



Self-Publishing Session

Resources & Information for Independent Authors

Presented by:



<http://www.woodwardpress.com>

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Self Publishing Resources

Helpful Web Sites: Important Information

Self-publishing a book: 25 things you need to know

Considering self-publishing a book? CNET's David Carnoy discusses the ins and outs of what it's all about.
http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-18438_7-10119891-82/self-publishing-a-book-25-things-you-need-to-know/

Publishing Is Broken, We're Drowning In Indie Books - And That's A Good Thing

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidvinjamuri/2012/08/15/publishing-is-broken-were-drowning-in-indie-books-and-thats-a-good-thing/>

The Real Costs of Self-Publishing a Book

Ignore the ad at the top of the page—this is actually good info about costs
<http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2013/05/the-real-costs-of-self-publishing-book/>

Joel Friedlander—The Book Designer

Friedlander is one of the self publishing industry's most popular bloggers and regularly features helpful info on his site.

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

Local: Scribe Publishing, Royal Oak

Not a self-pub service, but has good tips on how to publish and market.
<http://scribe-publishing.com/>

Step-by-Step Guides:

The Smashwords Style Guide

An almost universal style guide for digital conversion. The book is free to download.
<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/52>

Let's Get Digital by David Gaughran

The .pdf version is free to download (it's about halfway down the page).
<http://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/lets-get-digital/>

How to Avoid the Self-Published Look

<http://www.digitalbookworld.com/2013/how-to-avoid-the-self-published-look/>

Guide to Kindle Content Quality

<https://kdp.amazon.com/self-publishing/help?topicId=A1MMQ0JHRBEINX>

Frightening Publishing Stats

Janet Reid, Agent 2009

<http://jetreidliterary.blogspot.com/2009/12/statistics-to-torture-yourself-with-in.html>

Periodically I've posted tallies of my replies to incoming query letters. After one of those posts I realized that it might be interesting to keep tabs on what happens when I request a full. I started keeping notes sometime this summer. Between that date and today, I requested 124 full novels.

Just plain not good enough: **21** (a novel needs to be in the 99th percentile-these were closer to 90%--not bad, but not good enough)

Good premise, but the rest of the novel didn't hold up: **11**

Not compelling or vivid, or focused; no plot/tension: **10**

Slow start or the pace was too slow: **9**

I didn't believe the narrative voice: **5**

Structural problems with the novel: **8**

Interesting premise, but not a fresh or new take on familiar plots/tropes: **7**

Had caricatures rather than characters: **2**

Boring: **3**

Grossed me out: **2**

Major plot problems: **2**

Needed more polish and editorial input than I wanted to do: **2**

Good books but I couldn't figure out where to sell them: **7**

Got offer elsewhere; I withdrew from scrum: **2**

Great writing, just not right for me: **2**

Not right for me, refer to other agents: **9**

Not quite there/send me the next one: **1**

Sent back for revisions with editorial suggestions: **9**

Getting second read at FPLM: **1**

Got offer from me: **2**

Kristin Nelson Agency 2012

<http://nelsonagency.com/category/statistics/>

books sold (slightly down from last year). **33**

foreign rights deals done (up from 65 deals last year). **83**

number of new clients **16**

estimated number of queries read and responded to. **32,000+** or some big number... Down from last year as we closed queries in the month of December.

full manuscripts requested and read (up from 69 last year) **81**

Agent Sarah LaPolla of Curtis Brown 2012

<http://www.rachaeldahl.com/2013/01/02/literary-agents-annual-query-statistics/>

Total queries received in 2012: **3,914**

Total manuscripts requested from those queries: **71**

Most requested genres: YA Contemporary and Adult Literary Fiction

Second most requested genres: Adult Literary Mystery/Suspense and YA Horror

Least requested genres: MG and Adult Memoir

Total clients signed from the 2012 slush pile: **2**

A quick overview of what went on in my slush pile in early 2013.

Total number of unsolicited queries received from January - April: **1,182** (Note: "Unsolicited" does not include referrals, conference/contest requests, or revisions I had asked for previously.)

