

Book Publishing for the Indie Author 3 Steps to Success



THE WORKS

Everything You Need to Write, Publish & Profit!

SHAWN HANSEN

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Contents

Introduction	i
Book Publishing for the Indie Author: 3 Steps to Success	1
#1 – Set Realistic Goals	1
Know your PRIMARY reason for publishing.	1
#2 – Establish a Book Budget.....	1
EDITORIAL SERVICES – A Must Have for Everyone	2
INTERIOR DESIGN – A Must Have for Most / A Should Have for a Few.....	2
COVER DESIGN – A Must Have for Most / A Should Have for a Few.....	3
Cost Review	4
Editorial Services	4
Interior Design	4
Cover Design.....	4
Your Book Budget	4
#3 – Create a Plan	5
PRE-PUBLICATION.....	5
DURING PUBLICATION.....	6
POST PUBLICATION.....	6
In Summary.....	6
Get More from Shawn	7
FREEBIES	7
TRAINING COURSES FOR WRITERS & AUTHORS	8
About Shawn Hansen	13

Introduction

There has never been a better time to be a writer. In the last few years, online publishing and marketing opportunities have skyrocketed every writer's earning potential, and there seems to be no end in sight.

But – and there is *always* a but – these opportunities are only going to be valuable if writers make the most of them.

Potential and *reaching* one's potential are two different things, and the gap between them can be gigantic.

In *Book Publishing for the Indie Author: 3 Steps to Success*, I share how you can work hard *and* smart to take advantage of the potential that's all around us.

I hope what you read here inspires you to go out and Write, Publish & Profit!

Shawn

Book Publishing for the Indie Author: 3 Steps to Success

#1 – Set Realistic Goals

A goal without a plan is just a wish.

~ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, Author of *The Little Prince*

Know your PRIMARY reason for publishing.

- Labor of Love
- Exposure
- Profit

Ultimately, your book may fit into more than one of these categories, but to set yourself up for success, you have to determine your *primary* reason, and act accordingly!

Authors don't make money: Writers do!

Once the publishing process is done, you're an *Author*, but that's an ending. *Writers* keep the words coming, publish more, and become authors over and over again.

- One published book will work for those who are *Labor of Love* authors, but it won't do for anyone else.
- *Exposure* authors must treat book #1 as a vehicle to boost sales of ancillary items and later, for better sales of book #2.
- *Profit* authors must treat books #1 & #2 as foundational to increasing interest in (and sales of) book #3. This will lead to spiking backlist sales, even more interest, and the ever-widening circle of publishing success.

ePublishing makes writing profitable.

Because the costs associated with publishing an eBook are so much less than that of publishing a print book, you can earn a profit with eBook publishing – if you set realistic goals!

#2 – Establish a Book Budget

People are only taken as seriously as they take themselves.

~ Jane Stanton Hitchcock, Author of *Mortal Friends*

If you want readers to take your book seriously, you have to take it seriously yourself.

Everyone can write, right? This may be true, but we writers know not everyone can write *well*. Publishing is no different: Everyone *can* do it, but few do it *well*.

That's a shame, because failing to take publication seriously is a book's death sentence.

In order of importance, here are the professional services you need to be ready, willing, and able to spend money on if you want to succeed.

EDITORIAL SERVICES – A Must Have for Everyone

No one should ever edit her or his own book. There are no exceptions to this rule. Ever.

Whether you have a stack of advanced degrees, work(ed) as a professional editor, or have a wall full of writing accolades, you are *not* qualified to edit your own writing. Neither is your neighbor, your English-professor-sister-in-law, or your critique group.

The type of editor you need depends on the content of your book, your writing weaknesses, and your primary reason for publishing. The greater your desire to earn money with your writing, the more detailed your editorial needs.

A book with content inconsistencies, errors in grammar and punctuation, and/or typographical mistakes will be poorly received. It will likely get negative reviews (often viciously negative ones), refund requests, and be pulled from the virtual shelf.

You absolutely *must* hire a professional to perform quality control on your words.

INTERIOR DESIGN – A Must Have for Most / A Should Have for a Few

The finished file on your hard drive is *not* designed for publication: Your manuscript must be reformatted for ePublication, but there's no industry standard. In fact, each distributor (e.g. Amazon Kindle, Barnes & Noble NOOK Press, and Apple iBooks) has different specifications.

