

Self Publishing Book Project Checklist



Action Item	Date Due	Date Completed	Notes/Status
Book Production Steps			
<i>Essential steps to complete when self-publishing.</i>			
Research publishing/printing options			May decide to hire a firm to assist with self-publishing or establish your own publishing company and contract with a printer.
Determine book specifications			You will need to choose trim size, format (paperback/hardcover), printing (b&w vs. color).
Purchase ISBN from Bowker			An International Standard Book Number (ISBN) must be assigned to each format of a book (hardcover, paperback, ebook) and is required by most book retailers. Can purchase in blocks of ten or more: https://www.myidentifiers.com/get-your-isbn-now .
Copy editing			There are also multiple levels of editing, from light to comprehensive.
Proofreading			Proofreading is the final step before the interior of a book can be typeset, and it is meant to check for grammar, punctuation and spelling issues. If significant changes are made after editing or initial proofread, an additional proofread is suggested.
Book cover design			
Interior typesetting/layout			
Ebook formatting			Distribution should be setup direction with Amazon Kindle (https://kdp.amazon.com/). You can also distribute directly to BN.com, iBooks and other retailers or use a service such as Smashwords.com to distribute for you.

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Hiring Decisions

For best results, we recommend hiring contractors who have industry experience in the following roles.

Editor			A professional editor--someone with book editing experience--is highly recommended. Just because a friend has an English degree does not mean he/she is up to speed on current style guidelines for book editing.
Proofreader			A proofreader is often also an editor, but this is a different type of service.
Cover designer			
Interior typesetter			Interior typesetting is a unique skill set and can be more complex than you might realize. Seek out someone with experience.
Ebook formatter			
Copywriter			A copywriter may be hired to assist with writing the sales copy for the back of the book.
Website designer			
Index specialist			There is a whole community of professional indexers to help if you choose to include an index in the back of your book.

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Tasks to Tackle While Your Book is in Production

Many tasks can be handled concurrently while book is being edited, designed, etc.

Research retail prices for competing titles, print and ebook			Search Amazon for similar titles to get a sense of how competing titles are priced.
Choose retail price for book			Should have at least 60% markup over wholesale for best profitability.
Collect endorsements from authors (optional)			Testimonials from well known authors can add credibility to your book, and can be easier to get than you may think. Here's how: http://nonfictionauthorsassociation.com/seeking-testimonials-to-enhance-the-credibility-of-your-book/
Acquire a foreword (optional)			While not required, a foreword written by a well known author can be quite beneficial for a new author's book.
Write jacket copy			The jacket copy must be compelling and inspire potential reader's to buy. May want to hire a copywriter if needed. Here are some tips: http://nonfictionauthorsassociation.com/how-to-write-good-sales-copy-for-the-back-of-your-book/
Write author bio			You will need a bio for the back of your book and your website. Bio should be brief and concise, containing details related to your credentials as an author.
Prepare author photo			Most authors include a professional photo on the back of the book
Register copyright for book			This can be done online: http://copyright.gov
Create copyright page for book			See other books for examples
Choose categories for book			Book should be assigned to two or three categories for retailers to identify placement. Full category list here: https://www.bisg.org/bisac-subject-codes
Register Library of Congress control number (optional)			The LOC issues a control number used by libraries for locating books. Register here: http://www.loc.gov/publish/pcn/
Obtain rights for all images			If your book includes photos or graphics of any kind, you must obtain permission to print them in your book, or purchase images directly through a site like istockphoto.com or 123rtf.com .
Obtain a release from relevant parties			If you include content contributed from other sources, such as an article by a colleague, a signed release should be issued that gives you the right to print the material.

