

The Writer's Road Map

Answering all those questions about writing a book you have always wanted to ask but never had the courage.

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When I first decided to write this book I had one simple goal - to compile the kind of book I wanted to read when I set out on my writing journey.

You see, there are loads of books and blogs offering writing tips, but I often had very basic questions that I felt too stupid to ask. The result was that I spent hours reading and searching for the best possible advice.

Therefore, when I came to writing this book I started out by interviewing hundreds of new writers and asking them – ‘What one question have you never had the courage to ask?’

I collected the answers to these questions, made a list of the most common and set about answering them.

The result is this book – I hope it helps.

Chapter 1 - Getting Started - Know Your Genre

If you have always dreamed of being a writer, you can live your dreams by writing your own book and then self-publishing. Self-publishing is the way that many writers today are choosing to get their book out to the public.

Self-publishing today is not the same as it was years ago when you had to spend thousands of dollars to publish your book. You can self-publish a book for as little as \$500 when you choose a good self-publishing service online.

The first thing that you need to do is to know your genre. The one rule of writing is that you should write what you know. If you have a specific genre that you read, chances are that this is what you will want to write about. Take a look at your interests and the type of books that you read before you decide on your genre. Your book should never be just about making money - it should be about something for which you have a passion. There are many different genres available in both fiction and non-fiction. Before you start your book, have a plan of what it will be about and the genre it will fill.

You need to have a specific genre when you are writing a book so that you will be able to market it properly. Some books will cross genre lines - such as paranormal and romance. Some books will fit neatly into a specific genre. It should be clear what the book is about to the reader so that they will be interested in what you have written enough to buy the book. Most readers have types of books that they like to read and tend to stick with one or two genres.

If you are writing a non-fiction book, there are also genres. You need to make your book stand out among the rest in a way that will set it apart from other books of the same genre. If you are writing an Italian Cookbook, for example, how do you make it stand out from the other Italian cookbooks that are on the market already?

Once you find your genre and know what you are writing about, you should start

to think of marketing your book. Make it something that readers will choose when they see it in bookstores or online. This will set it apart from other books of its kind and entice readers to buy it. Many book authors are finding that they can make a career out of self-publishing their books and marketing them to the right audience.

After you have figured out what you are going to write about and what will make your book stand out among others, you can then start to outline your book. You should write down a synopsis of the book and the point that you are trying to make. Good books carry a message, make sure that your book has a message to the readers that they can take away from the book at the end.

While you may like free-form writing, which is writing without doing any sort of outline, you should still have an idea of the ending of the book in your head. When you are writing fiction, characters tend to come to life as you write. Your ending may change as you rewrite, it is important to be flexible. The way that you write depends on the type of person that you are. If you prefer to have everything ironed out for your book, then you should do an outline that will tell you where you are going. This is like having a roadmap on a car trip.

There are some people, however, who do not want to use a roadmap on a trip, and they just want to go. If this sounds like you, then just start writing and the ideas will start flowing in you. You can rework characters and plots as you move on in your book. Everyone has a different style when it comes to writing books. Over thinking the book and too much planning can bog you down and keep you from writing. Too little thought can keep your book from reaching a conclusion. It takes a lot of creativity as well as some structure in order to write a successful book that people will want to read.

You should read books in the genre that you are interested in so that you get the feel for this type of writing. Reading is a good way to improve your writing skills.

Before you start writing your book, read the genre that you like and have a good idea of what you want to say in your book.

Chapter 2 - Research Your Book

In order to write your book, you are going to have to do some research. Even if you are writing an autobiography, you still have to go back in your mind to research incidents that happened and most likely look up dates and names. You want to do research to make your book seem more authentic and well written. Nothing is worse than writing a book where you get facts, dates and other information wrong.

Research different types of books that have been successful in the genre that you have chosen for your book. When you are performing research, you can use your local library as well as the internet. If you are writing fiction, you will need to research even more. For example, if you are writing a murder mystery, you need to know police procedures as well as how murderers are caught. You can discover this information through your research by taking a look at the books at the local library. Some authors go as far to take a class in something that they want to learn about at a community college, so that they can be better prepared for their book.

You do not want to get bogged down with research, however. Many writers enjoy research so much that they neglect to write their book. This is not what you want to do - you want to research your book so that you have the right information, but not write a thesis. Too much research can stunt the creative flow of your book.

One way to research, what you are writing is to do the research after you have finished the first draft of your book. Or research as you are writing. The internet makes it easier to do research now more than ever. You can get most of the information that you need to research your book if you go online.

