

Book Publishing Guide



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Background Information About Publishing A New Book

Johannes Gutenberg invented movable type printing in the 1450s. Since then, the printed book has revolutionized learning throughout the world. With increased literacy and the invention of the printing press, no longer was knowledge limited to only the wealthy, powerful, or the church scholars. In recent years, in addition to conventional printed books, there are two other platforms for books that are being widely embraced as well - e-books and audio books. According to Jeff Bercovici of Forbes, Kindle titles account for approximately 19.5% of all books sold in the US. E-books now comprise 30% of all book sales with Amazon (Kindle) having 65%, Apple (iBook) 22%, and Barnes & Noble (Nook) 3.65%.¹ Audio books have now become increasingly popular. They have been around for decades, but are no longer thought of as marketable only to the blind. Technology has dramatically increased their popularity. A popular format for distribution of the narrated books is CD. There is a growing popularity for downloading audio books onto devices such as tablets, phones, iPods, and MP3 players. This technology delivered through the Internet empowers readers to listen and learn while doing activities that preclude holding a traditional book or e-reader. Major distributors for audio books include iTunes (Apple) and Audible.com (Amazon). Many audio book customers prefer to hear the voice of the author read the book, rather than a great radio voice. For millions of non-readers, this audio form of books opens up new worlds of education and entertainment.

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Adoration Publishing currently publishes both printed copies and Kindle books. We are planning to expand to include audio books in the near future as a part of our publishing operation. We encourage you to consider all these avenues for works that you wish to make available to the general public, most likely starting with a printed book. In all of these distribution formats, it is important to employ a well-designed cover and brief description of your book. Each one of these platforms has a significant following and plays an important role to communicate your message to readers and hearers.

Write and Perfect Your Manuscript

Two widely-used word processing software are Microsoft Word and the freely-distributed OpenOffice. The .doc and .docx supported by these programs will be accepted by all publishers. Both word processors are available for both PC and Mac users. Both packages will also export to the convenient .pdf format, which when used, will standardize your book's appearance when viewed on different platforms by your preliminary readers.

¹ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffbercovici/2014/02/10/amazon-vs-book-publishers-by-the-numbers/>, accessed 11/7/14.

Another popular writing tool is called Scrivener. It is inexpensive and is written specifically for authors to use in writing books and screenplays.

The first challenge you face will be to complete writing your book to the absolutely best of your ability. It is smart to clearly identify and do in-depth research on the subject about which you will write. Look to acknowledged professionals in the field for ideas. Identify what books of a similar topic are already available in the marketplace. Are the ideas that are put forth, consistent or in opposition to your point of view? Identify the market for whom you are writing the book, and why you are particularly suited to write on this topic. Identify a central golden thread through which all the key points of your writing will be woven together. Writing a book proposal as discussed later will help you solidify many of the important perspectives as you begin to write your first draft.

When you write, set aside a specific block of time to write, at least several hours at a time. You can think in short blocks of time, but writing coherently takes concentration and significant time. When you concentrate and start writing, keep writing. Avoid the common temptation to edit and re-edit the same paragraphs over and over. If you do this each time you start to write, you will be stymied in your desired progress. You need to remain focused on the big picture of your book and explore your ideas and creativity. There will be a time for detailed editing once a good first draft is completed.

In all the books we publish, we strive for authentic historical and stylistic perfection. Readers will judge your work based on both criteria. Manuscripts submitted to Adoration Publishing should conform to the style book: *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. When Turabian is silent, we rely upon the more detailed *Chicago Manual of Style*. Also, *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White will be of great help to every writer. All of these books are readily available from Amazon.com. Adoration can also provide you with a helpful paper entitled, *How to Write and Excellent Academic Paper*. This guide is available for Kindle as well. Much of the information provided there will also apply to writing a high-quality book.

Another great resource for writers is text-to-voice technology. There are a number of software packages that will take your written text and convert it to spoken English. One of the most popular is *Dragon Naturally Speaking*. A free shareware product is called *TextToWave*. These computer programs read your writing to you aloud. If you email .doc files to certain models of Kindles, they will provide this service as well. Note that not all current models of Kindle readers provide this option. Listening to your book being read aloud, while you are following along with your printed text, will help you to identify problems with your spelling, thinking process, and especially grammar.

Before you submit your manuscript to any publisher, it is smart to have four or five persons read your “final” manuscript. You should seek their candid feedback. You are not simply looking for good friends who will give you a pat on your back. You want well-read readers who can give you meaningful, constructive comments. Invite your readers to look for any lapses in logic, history, or scriptural or theological inconsistencies. Also, later in your publishing process, you will want these readers and a few others to post some written five-star reviews on Amazon and Barnesandnoble.com, once the book is available in the marketplace. Smart authors seek out a diversity of pre-publication readers to unmask shortcomings in their writing. Drawing readers from three or four faith traditions can be helpful.