Total number of manuscripts requested out of the 1,182 queries: **17**

Total offers of representation out of the 17 manuscripts requested: **0**

Kathleen Ortiz, at Lowenstein & Associates, 2010

Queries received **12,819**

Partial manuscripts requested **478**

Full manuscripts requested **87**

Representation to just seven authors, five of whom accepted.

Rachel Gardner, at Wordserve Literary (who represents Jody Hedlund), received more than 10,000 queries in 2010, and offered a contract to no one.

Kathleen Rooney, Publisher, Rose Metal Press (Independent Publisher)

We held an open reading period early this year and got 234 submissions of full-length book manuscripts, of which we chose three for publication.

Adam Robinson, Publisher, Publishing Genius (Independent Publisher)

PGP receives about 300 submissions during our open submissions month — and when we're not open I still get about 3 email queries a month. They publish about 6 books a year.

Print Layout Guide

General Information for Designing Your Book

If you're new to design and layout, it's strongly suggested you let a professional handle this aspect of your project. If you still want to do it yourself and don't have much experience, consider taking a class in print design first. The information below only covers a few of the basics.

Cover Design:

Plan the size of your book (and cover) carefully. An image may determine the size and shape of the cover, or you may have a preference. Check with your printer to make sure the size is not considered special (and more costly) dimensions.

Depending on where you are getting your book printed, make sure your cover file is in the proper file format (most printers prefer a pdf file)

Make sure color space is correct. Some printers, such as Create Space, will accept an RGB file. Others ask for a CMYK.

Resolution typically is a minimum of 300 dpi.

If you have color bleeds they must be .125 inches (one-eighth inch) on all side

Don't use clip art. Just don't.

For images, keep in mind that images found on a Google search may be copyrighted. The good ones almost definitely are. It's best to use a stock image service such as Fotolia or iStockPhoto. Typical cover quality images cost from \$15 to more than \$100 depending on a variety of factors including usage and photographer.

Consider other photo sources such as museum collections online (The Smithsonian has a great one), or professional photographer galleries.

Museums often have programs for use of their images. Photographers vary as to image availability and price. In all cases be safe and legal—contact the copyright holder for permission.

Use creative but legible fonts. A good source for fonts is <http://dafont.com>. You'll find more font sources later in this document.

Interior Layout:

Layout for the interior of a book is best accomplished in a professional layout program like InDesign or QuarkXPress. These programs are fairly expensive for first time purchasers (\$800+) and take months to learn and master. If you can get an educational discount, the prices are much lower (about \$200). Adobe offers a cloud-based InDesign application from \$20/month on a subscription.

Layout can also be done in Microsoft Publisher (\$109 or \$99/year as part of their subscription program), but it helps to have experience in print layout, as well as a thorough knowledge of the program.

It's not advisable to create a layout in Microsoft Word. This is a word processing program, not a layout program. While it can be done, the experience will likely be cumbersome and frustrating.

Plan your pages before you start the layout.

Prepare all graphics and images for your book at 300 dpi or higher.

Create template pages that include your basic page design (header, footer, page numbers, etc.) and use them for various sections of the layout.

Make sure to include a copyright page.

These pages are optional, but are often included: Acknowledgments, Foreword, Table of Contents, Index, Appendix, Bibliography.

ISBN:

An ISBN number (International Standard Book Number) is a 10 or 13-digit identifier used for professional publishing. ISBNs are the global standard for identifying titles and enter your book in a variety of databases, making them easier to find.

You need an ISBN for each format of your book. (ISBNs may be used for either print or digital versions of your books.)

Bowker (<http://myidentifiers.com>) is the US government's ISBN provider. They charge \$125 for 1 ISBN, \$250 for ten, \$575 for 100, and \$1000 for 1000 ISBNs. So clearly it's best to get these from a company that purchases them in bulk at a reduced price. There are many options.

If you use an online publishing service such as Create Space or Smashwords to publish, they will provide you with an ISBN number, but they will also list themselves as publisher, instead of you or your publishing service.

