricing trends within your genre and target audience. Analyse the Recommended Retail Prices of comparable books and assess their perceived value. Consider factors such as book length, format (eBook, paperback, hardcover), and the reputation of the writer. This research will help you position your book competitively in the market.

Profit Margin – Determine the profit you would like to achieve from each book sold. This ‘profit margin’ should account for both your desired income as a writer and the amount of income needed to cover the costs of publishing your book and future funds need to reinvest in your writing career. Consider your long-term goals and the sustainability of your pricing strategy.

Pricing Strategies – Consider different pricing strategies based on the format of your book. eBooks, for example, are often priced lower than physical copies due to reduced production and distribution costs. Additionally, consider offering promotional discounts or limited time offers to generate interest and incentivise readers to make a purchase.

In Australia, your book’s Recommended Retail Price includes GST. Some distributors, retailers, or libraries may require you to present an invoice that shows pricing that includes and excludes GST (see tax information on the next page).

Flexibility and Testing – Be open to adjusting your pricing strategy based on market feedback and reader demand. Monitor sales, gather feedback, and analyse the impact of your pricing decisions. You are free to experiment with different price points and promotional strategies to find the optimal balance between profitability and reader appeal.

Remember, setting the price for your book requires careful consideration of your costs, market trends, profit goals, and compliance with the Australian tax system.

By conducting thorough research, understanding your financial goals, and staying informed about tax requirements, you can establish a pricing strategy that is both competitive and financially viable for your writer journey.

Australian Tax Requirements

Writers need to comply with the Australian tax system and understand Goods and Services Tax (GST) obligations.

If your annual turnover exceeds the GST threshold (as determined by the Australian Taxation Office), you will be required to register for GST and include it in the price of your book. Familiarise yourself with the tax regulations and consult with a tax professional to ensure accurate reporting and compliance.

To sell your books in Australia to retailers and libraries, you will need to:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Be registered for GST, and report to the Australian Tax Office (ATO) quarterly with a Business Activity Statement (BAS) and annually through an income tax return; and
- Be able to create and issue tax compliant invoices.

If you do not want to register or do all this yourself, partner with a company that can provide this service for you – it can be any company that has an ABN, registered for GST, and has an accounting software system to produce invoices for you. It is then up to you and the company to determine how you will be paid for book sales.

International Tax

Internationally, you will need to complete tax requirements for the USA and Europe which is usually done and managed when you set up your author account on Amazon.

In setting up your account you might need to provide an ABN and bank account details to satisfy USA tax laws.

Reflection

People have different approaches and relationships with money and financial management. Implementing good processes and understanding the flow of finances and reporting requirements provides a strong stress-free foundation for ongoing success.

Take a moment to check in and consider these questions.

What's my approach to managing money generally?

What basic accounting skills do I have?

Do I know someone who can provide professional financial and tax advice? Who could I ask?

ACTIONS

- ☐ Seek **professional accounting or tax advice** on your options – to either set up your own ABN or to appoint a company to manage invoicing and tax receipts for you.
- ☐ Get your own **ABN**:
  https://business.gov.au/registrations/register-for-an-australian-business-number-abn
- ☐ Using your ABN, set up your own **author bank account** to use for sales income and book expenses.
- ☐ Investigate purchasing an **accounting software package** (such as MYOB or Xero) to manage invoicing, expenses, and BAS reporting. If not, set up a manual system to track income and expenses and create a template invoice to provide when asked.
- ☐ **Establish regular routines** to manage book finances and reporting requirements.

07 Marketing & Promotion for Self-Published Books

Embarking on the self-publishing journey means taking on the responsibility of marketing and promoting your book to build an audience. While the process may seem daunting, consistency and persistence in your marketing efforts can yield significant benefits over time.

Your marketing and promotion activities should strive to achieve three main goals:

Establish and Reinforce Your Foundation – As a self-published writer you need to engage in ongoing marketing and promotional activities to help build and refine title and writer recognition and metadata. By optimising this information, digital algorithms (which drive your book up the list in search results) can better understand your book, know more about your identity as a writer, and how everything connects. This foundation lays the groundwork for improved discoverability and reader engagement.

Continually Develop Your Audience – Building a strong reader base involves generating interactions and fostering direct relationships with readers and influencers. Actively engage with your audience, whether through social media, your website, blog posts, or eNewsletters. These interactions help establish recognition, nurture reader loyalty, increase reviews, and encourage word-of-mouth promotion.