Wise authors, welcome even grave criticism from their pre-publication readers, not because authors enjoy receiving it, but because it pushes the author to be more clear in writing style, historically accurate, and theologically sound. Be assertive in your conclusions, knowing that at times, excellent people might not take the

same position as you do. Be prepared for criticism; it will surely come. On occasion, some editors and pre-publication readers have led authors to change his or her thinking, when someone makes a compelling case.

Resist the temptation to have your readers invest their time, until you are fairly confident that you have developed your writing to your peak of perfection. Because many authors relish feedback, especially affirmation, they sometimes seem to move ahead too early into that process. It can be an inconvenience to ask your friendly readers to reread multiple versions as you progress. If you start this outside reading process too early in your writing, your readers will often find many of the same errors. Sometimes, starting the first pass with a single reader proves more efficient. Respect your readers' time and treat them as the valued assets they are to your writing career.

Have Your Book Edited By a Professional

When you have completed your best writing, rest assured that the work on your book is far from being finished. Your book must be read and edited by a professional editor. No author can adequately edit their own writing. Editing is one of the services that Adoration provides for books that we publish. Be aware that there are many styles of editing. We lean heavily toward scholastic editing, rather than the style of editing done for magazines, trade journals, sales, or newspaper distribution. Please take the editor's comment under serious consideration. Some suggested changes will be critical, such as grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. But, the rewording any editor suggests must be both true and congruent with how you would express your thoughts. Never authorize a change in your writing which you think diminishes your writing. Only embrace suggestions that you agree strengthen your writing and drive your points home stronger. Do not let any editor overrule your own sense of accuracy and details, although unresolved disagreements might preclude a company from publishing your work, should you be unwilling to accept their changes. The book must be your voice, not the editor's. Experience has shown that the vast majority of editing suggestions are appropriate and incredibly helpful. More often than not, the author will comment that he or she does not know why those improvements were not in the original draft, long before the editor pointed them out.

Transition from Manuscript to Marketable Book Products

When your manuscript is edited and perfected, you and your publisher will need to decide in what formats you wish to have it published. A big question is do you want to have a paperback or hardback version of your book along with a Kindle version, or do you want to publish only electronically with Kindle? You can also distribute your e-book version with iBook and Nook, but Kindle has the market share and also offers a free reading app for Apple, Android, and PC formats.

For printed books, there will be a cost to have your book properly formatted, and printed. Your publisher will design a front, spine, and back cover for your book. A powerful cover image is especially important when buyers are shopping on-line, no matter what format they are seeking. Should you take the path of a printed version first, its layout will enhance the development of an e-book version layout, because this type of formatting software can readily draw from the stylistic benefits of a hard copy book layout and cover and back design. There are costs for the setup and printing of the book. The cost for these steps will be paid by you, the publisher, or shared depending upon the direction you pursue for publishing your book. Once the layout for book printing is

completed, the necessary changes for publishing in e-books are made rather quickly. An e-book version is usually a must, and is relatively inexpensive to produce, even without producing a printed version.

Options for Printed Book Publication

There are four major options for publishing printed versions of a book:

1. **Submit your manuscript to a traditional publisher for consideration.** Traditional publishers know their retail markets and will select new works that fit their desired profile to generate a profit. Their refusal to publish a particular book is not necessarily an indication that the book is not excellent. It is often that they feel that the market which they have selected is not a good match for your book. Most traditional publishers will not review unsolicited manuscripts. They almost never will work with an unpublished author. They rely upon professional book agents hired by the author to pre-screen and prepare book proposals. Should the publisher ultimately decide to publish your book, the company will assume the entire costs and decisions for editing the content, layout, and the cover and back of the book as well. Expect them to require you to assign to them the long-term exclusive publishing rights in all forms of publication as well as the distribution rights of your book. They will bear the full cost of production, control the time-frame, and also most likely control the electronic rights for e-book publishing and audio publication. Traditional publishers will have the final say in the title of the book. They seem to move quite slowly. You should expect six months to a year or longer from the time they advise you that they are willing to publish your work before you might see a physical copy of your book. They also keep the lion's share of any sales revenue, which will fund the production, printing, and distribution costs as well as their marketing costs along with their profit. Their investment to get a book assessed, edited, laid out, cover design, final proofing, and printing is substantial. They will pay a small royalty to the author, for the books that they publish. The royalty will generally be based on the number of retail copies sold.
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- If we select your book for consideration for publishing, forward to us your “final” manuscript draft for review.
- Adoration will then advise you if we wish to publish your book. If so, we move ahead together.
- Consultation between Adoration Publishing and the author about the scope of work needed to bring the book to the market.
- Establish financial charges for publishing your book and authorize a mutually agreeable contract between the author and Adoration Publishing.
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