Once you have the ISBN, you need to have it converted into a barcode for the printed version of your book. Complete instructions for usage are here: <https://www.myidentifiers.com/barcode/faqs>

Bowker now charges for barcode conversion, but here is a free service you can use to do it: <http://www.tux.org/~milgram/bookland/#online> This will provide you with a barcode in eps or pdf format.

Converting Word Documents for Electronic Publishing

Your cover will be a separate image file. Don't include it in your manuscript document file.

Save your manuscript as a .doc or .docx file.

Standard fonts (Times New Roman, Georgia, Verdana and Arial) convert best. You'll also achieve a more consistent look if you use only one or two fonts for each document.

Standard font sizes (10, 12, 14 or 18 pt) convert best.

Turn on the Show/Hide feature by clicking on the show/hide paragraph icon in the Home toolbar. It looks like this: ¶

Check your paragraph breaks. They should all begin and end with the paragraph symbol. If they begin with an arrow, then you are using tabs for indents.

Tabbed indents can cause odd formatting breaks in .epub and .mobi documents. You'll get better conversion results if you set your Normal template to automatically indent paragraphs.

Always make a backup copy of your file before making these changes:

To set up your document as a Normal template in Word 2007: Click the Office button in the upper left-hand corner. Select **Word Options**, then **Customize**, and then scroll down the left column. Click on **Style** and then select **Add** (in the middle column). That will put the Normal template option in your menu bar. Once it's there, press CTRL+A or use the **Edit: Select All** feature from the menu to highlight all of your text; then select **Normal** from your menu bar. You may lose some specialized formatting when you do this; if that formatting is necessary to your story you'll have to go back and reset it by hand.

To set up your document as a Normal template in Word 2013: Press CTRL+A or use the **Editing: Select All** feature (upper right hand corner of the menu) to highlight all of your text. From the **Styles** menu option, click on the **Normal** option. Again, you'll need to go back and reset any needed specialized formatting.

You may still have some tabbed indents once this is done. To remove them all, use the **Find:Replace** feature. In the **Find** bar, enter ^t and leave the **Replace** bar blank. Click **Replace All**.

WordArt doesn't convert well. Neither do graphs or tables created directly from Word. Embedded image files are a better choice.

Remove headers and footers, except for .pdf documents.

Remove automatic numbering; the various conversion programs have their own numbering system.

Tables of contents for ebooks shouldn't have page numbers; instead, you should link the TOC directly to the page using bookmarks. Creating bookmarks can be a very long process, and is outside the scope of this document (don't worry: it's easy once you get the hang of it!) – please see the free Smashwords

Style Guide (here: <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/52>), **Section 20b** for step-by-step information on setting bookmarks for your table of contents.

If you're going to use the Look Inside or other sampling feature for your book, then the front pages of your book should be limited to the following (in order):

Cover

Publication and copyright information

Table of contents

Brief dedication (if any)

Start the book

Acknowledgements, which are traditionally in the front of print books, should be moved to the back of your ebooks; the sampling feature only allows a certain number of pages to be shown, and potential buyers would rather sample the story than read through a long list of names.

By the same token, you should also move your Foreword or Preface (if any) to the back of the book and present it as an Afterword unless that material is absolutely crucial to understanding the rest of the book.

Acknowledgements should be moved to the back of the book.

Cover Design Tips

Know what feelings you want to evoke. Do you want the readers who stumble upon your book to feel a sense of wonder? Desire? Fear? The cover should reflect a mood or theme that directly relates to your book.

Text-only is okay. Just keep in mind that covers which only have text against a color or patterned background look best if the text is in an interesting font or combination of fonts.

Don't overdo the crazy fonts. This is especially true for text-only covers.

Only use Comic Sans or Papyrus ironically. These two fonts, above all others, have been used so often in so many different ways that they seem amateurish to readers.

Learn how to use color. The colors you choose are important: they can symbolize emotions, give readers a sense of place or time, or just look great (or terrible) together. You can learn the essentials of color theory here: <http://www.colormatters.com/color-and-design/basic-color-theory>.

Less is more. Images with a lot of detail often don't look good as ebook thumbnails. Although it isn't a hard and fast rule, for beginners simpler images are usually better.

