

SELF-PUBLISHING BLUEPRINT



YOUR NO-NONSENSE GUIDE
TO SELF-PUBLISHING
YOUR FIRST BOOK,
THE RIGHT WAY — SIMPLY

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*Self-Publishing Blueprint: Your No-Nonsense Guide to
Self-Publishing Your First Book, The Right Way — Simply*
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Thanks for Reading!

About Veronica

1.

GET YOUR MANUSCRIPT EDITED

You have finally completed your initial draft of your manuscript. You've probably combed through your story, a hundred times (or more). Now what?

HIRE AN EDITOR!

This step should not be overlooked. No matter how great you were in English class, editing a book is a different animal. And it's not just checking your manuscript for typos, or grammar issues.

The three main types of editing, in the order they should be done:

- Developmental editing
- Copy editing
- Proofreading

DEVELOPMENTAL EDITING

This editing comes first! A developmental editor will read through your manuscript, and help you to re-organize it,

rewrite some areas, flesh certain scenes out a bit more. It's the big picture look of your story. Does your story make sense, and does it flow well? If it doesn't, here is where the developmental editor will be worth their weight in gold.

COPY EDITING

Copy editors check for mistakes and inconsistencies in your manuscript. Think of the copy editor as the technician of your book. They go through and clean up your spelling and grammar, adjust your word choices, fix punctuation issues, point out repetitive items, and do a basic proofread. After this process, bringing in your book interior layout designer would be a good next step.

PROOFREADING

Proofreading is the final step in the editing process. Think of it as your last set of eyes once your manuscript has been moved over to the final layout process. This type of editing helps to make sure your manuscript is error-free before you go to print. It's like a quality-control check to ensure your words carried over to the book's final layout correctly, and no mistakes have slipped through.

2.

SELF-PUBLISHING BASICS

Now that your manuscript is ready for a designer, you will also want to work on a few things.

CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A PUBLISHING ENTITY

At the very least, on your book's product page throughout your various online markets, and in the listing of your ISBN on Bowker (via BookWire.com), a publisher for your book will be referenced for this title. Do you want the world to see it was published by Jane Miller? Or do you want to look more "professional" as an author, and have it show something like-

Publisher: Red Sky Press [or] Miller Publishing [or]
Reverie Publishers

Consider talking to your bookkeeper or accountant to discuss if creating a legal entity such as an LLC, or at least setting up a DBA (doing business as) would be a good option for you. Usually, you will name your LLC or DBA

something that has one of these words: Press, Publishing, Publishers. Have fun with this step!

Hire a graphic designer to create a logo for your publishing entity. Otherwise have your cover designer create something simple – a text logo would be fine. This logo will go on your book's interior title page and copyright page. It should also go on your cover's spine and the back cover. Many book stores will not shelf a book that has no publishing logo on it's spine.

GET AN ISBN

In the US, go to Bowker to purchase an ISBN. An ISBN is like an identification number for your book.

(www.MyIdentifiers.com)

Bowker is the only legal place to get an ISBN in the US. I would not get a free ISBN from either Amazon KDP, nor IngramSpark.

You have an option to buy one individually, or a 10-pack of ISBNs. You will need an ISBN for your paperback version and a separate one for your hardcover.

None of the ebook retailers require an ISBN, and they will each assign their own ID # to your ebook.

When you are ready to go to print, pop back into your Bowker account to officially assign your ISBN to your book title, adding in your meta-data, i.e. title, subtitle, genre, pricing, upload your book's front cover, etc.

BOOK DESIGN

Here is the really fun part! Now that you have your publishing entity, and your ISBN, you can hire a book designer. Consider using the same designer to design both your interior layout and your cover. This way, they have the same look and feel.

Ask your book designer to suggest a trim size based on the length of your book, and your book's genre. A 6" x 9" is a good trim for most nonfiction books. 5.25" x 8" is a great option for most memoirs, and novels. Here's a great post detailing the most popular trim sizes per genre:

<https://www.ingramspark.com/blog/picking-a-popular-trim-size-for-your-book> Your book designer can also help you decide on the best color for your interior paper, and the cover finish.

If you hire different designers, let your interior designer know you would like to see a sample of the interior layout where your chapter headings look similar to the font used on your book's front cover.

Both designers should provide a 2-3 samples before designing the final product.

While your book is being designed, you will need to decide which publishing route you will take.

When you decide which printing model you will use, you will then need to relay this to your book designer. Your book designer will work with your chosen printer(s) to get the file specifications they require.

CHOOSING A SELF-PUBLISHING MODEL

You can self-publish your book using:

- Print-on-Demand
- Short-run digital printing
- Offset commercial printing

What versions of your book will you offer?

