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SOUTH AFRICAN EDITION

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# PUBLISH LIKE A PRO

THE COMPLETE GUIDE  
TO SUCCESSFUL AND  
PROFITABLE  
SELF-PUBLISHING

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VANESSA WILSON &  
GEORGINA HATCH



*Quickfox Publishing*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1</b>	<b>SO YOU WANT TO PUBLISH A BOOK?.....</b>	<b>15</b>
	Introduction: why write a book? .....	16
	<b>CHAPTER 1: ARE YOU A TRADITIONALIST OR AN INDEPENDENT? .....</b>	<b>18</b>
	The traditional approach .....	19
	The independent option .....	21
	Who owns your work? .....	23
	Potential earnings.....	24
	<b>CHAPTER 2: THE WRITE STUFF – GETTING IT TOGETHER .....</b>	<b>30</b>
	First things first.....	31
	Planning ahead .....	36
	Beginning and ending.....	37
	What’s in a name (or title)? .....	40
	Keywords are key.....	42
	The end is not the end.....	43
	Making it easier for publishers .....	45
	Protecting your copyright: proving ownership .....	48

<b>CHAPTER 3: YOU HAVE A DEAL!</b> .....	<b>50</b>
The finishing touches .....	52
What if you don't have a deal? .....	53

## **SECTION 2      GOING THE INDEPENDENT ROUTE ..... 55**

<b>CHAPTER 4: TYPES OF INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING</b> .....	<b>56</b>
Independent publishing models .....	58
Custom publishing .....	58
Vanity publishing.....	62
Self-publishing/print-on-demand .....	65
Subsidy or partnership publishing .....	69
Decision time .....	72
Choosing your service provider .....	73
Consultation is key.....	75
The consultation.....	75
The manuscript evaluation .....	77
The publishing budget.....	78
 <b>CHAPTER 5: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PITFALLS</b> .....	 <b>81</b>
Do you have what it takes? .....	83
Tips on funding your book .....	87

## **SECTION 3      BOOK PRODUCTION PROCESSES – THE NUTS AND BOLTS..... 92**

<b>CHAPTER 6: AN OVERVIEW OF BOOK PRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>92</b>
The publishing process .....	93
 <b>CHAPTER 7: THE EDITORIAL PROCESS</b> .....	 <b>96</b>
Editing.....	97
Types of editing.....	99
Substantive or complex edit .....	99
Standard edit .....	100
Light edit.....	101
Proofreading.....	101
Editorial permissions .....	103
Obtaining permissions.....	104

<b>CHAPTER 8: ADDING PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS TO YOUR BOOK</b> .....	<b>108</b>
Reviewing image quality.....	109
Resolution and image size .....	109
Scanning.....	112
File formats.....	112
Artwork considerations.....	113
Using online image libraries .....	114
Image permissions.....	116
Commissioning an illustrator .....	119
Commissioning a photographer.....	123
 <b>CHAPTER 9: PREPARING YOUR MANUSCRIPT FOR PUBLISHING</b> .....	 <b>126</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 10: DESIGN, TYPESETTING AND LAYOUT</b> .....	 <b>131</b>
Book interior design and style sheet set-up.....	132
Typesetting and layout.....	135
Your cover story.....	137
Page proofs and final sign-off .....	139
 <b>CHAPTER 11: ISBN ASSIGNMENT, LEGAL DEPOSIT AND BARCODES</b> .....	 <b>146</b>
ISBN assignment .....	146
Registering an ISBN in your name .....	148
Applying for an ISBN in South Africa .....	148
Legal deposit in South Africa .....	150
Barcode generation .....	151
 <b>CHAPTER 12: ALL ABOUT PRINTING – LITHO OR DIGITAL?</b> .....	 <b>153</b>
Litho printing.....	154
Digital printing.....	157
Choosing your printing specifications .....	159
Hardcover or softcover? .....	160
Binding options.....	162
Choosing paper for your book interior .....	165
Obtaining a print quote .....	171
Preparing your book for printing.....	176

<b>CHAPTER 13: EBOOKS IN A NUTSHELL .....</b>	<b>182</b>
What is an ebook? .....	182
Ebook formats.....	184
Digital rights management (DRM).....	189
Creating your own ebook – the danger of automatic file converters.....	190
Preparing for ebook publishing.....	192
<b>CHAPTER 14: THE PRODUCTION TIMELINE: PLANNING AHEAD .....</b>	<b>198</b>

## **SECTION 4      TAKING CARE OF THE PENNIES..... 203**

<b>CHAPTER 15: BUDGETING AND BOOK PRICING .....</b>	<b>204</b>
Your publishing budget.....	207
Working out your cost price per book.....	208
Setting a retail price.....	213
Calculating your breakeven point.....	223

## **SECTION 5      DISTRIBUTING, MARKETING AND SELLING YOUR BOOK..... 225**

<b>CHAPTER 16: DISTRIBUTION – CUTTING THROUGH THE CLUTTER .....</b>	<b>226</b>
The state of bookstores .....	227
Selling to libraries.....	232
Selling to schools and tertiary institutions.....	233
Other channels of distribution .....	234
<b>CHAPTER 17: ONLINE DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS.....</b>	<b>235</b>
Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) .....	237
Apple iBooks Store .....	239
Smashwords .....	241
IngramSpark.....	242
US tax withholding .....	244
Expanding your market by exploring other book formats ....	245
Audiobooks .....	245
Large-print and Braille books .....	247

