

MiPA February 2025 Member Meeting: Publishing Possibilities, From Manuscript to Market

The meeting covered various aspects of publishing, including event logistics, introductions of participants, and discussions about upcoming conferences and trips. The main focus was on the publishing process, with Joshua Weber from Calumet explaining different publishing models, editing stages, book production, printing options, and marketing strategies. The group also delved into topics such as AI in content creation, factors considered when publishing a book, and advice for aspiring authors.

Publishing Models and Author Roles

Joshua discussed the various aspects of publishing, including its definition, the different models of publishing, and the roles of publishers, authors, and editors. He emphasized that publishing is not just about printing or marketing, but involves a multifaceted process that includes design, editing, and distribution. Joshua also highlighted the importance of curation in the age of AI and the oversaturation of content. He differentiated between traditional, hybrid, and DIY publishing models, explaining their respective financial risks, author royalties, and creative control. Joshua also touched on the importance of author participation in marketing and promotion and warned about predatory publishing. Lastly, he outlined the steps involved in making a book, starting with manuscript acquisition and rejection, followed by editing.

Manuscript Editing and Production Process

Joshua discussed the process of manuscript editing and production. He highlighted three main editing stages: developmental, line, and copy editing. He also touched on proofreading, sensitivity reading, fact-checking, and translation work. In the design stage, Joshua explained the roles of a designer and an illustrator, and the importance of cover design, layout, and formatting. He also discussed the various elements of a book's front and back matter, such as the dedication page, epigraph, table of contents, acknowledgments, forward, preface, introduction, epilogue, appendix, glossary, bibliography, index, and author bio. Lastly, he explained the concept of galleys and the importance of making revisions at this stage.

Exploring Printing and Publishing Options

Joshua discussed the various options for printing and publishing books, emphasizing the importance of understanding the market and audience. He explained the differences between print-on-demand, short-run printing, and offset printing, and their respective advantages and disadvantages. Joshua also highlighted the significance of marketing and publicity in reaching the target audience, and the importance of defining goals as a publisher. He mentioned the role of distributors and wholesalers in the distribution process and the need for brand awareness. Lastly, he stressed the importance of being competent in managing the profit and loss of a publishing company. He provided helpful links for further exploration.

AI in Content Creation and Copyright

Joshua discussed the use of AI in content creation and its potential impact on copyright issues. He mentioned that he has not yet encountered any issues with AI-generated content, but he is aware of the potential problems. The group shared their experiences with AI tools and discussed the partnership between Authors Guild and Created by Humans to offer a stamp indicating that a book was created by a human.

Publishing Decisions and Editing Process

Joshua shared his perspective about the factors considered when deciding whether to take on a book for publication, emphasizing the importance of the work involved and the potential for the book to sell.