It is a good idea to research the characters in your book, even if they are fictional. Discover some information about personality traits of people. A good writer is very much in tune with psychology and the way that people think. In fact,

if you want to get in touch with the characters that you create, you can do so by learning a bit of psychology. Creative writers are often advised to take this class so that they can get in touch with the way that people think and react to certain situations. By learning how others think, you will be able to bring more to the book than your own perception of how to react in a certain situation. This will also help you with dialog. Realistic dialog is very important when writing a book. If you understand how and why people react a certain way and speak in certain terms, you can give your characters more depth.

In addition to researching your characters and the plot of your book, you should also make sure that you do some research on what makes a good book. You can take a writing course to learn how you can write a good book or even join a writing group. The more input that you get from other writers, and the more information that you share, the better your book will be.

There are conferences that you can attend for writers, as well as workshops. You can make these all part of your writing research, as in addition to researching your book, you should also research the components that make up a good book.

A good book has the following:

- Three dimensional, believable characters.
- A conflict.
- A climax.
- A resolution to the conflict.

You need to have some sort of conflict in the book, which is presented right from the start. The conflict must be resolved by the ending of the book. This does not mean that your book has to have a happy ending, but you cannot leave anything hanging out there that remains unsolved. You also want to craft your book so that it reaches a climax, which builds up throughout the book.

Another thing that you need to determine is which point of view you want to use to write the book. You can choose first person narrative, which is an easier style to write but is limited to the thoughts and actions of the main character, or narrator of the story. You can write first person observant which tells the story from the point of view of another character who is observing the action. You can choose third person and still write from the point of view of the main protagonist. When you are writing from the third person, you can also delve into the point of view from other characters in the book.

Of all styles of writing, third person omniscient, which sees into the heads of all the characters, is the most difficult to write.

Take a look at books that you like to read and see which writing style will best fit your book. The point of view that you write from can make or break your book. For example, the Sherlock Holmes books by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle were a flop at first, until he changed the point of view coming from Dr. Watson, which was first person observant.

In addition to point of view, you also need to decide if you are writing in the past or present tense. Most books are written in the past tense, although you may want to take a look at *Presumed Innocent* by Scott Turow to see an example of first person narrative in the present tense. Writing in the present tense is more difficult, but lends more action to the book.

Do your research by studying other books and your own writing style to see which point of view and tense you wish to use in your book. First person narrative, which is also called prose writing, is the easiest, but has limitations. Third person omniscient is the most difficult, but opens up the thoughts and feelings of other characters in the book. This type of research should be done before you start your book, but can be changed if you find that it is not working for you and how you want to tell a story.

Chapter 3 - Fiction or Non-Fiction?

Most people equate writing a book with writing a novel, which is a fiction story. This is not the case when it comes to writing, especially writing today. There is a very big market for non-fiction books as well. Cookbooks, how-to books, motivational books and biographies are all examples of non-fiction books that sell very well and are often self-published. In order to get a book published by mainstream press that is non-fiction, you have to have a well-known name or a unique idea. You also need to be extremely lucky, as there is heavy competition in the mainstream press for authors, especially unknown authors.

Fiction books tell a story and have a conflict and resolution. Non-fiction books do not follow along the same lines. There is no conflict in writing a cookbook, for example. There is a calling for all types of non-fiction books and this can be an easy way to publish your first book.

If you are writing a non-fiction book, you need to do heavy research and be very well versed on the topic of which you are writing. You should also have an angle to your book that makes it unique from others. Motivational books are a good example as there are many of them on the market right now.

What can you do to make your book different?

One example of a different type of motivational book is the *Laws of Attraction* series books. This took an old idea, put a new spin on it and created a series of very successful motivational books.

Biographies do not always have to be about famous people. You can write a biography about anyone who has led an extraordinary life or influenced many people. Cleverly crafted biographies about ordinary people who prove to be inspirational to others are very popular today. You need to have permission of the person about whom you are writing or their estate in order to write a good

biography. There have been unauthorized biographies that have made a sensation, but still required the person to do a lot of research on the subject, although they are not given the same amount of respect as biographies that are done with the consent of the author. You also risk running into a lawsuit, such as is the case with Kitty Kelley who wrote a slew of unauthorized biographies about famous people and found herself being sued by the late Frank Sinatra.

Cookbooks are very popular, especially when it comes to self-published books. However, your cookbook needs to have something different, a unique angle, in order to sell. Why would anyone buy your book of French recipes when they can get the same from Julia Child's cookbooks? One way to make yours unique is to add a bit of the French countryside and perhaps some fiction in with the recipes. This will prove to be entertaining to the reader as well as informational.