<b>CHAPTER 18: PROMOTE, PROMOTE, PROMOTE!</b> .....	<b>250</b>
Create a media kit.....	251
Develop your book pitch.....	254
Hold a launch party.....	255
Work your network.....	256
Make your worth known.....	256
Events are an event.....	257
Engage social media.....	259
Create a website.....	262
Enter publishing competitions.....	263
Attend book fairs and expos.....	264
Fortune favours the brave.....	267
 <b>CHAPTER 19: IT'S ALMOST, BUT NOT QUITE, THE END</b> .....	 <b>268</b>

## **SECTION 6**

<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>271</b>
Appendix A: Chapter 1: The write stuff.....	272
Appendix B: Keywords and title names.....	274
Appendix C: An example of prelim pages for non-fiction.....	276
Appendix D: A sample imprint page.....	278
Appendix E: Proofreading and editing marks.....	279
Appendix F: Publishing budget template (professional).....	280
Appendix G: Publishing budget template (simple).....	282
Appendix H: Publishing timeline template.....	284
Appendix I: The Advance Information (AI) sheet.....	286
Glossary and index.....	288
Acknowledgements.....	299
About the authors.....	300

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# FOREWORD

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So, you want to write a book? You have a great idea, a compelling message or a unique story. But the simple truth is that writing a book is hard work and requires an enormous amount of determination and perseverance. The media and publishing world is saturated with instant information; news; books; social media; blogs; trends; magazines – and it's very difficult to even get noticed. Slush piles of honestly written and well-crafted manuscripts that will never move off the table of the literary agent or the publisher pile up and remain untouched, despite having the potential to fill that special niche in the market.

So for many authors, self-publishing is the way to go. This book, written by two experienced and reputable publishing professionals, will help you to avoid pitfalls along the way to producing a quality product with the potential for success. For many traditional publishers, profit is often the driving force and the super-seller mentality reigns supreme. Some real gems are

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missed along the way and although it is a daunting task to sell directly to your readers, there is huge potential to be tapped.

I have been involved in the book trade for more than 40 years as a book selector for a National Library Service and as a selector for the Leisure Books and Leserskring catalogues and online book selling business. Yet, this very professional and practical guide has opened my eyes to the enormous amount of work that goes into producing a book. I never knew! That is exactly why this book would make such a compelling difference in the life of a budding author. To produce a high-quality, self-published book is of paramount importance for the serious author who has a lot to offer and needs to be heard.

I have known co-author Georgina Hatch for more than 20 years. We met when she was the Publishing Director of a major South African publishing house, and after that as an independent editor, running her own editorial service business, Write It Right. She has assisted a number of authors, who preferred the independent route, to produce and bring their books to market. Nothing escapes Georgina's eagle eye and she offers solid advice on funding and promoting the book as well.

Vanessa Wilson, founder and Director of Quickfox Publishing, is a production and independent publishing wizard. She goes into great detail to explain the nuts and bolts of every aspect of the production process, offering additional advice on budgets and pricing, ebook publishing, production timelines and online distribution. Every type of publishing is dissected.

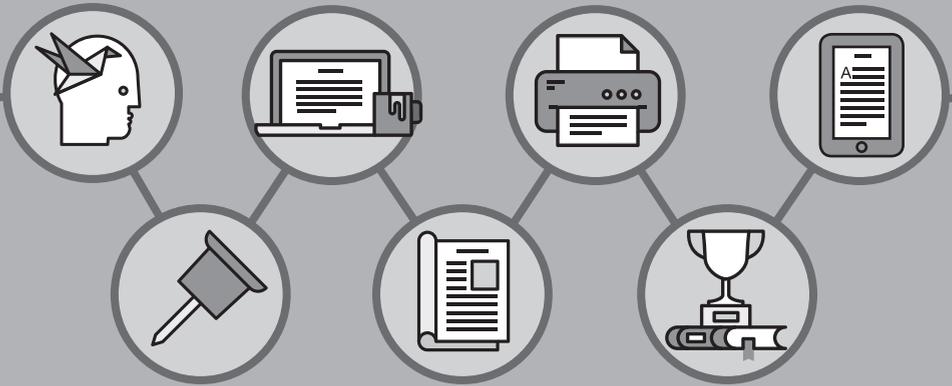
There are some works on self-publishing in the international arena, but for authors in South Africa, this very comprehensive and detailed book will make their job so much easier. I have not seen anything else as all-encompassing as this practical and useful book. I encourage all would-be authors to read it and learn!

**Lana Barnett**

CEO Leserskring/Leisure Books

SECTION

# 1



**SO, YOU WANT TO  
PUBLISH A BOOK?**



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## INTRODUCTION: WHY WRITE A BOOK?

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*“There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed.”*

**W**ise words these are from Ernest Hemingway, who knew a thing or two about writing books. Typewriters may be long gone, but the process hasn't changed. Writing a book is all about the proverbial blood, sweat and tears.