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Get author website ready			Make sure to add a book sales page to your site, or have a site designed if you don't yet have one.
Build marketing plans			So much to do! Plan for acquiring reviews, leveraging social media, marketing online and offline...
Choose book launch date			You'll want to set a realistic target date so you can plan your promotion efforts accordingly.
Apply for resale license			If you plan to sell books directly, you should collect and report sales tax. Visit your county office to apply.
Apply for a business license			As an author, you instantly become an entrepreneur. If you are serious about building your business, apply for a business license through your county office.
Track your expenses			When you treat your book like a business, you can also receive tax benefits of home-based business ownership. Talk to a qualified tax planner for advice.

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Cover Design Process

Following are the typical steps followed when designing your book cover with a professional designer.

Author and designer discuss concept ideas			To assist with the process, provide examples of book covers you like. Also let the designer know your trim size choice, hardcover or paperback, and printing in black and white or color.
Submit author bio to designer			
Submit jacket copy to designer			
Submit final page count to designer			Page count is needed to calculate size of book spine.
Submit ISBN			
Submit retail price			Should be printed on back of book.
Submit barcode			Depending on printer you use, you may need to generate a barcode (can be done via Bowker.com).
Provide testimonials			If you plan to include any testimonials/endorsements on your cover, you will need to provide them to your designer.
Review and approve digital file			

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Interior Layout Checklist

The following items may be included in your book, though not all are required.

Copyright page (required)			
Title page (required)			
Testimonials/endorsements			If you've collected multiple endorsements, you can insert them into the first page(s) of the book.
Dedication (optional)			
Acknowledgements (optional)			Typically the place to thank each person who assisted in the development of your book.
Foreword (optional)			
Introduction (optional)			
Table of Contents			
Full manuscript			Your interior typesetter will appreciate it if your manuscript is formatted cleanly, using consistent fonts and spacing throughout (just one space after each period).
Images (optional)			Must be highest resolution possible, 300 DPI, for best quality printing.
End notes (optional)			If footnotes are used, these are typically compiled as end notes in the back of the book or at the end of each chapter.
Appendices (optional)			Additional or bonus material may be included.
Index (optional)			This is compiled after the book has been typeset and allows readers to locate keywords within the book by page number. Indexes are commonly used in medical and other reference-type books.
Author page (optional)			You may want to include an extended author bio at the end of the book.
Call to action page (optional)			You may want to include a call-to-action page to promote your other book titles, programs that you offer, etc.
Special notes or instructions			Provide special requests to your typesetter before your project begins.

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Final Steps Before You Go to Press

Before you pull the trigger on printing and distribution, consider these tasks.

Order and review physical proof copy of the book			Check for remaining errors or printing issues before releasing book into distribution or ordering many copies.
Setup retail distribution			Your printer or publisher may offer this service. If not, you will need to setup distribution directly with Amazon, BN.com, Ingram, Baker and Taylor.
Determine quantity for initial print run			Ideally you should avoid ordering more books than you can sell in the coming months. Books must be stored in a temperature-controlled environment and if you decide to make changes, you'll be sorry to have a warehouse with 1,000+ books (which is why print-on-demand is so popular).
Launch your marketing plans			
Create an alert			You'll want to track when you or your book are mentioned in the media. Use a service like http://google.com/alerts or talkwalker.com/alerts .

Welcome to the Nonfiction Authors Association

A community for experienced and aspiring nonfiction writers.

How you can benefit from Authority membership:

- Become part of a community whose members have similar goals and a variety of experiences to share.
- Utilize our online forum to ask and answer questions and learn about the industry from your peers.
- Receive weekly marketing “homework” (a prompt emailed to you to help you keep the marketing wheels in motion).
- Download reports, templates, checklists, worksheets and other content from our database, with new content added weekly.
- Participate in our twice-monthly educational teleseminars and access our database of recordings from past teleseminar events.
- Receive discounts from our partners including Office Depot, PR Newswire and ProfNet.
- Receive discounts off our annual [Nonfiction Writers Conference](#) and our year-round [Nonfiction Book Awards](#) program.
- Participate in local chapters (where available).
- Receive a member badge for your website and get featured in our member directory with a free profile.



The world of publishing can be overwhelming—but it doesn't have to be!

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