The right document margins and formatting styles can make or break a reader's experience. Happy readers mean good reviews and increased sales. Unhappy readers. . .well. . .

In the world of electronic publishing, there are no page numbers, no headers, and no footers. "Pages" are determined by the consumer and are based on the screen size of her reading device coupled with the style and size of the font she uses when she reads. In addition to various screen sizes, eReaders have different resolutions, some are HD, and many display color. Most devices also offer a variety of screen tints while reading: White, black, and sepia. Each of these must be taken into account when designing a book's interior.

Can a writer design her own book's interior? Sure, but should she?

Is the writer:

1. An advanced user of Microsoft Word who knows how to create templates with styles and then copy/paste the individual sections of a manuscript into those templates?
2. Familiar with each of the formatting and file-type guidelines of the desired distributors?
3. Willing to review 200+ pages 3-5 times (per distributor) for the sole purpose of catching stray spaces, characters, and other anomalies?
4. Planning to publish a book every few weeks to retain the skills necessary to streamline the process?

Any writer who answers YES to *all* of the above questions can consider designing her book's interior, but she needs to weigh the time it takes away from marketing and writing against the cost of hiring a professional. For most writers, it's better to pay a professional to do the work.

COVER DESIGN – A Must Have for Most / A Should Have for a Few

Books are judged by their covers – Every reader knows this! The first thing a reader sees when browsing for eBooks is the cover, and the 2-3 seconds a reader spends looking at the cover will often make or break a sale.

One of the most common mistakes writers who self-publish make is creating their own cover art. To be frank, most self-made covers stink, and they stink big. Poor covers kill sales.

Like interior design, cover design requires a certain amount of know how, and aside from drops in sales due to poor design, some distributors (like Amazon) charge authors a file download fee per sale that comes off the top of the royalties earned. The fee is based on the overall size of the book file (\$0.15/MG at the 70% royalty option), and the largest element of the file is often the book's cover. This means a self-made cover that's not the right size, resolution, and compression will end up plucking money right out of the author's pocket.

Can a writer design her own book cover? Sure, but should she?**Is the writer:**

1. An advanced user of Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, or similar design software?
2. Familiar with the differences between RGB and CMYK color modes?
3. Knowledgeable about .PSD, .PNG, .TIF(F), .JPEG, and .PDF file types?
4. Clear about what a 1:1.6 versus a 1:1.5 ratio is?
5. Capable of creating art that's 300 dpi as well as 72 dpi?
6. Comfortable with file compression and embedding font?

Any writer who answers YES to *all* of the above questions can consider designing her book's cover; however, considering a basic professionally designed eBook cover can be purchased for about \$50, the time trade isn't worth it for most writers.

It costs money to prepare a book for publication. There's no way around this. Here's a cost summary of professional services to help build a book budget.

Cost Review

Editorial Services

\$1.00 to \$3.00 per page – Industry standard “page” is 250 words.

Interior Design

\$50 to \$350 – Longer works, and works with tables, charts, and/or images will cost more.

Cover Design

\$50 to \$225 – Lower cost covers are generally not one-of-a-kind, and the more complex the design, the more expensive the art.

Your Book Budget

\$275 to \$625 per book

- Labor of Love: \$275 - \$350
- Exposure: \$300 - \$500
- Profit: \$350 and up

Some valuable price comparisons:

- **Labor of Love = How much a person will spend on holiday and birthday gifts for family and friends this year.** If a person has 10 people on his or her birthday and holiday family & friends list, and each is gifted a copy of the eBook, that's spending \$27.50 to \$35 per person. \$35 is less than the cost of a nice meal.
- **Exposure = The amount of money it would cost to take out an ad that's seen by millions.** During its peak in 2012 – Cyber Monday – Amazon sold 306 items per second, and while not all those sales were books, it speaks to the enormous number of people Amazon reaches. What kind of ad could be placed for \$300 (or \$500) that would be seen by all of America? Wherever they lived? Whatever time of day or night they looked? Once published, an eBook is a nonstop advertisement for the author; the author's Web Site; and the author's other books, products, and services.
- **Profit = The amount of money it would take to open a new business and staff it.** The first book published for profit is equivalent to starting a new

business. It's unheard of to open a business for \$350 (or even \$625). Each book thereafter is like hiring an employee. Who can hire a full-time employee for \$350 (or \$625)? And that's total – it's not hourly or weekly or monthly or annually. Plus, there's no medical insurance to provide, no holiday pay to consider, no sick leave to worry about. Once published, that book works 24 hours each day, 7 days each week, and is (potentially) serving consumers worldwide.