According to a recent survey carried out by the *New York Times*, 81% of people feel they have a book in them and should write it. Their reasons range from wishful thinking to plain weird. So before you read any further, ask yourself: “Why do I want to write a book?” If your answer is any of those outlined below, it may be wise to find another way to achieve your goal:

- I want to be famous.
- I want to make a pile of money.
- My mum / dad / sister / uncle / dog will be proud of me.
- It will be my legacy to the world.
- I love writing, so why not?

These are all perfectly valid reasons for *wanting* to write a book, but they are unlikely to sustain you during the marathon that is book-writing, or guarantee you success as an author. For every famous writer, there are thousands of others who are being choked by a cloak of invisibility. For every wealthy writer, there are throngs who make nothing and are sometimes forced to subsidise their books. Here are some valid reasons for *actually* writing a book:

- You have a genuinely unique story to tell that will be of interest to other people.
- You have a powerful message which, through the telling, will be of benefit to others.
- You're an expert in a particular subject and wish to share your expertise, establish yourself as an authority in your field, and differentiate yourself from your competition.
- You believe that people will pay to read your story or message.

Many people believe that publishing a book is simple – just write the story and send it off to a publisher or obtain the help of an independent author services company and, hey presto!, you have a book. If only it were so straightforward.

A traditional publisher will not accept your book unless they can make money from it, no matter how brilliant its content; and the independent publishing route – despite being a quicker and easier route to getting published – presents many challenges of its own. While you may not have to bleed to get your book published, you will certainly have to sweat, and there may be a few tears along the way. **Never fear, we are here to help.**

This book is intended to guide you through the process of publishing your book while still hanging on to your sanity. We explore the entire publishing process, step by step. Within these pages, you will find survival tips, practical advice, technical know-how and specific instructions. We also cover most of the questions authors have asked us about publishing, book production, distribution and marketing. We hope you find this book not only highly informative, but also practical and a trusted partner on your publishing journey!



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## ARE YOU A TRADITIONALIST OR AN INDEPENDENT?

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**F**irstly, let's take a long, hard look at the publishing industry in South Africa. South African publishing houses focus on three broad market areas: academic, education and trade.

1. Academic (or higher education) publishing provides learning materials for the tertiary education market.
2. Educational publishing is aimed at the schools market, from pre-school to Grade 12, and provides learning materials for learners and support materials for teachers.
3. Trade publishing provides the kinds of books that you find at bookstores in your local shopping mall. This includes fiction and non-fiction.

As academic and educational books are traditionally commissioned by specialist publishers, the focus of this book will be on trade publishing. However, the content is useful for all publications, so please keep reading.

According to a survey carried out by the Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA), locally published books constitute

42% of the annual turnover of the South African publishing industry. Of this, fiction constitutes 36% and non-fiction, 64%. The turnover from imported books is the exact opposite – 64% comes from fiction and 36% from non-fiction. This tells us that the bestselling fiction in South Africa – in other words, big-name, top 10 titles – is imported.

Of the books that are published locally in the trade sector, adult books account for 82% of turnover and children's books for just 18%. English-language books constitute 54% of turnover and Afrikaans 45%. The English titles are predominantly adult non-fiction (62%) whereas the Afrikaans sector is fairly evenly spread across children's books, adult fiction and adult non-fiction.

What these statistics tell us is that more books are imported into the country than are published locally. Of the books that are published locally, non-fiction sells better than fiction.

The South African publishing industry is fairly small. At the time of writing, there were approximately 23 traditional publishers active in the trade sector, but this is shrinking all the time owing to mergers and, sadly, some closures.

To understand the local industry and decide which publishers to approach for your book, it's important to discern and comprehend the differences between traditional book publishing and independent book publishing.

## THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH

Traditional publishing is for books that are guaranteed to sell several thousand copies. Traditional trade publishers receive hundreds of manuscripts per month, and with fierce competition and high production and distribution costs, they need to be selective about what they take on. Their clear intention is to make a profit, so they will only publish a book if they are convinced it will sell and make money for their company. This is truly the bottom line.

The publishing company's shareholders, sales executives and marketing team need to believe in the books they publish before they back them financially. The sales executives, in particular, need to be convinced that they can sell the book into various outlets, including bookstores, and that their valiant efforts will be supported by a promotable author who will work well with the organisation's marketing team.

Once a deal has been agreed upon, the traditional publisher will control all aspects of book production. Although the author will be consulted, the publisher will be responsible for:

- Evaluating the book and determining its sales potential.
- Financing the book.
- Editing the book.
- Designing the interior and book cover.
- Commissioning illustrations and photographs, if necessary.
- Obtaining text and image permissions, if necessary.
- Typesetting and proofreading.
- Printing the book.
- Converting the book into an ebook.
- Marketing and publicity.
- Book sales.
- Local and international distribution and stock control.
- Financial administration and author royalty payments.
- General project management.

In other words, the publisher will take on full financial, production and marketing responsibility for the book. In return for its investment, it will retain the bulk of profits made from selling the book. The publisher will also control what happens to the book: what it looks like; when it's published; where it's sold; and how long it will remain in print.

On the upside, traditional publishers have the resources, contacts and marketing experience to get the book out there and selling, and they take on all the financial risk in doing so. Furthermore, the publisher is likely to have access to a broader, international book-buying market that authors publishing

independently may not have. The author earns a royalty from all sales without the need for any further involvement, apart from publicity appearances organised by the publisher.