If you are going to write a novel, then you have to prepare as outlined in the previous chapter. Your novel should be of a genre that you like and most of all, something that you would buy yourself if it were available in the bookstore. You can put a lot of creative passion in your novel and turn it into something that will stand out. Many people self-publish novels because the competition is so great to get a novel published by an unknown author in the mainstream press.

When you self-publish, you do not need an agent to help you get your book to the publisher. Working with an agent is a good idea if you are trying to publish in this way, but the Catch 22 is that some mainstream press companies will only work with an agent. In addition, most agents will only want to work with a person who has a previous novel published. Needless to say, this makes it very difficult for someone to break into mainstream press with their book.

Even if you did manage to get a book published by a publisher, you would still have to market the book on your own. If you self-publish, you can do the same type of marketing. Because so many people today buy books online,

self-publishing is quickly becoming the publishing form of choice for authors writing fiction and non-fiction.

Chapter 4 - Completing The First Draft

Once you have decided on the book that you want to write, you should start on your first draft. This may change by the time the book is completed, although chances are that you will keep some of the information in the final book that you have in your first draft.

Everyone writes in a different way. There are those who rewrite as they are going along and those who complete the first draft before attempting any rewriting. It is best to write the first draft and get it all on paper, or computer, before you start any rewriting. This will allow you to see the direction that your book has taken and how it looks. You should not get discouraged if your first draft is less than magnificent - this is only your first draft.

Many writers who write fiction like to get that first draft finished before they start any research into the book that needs to be finished. Having the first draft completed does not mean that you have completed your book, but that you have completed a rough draft of a book. The average book is about 80,000 words, although a rough draft of a book may be less.

In some cases, writers will sketch out a first draft that is mostly narrative. It contains only sparse dialogue, to be padded out later when re-writing. If you are writing a fiction book, this is a good way to get the book down on paper, see if the plot makes sense, and make sure that you present a conflict and resolution to the conflict.

There are two types of conflict that can be contained in your book. These are either internal conflicts or external conflicts. Internal conflicts are those that take place in the minds of the characters of the book. They can be due to their perception of the world or their perception about another individual.

External conflicts are those that are caused by outside influences.

Misunderstandings or third parties getting in the way are examples of external conflicts that arise in fiction books.

A good way to figure out the conflict in the book is to present the reader with a question that will be answered at the end of the book. This type of conflict is often used in murder mysteries. The reader does not know who committed the murder until the climax of the book, after which the conflict has been resolved. A good book presents not only external conflicts, but internal conflicts as well. It also may present a series of conflicts in the book that come together to be resolved by the time the book ends. It is important to create conflict in a fiction book that will keep the reader reading and wanting to see a resolution in the end.

A good book also makes a point. There can be symbolism in the book as well as a subtle message that the book is trying to get across to the reader. While not all books contain these variables, they are found in some of the great novels.

Another factor you want to add into your fiction book is foreshadowing. This should be presented throughout the book, but especially in the beginning. This gets the reader hooked early on so that they want to continue to see what happens in the book. They will be anxious to get to the end of the book to discover the reason for the foreshadowing. Foreshadowing implies that something will happen to change the world of the characters early in the book. This intrigues the reader and makes them want to continue reading.

The first paragraph of your book is probably the most important part of the book. This paragraph will either hook or bore the reader. One problem that many authors have when it comes to writing a book is a slow start. This fails to pull the reader in and keep them interested in reading the book. Including foreshadowing in the first paragraph is a good idea. Another thing that you can do to make your book more interesting to the reader is to start in the middle. Instead of starting the book from the beginning, you can start in the middle of the story and then

take the reader back, through the use of dialog and narrative, to the beginning of the story to fill them in on history.

The climax of the book is also important in a fiction book. The plot should slowly build up to the climax. You may have several anti-climaxes in the book as well as other conflicts being resolved. The main conflict in the book must be resolved by the end of the book.

Do not make the mistake of introducing characters at the end of the book who figure heavily into the resolution of the plot. For example, if you are writing a murder mystery, you need to have the murderer figure in to the book early on. Some writers will make it look as if someone is obviously guilty but the culprit is someone who the reader does not expect. You want to keep your reader hungry for more as they get to the end of the book.

While the first paragraph, climax and conflict resolution are integral parts of the book, do not fill your book with fluff. Each character in the book should figure somewhat in the plot. Each sentence in the book should move the plot forward. This does not often happen in the first draft of the book but will happen as you continue with re-writes. Remember that any book, even a non-fiction book, does not appear on paper the way that it comes out of your head. You have to be prepared for re-writing.