- Paperback
- Hardcover
- Ebook
- Audiobook

PRINT-ON-DEMAND (POD) PRINTER/PUBLISHING

Your book files are sent to a POD printer – and books are printed as an order comes in. No upfront inventory is required.

Great for first-time authors. A budget and quick way to get your book on Amazon, as well as other online retailers. Low cost barrier of entry.

RECOMMENDED POD PLATFORMS

Amazon KDP for your retail Amazon market sales, PLUS IngramSpark, to sell your book on all other major online retailer platforms, world-wide.

AMAZON KDP (KDP) charges no up-front setup costs. They pay you 60% royalties from your retail price, minus the printing cost of your book. The typical printing cost for the average book is between \$2-\$4. You can purchase “author copies” from them directly at wholesale, which would be the printing cost of the book, plus shipping and taxes.

When you create a KDP account, and submit your files to KDP, they will add your book to Amazon and your title will have it's own product page. When an Amazon customer buys your book, KDP will then print the book and ship it directly to that customer.

INGRAMSPARK charges a title setup fee of \$49. Any revised files you may need to send them after-the-fact, is charged at \$25 per new file you send. They too pay you royalties minus the printing cost of your book.

Because they push your book out to all the major online retailers, you have to select a wholesale discount to offer

the online retailers. Most bookstores require a minimum discount of 40%, and whatever discount you set with IngramSpark, they will keep 15%. I recommend you set your wholesale discount to 55%, so IngramSpark gets its cut, and the bookstores get their 40% discount. With IngramSpark, you can expect to receive royalties of 45% minus the printing cost of your book.

The way IngramSpark works is they disseminate your book's meta-data – title, keywords, genre, pricing, etc. to all the online book retailers that connect to their data feed. Your book will then show up as available to purchase with most online retailers such as Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, AbeBooks, Walmart, and even your local book stores if they offer an online catalog. When a customer visits Walmart.com, for example, and purchases your book, Walmart places an order from IngramSpark directly, who then prints and ships the book to the customer.

A short-run digital printing company

A great addition to your publishing model! This is useful to bring down your per-unit cost of your book, if you can afford printing a larger quantity of books up-front. This is a good model if you are a speaker, trainer, consultant, who can offer books for sale at many events throughout the year.

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A hybrid-model combines POD & printing with a short-run digital printer. You can have your book available for sale on Amazon via KDP, and world-wide online through IngramSpark, and then sell physical low-cost, higher-profit copies at physical events. If you want to handle the fulfillment, consider offering author signed-copies of these books for sale on your author website.

The quality in these printed books tends to be slightly, to much better than KDP and IngramSpark. You also have more options for printing. Thicker paper, different color paper options, you can have a paperback printed with cover flaps to mimic a dust jacket that you would see on a hardcover. You can print one-page in color, and the rest can be in B&W. You can have a foil-embossed title.

These printers charge a setup fee, and usually have a minimum quantity requirement. The more books you print with them at one-time, the lower your per-unit book costs go down. The downside is now having X number of books in your garage that you need to sell. But if you have a good business model, you can sell these books quickly, and for a larger profit-margin.

Offset printer

A must for printing low per-unit cost children's books, coffee table books, and photography books. Digital printing is basically a high-end, commercial laser printer. Whereas with offset printing, it uses printing plates and wet ink - it transfers an image onto a rubber "blanket" and then that is rolled onto a sheet of paper, which will then be set into your book's binding. This takes more time, but produces a higher end book.

Typically, you will want to print at least 500 books, however this model is usually best when printing 1,000+ copies.

VERSIONS OF YOUR BOOK TITLE TO PUBLISH

When considering what versions of your book you will offer, the paperback of course is a must. In my experience, a hardcover is a nice option to offer for sale, but if you are using the POD model, a hardcover isn't very cost-effective. Most of your actual print book sales will come from your paperback anyways.

Hardcovers

A hardcover is most often used by an author to give away copies to family, friends, colleagues, and aren't concerned with the cost to them.

Considering an Ebook vs Audiobook:

Audiobooks are expensive to produce. However, it can be lucrative with the right marketing. It's usually best to

consider offering an audiobook after you have seen consistent sales overtime, to justify the up-front production cost of the audiobook.

Ebooks are much cheaper to produce, and it opens you up to a whole new world of promotional opportunities. If you submit your ebook to Amazon KDP, it becomes known as a Kindle. You could submit your ebook to other online retailers such as Apple Books, B&N Nook, or Smashwords/Draft2Digital, but most of your sales will come from Amazon.