On the downside, the author has no control of the book while the publishing contract is in place. You will be consulted during the production process, but ultimately the final decisions rest with the publisher. So how your book looks, how it's marketed, how it's sold, and how long it remains in print will not be your decisions.

Traditional publishing is best suited to authors who believe their book has widespread appeal and can be sold via conventional bookstores. It's also suited to authors who prefer to hand over their book in its entirety and have no further involvement in its production and marketing; authors who have little to no direct access to their potential readers; and authors who lack the funds to publish independently.

## **THE INDEPENDENT OPTION**

Publishing independently, usually referred to as self-publishing, means that the author takes on many of the responsibilities that a traditional publisher would normally handle, from choosing a publishing team and funding the project, to making pricing decisions and marketing the book. The author is also responsible for finding suitable distributors and making most of the final decisions relating to the project.

Because authors have full control, they can customise the publishing process according to their needs. They can also keep a book in print for as long as they choose to do so. Most importantly, they retain all the profit from book sales.

As daunting as some of the author's responsibilities sound, there are service providers who can assist with many of the publishing and distribution functions, often as a seamless, one-stop service. The most important decision an author will need to

make is which service provider to partner with to help them turn their book publishing dreams into reality.

A good publishing service will offer at least these basic services:

- Manuscript evaluation.
- General publishing and distribution advice.
- Editing and proofreading.
- Cover design and interior formatting.
- ISBN assignment.
- Book printing.
- Ebook conversion and distribution.
- Access to bookstore marketing and distribution services.
- Access to online book distribution services and retailers.
- Project management.

Some may offer additional services, such as:

- Translation.
- Ghostwriting or overwriting.
- Illustration.
- Photography.
- Obtaining permissions for image and content reproduction.
- Sourcing images.
- Organising book launches.
- Basic marketing, such as social media posts, publicity and press releases.
- Developing author websites.
- Designing promotional material such as book launch invites, posters, flyers, roll-up banners, and Facebook images.

Self-publishing is best suited to authors who believe their book has niche appeal and can be sold via outlets other than traditional bookstores; authors who have easy and direct access to their potential buyers; and authors who have the financial resources for publishing and marketing. It's a major plus-point if the author has a ready-made sales network made up of clients, strategic partners and other interested parties. It's also better

suited to entrepreneurial or business-minded authors who are not afraid to market, promote and sell their book.

## WHO OWNS YOUR WORK?

The ownership of a book is governed by the copyright, which is a type of intellectual property applicable to certain forms of creative work, including books. It's a legal right created by the law of a country that automatically grants the creator of an original work the exclusive rights for its use and distribution. You don't need to register your copyright to have it.

It's a complex issue, but broadly speaking, if you write a book the copyright belongs to you, the author, unless you cede it to a third party, such as a traditional book publisher.

### Traditional publishing

For as long as the publishing contract is in place, the traditional publisher will hold the copyright to your book. During this period you may not take the original manuscript or any of its content and publish elsewhere, unless this has been specifically written into the contract. Even then, it's likely that you will be restricted in how that material may be used or republished.

Once the contract has expired, you will again own the rights to the original content of the book, but the publisher will continue to own the copyright to the book in its published format. This includes the design, layout and edited version, as well as the electronic files and printing plates. Should neither party choose to renew the contract, you are free to publish the book yourself using your original manuscript. Alternatively, you may have the option of purchasing the existing electronic files or printing plates from the publisher. It usually works out much cheaper to buy the existing material than to start production from scratch, so be sure to enquire about that option if the publisher chooses not to renew your contract.

## Independent publishing

When going the independent route, you own the copyright to your original work. This means that you are free to republish your book elsewhere and you are also free to write and publish other books using the same or similar content. However – and this is very important – while you retain copyright of your original manuscript, you do not necessarily hold copyright of the electronic files created to print the book. This is because the publishing service uses its own team to design the cover and format the book, and they, therefore, own the copyright to that specific layout and design. The exception is when the publisher performs the services on a work-for-hire basis, or cedes the copyright over to you. In this case you, the client, will own the copyright. It is therefore necessary, when considering a publishing service, to establish up front whether you will have ownership of the final electronic files.

You can find out more about copyright and proving ownership of copyright on page 48 in the next chapter.

## POTENTIAL EARNINGS

One of the main differences between traditional publishing and independent publishing is the author's earning potential.

Because the traditional publisher invests money in the book, the company rightly expects a financial return. Authors are compensated by way of a royalty payment of between 8% and 15% on the *net receipt* of the book. The net receipt is the trade price after bookseller discounts and VAT have been deducted.

Yes, in exchange for displaying your book on their shelves, booksellers require the retail price to be heavily discounted. Discounts can range from 40–55%; and what is left after tax and discounts is split between the author and publisher, albeit not on an equal basis. The author is paid his or her agreed royalty percentage and the book publisher keeps the rest. The publisher uses their portion to cover the costs of production, warehousing,

distribution, and marketing. The publisher must also cover operational costs and make a profit.

Let's look at an example: If a book has a retail price of R250 and the bookseller deduction is 45%, the net receipt is R137.50 minus 15% VAT, which equals R120.61. If an author is being paid a 10% royalty, the author will earn R12.06 for each book sold and the publishing house will retain R108.55. The publisher may seem to make a lot, but when you add up all the publishing costs, it's not much at all!

