

The Ins & Outs of Self-Publishing

Created by Rue Sparks
(Not for redistribution)

MANUSCRIPT PROCESS

1. **Write the book**
2. **Self-edit/Drafting** (*Work big to small*)
 - a. Concept development, story beats, plot arc, etc
 - b. Character development, growth and arcs
 - c. Worldbuilding & Research
 - d. Refine, but don't go overboard (*a lot of it will still change!*)
3. **Beta Readers**
 - a. Beware: Not all opinions of your book are created equal
 - b. Also Beware: "Beta swapping"
4. **Sensitivity Readers & Redraft**
5. **Editor Notes & Redraft**
6. **Line edits, make the verbiage shine!**
7. **Proofreading**

Note: Beta readers, editors, proofreaders, etc. can be paid or unpaid depending on your relationship to them.

BEFORE PUBLICATION:

- **Register copyright**
- **Purchase ISBNs and/or Barcodes**
- **Formatting**
 - Paperback
 - Hardback
 - eBook
 - Audiobook
- **Covers**
 - Resized for different Formats/Distributors
- **Order Author Proofs**
- **Set up pre-order** (or not)

Note: Some, all or none of this can be done yourself to save on costs. There are resources to teach you these processes.

FORMATTING & COVER CREATION

Formatting Software

- **Vellum (Apple Only) — \$250**
 - Made to Format for digital and print
 - Limited for fine tuning
- **Atticus (Apple and Windows) — \$147**
 - Made to Format for digital and print
 - Limited for fine tuning
- **InDesign — Adobe Subscription**
 - Can Format for digital and print
 - Steep learning curve
 - Great for detail-oriented creators
 - Can do complex layouts in print
 - eBook formatting can be tricky
- **Microsoft Word - Office Subscription**
 - eBook and Print
 - Most limited functionality
 - Can cause issues when reformatting for different distributors (ebook)

Cover Options

- Hire an Illustration/Graphic Designer
- Buy a pre-made cover
- Create your own
 - Software
 - Canva
 - GIMP
 - Photoshop
 - Find images
 - Royalty free stock
 - *Free stock

**Be aware of the rights of any images you use. Always reverse google image search any photos you're using for covers.*

DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

Aggregators (Publish to Multiple channels):

- **Draft2Digital/Smashwords**
 - eBook
 - Paperback (through IngramSpark)
- ***IngramSpark**

- eBook
- Paperback
- Hardback
- **Findaway Voices**
 - Audiobook

Publish Direct:

- **KDP/Kindle/Amazon/ACX**
 - eBook
 - Paperback & Hardback
 - Audiobook
 - Kindle Vella
- **Barnes & Noble**
 - eBook
 - Paperback
- **Kobo/Kobo Plus**
 - eBook
- ****Google Play**
 - Audiobook
- **Apple Books**
 - eBook
 - Audiobooks

Note: You can publish with an aggregator, but opt out of a particular distribution (Amazon, Kobo, etc) and publish direction to that distributor.

** IngramSpark charges a fee for revisions after 60 days of publication*

*** Draft2Digital doesn't distribute to Google Play*

POST PUBLICATION

- **Coordinate a launch campaign**
- **Order author copies** (within reason!)
- **Create/Update your author website**
- **Order business cards**
- **Bookmarks and/or postcards** (optional)
- **Claim your author pages**
- **Create a Universal Book Link to all formats & distributors** (ex: books2read.com)

MARKETING

- **Identify your niche** (Be specific!)
- **Create a budget** (and be realistic!)
- **Decide where you want to put your energy on social media/online**

- **Reach out to local indie bookstores**
 - Carrying your book
 - Author Appearances
 - Contact info for local orgs and events
- **Connect with your local library**
 - Participate in library events
 - Ask about purchase or donation of your book
 - Check their calendar for local writer groups
- **Go to local conventions, trade & art shows**
- **Talk to creators about activities & orgs**
- **Feature in bookish newsletter** (free or paid)
- **Newsletter swap with other creators**
- **Do podcast or blog appearances**
- **Paid Ads** (Amazon, Instagram, Facebook, etc.)
- **Have a pre-release Book Bundle**

MARKETING DETAILS

- ***Social media:**
 - Pick one or two places and be consistent
 - Engage outside your own space
 - Watch what posting times/tags/frequency/content works best with analytics
- **Website:**
 - Your “hub” that links everywhere else
 - Social media links and/or integration
 - Bibliography and Book Pages
 - Blog (optional)
 - About page
 - Contact page
 - Newsletter signup on first page (optional)
- **Newsletter**
 - Way to keep your readers updated
 - Consider your demographic and what adjacent content interests them
- **Claim & Update Your Author Pages**
 - Amazon
 - Goodreads
 - Bookbub (optional)

*Social Media tactics, and which sites to have a presence on, are going to vary heavily depending on your genre and demographic.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Which formats do you want to create?
- Pre-order or no pre-order?
- “Wide” or Kindle Unlimited? Kindle Vella?
- Which distribution channels?
- Which social channels to focus on?
- Should you create a blog and/or newsletter?
- Should you focus on local or global markets with your distribution and marketing choices?
- What is your budget, and what makes sense within that?
- What can you hire out, and what will you do yourself?

RESOURCES

General Self-Publishing

- Let’s Get Publishing Series — David Gaughran

Editing:

- Salt & Sage Incomplete Guides
- The Emotional Craft of Fiction
- Writers Helping Writers Series (Emotion/Conflict/Occupation/etc Thesaurus)
- Save the Cat! Writes a Novel

Marketing:

- Newsletter Ninja

Writer Life

- Dear Writer: Writer You Need to Quit — Becca Syme (Also see burnout series on YT)
- Big Magic — Elizabeth Gilbert
- Fire Up Your Writing Brain — Susan Reynolds

AND ON TO THE NEXT...



RUE SPARKS

find me at ruesparks.com