

WHAT AM I FACING AS A SELF-PUBLISHER?



Sadly, a lot of writers decide to have their book traditionally published, because they do not believe they can handle the tasks themselves. The whole process seems overwhelming to them.

If you are in doubt about whether you can handle self-publishing or not, then this article will help you to learn more.

Afterwards, you will be able to make an educated decision.

Six Steps to a Selling Book

Writing a book is only one small part of the whole procedure to have your book available for the world to buy.

After you have finished writing the book, it should be proofread and perhaps edited.

You will need a cover for it and a blurb for the back of it.

You will need to have your book printed and/or turned into an electronic version.

And then you will need means to get your book in the hands of customers.

That is six or seven steps, depending on whether or not you prefer to have it edited.

Who will take care of those steps?

Whether you find a publishing house or you self-publish, you will need to take care of the first step: writing the book.

Although, even that step can be outsourced.

What a Publishing House Takes Care of For You

Should you land a contract with a publishing house, they will have inhouse experts who will take care of editing/proofreading your book.

You will have to go through their edits, rewrite, and in the end transfer their proofreading to your manuscript.

Meanwhile, you and the publisher will agree to a title, and they will ask their graphical employees to create a cover for your book.

Copywriters, employed by the publishing house, will write the blurb for your book, unless the editor himself does it.

When the publishing house get the finished manuscript back from you, they will send it to a printer, or print inhouse, if they are big enough.

And once the book is printed, they will distribute it to bookstores on and offline.

Could you handle all that yourself?

Probably not, but nobody demands of you that you should be like a traditional publisher. We live in a modern world, and today, it is much easier to be a self-published author than ever.

Tasks You Must Take Care of as an Indie Publisher

After you have written your book, you need to find someone who can proofread it. If you want it edited, then find an editor first, and a proofreader as the last step. Because otherwise you risk wasting money on having paragraphs proofread that will not be in the book after the editing process.

Feeling overwhelmed by this step? Do not be. You can ask a friend, who is good at English to proofread your book. Or you can hire a proofreader on Upwork or Fiverr.

You will still have to go their edits, rewrite if you like their ideas, and transfer their proofreading to your manuscript.

As for the title, you have to come up with it on your own. But you can discuss it with others, if you are in doubt. Use Facebook groups for writers and ask them what they think. Do not ask friends or family, unless they are interested in the topic or genre of your book.

Guess who will have to get a cover for your book? Yes, you. You can learn to make covers yourself by getting inspiration from other covers in your book category. Or you can outsource it through Fiverr or Upwork. Or you can choose one you like on pages like 99designs.com.

Before you publish your book, you need a blurb, a small text that will sell your book to the right audience. This can seem challenging at first, but there are plenty of books and courses about how to write this sales text. And practice makes perfect. This text is not set in stone. You can change it, if you find out that your book is not selling.

Look for inspiration in blurbs for best-selling books that are similar to yours. Analyze why you think their blurbs work so well. And then use this knowledge for creating your own blurbs.

Good news. After you have done all this, you do not have to find a printer, or pay up front for a number of book copies. You can, if you like, and if you have the means to get the book into the hands of customers yourself.

An easier solution is to use a print-on-demand service. Years ago, there were only one or two. Lulu.com being the biggest.

While Lulu still exists, the market has changed, and the biggest print-on-demand service is now Amazon's KDP platform (which stands for Kindle Direct Publishing).

On KDP you can not only publish your book as print-on-demand. You can also publish it in electronic version. All you need to do in both cases is to upload a file that contains the content of your book. You can either create this text file yourself or outsource it, if you are unsure about how to format it so it looks great.

As for bringing your freshly published book to the bookstores, no problem. KDP takes care of that. Your book will be placed inside Amazon.com and other Amazon stores throughout the world. You can even ask them to distribute to other stores, but your royalties will be lower from stores other than Amazon.

It is still a good idea to have your book go as wide as possible, but in that case, you will be better off by using a service like Draft2Digital.com that will distribute your book for you to several major bookstores like Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Apple, and even to a few libraries.

The Six Steps Again

Let us recapitulate on the five steps to selling your book to give you a quick overview:

Step #1: Write your book.

Step #2: Proofread your book.

Step #3: Get a cover

Step #4: Write a blurb

Step #5: Get your book printed and/or turned into an electronic version

Step #6: Distribute your book

Now that you know what each step takes, it is no longer overwhelming, is it?