For as long as the book continues to sell, the author will receive a percentage royalty from each book sold, usually paid out twice a year. Once the publisher decides not to reprint the book and allows it to go out of print, the financial tap will be turned off.

In independent publishing, the author finances the publishing of the book and is therefore entitled to all the profits. By selling books directly to customers and bypassing bookstores, the author can make approximately 40–60% of the retail price after production and printing costs have been deducted.

Books can stay in print for as long as desired and, provided the author can pay the related production costs, content may be updated and new editions published as necessary.

The other advantage of publishing independently is that the author can secure bulk book deals with large companies and organisations. In exchange for the bulk sale, the author can offer to brand the book covers with the company's logo or customise the entire cover. There is tremendous flexibility to publishing independently, so authors can find innovative ways to make money from their books.

## **There is no get rich quick!**

At this point, let's make one thing completely clear: whichever publishing route you choose to follow, you're unlikely to get rich from publishing a book, at least in the domestic market. In South

Africa, if you sell 3 500 to 4 000 books, your book is considered a bestseller. Of course, there are the rare exceptions to the rule. John van de Ruit's novel *Spud* (Penguin Books) sold more than 500 000 copies. Former South African national rugby coach Jake White's non-fiction book *In Black and White* (Zebra Press) sold more than 210 000 copies. These particular titles succeeded because of their originality, topicality, and widespread appeal to a general target market. But they are uncommon exceptions in a country that is noted for its less-than-average book sale success.

When it comes to earning potential, there is very little room for negotiation with traditional publishing houses, unless the author is a celebrity or major authority in their field. In that case, higher royalty payments can occasionally be secured. No doubt, you have read with envy about international publishing houses vying for the rights to publish a particular book, or about agents auctioning off the rights to a book. This rarely, if ever, happens in South Africa. In fact, book agents hardly exist in this country and most would-be authors conduct their own negotiations with publishers.

That's not to say that international sales are impossible. If authors feel their book has appeal outside of the domestic market, the services of an international book agent may be obtained. This agent will then approach publishers in other countries who might have an interest in publishing the book.

If the book is published by a local traditional publisher, the company will retain all domestic and foreign rights. If the publisher feels the book appeals to an international market and a deal is secured with an overseas publishing company, the South African publisher will be paid a fee and the author will receive a percentage return on this deal. There is no average return as each deal can be completely different depending on the market involved.

The main attraction of publishing through a traditional book publisher is that someone else funds the project and takes

charge of services, such as sales, marketing and distribution. The disadvantages are that the author has to relinquish control of the publishing process and will earn less.

The main attraction of publishing independently is that the author takes control of the publishing process, retains ownership of the work and has the potential to earn more. The disadvantage is that all publishing costs are for the author's account and the author is responsible for driving marketing and book sales.

## **In conclusion**

By now you should have a better idea of the advantages and disadvantages of using a traditional publisher and publishing independently. The table overleaf summarises the features of both types of publishing.

**TABLE 1** Traditional publishing versus independent publishing

Traditional publishing	Independent publishing
It can take many months or years to secure a publishing deal.	You can publish your book straightaway; you simply need to find the right publishing service.
It costs you nothing to have your book published; if your book includes illustrations or photos, you might be required to supply those at your own expense.	You pay for publishing your book, so you must have enough money to cover all the production, printing and marketing costs.
There is no financial risk to you, the author.	There could be minor to considerable financial risk.
The quality of the final book that hits the shelves is likely to be high, and the product itself very marketable.	The quality and marketability of the final book is dependent on the service provider and the budget you have available to invest in professional services.
You don't have the final say over the production of your book, although your input will be regarded and accommodated where possible.	You have full say over the production process. If you are catering to a niche market that you know well, you can preserve the integrity of your content.
You earn a royalty of 8–15% of the net receipts (retail price less bookstore discount and VAT).	You earn 100% of the profits after all costs have been deducted. This can work out to be anything from 15% to 60% of the retail price depending on the channels you sell through and your initial investment; the highest profits come from direct-to-customer sales.
You have no control over the pricing or marketing of your book.	You have full control over every aspect of your book, including pricing and marketing.
The publisher decides whether to keep the book in print or not.	You decide whether to keep the book in print or not.
The publisher takes full responsibility for the marketing and selling of the book.	You take full responsibility for the marketing and selling of the book; you can enlist the help of professionals but this will cost you.
Better suited to authors who feel uncomfortable driving their own marketing and book sales.	Better suited to authors who feel comfortable driving their own marketing and book sales.
Suited to authors who have no access to their target market.	Well suited to authors who have easy or direct access to their target market.
Once your book has been published, the publisher will promote it for the first three to six months.	Once your book has been published, you can continue to promote and sell it indefinitely.
Popularity and demand for your book will dictate whether it is kept in the market after the publishing contract has expired.	Your book can remain in print regardless of the level of demand.