Chapter 5 - Rewriting

Ernest Hemingway suggested rewriting a book 30 times before it is ready for publication. His reasoning was that each time the writer goes over the book for rewriting, they have a better understanding into the minds of the characters. The more you get to know your characters, the more you will be able to write convincing dialogue and narrative.

One important thing to remember when you are rewriting is to not be afraid of making major changes in your book. If something is not working and does not feel right, change it. It is important not to get married to your book. While you have a natural passion for the book, you should also be open-minded enough to realize if something is not working in your plot, you have to fix it.

The best way to start rewriting is to read your first draft. You can then note inconsistencies and other plot problems that occur with the first draft. You should begin your rewriting from the beginning of the book to the end, especially if you are writing a fiction book. Even if you are writing non-fiction, you still want to rewrite your book to tighten it up.

Try not to use a passive voice when you are writing. This is when you put in words like “would have” and “was.” Try to use more action words in your book, otherwise it may tend to get sluggish. Also, go over the dialog and make sure that it seems natural. You want to look at dialog as well as consistency when you are rewriting your book.

Each time you continue to rewrite the book, you are making it a better story. You have a better feel for the characters in the story and they become more lifelike to you. So much so that you can figure out what they like for breakfast or what is their favorite color. By including personality traits in the book, that are distinguishable to each character, you make them more lifelike for the reader.

The more you get to know the characters in your book, the more lifelike they will seem to the reader. You want to get away from flat characters and breathe some life into them. The only way that you can do this, when writing a fiction book, is to get to know them. This is naturally more difficult to do with fiction than non-fiction because the characters are a figment of your imagination. You have to want to make your imagination come to life on paper when you write your book.

Make sure that there are no loose ends in the book and that every sentence drives your plot forward. Get rid of unnecessary dialogue that will slow down the process of your book as well as unnecessary descriptions. The best books are those that continue to move the plot forward and have meaning in every sentence.

Do not mistake rewriting as checking for grammar or spelling. This will be done when you are proofreading your book, although you should naturally make any corrections when you see them.

One thing that you may want to do to make your rewriting easier is to give yourself a rest between the rewrites. This allows you to look at the book with fresh eyes and get a fresh start reading it. If you have a friend, or trusted person, to whom you can give the book, you can give it to them for a critique. They may be able to see glaring errors in the plot that you may overlook. While you are close to your book, you may also be too close. It is helpful to have a second pair of eyes read the book after you have rewritten it to sufficiency.

You cannot rewrite a book too much. There does have to be a point where you say that you are satisfied with the story and what it conveys. After you have completed your book and feel that it is publication worthy, you are ready for a grammar check.

Go through your book and look for grammatical errors. There are some instances

when grammatical rules are broken, especially when it comes to dialogue. You want to make sure that you have correct grammar used in your book. If you have a grammar check on your word processing program, use it. You can also use spellchecker as well. But never depend on a spellchecker to do your proofreading for you. When you have finished your book, it is time for proofreading.

Chapter 6 - Proofreading Your Book

Take the book and print it out on paper for proofreading. Then, starting with the last page and moving backward, use a ruler to look at each line in the book. This is a tedious process and one for which you can pay a freelance proofreader. You are looking for spelling mistakes as well as mistakes in punctuation. When we read, our eyes naturally gloss over words that we are familiar with and often do not see that they are misspelled. This is why it is important to take your time and proofread your book from finish to start. By going up one line at a time, you will not be reading, but looking for errors that your eyes will ignore if you simply read the book.

You can hire a professional proofreader for this purpose (bubblecow.net). They will go through the book the way that suits them and deliver you a product that has changes. They will put proofreading marks on your paper of which you should be familiar. They will not make the changes for you, but signal you to make the changes.

It is vital that you proofread your book or have someone else do it for you. If you have a book published by the mainstream press, this service is done for you. If you are self-publishing, however, you do not have this luxury. Although there are many self-publishing companies online that offer proofreading services for a price for their clients.

Proofreading a book is not like editing a book. Copy editing is a completely different process altogether. You can choose to copy edit your own book or have the company that publishes the book for you do the job. We will discuss editing for your self-published book later.

If you decide to proofread your book yourself, take your time and do it correctly. Do not rush through this process as an array of misspelled words in your book will make it look less than professional to the reader. You want your book to be

as professional as possible so that the reader will not get turned off. You can keep it free from typos, punctuation and spelling errors by doing careful proofreading or hiring someone who you can pay to do the job for you.

Even if you have someone else who is not a professional proofreader take a look at your book you can have a fresh pair of eyes look at the book so that they can see errors where you cannot. Remember that you have a very strong connection to your book that others do not. You have most likely read it over and over again. Having someone who has not looked at the book take a look for errors can help you out tremendously.

