

How to write a novel and get it published

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Précised from: The four different publishing paths authors can pursue today

Four things every writer needs to know if they are planning on publishing today August 7, 2012 by keithogorek

The world has changed for authors which means they have new opportunities and consequently responsibilities. This is both a thrilling and confusing time for authors, so I think it is more important than ever for authors to be informed and choose the best option for getting published based on their **goals, skills, patience, and budget**.

Gone are the days of walking to the mailbox and pulling out a pile of rejection letters and wondering if you would ever get published. Today, every author can get published and get his or her book into the hands of readers—whether you use a DIY method, assisted self-publishing (e.g. *AM Publishing NZ's services*) or sign with an agent (*we don't have many in NZ*) and try to acquire a traditional publishing contract.

That means authors have more opportunity than ever before, but they also have more responsibility. And that is not something anyone seems to be talking much about. Whereas before it was the publisher, now it is the author who has the responsibility to set clear goals and a budget. Having clarity about these two areas will help authors make the best decision about which publishing path is best for them. In addition, they also need to have a realistic assessment of the skill and time they have to put to the project.

You can change your brakes and wash your car for less money if you do it yourself, rather than paying someone to do it for you. But if you don't know how to change brakes or you don't have time to wash your car, you should pay someone to do it for you. I think the same type of decision-making should be applied to making a publishing decision.

In addition, authors should:

- 1. Make sure you have a clear picture of who the audience is for your book.** Saying your goal is to sell to every man, woman, and child on the planet (I had an author tell me that) is not realistic.
- 2. Understand your options.** DIY, assisted, and traditional publishing all have advantages and drawbacks. Inform yourself. There is plenty of information out there.
- 3. Think about your marketing while you are writing your manuscript,** and know there are no guarantees with marketing. Just ask any marketing director at any company in the world. You do some things that you think will work and they don't, but you also do some things that far exceed your expectations. The key is to be consistent and experiment. Not everything is going to work, but if you do nothing, you don't stand a chance.
- 4. This industry-changing shift in publishing does not mean everyone will be successful, but it does mean everyone will have the opportunity to be successful.** Honestly, I think that is the most exciting thing about the time in which we live. Indie publishers are simply providing the opportunity. Not that long ago, authors only had one choice: find an agent and pray they could sell the manuscript. That has all changed, and I think that is amazingly exciting.

Too many authors publish a book with the expectation that the world is just sitting, waiting for their manuscript to get finished, and once they make it available for sale, the world will come to them. The reality is, being an author takes an informed, consistent effort, but when you get those emails from readers that tell you how much they enjoyed your book or found it helpful, it is one of the most rewarding experiences you can have.

Certainly, there are economic considerations when it comes to publishing, but I think the one common goal that unites all authors is they want to impact people with their writing. Writing to help others or telling a story that has to be told or supporting a business or ministry are worthy pursuits because they impact people.

As I say to authors all the time, I don't know how many books you will sell if you publish, but I know how many you will sell if you don't. I don't know how many people you will impact with your book if you publish, but I know how many you will impact if you don't. And to all the naysayers and fearmongers, I would like say: quit bickering about methods, and let's encourage authors to seize the opportunity.