Always Be Expanding Your Reach – Utilise targeted paid advertising and promotions to expand your book's reach beyond your existing audience (such as Facebook and Amazon ads). This approach enables you to break through in a crowded marketplace and reach new readers who may be interested in your work. By strategically investing in promotional efforts, you increase the chances of gaining visibility and attracting a wider readership.

Launching Your Book Timeline

You only get to launch your book once!

Here are some ideas to adapt to suit your new book launch for your target audience based on resources available. Flexibility, persistence, and consistency in your marketing efforts are key to building momentum and establishing your author brand.

Good luck with your book launch!

7+ Months Prior to Launch

Develop Your Plan – Determine a specific date for your book launch, allowing ample time for preparations. Set out a timeline of marketing and promotional activities.

Understanding Your Target Audience – Identify your ideal reader for your new book and research their online interactions, preferred book-buying platforms, and aspects of your book that will resonate with them.

Author Website: Ensure your author website is updated and previews, where possible, your forthcoming book.

Build Awareness – Start building awareness by sharing through your website and social media your writing journey, inspiration, or snippets of your work-in-progress. Engage with potential readers and start generating excitement and anticipation through social media posts, blog updates, and newsletter announcements.

6-3 Months Prior to Launch

While You're Writing – Maintain an active online presence, sharing updates, behind-the-scenes content, and teasers to sustain excitement and keep your audience engaged.

Crafting Your Elevator Pitch – Develop a concise and intriguing elevator pitch (25 words) that encapsulates your book's hook and the target audience it will appeal to. Focus on capturing attention and generating curiosity.

Create a Launch Team – Assemble a group of enthusiastic readers or influencers who can help spread the word about your book.

2-1 Months Prior to Launch

Complete Your Metadata – Finalise your metadata document (see pages 18-20 of this guidebook) and consider registering your book with Australian Publishers Association's Title Page and Nielsen's Title Editor (see page 20).

While Your Book is Being Edited – Continue to maintain momentum through regular communication and sneak peeks of your book's progress. Consider offering limited-time pre-order opportunities to incentivise early sales.

Update Your Author Website: Ensure your author website is updated and showcases your new book prominently, with details, cover image, and pre-order links.

Your Online Profile – Establish an online presence through platforms like Amazon and Goodreads author pages.

Advance Reader Copies (ARCs) – Provide free ARCs to professional literary reviewers, influencers, book bloggers, and readers before launch to gather testimonials on Amazon, Goodreads, and for your general promotion. Positive reviews and testimonials boost credibility and attract more readers.

Local Bookstores and Libraries – Approach independent bookstores and local libraries to inquire about book signings, author events, or potential placement on their shelves. Submit your book to library distributors for their consideration.

2 Weeks Prior to Launch

Ramp Up Communications – Build anticipation by revealing the cover, sharing excerpts, and promoting pre-order options. Utilise your email list to send out dedicated launch announcements, exclusive content, and pre-order incentives.

Paid Advertising – Consider targeted online advertising campaigns on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or Amazon to reach specific audiences.

Local Media Outreach – Contact local newspapers, radio stations, and community websites to share your story, book launch details, and upcoming events.

Book Promotion Sites – Submit your book to reputable book promotion websites like BookBub, Freebooksy, or Bargain Booksy to gain additional exposure.

Collaborate with Influencers – Partner with influencers, Bookstagrammers, or relevant social media personalities who align with your book's genre and target audience. They can help amplify your reach through reviews, features, or recommendations.

Launch Day

Tell the world – Launch your book with a bang, promoting it across your platforms and engaging with readers.

Book Launch Event – Organize a book launch event to celebrate your book's release and generate excitement. Invite friends, family, local bookstores, and community members to attend. Host a virtual event through platforms like Facebook Live, Instagram Live, or Zoom. Include readings, Q&A sessions, guest author appearances, and giveaways.

Post-Launch

After release maintain marketing efforts, including writer presentations and tours, interviews, and attend virtual events to sustain momentum and continue expanding your readership.

See the next page for a range of ongoing marketing and promotion ideas to help maintain momentum.

Legal Deposit – Don’t forget to submit your book to the National Library of Australia national eDeposit (see page 17 of this guidebook).