If you aren't a skilled illustrator or graphic artist, it's a good idea to hire someone. If you're doing it yourself, then stick with the single central image + text look. Keep it simple, or your book may end up looking like a grade school report illustration. You can find examples of what I mean here: <http://lousy-bookcovers.com/>. We've all seen covers like this. It's a fair bet that none of us have paid money to read those books, or even picked one up for free. Neither will your intended audience.

Know your audience. Readers probably won't buy your historic romance novel if a Ferrari is on the cover even if the main character's name is Ferrari; likewise, people who buy cookbooks are not going to be enticed by artsy photos of burned-out buildings no matter how many great barbecue recipes are inside. I've seen science fiction books with covers featuring palm trees and flowing curlicue fonts, and relationship advice books with covers that were taken from gory video game still shots. Check out the competition: look at the covers of several books in your book's genre or with similar subject matter and take some time to think about what does and doesn't work with those covers.

Experiment. The first cover you come up with probably won't be the best one you can produce. Play with layout and style until you have three or four cover mockups that you really like.

Get a focus group. Now that you have a few good covers, pick your two favorites and do a survey: ask your friends or your writers' group members which cover they like best, and why. Self-published author David Gaughran walks readers through the process he and his artist used when designing the cover for his book *Transfection* here: <http://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/covers/>. What's notable about his process isn't that the cover went through several versions; it's that when he and his artist couldn't agree on the best design, Mr. Gaughran reached out to get his readers' opinions. Although his favorite design

got more votes, comments on the other design repeatedly mentioned how striking the image was. Based upon the responses he received, he wound up going with the design he *didn't* prefer, because he knew it would pique readers' curiosity more than his favorite.

Resources to Create Your Own Low-Cost Covers

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Central images
- A font which compliments your theme
- Graphics editing software

FINDING IMAGES:

Stock photos and/or illustrations are a great place to start. There are several websites which offer images at reasonable rates (often for less than \$20 per print-ready graphic).

If you only intend to produce ebooks, then you can purchase graphics at 72dpi (dots per inch). This is much cheaper than buying images at 300dpi (which is required for print books). It is wise, however, to buy the 300dpi graphic up front and create your cover at print size from that even if you are creating ebooks. You may want to use that image for a print cover one day, and it will save you a great deal of time and money to produce your cover as if you're planning to take it to print, make a copy, and convert that copy to a lower resolution for your digital book. It is easy to make a high-resolution suitable for the Kindle, NOOK, or other devices – but it is almost impossible to convert a low-resolution image to one that will look good in print.

Typically, purchasing credits toward your graphics in bulk is cheaper than paying for individual images; if you intend to produce more than one book or want a group of related images for promotional materials then buying credits is a good idea. Credits usually expire one year from purchase.

Some Definitions:

Photos come in two resolutions: 72dpi (dots per inch) for Web usage; and 300dpi for print.

Illustrations may come in different resolutions, but are often only available as **vectors**.

Vector illustrations can be scaled to any size, but they require specialized programs to view and manipulate. Most vector illustrations available on stock image sites are in .eps format, which can only be opened using Adobe Illustrator. If you don't have Illustrator, you try one of the conversion options here*: <http://alesandrab.wordpress.com/2013/01/16/convert-eps-or-ai-to-svg/> to convert the image to .svg format, which is accepted by more graphics programs.

**Please note: when converting graphics from .eps to .svg using any program except Adobe Illustrator, errors may appear. If you have a friend with Illustrator, it's worth asking if they'll convert .eps files for you to minimize these errors.*

Stock image websites - a brief comparison:

*All prices are for **royalty-free** images (see below) and are valid as of 10/1/13. Prices are not comprehensive and are subject to change at any time.*

<http://www.gettyimages.com>

Image selection and quality:

Excellent. They have more high-quality exclusive photos than anyone else out there.

Discount (credit) packages not available.