Consider Amazon's KDP Select as a Marketing Tool

Amazon allows authors to enroll their Kindle ebooks into "KDP Select." But in doing so, your ebook must be exclusive to Amazon for at least 90 days, while enrolled in KDP Select. Your Kindle will then automatically be included in Kindle Unlimited (KU). Think of KU like Netflix. You pay Netflix a monthly subscription fee, and you can stream any title they have in their catalog. Similarly, KU subscribers can read any Kindle in the KU catalog as part of their KU subscription fee. An author gets paid for each page read in the KU platform.

KDP Select offers two free promotional tools:

1. Kindle Countdown deals (where you stagger a price discount overtime)
2. Free Book promotion (where readers can purchase your Kindle for free, around the world)

These are both very powerful ways to boost your rankings, sales overtime, and gain new reviews on Amazon. You can learn more about KDP Select from Amazon here:

https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/select

Any and all promotions you offer for your Amazon Kindle, also promotes your print title on Amazon since they are linked together on the same product page.

Overtime, as you gain reviews you can consider running Amazon Ads for either your Kindle or Print book.

3.

GOING LIVE – PUBLISHING YOUR BOOK

PUBLISHING YOUR PRINT BOOK AND EBOOK

Now that you have chosen a printer, and your book design files are ready for print, you will setup your book files with your chosen printer, i.e. Amazon KDP and IngramSpark. Before you go live, it's a good idea to first request a book proof from each of your printers.

If you choose to print your book instead with only a short-run digital printer, or an offset printer, you will need to setup an account with Amazon SellerCentral, if you want to also offer your book for sale on Amazon. You tell Amazon how many books you want to send them, and you create your book's product page, all through SellerCentral. Details here: <https://sellercentral.amazon.com/>

Veronica Yager

You or your ebook professional can help you get your ebook published to Amazon KDP, and any other ebook retailers you have decided on.

4.

ESTABLISHING YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

AMAZON AUTHOR CENTRAL

When either version of your title is live on Amazon, visit authorcentral.amazon.com to claim your Amazon author profile page, add your book title to your profile, and even connect your blog. Check out Stephen King's profile on Amazon to see this in action:

<https://www.amazon.com/Stephen-King/e/B000AQ0842>

GOODREADS

Goodreads is like the Facebook for book lovers! You will first need to add your book title to Goodreads here: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/new> and then you can claim your author profile by following the steps here:

<https://www.goodreads.com/author/program>

SOCIAL MEDIA

You will want to do some research into your target market to see where they hangout online. Usually, you will create a

Facebook Fan (business) page at the very least. Details on setting that up can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/business/pages>

AUTHOR / BOOK WEBSITE

A home, or a central hub, for your book is a must. You can link to all the places a reader can buy your book from here, you can link to your Goodreads and other social media pages from here, and you can consider selling your book directly from your website as well. Plus, it's an added SEO (Search Engine Optimization) tool if you consider blogging.

[Systeme.io](https://systeme.io) has a completely free option to host one free website, and connect a custom domain. [Namecheap.com](https://namecheap.com) offers cheap domains and includes privacy protection so that your personal information is not in a public domain database. Once you buy a domain there, such as JaneMiller.com you can then connect it to your free website you have built on Systeme.io.

If you aren't tech savvy, [Wix.com](https://wix.com) offers a low-cost website platform, and they have many great free templates to choose from to build a basic author website.

You only need to build a one-page site that includes:

1. Book cover and a short blurb about your book
2. Where to buy the book (link to Amazon, B&N, and any other retailer platform you want to promote sales on)
3. About the author section with a short bio, and your photo

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4. How to connect with you online, i.e. link to your social media, and Goodreads page
5. Contact form that sends messages directly to your email

Here are some examples of simple one-page author websites we built on Wix:

- <https://www.jeanetteminniti.com>
- <https://www.jamesjuliana.com>

Of course, you can build more complex websites, with more pages, but the above gives you an idea on getting started. YouTube has a wealth of videos on building simple sites using Wix.

Veronica Yager

THANKS FOR READING!

If you found this guide helpful, consider joining our mailing list to keep up-to-date with self-publishing industry news, announcements from various platforms, as well as marketing tips. Join *The Author's Nook* newsletter [here](#).

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions, or get stuck along the way!

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Web](#)

ABOUT VERONICA

Veronica Yager is the **founder** of [Journey Bound Publishing](#), a self-publishing consultant and lead designer. She is the leading authority in the publishing and design industry. And for **over 15 years**, Veronica has helped **over 200** individuals become published authors. Veronica is also the **past president** of the Colorado Independent Publishers Association, a nonprofit nationwide co-op of authors, independent book publishers and publishing professionals.