Traditional publishing	Independent publishing
Your book's success lies with the publishing company.	Your book's success lies with you and the resources you have available to publish and promote a good-quality product.
It can take up to a year, sometimes longer, for your book to be published and available in the market.	It can take 4 to 6 months for a trade-quality book to be published and available in the market. Some online platforms enable you to publish in less than a month, but this assumes that your manuscript is already well edited and good to go.
You are bound by contract, so you may not approach another publisher while your contract is in effect. You are usually also not allowed to rewrite or rework your content for publishing elsewhere, unless your contract allows it.	You are free to publish with whomever you like, whenever you like. You can also use some or all of your content for other products and books published through other companies.
At the end of the contract period, you may have the option to buy back the printing plates or book files to continue publishing the book yourself.	Depending on the publishing service used, you may or may not have ownership of the final print-ready files.

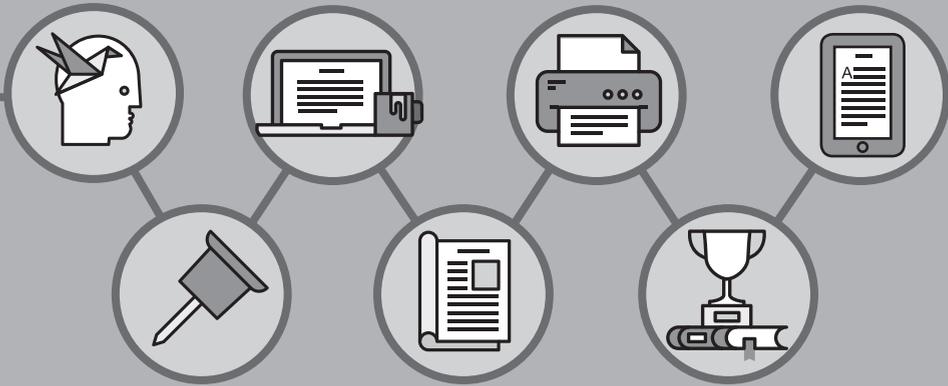
### # TIP Before you submit your manuscript for publishing

If you want to approach a traditional publisher, first have your manuscript evaluated and then professionally edited to give yourself the best chance of being accepted. The less work a book requires to make it market-ready (work costs money), the more likely the publisher is to offer you a deal – if they believe the book will sell. It also presents your book – and you – in the best possible light. Publishing houses receive hundreds of manuscripts monthly, so you need to stand out in the crowd with a product that reads well and impresses.

Finally, the more you can bring to the table, the better. An accurate analysis of your book's target market; the niche it fills; how it differs from similar books; its sales potential; and how you are able to help promote it, will also shine favourably upon your submission and increase the likelihood of your picking up a publishing deal.

SECTION

# 3



## BOOK PRODUCTION PROCESSES — THE NUTS AND BOLTS



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## AN OVERVIEW OF BOOK PRODUCTION

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**B**y now, you may have noticed that there is a common thread running through this book and a word that is often repeated – *quality, quality, quality*. When you are investing your own money, it's tempting to choose the cheapest route possible just to see your book in print. However, it's important to stop and remember that your book represents **you** and everything you stand for.

### **There are no short cuts**

In the past independent publishing was synonymous with poor quality because authors didn't invest in professional editing and design. Editing and design are art forms and the expression 'you get what you pay for' is very apt when it comes to these skills. Settling for anything less than excellence destroys credibility, as well as customer trust. It also annihilates your chances of marketing the book through mass media. Media, such as magazines and newspapers, won't touch books that are clearly

of low quality, never mind review or feature them on their pages. In fact, members of the media are more critical than most: hundreds of books compete for the same review space on their pages each month, and as experienced writers and journalists, they are constantly exposed to high-quality books by major publishing houses. They instantly recognise professional quality when they see it.

Bookstores are reluctant to stock books that are not supported by adequate marketing and publicity. And some publications won't review your book if it isn't readily available in bookstores. So even if bookstores are not your primary channel of distribution, you might still require a bookstore presence to secure reviews in certain media. From this perspective, publishing a book that meets industry standards is non-negotiable.

Establishing consumer confidence in you, the author, and what you have to say is vital if you hope to publish more books down the line. Consumers take trade-quality books for granted. After all, that's all that's been available on the market, before self-publishing became a popular option. You can bet your bottom dollar that customers who have a bad or disappointing experience will not give you a second chance when you release your next book.

## THE PUBLISHING PROCESS

When you choose the independent publishing route, there are processes that need to be followed and boxes that must be ticked to ensure a quality product.

Figure 1 on page 95 shows a typical publishing process, from start to finish. Following this process will ensure the greatest likelihood of achieving a trade-quality product. Each of the stages in the publishing process have been dealt with extensively in other chapters, so we won't elaborate on them here, except to say that the order in which the stages are completed can differ slightly from one publisher to the next.



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## THE EDITORIAL PROCESS

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**A** good custom publisher will insist on having your book both edited and proofread. We have devoted a good few pages to this part of the production process because its importance cannot be overstated. There's not an award-winning or bestselling author on the planet whose books don't undergo professional editing and proofreading. It's par for the course in traditional publishing. In fact, books published by traditional publishers usually undergo multiple edits to produce the slick, bestselling products you see in bookstores or on the *New York Times* bestseller list.

Your manuscript may require a complex, standard or light edit. The type of editing depends on the condition of the manuscript and will usually be specified in the cost estimate after the editor has assessed the manuscript. Depending on your service provider, this assessment might be done by way of a brief perusal of sections of the manuscript, usually at no cost to you, or in the form of a proper manuscript evaluation, for a fee. We believe that a proper evaluation is vital to ensure that the editor

and author address all the issues in the manuscript, and that the editorial budget accurately reflects the amount of work required to produce a clean, publishable manuscript. You don't want to be saddled with an unexpected bill for extra editorial work.