Remember, if you want readers to take your book seriously, you have to take it seriously yourself.

#3 – Create a Plan

It's good to do uncomfortable things. It's weight training for life.

~Anne Lamott, Author – (from *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*)

Unless your primary reason for publishing is to produce a Labor of Love, you have to think about marketing *far in advance* of the release of your book.

I know many writers feel like they're too busy or too focused on the details of publishing to turn their attention to marketing, and after all, without a book, how can you market, right? Wrong!

It's a huge mistake to think there's no reason (and no way) to market prior to the release of your book.

PRE-PUBLICATION

This is the time to create interest in your up-coming release. If you want to avoid the disappointment of slow, early sales, then pre-publication buzz is essential.

How to Prepare & What to Do

- Create/Polish your Media Kit (Bio, Head Shot, Excerpt, Event Interest, etc.)
- Practice Your Elevator Pitch
- Create Social Media Teasers (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest) and a Posting Schedule
- Secure a Web Site / Blog
- Plan & Write Blog Posts and Determine a Posting Schedule
- Begin List-Building
- Write & Send Press Releases
- Write & Send E-Mails
- Secure Promotional Materials
- Plan a Book Launch and Tour (Virtual and Physical)
- Enlist Family, Friends, and Your Writer's Group(s) to Help with the Launch and Tour

DURING PUBLICATION

There's a waiting period between the time you submit your finished eBook file(s) and its release. The wait can be excruciating, so use the time wisely!

How to Prepare & What to Do

- Review Everything from Pre-Publication, and Catch Up As Needed
- Create Social Media Campaigns and Distribute to Friends, Family, and Writer's Group(s)
- Create Web Site and Blog Articles and Distribute to Friends, Family, and Writer's Group(s)

POST PUBLICATION

There's going to be a rush of adrenaline followed by a period of emptiness, and the best way to fill the void of all the work you've been doing is by marketing what you've just published and moving on to the next book.

How to Prepare & What to Do

- Divide Your Time: 60% Marketing What You've Just Released & 40% Writing Something New
- Contact Local Groups, Organizations, and Media and Offer Yourself as a Guest
- Create a Book Trailer and an Audio Excerpt – or Hire a Pro
- Create More Social Media Campaigns and Distribute to Friends, Family, and Writer's Group(s)
- Create More Web Site and Blog Articles and Distribute to Friends, Family, and Writer's Group(s)

In Summary

The Internet and eReaders have created a content-hungry market just waiting for your eBooks. Your earning potential as a writer is better than it's ever been before, but you have to be prepared to take advantage of it.

Book Publishing for the Indie Author: 3 Steps to Success has shown you how to work hard *and* smart to take advantage of your income potential as a writer. Are you willing to do what it takes? I thought so! Now, go Write, Publish & Profit!

Shawn

Get More from Shawn



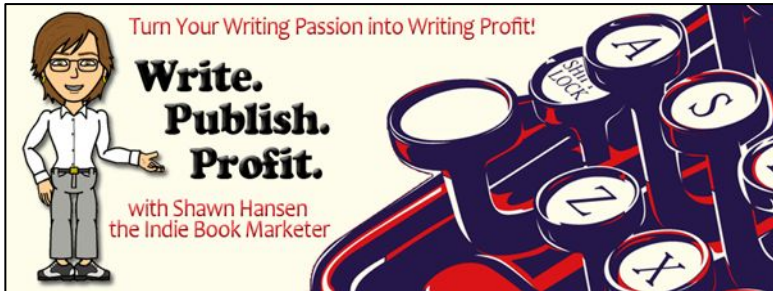
If you enjoyed *Book Publishing for the Indie Author: 3 Steps to Success*, I'd like to invite you to take a look at some of my other guides and trainings.

Each is designed to help you Write, Publish & Profit! ☺

If you have any questions about anything you see here, don't hesitate to contact me.