Remember that even books published by the mainstream press have errors. Having one error in the book is not the end of the world. Having a chockfull of errors, however, can make your book look shoddy and not well put together.

Chapter 7 - Finding a Self Publisher Online

Years ago, if someone wanted to get a book self-published, they had to pay thousands of dollars. A press would publish the book for the individual and give them a certain amount of copies. The author of the self-published book paid for all of the copies, plus the fees that were involved in setting the press and printing. Those who did seek to have their books self-published were not thought to be good authors. The name used for self-publishing then was vanity press. It was thought that those who got their books published this way just had the money, not the talent, that was needed to be a writer.

The same is not true now. Because so many people purchase books online, more so than at the bookstore, self-publishing is seen as much more respectable. And because mainstream press takes very few authors and is so competitive, it is also seen as a way for a writer to have their voice heard.

There have been stories of those who submitted, just for fun, a first chapter and query letter of a great novel to publishers to see if they actually read them. They were returned with standard rejection letters. Many publishing houses will not take writers who are not represented by agents. This makes it very difficult for someone to get their book published as most agents who deal with these publishers only deal with established authors.

Some decide to publish their books using small press publishers. These publishers will not charge a writer for printing their book, but will also not have the clout to get the book reviewed in the *New York Times*. The writer has to do all of the marketing for the book and only receives a small portion of the royalties. Needless to say, it makes more sense for a new writer to self-publish their book and market it himself or herself. They can use modern self-publishers that print to order and do not charge an enormous fee for publishing a book. The books are given ISBN numbers and are listed on places like Amazon, where most people today are buying books. The author can have their book in a bookstore as long

as it has an ISBN. There are many ways for a self-published author to market their book.

Since you will most likely do the marketing anyway when you get your book published, you might as well self-publish your book with a publisher that does print to order publishing. This way, you get a higher percentage of the profits and the book can be listed online for those who are interested in buying it.

Self-publishing is the way that many writers today, even those who have been published by small press, are deciding to publish their book.

Two places that you can go online to self-publish your book are Lulu.com and Booklocker.com. Both of these are well known with self-publishers and print to order. You can get other services from these companies as well, including formatting your book.

Lulu gives you tools to format your book yourself. You need to submit a PDF to Lulu in order for them to be able to print your book. If you have a PDF converter or Adobe, you can format your own book this way through this company. They give you a choice of hardcover or soft cover as well as different sizes of the book that are available. If you choose a plain cover with just lettering, you can get the book printed for less than \$200. The books are listed on the Lulu website and you can also get them listed on Amazon. This is a good option for those who have little money, computer skills and are able to format the book on their own. You can also pay for them to format the book for you.

Booklocker does not offer you the choice to format, although for those who do not know how to format a book and are afraid of formatting it in the wrong way and then paying for a book that is virtually unreadable, this is the best option. It is also less money than other self-publishing sites. This also lets you get your book listed on Amazon as well as the Booklocker site.

Both of these sites print to order, which means that you do not have to order a bunch of books. They will print a book when a customer orders it and ship it out for you. You get paid a percentage of the books that you sell, which is a higher percentage than what you would get with a mainstream publisher and much more than you can get with small press publishing. If you take the time to market your book, which you can do, you can end up making a lot more money and getting your book out to readers.

Take a look online and find a website that will offer you print to order books. You will get a percentage of the books that you buy for yourself as well. You can purchase the books yourself and get them in bookstores as well as book fairs and exhibits for self-published writers. Bookstores will take a book as long as there is an ISBN on it. The book publisher will also include a barcode on the book.

There are now many more options open than ever before for those who want to self-publish their books. Because of internet technology and computer technology, it is easy for any writer to get their book published through self-publishing. An increasing number of writers are seeking out self-publishing to make money and get their books out to the public who are eager to read them.

Chapter 8 - Printing Your Own Book

Another way to get your book self-published is to print your book yourself. You can do this at a number of different places, although you have to format your book yourself as well as prepare it for the printing press.

Online printers will print up your book. You can get an ISBN number yourself by going to the site at isbn.org. You need one number for all of your books. You can get them in a barcode to put on your book that you print yourself.

It is less costly to print your own book. You can use an off line printer as well as an online printer. You just have to get everything ready for printing. This includes the cover. The cover will be made of a thicker paper and can be glossy or matte. The cover is an important part of the book, so it is a good idea to hire a graphic artist to design the cover if you are planning to print the book yourself.