## EDITING

Editing is a specialised skill and should be performed by an experienced book editor. Editing books is very different from, say, editing a magazine or a newspaper in which articles are short and self-contained. Expecting a magazine or newspaper editor to edit a book – unless they have experience doing so – is akin to expecting a 5km-runner to run a 42.2km marathon with no additional training.

Avoid the temptation to have your newspaper editor brother-in-law perform the main edit on your book. By all means, engage his help to get your manuscript into the best possible shape before you hand it over for production. This will make the editing process quicker and easier and therefore less costly. And yes, definitely get his help if you're on a low-to-zero budget and will be using a print-on-demand or low-cost publishing solution. It's also an excellent idea to enlist his help at the proofing stage as every set of eyes helps, and any help you get is better than no help at all. However, he might not have the legs to carry you all the way to the finish line when it comes to producing a professionally edited book akin to those produced by major publishers.

Also avoid the temptation to assume that overseas editors are better than local ones just because they're more expensive and they're based overseas.

As publishing consultants, we frequently come across manuscripts that authors have paid a fortune to have edited abroad, sometimes by professors of English at well-known universities who are published authors themselves, that needed extensive editing back here in South Africa to get them into proper shape. There are a few lessons in this: 1) Professors of English teach

English – *teaching* is what they do for a living. Book editors edit books – *editing* is what they do for a living. 2) Even if professors of English *do* have a few published books under their belts, their books have *always* been edited by a professional book editor who earns a living editing books all day. 3) There are specific English language conventions and idioms that are unique to a South African audience – our use of ‘s’ instead of ‘z’ being just one of them. And finally, 4) It’s important to know what kind of edit you are paying for. Different levels of editing address different issues in the manuscript.

The editorial process can take anything from a few weeks to a few months to complete, depending on how busy the editor is; how long the book is; the level of editing required; how quickly you respond to the editor’s queries, if any; and how many editing phases the manuscript requires.

If it’s a complex edit with many queries, this will obviously delay the process. It’s more cost-effective to take the time needed to get your manuscript into the best possible shape before handing it over for editing. Also, be aware that most editors will not be able to start your job immediately. They’re usually working on other jobs that they need to complete before they can tackle yours, so you’ll need to factor this into your publishing timeline.

Once the editing is complete, the editor sends the edited manuscript back to you to review – usually with changes marked and highlighted so that you can see their insertions and deletions – and approve or reject the changes. The editor may be in touch with you during the editing process to ask for clarification or to request further elaboration. Alternatively, they may leave notes

Find out more about publishing timelines in Chapter 14.

## # TIP Choosing an editor

When choosing an editor, it’s reasonable to request an edited sample chapter of your book to assess the editing before you hand over the entire job. This may or may not involve a small cost, but if it does, it’s worth it. Editing is one of the more expensive book production services – and the most important – so it’s best to make sure that you’re happy with the editor and the quality of their work.

and remarks in the manuscript for you to address, and then integrate your additions and comments into the final manuscript before handing it over for typesetting.

## Types of editing

There are four main levels of book editing, each attending to different issues in the manuscript and carrying a different cost. Terminology defining these levels may differ depending on where you are in the world. Americans, for instance, use the terms line editing and copy editing, whereas in South Africa, we use the terms substantive editing and standard editing.

Editors in South Africa often perform multiple levels of editing as part of the same edit. A substantive edit, for instance, will include everything that a standard edit includes and more, as it works with the manuscript at a much deeper level. And a proofread may turn into a light edit. While not cast in stone, and bearing editorial fluidity in mind, the information that follows illustrates the basic editorial functions so that you're aware of what you're getting and can budget for your editorial requirements accordingly.

## Substantive or complex edit

Sometimes called a 'developmental edit', this is the **most intensive form of editing**. In addition to all the standard editing functions, a complex or substantive edit also focuses on the manuscript's intended use and target market, as well as the internal organisation, style and flow of information or narrative. It ensures completeness, accuracy, consistency, conciseness, readability and, most especially, clarity. The aim of a professional edit is to ensure that everything is so clear that it cannot be misunderstood. Paragraphs may be rewritten, expanded upon or condensed, and text moved from one section of the book to another if it makes better sense there.

This is the most expensive form of editing because the editor engages with the material at the deepest level – also checking for factual accuracy and copyright, referencing material appropriately and pre-empting a range of potential issues including legality of content. Ultimately, the accuracy and legality of content is the author's responsibility, but it's important that the editor raises any red flags about potential issues.

A substantive edit is almost always followed by a standard or light edit due to the extent of the work undertaken. It's impossible for an editor working at this level to ensure everything is perfect. The editor is also required to make many judgement calls during the editing process. A fresh set of eyes – and a new perspective – are called for. As an author, you can well appreciate this: simply think back to when you stopped writing for a while and then went back to your manuscript to carry on. Invariably there were things you ended up changing because you saw room for improvement, or you spotted mistakes or repetition that you hadn't noticed before. So it is with editing.