FREEBIES

Write. Publish. Profit. Facebook Group



Join a supportive, engaged group of writers who are committed to turning their writing passion into writing profits!

<http://facebook.com/groups/WritePublishProfit>

5 Simple Ways to Write, Publish & Profit.



One of the keys to success is knowing what to write and where to sell it to earn the most with your words.

In *5 Simple Ways to Write, Publish & Profit* I show you 5 simple-to-implement ways I earn money with my writing.

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/5-simple-ways-write-publish-profit/>

TRAINING COURSES FOR WRITERS & AUTHORS

Project Planning and Time Management for Writers



If you're a writer who wants to have a successful business, you've got to become an expert at Project Planning & Time Management.

Simply put, if you plan your projects correctly, and you manage your time efficiently, you're going to outpace your competition.

<http://shawnhansen.com/project-planning-time-management-for-writers/>

7 Profitable Alternatives to KDP Select Free eBook Promotions.

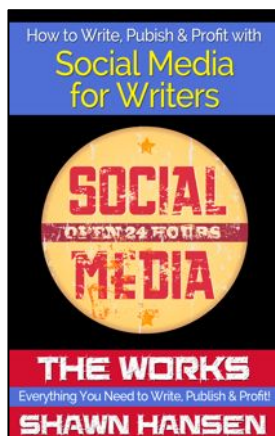


Kindle free eBook promos no longer boost sales, increase rankings, or deliver readers. AMAZON HAS CHANGED!

Discover 7 profitable alternatives, so you can sell more books!

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/make-money-writing-7-profitable-alternatives-to-kindle-kdp-select-free-ebook-promotions/>

How to Write, Publish & Profit with Social Media for Writers



This training includes:

- Facebook: Setup + Groups, Lists, and Posting Strategy
- Twitter: Setup + Hashtags, Chats, and Posting
- LinkedIn: Setup + Groups, Updates, and Posting
- Pinterest: Setup + Boards, Pins, and Posting Strategy

<http://shawnhansen.com/social-media-for-writers-4-workshop-webinars/>

Amazing Author Platforms



This training includes:

- The 5 Biggest Web Site & Blog Mistakes Writers Make
- The Role of Social Media in Your Author Platform
- Your 5 Marketing Plan Must Haves

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/amazing-author-platforms/>

Opt-Ins 101: How to Turn Web Site & Blog Visitors into Buyers

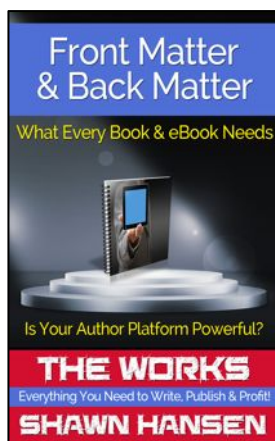


This training includes:

- What an Opt-In Is
- What to Offer Visitors
- How to Create the Form You Need for Your Web Site or Blog
- How to Install That Form
- How to Follow Up

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/opt-ins-101-how-to-turn-web-site-blog-visitors-into-buyers/>

Front Matter & Back Matter: What Every Book & eBook Needs



This training includes:

- What Front Matter Is
- What Back Matter Is
- How the Right Front Matter & Back Matter Can Increase Sales and Positive Reviews
- What to Include in an eBook Versus a Print Book
- How to Leverage Each to Ensure Readers Come Back for More

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/front-matter-back-matter-what-every-book-and-ebook-needs/>

Sales Funnels & How to Use Them

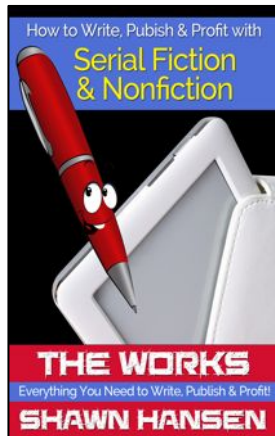


This training includes:

- What a Sales Funnel Is
- How to Set Up Your Sales Funnel to Generate the Most Book Sales
- How Each Price Point Leads to the Next
- Where and How to Determine Your Customer's Entry Points
- How to Make a Sales Funnel Work

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/sales-funnels-how-to-use-them/>

How to Write, Publish & Profit with Serial Fiction & Nonfiction



Perfect for both reader and writer, serializing work means faster publication, more money, and hungrier fans.