In order to get an ISBN, you have to set up a publishing company of your own. You can do this easily enough and then apply for the ISBN. It can be costly to pay for these numbers on a single basis, which is why it often pays to have the self-publishing company print the book for you and get the ISBN. Because they order more of them, they get them at a lower price. If you are planning on printing up more than one book, you can order a series of 10 ISBN numbers and get a discounted price. Self-publishing companies order these by the hundreds, which is why they can provide a number for customers included in their printing price.

The disadvantage to printing your own book is that you cannot get it listed on online sites such as Amazon. You can distribute it to bookstores and gift stores, however, as long as you have the ISBN. In some cases, such as a gift shop, they may take books that are just printed crudely without an ISBN on a consignment basis.

Printing your own book is a lot of work but works for some who are on a limited

budget and cannot afford a few hundred dollars to use a self-publishing company. It takes some knowledge in how to format the book as well as design the cover. You may end up spending money on a graphic artist if you want to get your cover to look professional.

You also have to do your own editing and proofreading when you are printing up your own book. This can be very time consuming, which is why many writers prefer to pay the money to a self-publishing company.

Printing your own book may work if you have a small literary magazine that you put out. It can work if you just want to distribute books personally and sell them. It can work if you are planning just to sell your book on your own. You have to remember that even with an ISBN a bookstore may be reluctant to put a book on their shelves that does not look as if it has been professionally printed.

Chapter 9 - Editing For Your Self Published Book

Editing your book is different from proofreading. You need to pay attention to style as well as grammar when you are copy editing. It pays to have good grammatical skills and have a certain style that you use for your book when you are considering your own editing.

Most of the self-publishing sites offer copy editing services for an extra charge. This can help you over awkward phrases that you may not notice in your book as well as other grammatical problems. You may say something in a way that you do not mean when you are writing a book. It may make sense to you, but not to others. A copy editor will read your book with a fresh pair of eyes and pick out errors. They will also pay attention to style and pick out any spelling errors that they may see.

Copy editing for a book will also help you tighten up your book. In some cases, they will eliminate repetitive sentences or words that bog down your book. Copy editing is not like regular editing, which will take a good look at your book to see if it makes sense. An editor will usually make suggestions for broader changes than a copy editor.

It is a good idea to pay someone to edit your book. You should at least hire someone to copy edit the book. An editor can make sure that everything in the book makes sense and is written in the same style.

Writers often have a habit of switching styles when they are writing. Most writers have a creative streak that causes them to write. It can be difficult for them to edit their own work just as it can be difficult for them to proofread their own work. Spending the money for editing is one of the best investments that a writer can make.

Chapter 10 - Your Book Is Printed - Now What?

After you have your book printed and ready to go, what do you do?

You do the same thing that you would do if a mainstream publishing company published your book - promote it!

There are many ways that you can promote your book both online and off. One thing that you will want to do is to promote your book by getting some positive reviews on Amazon. If you have your book listed on Amazon, you can get reviews for the book from a book reviewing service. You can send them a disk with the book on it in PDF format and have people read it and give it a good review. The more reviews it gets, the more it will rise in Amazon.

You should have a website as a teaser for your book. When you have a website, you can sell books directly from the site or you can send the buyers to Amazon. You can become an affiliate of Amazon and get paid a commission on all of your sales. You can also have a post office box where people can order your book by mail. In addition, you can also direct them to the self-publishing company where they can find the book. You can then market your website using strategies that are used to market any website.

You can place book reviews for the book to various book review websites online. There are many sites where you can place book reviews of your book. You can also put a link to the book website on these sites.

If your book is non-fiction, you want to write articles and place them in article hubs on the internet. Article hubs will allow you to place free articles online. Do a Google keyword analytics to see which are the right keywords for your book. You can write articles with these keywords and place them on the different sites with a backlink to your site.

In addition to promoting your book online, through the use of the website and book reviews, you can also join writing groups that are for self-published writers. There are many sites that are made for self-published writers that you can take advantage of and promote your book. You should also look into local libraries that often have groups for self-published authors. There are often book fairs for self-published authors as well.

You can send your book to different newspapers and local magazines that review books. Bear in mind that papers like the *New York Times* and magazines like the *New Yorker* have many books that people want them to review. You have a better chance of getting your book reviewed by magazines that are genre related to the book that you have written.

Small, independent bookstores will feature your book, especially if they are local bookstores. You should take your book in there, buying up several copies of the book for selling and then have a book signing. Most bookstores are more than happy to have local authors visit and sign books. This can be advertised through flyers and in the bookstore itself. As the bookstore gets a commission for each book that you sell, they are more than happy to have local authors come in and sign books. This brings business to the store as well as gets you recognition.