Launch a Review Campaign – Encourage readers to leave reviews on platforms like Amazon, Goodreads, and other relevant book review websites. Consider offering incentives like exclusive bonus content or giveaways to motivate readers to leave reviews.

Online Reader Engagement – Encourage readers to share their feedback, reviews, and recommendations on social media. Engage with them by responding to comments and messages.

Ongoing Marketing and Promotion

No one is going to buy your book if you are not selling it!

Marketing and promoting your book requires ongoing effort, planning, and routines. To ensure ongoing visibility for your self-published book, it's crucial to have a well-defined marketing and promotional plan in place.

Here are some ideas for self-published writers.

Essential Elements

Develop a Marketing and Promotional Plan – Create an annual timeline outlining your marketing and promotional activities. This plan will help you stay organised and ensure a consistent approach to reaching readers, retailers, and libraries.

Maintain an Author Website – Ensure your author website includes a reader subscriber function, allowing visitors to sign up for electronic direct mail (EDM). Use your website to showcase your books, provide updates, and engage with readers.

Maintain Regular Communication Cycles – Use electronic direct mail (EDM) to regularly communicate with reviewers, retailers, libraries, and readers. Keep them informed about your book updates, events, and any promotions.

Engage on Social Media – Regularly create engaging content on social media platforms, such as posts, stories, reels, videos, and blogs. Interact with your audience, respond to comments, and share updates about your writing journey.

Gather Book Reviews and Testimonials – Continuously seek book reviews and testimonials from readers to bolster your credibility and encourage others to discover your book.

Advanced Activities

Utilise Paid Promotion and Advertising – Consider investing in print, radio, or online advertising platforms like Facebook or Amazon adverts to target specific audiences and generate awareness.

Organise Giveaways and Reader Prizes – Run contests or giveaways to engage with readers and incentivise them to share and promote your book.

Catalogue Inclusion – Work with distributors and retailers to ensure your book is listed in their catalogues, increasing its visibility to potential buyers.

Create Marketing Collateral – Develop marketing materials such as flyers, postcards, bookmarks, business cards, and pull-up banners to distribute at events, book signings, and other promotional opportunities.

Leverage Media Opportunities – Seek media coverage through media releases, articles, opinion pieces, and interviews to expand your reach and raise awareness about your book.

Blog Tours – Arrange for guest posts, author interviews, and features on book-related blogs and websites to expand your reach and introduce your book to new audiences.

Guest on Podcasts – Seek opportunities to be a guest on relevant podcasts to discuss your book, share insights, and connect with listeners. This allows you to reach new audiences and discuss your book in an engaging and conversational format.

Participate in Author Talks and Events – Connect with local bookshops, libraries, book clubs, writers' groups, and literary, arts, and cultural festivals. Offer author talks, participate in panel discussions, and engage with fellow authors and readers in your genre.

Remember, building an ongoing marketing and promotional strategy requires consistency, adaptability, and a proactive approach to reach and engage with your target audience. Continuously explore new avenues and collaborations to expand your reach and connect with readers who will appreciate your work.

ACTIONS

☐ Establish an **annual plan** that includes:

Your goals/measures of success for the year.

Marketing activity you will undertake to promote your book(s) and yourself as an author.

Distribution and sales for the year ahead.

Sales data you are interested in.

Financial management and reporting.

☐ Establish the **essential elements** for a self-published book:

Website.

Social media accounts.

Regular communication cycles (such as an eNewsletter) with readers, reviewers, retailers, and libraries.

Cycles of asking for reviews and promoting them.

☐ For every new book you launch, develop a dedicated **marketing and promotions plan** that begins before you start writing.

☐ **Research what other authors do** in your genre – their website, social media, and promotional activity.

☐ **Develop your knowledge and skills** in self-published book marketing. 852 Press recommends:

Mark Dawson's Self-Publishing Formula
https://learn.selfpublishingformula.com

The Creative Penn www.thecreativepenn.com

Jane Friedman www.janefriedman.com

☐ Develop an **elevator pitch** for your book – the 25 words or less statement that encapsulates your book's hook and the target audience it will appeal to.

☐ Research and identify **literary reviewers, book bloggers, and book influencers** to contact and offer Advance Reader Copies.

