

A HYBRID PUBLISHER...

IS IT WORTH IT?



Maybe you have written and self-published a book, and now a publisher has contacted you. And he tells you he is “hybrid.”

Maybe you have written a book and want to publish it traditionally, but nobody wants it, and now you are considering a hybrid publisher.

At any rate, you are probably thinking: is it worth it? Should you embrace this opportunity or run as far away as you can?

That is what we are going to look at now.

But first, let us define a hybrid publisher.

What Is a Hybrid Publisher?

Like the word hints to, it is a combination of a traditional publisher and self-publishing.

With traditional publishing, you sell your rights to your book to the publishing house against an advance and royalties for a certain period. The royalties can be anything between 3% and 15%, mostly ranging in the lower end.

The publishing house will take care of expenses for printing, cover, editing, proofreading, and distribution. (Marketing is rarely included.)

Only a few writers will get their books approved by traditional publishers. Most will be rejected.

As a self-publisher you get to keep up to 70% of your book's sales price, but there is no advance, and you have to pay for cover, proofreading, etc. If you go through a printer, then you will have to pay up front for a number of paperbacks.

You will also have to pay for shipping from the printer to your home. And for envelopes, wrapping, and shipping from your home to the customer.

Today, that is no longer necessary. If you use print-on-demand services, there are no upfront costs, no shipping to your house, and the customer will pay for shipping and handling, when he orders your book.

A hybrid publisher will not give you an advance, but he will ask you to pay a certain amount to cover the expenses for printing and more. He will have some kind of approval procedure, so not everybody can get their books published through a hybrid publisher.

You will typically get a higher royalty percentage than a traditional publisher will offer you, but if your book does not sell, you will get nothing and will have lost your fee.

If you think this sounds somewhat like “vanity publishing,” you are right. And some hybrid publishers will be vanity publishers in disguise.

The difference between good hybrid publishers and vanity publishers is that vanity publishers accept everybody’s manuscript, because it does not matter to them whether it sells. They take your money and publish your book as it is, and consider it job done.

A good hybrid publisher will put in the same work as a traditional publisher, which means they will help you with the editing and proofreading and making your book as good as possible (in their opinion). They will provide the cover and they will help you distribute your book.

This Sounds Good... or What?

If you are a first-time author, this may sound good to you. Somebody else takes care of all that tedious stuff that you know little about.

Yes, but it comes at a high price: the fee you need to pay up front.

Here are the tasks that need to be done to end up with a published book:

1. Someone must write the book. Here it does not matter whether you self-publish, get traditionally published, or use a hybrid publisher.

2. Your book is not ready to publish yet. As a self-publisher, it will take a while before you can get paid. If you publish through a traditional publisher, you get an advance at some point in time. If you go with a hybrid publisher, you pay a fee to them.

3. Your book may need editing. As a self-publisher, you must find somebody to do the job and pay for the work. A traditional publisher will have in-house editors and pay them. A good hybrid publisher will do the same for you.

4. Your book needs proofreading. As a self-publisher, you take care of hiring and paying someone to do this. A traditional publisher and a hybrid publisher will take care of this.

5. You need a cover. As a self-publisher, you take care of this. A traditional and a hybrid publisher will take care of this task, and you will have no saying in this matter.

6. To sell your book, you need an enticing description. As a self-publisher, you are the copywriter. Or you hire one. A traditional and a hybrid publisher will take care of this.

7. Once your book is published, you need to distribute it. As a self-publisher, this is not your problem. Amazon and Draft2Digital take care of this. If your book is traditionally published or hybrid published, the publishing house takes care of this step.

8. You need eyeballs on your book. In other words: marketing of a king. As a self-publisher you need to take care of this. And guess what? Even as a traditionally published author or a hybrid published author this is your job. Only the top selling authors get any kind of promotion from their publishing houses. If your book starts to sell, Amazon and Draft2Digital will help you spread the word about it for no extra cost.

9. Your book sells. Hurrah! As a self-publisher, you get paid 70% after roughly two months. If you went to a traditional publishing house, you get paid once or twice per year, sometimes only after two years. If you went hybrid publishing, they will often pay out more frequently, for example, once or twice a year.

So yes, a hybrid publisher will take care of expenses and tasks for you, but it is not free.

You can find cheaper help by going through Upwork or Fiverr. And if you publish on Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) and places like Draft2Digital,

, they will take care of the distribution for you for a very low price. You only pay once your book is sold, never up front.

So, it is completely up to you, of course, but my advice is to self-publish your book. Learn the trade, and once you have published one or two, it will be a lot easier and faster the next time.

Sources:

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