If you have a small local newspaper, you can use them for publicity for your book. Small, hometown newspapers are an ideal way to spread the word about your book.

Take a look at your local parks department to see if they have anything for self-published authors. Many parks departments are having book signings for those who self-publish.

You can also take your book to gift shops that will sell it on consignment. This is an ideal way to sell cookbooks that are self-published. Be sure to match the type

of marketing that you do to get the word about your book out there to the venue.
Leave no stone unturned when you are marketing your book.

Chapter 11 - Online Marketing to Sell Your Book

The best way to sell your book is online. Your first venue will usually be the self-publishing company that prints your book. They not only print books but also sell books that are written by their authors.

Be sure to tell family and friends that you have published a book and encourage them to buy it online rather than from you. Most websites rate books on the sales, so you want to make sure that any sales go through the website.

Most of the online print on order sites will list the books on Amazon, who are the biggest seller of books in the world. Getting your book listed on Amazon is the same as having it on a shelf in a bookstore. But remember that if no one knows that you have a book out, they will not find it unless they stumble upon it.

Use social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to get the word out about your book. You can also place links to the book page on various forums. You do want to get a website so that you can spread the word about the book.

Developing your own website and getting a host is neither difficult nor expensive. You can have a website and host for your book very inexpensively.

You cannot afford to ignore the power of online marketing when it comes to selling your book. The fact is that today that many books are sold online, in fact the vast majority of people sell their books online. You want to be sure that you do your best to market the book as much as possible on the internet.

Digg is another site where you can put comments and information about your book. Digg usually takes articles that can be “dugg” by others. You should have all of your family and friends digg the article up so that others can see it. The more exposure you get online, the better off you are.

Another site that you can use is Propeller. This is the Yahoo site that is similar to

Digg. Anyone with a Yahoo account can buzz an article up. If you get enough buzzes to your article, it may appear on the Yahoo home page. You can write an article using a pen name about a local writer who has written a book and place it on these sites so that others will boost it up in the engine. This is one way to get recognition for your book online.

You need to have as much exposure for your book. Make sure that your book features on Amazon as well as the site where it is printed. Also be sure that you have a website that tells a little bit about the book and gives readers an incentive to buy the book. You cannot get overexposed when you are online and trying to promote your book.

You will find that you get more sales from online sales than you will from bookstore sales. While it is important to get as much exposure as possible for your book, you need to concentrate heavily on online sales. Get as much online exposure as you can for your book so that you can make sales.

Chapter 12 - Off-Line Marketing to Sell Your Book

You will want to get as much exposure off line as well. We have already talked about groups that you can join and getting your books in bookstores to do book signings.

Book signings are the best way for you to get exposure with your book. You can do them in any local bookstore. They will be glad to have you. You can bring your books to the bookstore to sell them.

Most larger bookstores will want you to go through the main office in order to have your book stocked on their shelves. These stores will want to see a copy of your book before they place an order. This can be time consuming for you, but is well worth a try.

You are better off, however, to approach the manager of the bookstore and offer them the books on a consignment basis. They will let you do a book signing and you can bring your own books, but will have to give a commission to the store.

You can use a book distributor to distribute your book to local bookstores to get them on the shelves. This may be easier than going through the corporate route. You will have to buy the books from the publishing company in order to get them to the distributor.

The distributor will then work to get the books to the major bookstores. Again, this is a tough sell. Best sellers from major presses have more shelf space in bookstores as well as prominent shelf spaces. Just like in the supermarket, the biggest distributors have the most attractive shelf space. If you think that you will see your book on the center shelf at the major bookstore, think again. If they take your book, it will be in the shelves. This is why you need to promote the book with book signings. You should still do what you need to do to get the book at the bookstore.

There are still plenty of local, independent bookstores available. They are often receptive to local authors and will eagerly take your book on a consignment basis. They will be glad to have you go in there and do a book signing. Take a look at independent bookstores in your area.

Make sure that you join an off line group of self-publishers and take advantage of book fairs that are made for self-publishing authors. You can also make up bookmarks for your book so that they can be handed out at these fairs. The bookmarks should have information about the book as well as where readers can find it.

You have to do some legwork to get your book out there to the public. You need to be sure to do as much as you can to get the book information out there. The more you continue to promote your book, the more interest it will generate.

When you go through the time and work of putting all of your creative talent into a book, you want to do what you can to make sure that the book is read. Most writers who are good writers are not as interested in the money for the book as they are in the book being read by others.