☐ **Have at least one book launch event in your lifetime.** You only get to launch your first book once and it's a great occasion for family and friends to celebrate your achievement.

☐ Consider opening a free account with online design platform Canva to help produce marketing materials and social media tiles.

www.canva.com

Reflection

As a self-published writer, you are responsible for developing and implementing marketing and promotion activities.

Take a moment to check in and consider these questions.

What basic marketing, advertising, and promotional skills do I have? What are my strengths?

Do I know someone who can provide advice on marketing and promotions? Who could I ask?

Am I a confident public speaker? Could I do an author talk or a media interview confidently?

Am I comfortable in asking for a sale and promoting myself?

How would I respond to negative reviews or comments?

Final words

Self-publishing empowers you to bring your book to the world, but success requires effort and planning.

Focus on the following:

Quality Matters – Invest in editing, formatting, and cover design for a professional result.

Build Your Platform – Establish an online presence, engage with readers, and develop an author website.

Understand Distribution – Explore options like POD and partnerships with distributors like KDP Direct and Ingram Sparks.

Master and Manage Your Metadata – Craft compelling synopses, author bios, and keywords for discoverability and categorization.

Embrace Marketing – Create a launch plan, engage in ongoing promotion, and connect with readers through social media, email marketing, and collaborations.

Target Retailers and Libraries – Understand their expectations, offer attractive discounts, and consider library distribution options.

Price Strategically – Consider costs, market trends, and profitability while complying with tax obligations.

Direct Sales – Explore opportunities for doing direct sales yourself at events, through your website, and with digital payment devices.

Be Patient and Persistent – Building an audience and achieving success takes time, so stay committed and adapt your strategies as needed.

Follow the Process and Attention to Detail – Self-publishing production and marketing relies on consistently following processes and having high attention to detail. One step wrong, and often you must start again.

Measure Your Success – Track your progress. Keep track of your book's progress such as how many people have viewed your book, how many have purchased it, and how many reviews you have received.

Continue Marketing Efforts – After the launch, maintain momentum with regular promotions, reader engagement, and ongoing marketing activities.

Remember, self-publishing requires dedication, flexibility, and a proactive approach. With a solid plan, persistence, and a focus on quality, you can navigate the self-publishing landscape successfully and bring your book to eager readers.

Help Is Here

The **Australian Publishers Association** and **Small Press Network** are the peak national bodies representing publishers. Often, they have great information and resources for writers.

The peak national body supporting authors is the **Australian Society of Authors** (ASA). Membership provides access legal and professional advice, regular updates, and opportunities with publishers and agents.

www.asauthors.org

Internationally, there is the **Alliance of Independent Authors** A professional association for self-publishing authors that offers a wealth of resources, guides, and a supportive community.

www.allianceindependentauthors.org

852 Press and Richard Evans have found the following websites highly valuable in offering reliable and up-to-date information, education courses, and resources to help you navigate the self-publishing process and enhance your knowledge and skills as a writer (to note, we have no affiliation with these sites other than having benefited from their resources).

Mark Dawson's Self-Publishing Formula

Offers comprehensive online courses and resources for aspiring self-published authors, covering writing, marketing, and launching your book.

https://learn.selfpublishingformula.com

The Creative Penn

Joanna Penn's website provides valuable insights, tips, and resources on self-publishing, marketing, writing craft, and author entrepreneurship.

www.thecreativepenn.com

Jane Friedman

Jane Friedman's website features a wealth of articles and resources on the publishing industry, including self-publishing, book marketing, and author platform building.

www.janefriedman.com

852 Press Can Also Help

At 852 Press, we are passionate about supporting and empowering aspiring writers on their self-publishing journey – to help them tell their story.

We are more than happy to engage with individuals seeking advice and answer their questions to the best of our ability.

We understand the challenges and uncertainties that emerging writers and self-published authors may face, and we are here to provide guidance and share our knowledge.

However, it is important to note that our primary focus is on delivering workshops and providing educational resources.

Occasionally, we offer project management services where we coach and support writers in following the steps outlined in this guidebook. Our preference is to not be directly involved in, or manage for writers, the financial investment required to publish a book.

For project management, a reasonable service fee applies, and an agreement will be provided that clearly outlines the scope of work and deliverables as a way of managing expectations. This agreement ensures transparency and clarity for both parties involved.

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