By the end of the session, you'll be ready to write serials and earn more money selling these smaller portions than you would by selling the whole book at once.

<http://shawnhansen.com/make-money-writing-serial-fiction-nonfiction-workshop-webinar/>

How to Write, Publish & Profit by Creating Calendars & More

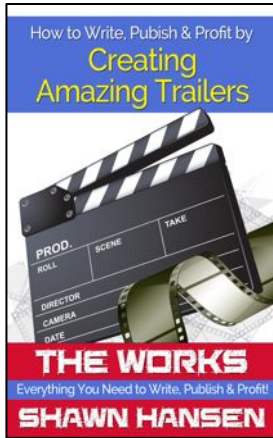


This training includes:

- How to Create a Great Calendar Whether You're a Fiction or Nonfiction Writer
- Exactly What to Put on Your Calendar Pages
- How to Format Great Images for Calendar Pages
- Where to Order Printed, Full-Color Calendars for Under \$5 Each
- And More!

<http://shawnhansen.com/creating-calendars-more-workshop-webinar/>

How to Write, Publish & Profit by Creating Amazing Trailers



Engage your readers and sell more of your writing!

Learn how to create amazing trailers using Power Point and iMovie.

<http://shawnhansen.com/landing/creating-amazing-trailers/>

Shut Up & Write! The Newsletter for Serious Writers



No Fluff • No Nonsense • No Excuses

Get a weekly dose of the stuff you need to get writing, publishing, and selling in an easy-to-digest newsletter.

Shut Up & Write! is the ammunition and inspiration you need to write more and make more money doing it.

Each Weekly Issue Contains:

1. **Open Markets**
You'll get the scoop on one fiction and one nonfiction market looking to *buy and publish* your work.
2. **Fiction & Nonfiction Ideas**
You'll get one fiction and one nonfiction writing prompt. They'll be geared to the featured Open Markets but suitable for other projects as well.
3. **The Photo Prompt**
Learn to do more with what you see all around you by honing your skills with an image. Each week, you'll get three exercises related to an image.
4. **Three Articles**
 - **Writer's Tool Kit**
Every writer needs tools, and each week I'll share one that I use.
 - **Thoughts on Writing**
Building and maintaining a writing career can be bumpy and laborious and filled with joy. I'll talk honestly about it.
 - **And Another Thing**
We all know we need to write, but what else will help us build solid careers? I'll tell you.
5. **Training, Writing-Related Information, and Tips**
I'll point you to a great video and a couple of useful Web Sites, so you can grow your writing muscles. I'll also include several tips to further your success.
6. **Recommended Reading**
I'll share one nonfiction book on craft that's helped me and one fiction book I think is worth reading to experience good writing.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

<http://shawnhansen.com/shut-write-weekly-newsletter-real-writers/>

About Shawn Hansen

In 2006, I began writing professionally. I studied the craft, the market, and wrote lots and lots of words every single day. I committed to submitting something somewhere each week, and eventually, the stack of rejections included the occasional acceptance letter with a cash-money check attached. I have now published over 1,000 stories in a variety of places – many of which no longer exist. This is not my fault. I swear.

I've been an annual participant (and winner) of NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) since 2006. My first NaNoWriMo was life altering. I learned to write with abandon. My goal each day was simply to pound out 1,667 words – no matter how awful. It turns out that's how first drafts get *done*. It was also during the 2006 NaNoWriMo that my characters took over a story for the first of many times – it's one of the magical moments of writing, and I continue to have them.

Writing every day, and submitting and publishing on a regular basis are the keys to my success. There are plenty of keys to go around, so if you write, or you want to be a writer, grab a set of your own keys and get to work!

I'd love to connect with you!

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/WritePublishProfit>

My Free Facebook Group. Join over 1,300 other writers and learn more about how to Write, Publish & Profit!

<http://www.Twitter.com/ShawnEHansen>

Twitter Fiction and other fun stuff

Are you an author in need of inspiration or publishing services?

<http://ShawnHansen.com>

My home on the Internet, which I call The Works: Everything you need to Write, Publish & Profit!

<http://www.BookCoverJunction.com>

Jaw-Dropping eBook Covers and More

<http://www.FlyingDonkeyPress.com>

Where Authors Find Their Wings