Having your book read and enjoyed by other people is the most gratifying thing a writer can experience. Working hard to complete and print your book and then having others enjoy your writing is one of the best things a writer can experience.

If you have been considering writing a book, but are not sure if you can get a publisher, you should consider self-publishing your book. Instead of trying to get an agent and a publisher to look at your book and then only give you a small percentage of the profit, you can easily self-publish your own book and have others read it.

Do you need professional help?

So you have read the articles and applied the lessons but...

...how do you know if your book sucks or not?

In 1973, a then unknown writer was sweating hard over his first novel. He was working crappy jobs and slaving away in his spare time. However, it just wasn't going his way.

So, after one particularly difficult night of writing he screwed up his half-finished manuscript and chucked it in the trash. Resigned to give it all up and 'go get a real job'.

Then... at his lowest point, when he felt as though the world had turned its back on him, when he thought he would have to give up his dream and face all the 'told-you-so' haters, when he thought he was just wasting his life, *his wife came to the rescue.*

She recovered the manuscript from the trash, read the first few chapters and begged the writer to finish the novel.

That book was *CARRIE* and went on to earn its writer, Stephen King, millions of dollars.

I am betting you know exactly how King was feeling at that moment.

You have been writing away but wracked with doubt you just don't know if your book is good enough.

Are YOU just wasting your time?

We have all asked ourselves this question.

But how do you find out?

How do you discover if your book is good enough?

Since you are probably not married to Stephen King's wife the question is -
Where do you get honest feedback with suggestions for improvements?

Well...

You could just trust your own judgment. You know you have structured the book well and your dialogue seems fine. After all you have read the book like a million times. Why not just take the gamble?

The problem is you don't know what you don't know.

I am betting the articles in this ebook have taught you something that you didn't know already.

What else don't you know?

So if not you, what about your friends and family?

They are always willing to help.

After all it worked for King.

Well... here's the secret.

King's wife might have kicked him up the butt, but it was King's editor at Doubleday that licked the book into shape.

By all means get feedback from your friends and family, but remember they are probably just going to tell you what they think you want to hear.

You NEED honest and brutal feedback. I am betting this isn't your mum's cup of tea!

So what can you do?

The answer is to seek professional help.

No... not that kind of professional help, the BubbleCow kind.

We specialize in the 'big picture' editing that will give you the ruthlessly honest, unbiased advice you need to improve your manuscript.

- We will show you plot holes and tell you how to fill them.
- Spot problems with dialogue and explain how to fix them.
- Check the flow and readability and then provide a step-by-step guide on how to lift your book to the next level.

Our professional editing includes two key aspects:

The first is the Editor's Report.

This includes our editor's thoughts on your manuscript, ideas about improving your work and any structural points you should consider. This feedback also includes any points that we feel need particular attention. The aim of this report is to provide a single summary document that you can use as a reference point when applying the feedback. Many writers have told us that they found it very useful to have a summary of the key areas that need attention, especially when the individual comments embedded within the document can number in the high hundreds.

The second part is the in-depth line edit.

This is embedded in your original document and can be viewed by opening the document with any good word processing package. Our comments will appear on the right hand side of the text. The editor will have read through your work on a line-by-line basis, and added comments and pointers that will improve your text. Though this is not a proofread, any grammar or spelling mistakes we spot will be corrected. The report is designed to allow you to produce a new and better re-write by systematically working through the comments and implementing their suggestions as you see fit.

It is our belief that the report is as much a teaching aid as it is an assessment of your book. We design our feedback to highlight areas in which you can strengthen your writing. We also structure our comments in such a way that you will be shown how to apply the techniques we are suggesting to improve your book.

You see, **editing** is what we do.

Since setting up in 2007 we have edited more than 500 books, both fiction and non-fiction.

So, I am sure you have heard lots about the cost of professional editing.

The truth is that BubbleCow are set up in such a way that we can provide you with a competitive price.

To be really honest, we are much cheaper than we should be. Our advisors are always pushing us to drastically increase our prices.

But, for us, we are in this for the long game.

We want self-publishing to be an unbridled success and to do this we need to play our part by providing the kind of professional help that will help writers to be amazing. .

So... I will not ruin the surprise.

What To Do Now...

Go to bubblecow.net and take a look at our prices.

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Now you are back I have one more surprise.

If you email givemediscount@garysmailes.co.uk we will give you an additional 10% discount to the cost of editing.

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As always, the advice of a competent legal, tax, accounting or other professional should be sought. The author and publisher do not warrant the performance, effectiveness or applicability of any sites listed or linked to in this Ebook. All links are for information purposes only and are not warranted for content, accuracy or any other implied or explicit purpose.