



SELF-PUBLISH LIKE A PROFESSIONAL

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This document was made in January 2014, and given the industry seems to change in 24 hours, it may already be outdated. I'm not endorsing the companies I list, just giving ideas.

When I decided to self-publish my own book, *Bonjour 40: A Paris Travel Log*, I knew very little about traditional publishing and *absolutely nothing* about self-publishing. I simply wanted to use the book to learn about it, and give it a shot. Please note, I have a professional marketing and design background. However, that doesn't mean you can't do it, too. So some tips...

TIPS:

Number one: Write

You have to have something to publish.

Number two: Learn.

Split your time. If you work during the day and write at night, give up one night each week to just sit down and learn about the industry. (Doctors don't wait until they're in surgery to learn the body.)

If you don't understand publishing, I'm sorry there is no shortcut (not even for the traditionally published author or you can be taken advantage of). You have to learn, read, and Google every question you have. Knowledge is power and the way to gather power from the traditional publisher is to know more than they do.

Number three: Be professional

The key to self-publishing and looking like you didn't self-publish, is to act and think like a traditional publisher. If there is a facet of self-publishing you can't do well and it doesn't come out being 100% professional, then find someone who can.

Here's a starting place for the above. No go and be curious...

Why all books have an ISBN:

There is only ONE source for ISBNs and that is BOWKER.

<http://www.isbn.org/>

What is self-published vs traditional vs hybrid vs whatever??

The best overall explanation of how publishing (self vs traditional) industry works.

<http://agentquery.com>

An Info Chart on the differences:

<http://janefriedman.com/2013/11/19/infographic-key-book-publishing-paths/>

So you have an outline, a manuscript or a book proposal. Now what?

YOU COULD DO ALL IT YOURSELF

If you fully self-publish:

Self-published authors are like general contractors amassing a team of professionals to handle all the bits. The key is to hire a professional for each that you have not been professionally trained to do (other than the writing).

Hire editors.

One for developmental edits by genre (plot, character growth, target audience)

One for general copyediting (punctuation, grammar, etc.)

Find an editor: <http://www.publishersmarketplace.com/>

<http://kristenweber.com/>

Two JRW editors:

<http://www.kris-spisak.com/>

<http://www.editorialinspirations.com/>

Hire a book cover designer/print layout designer.

If you're designing covers in MSWord, Please. Just. Stop. (No, they don't look good.)

Here's a beginning list, or turn to others in your book community for suggestions.

<http://www.smashwords.com/list>

<http://www.authorsupport.com/>

<http://224pages.com> (my own site, shamelessly)

Pay for ebook formatters if you don't do it:

My Bonjour 40 book with 30 images for all e-book formats cost only \$150.

<http://www.smashwords.com/list>

<http://ebooks2go.com>

Which printer/distributor?

Groups like Smashwords handle just e-book distribution for a percentage of royalties.

For full self-publishing should you use Lightning Source/Ingram Sparks/CreateSpace?

This explains the options and differences. You have to choose what is right for you.

<http://www.self-pub.net/blog/lightning-source-createspace-and-ingram-spark/>

<http://www.newshelves.com/2013/03/28/why-you-need-lightning-source-and-createspace/>

Building author platforms, marketing and publicity.

This is a big nut to crack in this one document and should not be entered into without a plan.

Marketing/Publicity Groups with self-publishing options

<http://smithpublicity.com>

<http://booksparkspr.com>

<http://224pages.com> (shamelessly mine)

Google others

Does all the above seem like far too much? But you still want some involvement (or traditional publishers have completely ignored your queries)? Try hybrids....



HYBRID

If you want to self-publish, and keep your rights, but don't know diddly about the above, then you need to work with a group that acts as your general contractor. So hybrids are for you.

Generally, they allow authors to keep rights, and help navigate the publishing process, marketing and both e-book and print distribution.

What is a hybrid publisher?

Read about few, and Google search for others:

<http://klat.com/blogs/21st-century-publisher/the-rise-of-hybrid-publishing>

<http://newbieauthorsguide.com/2012/08/06/rise-of-the-hybrid-publishers/>

Hybrid Examples:

<http://publishnext.com>

<http://booktrope.com>

<http://authorhouse.com>

<http://bqbpublishing.wordpress.com/tag/hybrid-publisher/>

Google others.

OTHER INFO:

Generally speaking, there are lots of blogs and books to help learn the industry, too.

<http://nathanbransford.com/>

<http://janefriedman.com/>

<http://www.karenachase.com/2014/01/self-publishing/>

<http://jakonrath.blogspot.com/>

Google Others

Books:

Write. Publish. Repeat.

By Johnny, Sean and Dave.

<http://selfpublishingpodcast.com/>

Self-Publishing for Dummies. (Seriously, they have a book for everything.)

Good luck out there. Go write. Build your network. Meet with authors. Ask questions.

Learn the publishing profession and you might become be a professional author.

Say you can't, and likely you won't.