Image Cost (photos):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): \$21 to \$26

72dpi M (for ebooks): \$165 to \$215

300dpi L or XL (for print books): \$375 to \$567

Image Cost (illustrations):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): \$10 to \$115

72dpi M (for ebooks): \$135 to \$215

300dpi L or XL (for print books): \$308 to \$567

Vector (not available for most illustrations): \$432 to \$638

<http://www.istockphoto.com>

Image selection and quality:

Very good to excellent.

Credit Prices:

Smallest available package: \$49.99 for 30 credits (\$1.67/credit)

Largest available package: \$4,200 for 3,000 credits (\$1.40/credit)

Image Cost (photos, in credits):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): 1 to 10 credits

300dpi M (for ebooks): 7 to 55 credits

300dpi L or XL (for print books): 12 to 135 credits

Image Cost (non-vector illustrations, in credits):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): 35 credits

300dpi M (for ebooks): 55 credits

300dpi L or XL (for print books): 105 to 135 credits

Image Cost (vector illustrations, in credits):

1 to 40 credits

Notes:

[Bargain images](#) are available. These images are 40-60% off their regular price.

[Free images](#) are also available through istockphoto. The selection changes often.

Review of over 200 images did not reveal any prices for non-vector illustrations other than the ones above.

<http://www.fotolia.com>

Image selection and quality:

Very good to excellent.

Credit Prices:

Smallest available package: \$14 for 10 credits (\$1.40/credit)

Largest available package: \$7,000 for 9,400 credits (\$0.70/credit)

Image Cost (photos, in credits):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): 1 to 49 credits

300dpi M (for ebooks): 5 to 149 credits

300dpi L or XL (for print books): 10 to 299 credits

Image Cost (non-vector illustrations, in credits):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): 1 to 20 credits

300dpi M (for ebooks): 6 to 60 credits

300dpi L or XL (for print books): 10 to 100 credits

Image Cost (vector illustrations, in credits):

5 to 100 credits

Notes:

Custom credit packages are available: tell them how much you want to spend, and they'll let you know how many credits you can get for that amount.

Starting prices are displayed in the search thumbnails. This feature isn't available on most other sites.

You can search illustrations by vector vs. non-vector. This feature isn't available on most other sites.

<http://www.dreamstime.com>

Image selection and quality:

Good to very good.

Credit Prices:

Smallest available package: \$14.99 for 11 credits (\$1.37/credit)

Largest available package: \$1,760 for 2,000 credits (\$0.85/credit)

Image Cost (photos, in credits):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): 1 to 4 credits

300dpi M (for ebooks): 4 to 8 credits

300dpi L or XL (for print books): 5 to 19 credits

Image Cost (non-vector illustrations, in credits):

72dpi thumbnails (for websites): 4 to 11 credits

300dpi M (for ebooks): 8 to 16 credits

300dpi L or XL (for print books): 13 to 18 credits

Image Cost (vector illustrations, in credits):

Usually around 35-40 credits

Notes:

Custom credit packages are available.

Dreamstime has more free images than most sites, but they're of a lower quality.

Other stock image sites worth checking out:

<http://www.shutterstock.com>

<http://www.bigstockphoto.com>

<http://www.jupiterimages.com>

<http://www.alamy.com>

Many museums and libraries (the Smithsonian is a great example) offer licensing for images they have on file. Contact the organization directly for pricing and licensure.

Copyright-free image sources:

<http://www.commons.wikimedia.org> – *not all of these images are copyright-free – always check the licenses before using!*

<http://www.loc.gov> – Library of Congress website, includes a searchable photo index. *Not all of these images are copyright-free – always check the licenses before using!*

Licensing:

Keep detailed records on how you use these images, *especially* if you don't change them very much when producing your cover! These sites have more or less standard licenses which dictate how you can use their images, but it's very important to check the details of the particular license you purchase before putting your book up for sale.

Copyright-free (CF) is just that: completely free of any copyright restrictions because the copyright has expired or because it was never properly established in the first place. You don't have to purchase or license copyright-free images in any way, although it's good form to credit the original artist and/or the place where you found the image.

Creative Commons (CC) licensing is not typically available to items intended for resale. Images offered under creative commons licensure usually do have artist contact information handy; if you find a CC-licensed image that you really want for your book, contact the artist directly to see if you can work something out.

