

What is Publishing?

Publishing - The process of creating a book as an object and product--all the steps necessary to put it into the market

- Publisher is granted publication rights by the author (copyright holder) to create and sell the book in a specified market and medium
- Publishing requires duplication and distribution
- Publishing is fundamentally about rights assignment--the steps taken to exercise those rights to create revenue

What Publishing is NOT

- Not Printing
- Not Marketing
- Not Publicity
- Not Editing

Types of Publishing

Traditional Publishing - publisher takes the financial risks, handles editing, production, distribution, and publicity with the author.

- Author gets a small royalty, possibly an advance, and has minimal control of product.
- Can be for profit (e.g." Big 5") non-profit (e.g." Academic")
- Author doesn't pay anything in traditional publishing; the publisher puts the money in and has the final say

Hybrid Publishing

- Author invests costs & shares financial risk
- Shared responsibility editing, production, and publicity
- Larger royalty percentages, more control of product
- Diverse spectrum of appeal

DIY/Author Managed Self-Publishing- Author takes full financial risk

- Author receives all royalties
- Appeal varies; lack of experience in producing quality books
- Possibly working with one or more publishing service providers or "publishing partners."

Author Expectations

- Author participation required in marketing and promotion
- An author's platform is their existing followers and connections—their network
- Beware predatory publishing--lack the standards and follow-through to accomplish what they say

Manuscript to Market Step 1: Acquisition

Acquisition - traditional and some hybrid publishers seek out authors and/or work with agents to find authors.

- An acquisitions editor decides what makes financial and business sense for the publisher
- For-profit publisher, this means a book that will net make money
- For non-profit publishers, this means a book that is consistent with their mission and grant requirements
- Manuscript rejection isn't personal—if it isn't a good fit, consider it a blessing

Manuscript to Market Step 2: Editing

Editing - includes everything from ghost writing to proofreading; usually more than one person.

- Developmental Editing/Editor - (content editing) big-picture, flow, story arc; makes the book make sense.
- Copy Editor: clarity, grammar, consistency; makes the book more readable.
- Line Editor: (stylistic editing) word usage, POV/tense, descriptive consistency.
- Proofreader: spelling, grammar, punctuation, captioning, hyphenation/breaks (usually after typesetting).
- Other editors: sensitivity readers, fact-checkers, translators.

Manuscript to Market Step 3: Layout & Design

Design

From the cover to the interior, design works with the author's content and marketing plan to create a book that is attractive and engaging to readers, harmonious with the author's intent

Layout (Formatting)

Formatting - the actual placement of the final manuscript into the formatted document.

- Additional Formatting: Image/Illustration/Diagram/Map/Table

Indexing/Indexer - Alphabetical list of terms and ideas with associated page numbers.

Galley – Documents showing the book's interior pages and/or cover.

Standard Galley Book Dimensions.

6" x 9" Paperback

5.5" x 8.5" Paperback

5" x 8" Paperback

- Publisher possesses native file for making revisions
- Author needs to submit suggested changes

Cover Design - focuses on the front cover, spine, and back cover, dust jacket.

- Designer ≠ Illustrator (although sometimes an illustrator can design, and sometimes a designer can illustrate; better to think of them separately).
- Interior Design/Layout defines the look and feel of the inside.

Manuscript to Market Step 4: Production

Production:

Book Production - refers to the printing and binding of a physical book

- Production Plans: a "key" part of initial design and market planning

POD - "Print on Demand," a digital printing process that print and binds books one at a time as they are ordered.

- Zero inventory and built-in distribution
- Generally lower quality
- Fewer options
- Lingering industry stigma

Two Main POD Services

Amazon KDP: Kindle Direct Publishing

- Available worldwide on Amazon Website stores
- Kindle dominates eBooks globally
- Publishing exclusively eBooks as Kindle enables Kindle Online Lending Library (KOLL) or Kindle Unlimited

Ingram

- Largest book wholesaler in the world
- Many booksellers won't stock Amazon printed books
- Order titles seldomly without return privileges & discount
- Significantly lower revenues

Short Run Printing - Printer that produces a small quantity of books at a time, usually 20–1,000 (usually digital)

Offset Printing - The standard and typically makes economic sense for volumes > 1,000 books at a time.

- High quality
- Maximal Flexibility

Binding & Finishing

Binding - Fastening of individual sheets together.

Finishing - Process of decorating the outside of the book.

Softcover (paperback) - Assembled from cut sheets and glued, known as perfect binding.

Hardcover - Involve folding and sewing the printed sheets in signatures (blocks of pages); allows a book to open and lay almost flat

- For an eBook (typically an ePub if distributed—sold—through online platforms), production usually means creating the distributable electronic file

Manuscript to Market Step 5: Marketing & Promotion/Publicity

How the “world” discovers your book

- Upwards of 4 million books are published in the US each year
- 500,000–1,000,000 through traditional channels based on ISBN assignments
- 1.4 million self-published titles released on KDP in 2024
- “Breaking Out” is the hardest aspect of publishing with new titles & unknown authors
- Marketing primarily focused on the consumer/reader

- Consider marketing to the reviewers, influences, and book buyers
- Speaking/Podcasts, newsletters, social media interactions are common ways
- Advanced Reviews
- Paid reviews (Kirkus)
- Awards (such as the Midwest Book Awards!) generate buzz around your book
- Advertising, Catalogs, and Book Fairs help reach broader audiences

Manuscript to Market Step 6: Distribution & Fulfillment

Distribution and Fulfillment: How the “world” gets your book.

Wholesalers - Warehouse books and ship them to booksellers.

Fulfillment - Process of receiving, storing, and shipping books to customers.

Distributors - Work with publishers and sell titles directly to retailers, bookstores, and libraries.

- they may also stock books, handle orders from booksellers, and may use dedicated sales force.

- Direct Sales - Books the publisher or author sell themselves.

Publishing is a Business

- Consideration of Roles: Designer, Editor, Administrator, Marketing Specialist, Visionary.

- Define Business Goals (Profit? Mission?)

- Brand Awareness (Increase visibility of books through websites, speaking events, literary events, etc.)

- Foreign Rights - Wider international market of sales (translations), movie rights, audiobooks, etc.

- P&L (Profit and Loss/ Income and Expense Statement); assessing cost of creating and selling a book.