

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 Since this study, Google Books has experience significant growth. Audio books have now also 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. The historic format for distribution of the narrated books has been CD. There is also now strong 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, printed book or e-reader. Major distributors for audio books include iTunes (Apple) and Audible.com (Amazon). Sometimes, these recordings are professionally narrated. But, many audio books are recorded by the author. For millions of non-readers, this audio form of books opens up new worlds of education and entertainment.

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¹ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffbercovici/2014/02/10/amazon-vs-book-publishers-by-the-numbers/>, accessed 7/26/18.

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. Another popular writing tool is called Scrivener. It is inexpensive and is written specifically for authors to use in writing books and screenplays. Scrivener will help you organize your research and can make it easy to facilitate your writing when you organize and reorganize your project.

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 others 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. There is a wonderful website where you can paste text onto their page and it will read it back to you. See <https://ttsreader.com>. 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, we suggest that you 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. Smart authors seek out a diversity of pre-publication readers to unmask writing shortcomings. Drawing readers from three or four faith traditions can be helpful. Invite your readers to look for any lapses in logic, history, or scriptural or theological inconsistencies. 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. Also, later in your publishing process, you will want these readers and a few others to write some brief endorsement that you can -use in the promotion of your book and later post some five-star reviews on Amazon, Barnesandnoble, and Goodreads once the book is available in the marketplace.

Resist the temptation to have your readers invest their valuable 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 and you have addressed the concerns of your early readers, 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 assertive in conclusions you draw, 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. 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 comments 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. Our 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.

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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.

2. **Start your own publishing company.** You will have to set up your business formally through the Secretary of State and prepare state and federal tax returns for the company. You will also have to collect and pay sales taxes on your retail book sales. You will retain all publishing rights for your work. You must have a publishing company website to promote your book. When you completely self-publish you are taking on the responsibility and cost for editing, layout, cover design, printing, distribution, and marketing. You will purchase your own ISBN (International Standard Book Number)² for the book. In order for you to facilitate cataloging your book in libraries, you will need to assign Library of Congress call number and a Dewey Decimal call number, and obtain the assigned Library of Congress Control Number (LCCN) from the Library. You will fund the cost for offset printing and shipping of the books for you to warehouse or set up and manage an account with a print on demand operation, the retail distribution venues (Amazon and Barnes and Noble) and the e-book publishing companies. You will be in full control to set your retail pricing and the discount you offer to retail outlets. In turn, you will retain all the copyright ownership and control of the end results in all forms, including all profit or losses that you generate.
3. **Work with an established publishing company who will become a partner in your supported self-publishing efforts.** Most self-publishing companies provide all of their services on a fee-basis to a wide scope of book topics. Virtually all of these companies will allow you to continue to own all the publishing rights on your original manuscript. They publish on a non-exclusive basis, unlike the traditional publishers who will likely require you to assign all rights to them in perpetuity. Some, but not all, focus on a targeted profile of readers. They do a lot of the work of publishing for which you will pay. They will charge you the cost for the editing, the book layout, the book cover design, and some level of promotion. Expect that the publisher will not grant you the rights to those work products that they produced. Even though you pay them fees for the design of the book cover, the layout of the book interior, and the editing of the book, it is likely that you will not own those elements of your book such as the final editing and the cover design, unless this is assured in writing and an electronic copy is delivered to you. Costs are often between \$600-\$8000 or more. They will sell you copies of your book at a discount for resale, but they usually keep a substantial royalty for each copy printed and sold to the public as well as to you directly. A common discount for your direct purchases will be 20-40% of the list price. Some companies will let you participate in the establishment of the sale price; others commit to a pricing formula based on the number of finished pages and the number of illustrations that are included in the book. Some of these operations imply that they make an assessment as to whether or not they will publish your

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- Adoration will then advise you if we wish to publish your book. If so, we move ahead together.
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