If you're buying images you'll probably want royalty-free (RF) images rather than rights-managed (RM) ones.

Royalty-free licensing is pretty basic: if you sell a book with an RF-licensed image on the cover, the photographer or artist does not get a cut of every book that you sell.

Rights-managed is more complicated: these licenses are either far more expensive up front, or the artist or photographer may get a straight percentage of every sale, or they will receive regular payments at every sales

benchmark, forever. It depends upon the specific rights you purchase and the policies of the site from which you purchase those rights. Always check the site licensing rules and keep detailed records if you intend to purchase RM licensing.

Even with royalty-free images, if you sell over 10,000 copies of a book which features a central image which you have not *substantially* altered you will have to go back and buy an extended license. Getty Images, istock-photo, and the other stock image suppliers do regular image searches and will litigate if you don't have the appropriate licensure. By law, they can charge thousands of dollars per violation so it's critical to keep those records.

Why can't I just download a picture from the internet?

So many reasons:

It's stealing.

It's just as bad as plagiarism of written work.

Artists, photographers, and their friends are onto image thievery. You will get caught.

When you get caught, you can be sued.

When you get caught, you may be identified on all kinds of social media sites as someone who steals images.

There are thousands of great pictures of guns, mermaids, beautiful women, or whatever your book cover requires that you can obtain legally for under \$10.

Seriously: don't steal images. It isn't worth the hassle.

People post images that aren't theirs on Facebook all the time.

This is a bad argument for so many reasons:

It is against copyright law to post photos anywhere online without express permission.

Those images aren't intended for resale.

In many cases (it should be all!) the artist or photographer is credited.

If credit and backlinks are provided, those postings are often considered by the artist/photog to be free publicity so they let it slide. There's an excellent discussion on this topic at

<http://welbornsocialmedia.com/blog/861/is-it-legal-to-post-photos-from-google-images-on-my-facebook-page/>.

Artists and photographers can and do get those images pulled when they want to.

Artists and photographers can and do litigate against people who post their works in ways that they find objectionable, and they win, because, again:

It is against copyright law to post photos anywhere online without express permission.

It is very much against the law to take one of those pictures as your book cover without buying the appropriate rights.

This cannot be stressed enough. Do not steal images.

FINDING FONTS:

Sometimes the fonts you already have aren't enough. There are lots of great sites to help you out.

Always check the licensing carefully before selecting a particular font, and keep records of font purchases and licensure in case of a dispute. Just as it's good form to credit the artist or photographer who supplies the central image (if there is one) for your book cover, it's good form to note the name of the font and the designer if it is an unusual or premium font.

<http://www.dafont.com>

Many of their fonts are free; others cannot be used for commercial purposes. Donations are welcome. Where there is a cost, prices are set by the designers; they range from \$29.95 to \$69.95 for a single font.

<http://www.fonts.com>

Most of their free fonts are for website use only. Check the licensing carefully and be ready to buy the font you want or find a copyright-free one instead. Prices range from a \$40/month subscription for up to 5 fonts a month to \$50 per font. Yearly subscriptions are available at a discount.

<http://www.1001freefonts.com/>

Their fonts are 100% free, but only some of them can be used commercially.

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

Their fonts are 100% free for personal use. A small percentage of their fonts must be purchased if you're going to use them for book covers. Prices are set by the designers, and range from around \$20 to \$69.95 for one to five fonts.

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

They have a nice selection of fonts that you won't find elsewhere. Most of them are free for commercial use.

<http://www.waldenfont.com/default.asp>

This premium font site specializes in accurate reproductions of retro and historic typefaces from the 18th through the early 20th centuries. They occasionally make a font available for free. For the others, the fonts are packaged by era or theme; prices range from \$25 (for one particular font) to \$89.95 (for a specific package of 62 fonts).

FINDING GRAPHICS PROGRAMS:

Free programs:

<http://www.gimp.org>

GIMP is one of the most popular open source graphics programs. It is intuitive and easy to use.

<http://inkscape.org/>

Inkscape is a sleek vector graphics editing program. There's a bit of a learning curve, but it's simple enough once you get the hang of it.

<http://www.serif.com/free-graphic-design-software/>

Serif has a free version of their popular graphics program available at this link. Its features are limited in comparison to the paid version, but you'll be able to manage the essentials.

Programs for sale:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/catalog.html>

Adobe products have quite a learning curve, but if you have a lot of projects to do it's definitely worth your time. New Creative Cloud options are available from \$19.99/month for a single program to \$49.99/month for the entire range of Adobe products. Standalone programs are no longer available through Adobe's website but can still be found on eBay and other online shopping sites.

<http://www.corel.com>

CorelDRAW is one of the leading graphics programs; again, it will take some time to learn how to use this program but it's well worth the effort. On sale as of 10/1/13 for \$469 (usually \$499).

DIGITAL BOOK COVER SIZE:

A site-by-site breakdown of preferred cover sizes is here: <http://ebookindiecovers.com/ebook-cover-size-requirements/specifications/> but as a general rule, the file should be at 72dpi (dots per inch) and should be at least 1400 pixels wide.

Keep the aspect ratio at 1:1.5 or 1:1.6 – so if your cover is 1400 pixels wide it should be 2100 pixels high for 1:1.5, or 2240 pixels high for 1:1.6. The file should be as small as you can make it and still have it look good; it's best to keep it under 2MB, and 1MB is usually about perfect.

Marketing Tips

Dos and Don'ts

Three months before publication

Do:

Begin marketing three months *before* your planned release date.

Use email to tell your friends and family about the planned release date once or twice a few months before that date. Leave it at that for now. No one likes a nag.

Take advantage of social media, especially for your first few books: create an author page (separate from any personal pages) on Facebook and on other social media sites (see below). *Don't invite anyone to like them or to follow you yet.*

Write a press release and research any local media contacts and book groups. You're just building a mailing list right now. Don't send the press release out yet.

Begin filling your social media sites with related content at least one month before your planned release date. Related content can be photos, links to articles, articles that you write yourself...anything that relates directly to your book without being an advertisement for your book.

Advertise your book sparingly on your various sites.

Start a blog (see below) and write at least five or six articles about your process or your progress. Once you've kicked out a bunch of content there, you can scale back to one post every week or two if needed – just don't neglect the blog altogether. Publishing a book is exciting, and people like to feel they know the author.

Don't:

Mention your book at every possible opportunity, in person or online. It's almost ready, but it doesn't really exist yet. No nagging.

Two months before publication

Do:

Create a Goodreads account (see below) and rate a bunch of books that you liked. Invite the readers amongst your Facebook friends from your personal account to follow you on Goodreads.

Review a dozen or so books on Goodreads. They don't have to be long reviews, and it's best if you review a mix of popular books and ones that aren't as well known. You will get more goodwill if you limit yourself to reviewing books that you honestly enjoyed. Books that fall under the same subject matter as

your own work are best. Not everyone cares, but those who do follow authors like to know that authors are also readers.

Continue to update your social media sites and blog.

Start to follow complete strangers on your various social media sites. Select people who are doing things that relate in some way to your book.

Play nice with your new friends. They're strangers, and one of them may say or post something you that bothers you. Quietly unfriend or stop following them if needed but don't start any fights.

Don't:

Write hateful reviews about competitors' books, even if you do hate the book.

Start looking for companies to market your book. They'll charge you thousands of dollars to do a bad job at tasks that you're already doing well.

One month before publication

Do:

Release the cover image as soon as you have it.

Blog about how cool the cover image is, especially if someone else designed it. Gush about the artist and provide a link to his or her site. Keep any differences of opinion you had over the design process to yourself. The power of good internet karma cannot be overestimated.

Invite all of your friends, family, acquaintances – anyone who might be interested – to like or follow your various social media pages.

Double check your publication benchmarks and make sure you can get the book out on the planned release date. If you can't, update all of your sites as soon as you realize that the date will be pushed back.

Stick to your second publication date (if any).

Post flyers with information about your book (title, author, cover, blurb, publication date, price, Facebook page address, blog address, contact info) in any local library, coffee shop, tea room, themed shop, or other location that will allow you to do so. Write down those business' addresses and contact information.

Send those businesses a thank-you email or fill out a complimentary comment card.

Send a reminder email to your friends and family members.

Send out your press release a week to ten days before publication.

Don't:

Send invites and emails every day. Seriously: don't do this.

Browse ebook marketing sites with the idea that maybe you'll just buy the cheapest package. You are a sensible, strong person, but these companies are sales wizards and they will fleece you.

On publication day and for the first week thereafter

Do:

Tell people where to buy your book on the morning of the *very first day* it's available. People honestly forget to do this. Don't forget. Use every single tool you have: your social media sites, your blog, and email.

Take new flyers that say "it's here!" or something similar around to the places that let you put up the first one.

Remember to send thank-you notes.

Tell everyone you know about the book again, later that same day. After dinner is a good time. Use every tool you have *except* email. Two Facebook posts in one day is slightly annoying but understandable. Two emails in one day is spam. After your first "my book is out!" notice, your email blasts are over for this book.

Remember to links to places where your book is for sale front and center on your social media sites. Yes, people forget to do this.

Tell everyone you know about your book every other day for a week, then back off.

Don't:

Forget the thank-you notes.

Call local media to see if they got your press release. They did. One follow-up email is okay.

Join Amazon's Select program if it's your first book. You don't need it yet, and you may be severely limiting sales.

Stop updating your social media sites with value-added content. This is the non-advertising stuff; you'll have some interest by now that has nothing to do with your book and you want to make sure that your followers and fans stay interested.

Schedule readings unless you're selling print books and you know you will have them available for people to buy by the reading date. Yes, people do this. All the time.

After the first week of publication

Do:

Get ready to do it all over again. You ought to be working through the final draft of your next book by now. The best marketing for any single book is all of the author's other books.

Keep updating your social media sites. You can dial it back to one post per site, per week if you like.

Remind people about once a month that you have a book for sale. Provide links.

If you have a print book, schedule readings with local book clubs and at meetings that address your book's topic. If you live in a major metropolitan area, there will be meetings on that topic. Visit <http://www.meetup.com> to find them, and ask the organizers if you can book a reading. Point them to your Goodreads page and your various social media sites so they can see how charming and well-informed and not salesman-like you are.

Offer free copies of your book to any local library which accepts donations. Some libraries loan out ebooks, so you don't need a print version in those cases. Nursing homes and doctors' waiting rooms are also good homes for appropriate print editions. Ten or twelve books sprinkled throughout your community are a nice gesture, and one you can blog about. Ten or twelve books offered as part of a giveaway at a local fundraiser are an even nicer gesture, and one that other people will blog about for you.

Don't:

Stop writing. That second book will sell the first one, and vice versa.

Get upset if a person or company doesn't want a free copy of your book. Just say "okay, thanks anyhow" and leave it at that.

Social Media Overview

This is not a comprehensive list. It's a starting point. Some books will be better suited to some sites than others, and some sites (such as reddit or Digg) aren't on here at all. It will take time to figure out what's best for you and your book.

SITE NAME/URL	WHAT IT'S FOR	HOW TO USE IT
Facebook / http://www.facebook.com/ Author and book pages can be established separately from personal pages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating close friends and family about everyday life Scheduling events Building a fan base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post photos or links to articles about your book's topic Announce your publication date Announce upcoming readings or book signings.
Twitter / http://www.twitter.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick updates about everyday life Conversations with strangers about popular topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post links to articles about your book's topic Announce publication date and readings or book signings Initiate conversations with strangers about popular topics, especially if they relate to your book
Pinterest / http://www.pinterest.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing visually arresting images that relate to groups (or 'boards') of topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Come up with three to five topics that relate to your book and create a board for each. Find the most appealing images you can for each topic (if they link to a related article, that's great) and post them to the appropriate boards with link if possible. Comment positively on at least some of the articles to which you're linking.
Google Plus / https://google.plus.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everything that Facebook is for G+ doesn't have much activity yet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The same way you'd use Facebook.