## Standard edit

**A standard edit is the *minimum* level of editing required for publishing.** A standard edit – sometimes called a copy edit – is the most common level of editing. It checks for grammar, punctuation and spelling. It also checks for factual errors; syntactical problems; word usage; language style; consistency; repetition; ambiguity; hyphenation; tautology; capitalisation; number usage; logic; and general flow of content.

The editor will flag contradictions, timeline issues and factual inaccuracies; standardise heading levels; check table and figure numbers to ensure that they run sequentially; and check that tables, graphs and artwork correlate with the text.

In a traditional publishing environment, particularly academic and educational publishing, the book designer will provide the editor with a marked-up sample of the design specifications,

which the editor uses to mark up the entire book. This is rarely, if ever, done in an independent publishing environment.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In a traditional publishing environment, editors are often required to mark up the text. This means that they will indicate level 1, level 2 and level 3 headings, captions, the start and end of special text boxes and text features, quotes, and so on. This ensures that when the book is typeset, the hierarchy and structure of the content is accurately and consistently maintained throughout. An example of how text is marked up can be found in the Did You Know? box on page 129.

## Light edit

A light edit is similar to a standard edit, except that far less work is involved and it's **typically performed on a manuscript that has already been edited**. It involves a further check on grammar, spelling, punctuation, incorrect word usage, needless repetition, consistency of language and punctuation, and ensures correct cross-referencing. It's practically mandatory after an extensive edit, as it provides a fresh second-eye check to iron out any issues or mistakes that were missed or arose as a result of the extensive edit. It may also be necessary after a standard edit, depending on how complex the standard edit ended up being. It's extremely rare to come across a manuscript that requires only light editing. When that happens, the author is usually an experienced writer or editor.

## Proofreading

This is often done *after* the book has been typeset and the first set of page proofs have been produced. By now, the sentence structure, flow, development, and content should already be sound, but the manuscript still needs another check for punctuation, spelling, table and figure numbers, typos, as well as errors that may have crept in during typesetting.

Proofreading also checks for consistent use of regional English (e.g. British English vs. American English), consistency in currency (e.g. USD vs. \$), consistency in how numerals are written out (e.g. 100,000 vs. 100 000), how dates are represented (e.g. 1 January 2016 vs. January 1, 2016), and so on.

If you are publishing an academic book, or any other book in which credibility depends on a high level of accuracy and detail, engaging the services of a specialist proofreader, rather than an editor who proofreads, is recommended.

### DID YOU KNOW?

You may be wondering why an extensive or standard edit doesn't leave you with a perfect manuscript. That's because editors are human, too. An extensive or heavy edit involves a level of engagement in which the editor eventually becomes too involved, much like the author, and starts seeing what they expect to see, not what is *actually* there. It's the same reason that authors cannot edit their own work. Our brains are amazing organs that are very good at filling in letters and words. We see what we *expect* to see.

**Aoccdrnig to rseearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttae in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihg is taht the frist and lsat ltteers be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.**

**NO71CE H8W YOU C4N RE4D 7H1S ES81LY W17HOUT H4VING TO R3ALLY 7H1NK A3OUT 1T?**

This should give you a new appreciation for editors and proofreaders! It explains why errors still manage to creep through, despite reading and correcting your book countless times.

Jumbled letter order (bold) collected on the Internet, 2018. Original source unknown.

In reality, most books require at least two edits and a proofread, and even that may not be enough. The book, the complexity of the subject, and the nature of the editing performed will all have an impact on the number of revisions that may be needed. This is quite normal, and in a traditional publishing environment, multiple revisions are common, with various people (fresh eyes) reading the manuscript at each stage.

Editorial services will likely make up the largest portion of your production costs. At the very least, you should budget for a minimum of *two* editorial phases: a standard edit and a proofread. If the manuscript requires substantive editing, then three editorial phases may be the necessary minimum: a substantive edit, a light or standard edit, and a proofread.

## EDITORIAL PERMISSIONS

It's entirely normal for authors to research other similar published works or online information when writing their books. No-one can know everything, even if they are a specialist in their field, and a well-researched book is an authoritative book.

What authors cannot do, however, is quote someone else's work word for word, sentence by sentence – at least, not without obtaining permission from the copyright holder to do so. The copyright holder can be either the author or the publisher. Reproducing copyrighted work without the necessary permission is known as *copyright infringement*.

Provided you are using very *short* extracts from other people's work, it may not be necessary to seek permission – this is known as 'fair use'. The problem is that there is no standard rule for the number of words you are legally allowed to copy. Some claim it's 150 words, others say it's 300, and yet others maintain that you can use as much as 10% of your total word count. Our advice is to use as few copied words or extracts as possible and **always credit the source!** Using other people's work without crediting them – in other words, passing the work off as your own – is called *plagiarism* and is a form of fraud. Plagiarism is taken very seriously in the publishing industry.

There are other instances when you may not need to seek permission, but it's a complicated business.

Generally, you don't need permission to publish someone else's words in the following cases:

- The work was published before January 1, 1923, in which case the copyright has expired.
- The work is in the **public domain**.
- You mention the title of a work or its author as a **stated fact** (also applies to songs and poems).
- The work is licensed under **Creative Commons** guidelines; this enables free distribution of an otherwise copyrighted work and should be clearly stated in the book itself.
- You are following **fair use** guidelines – quoting just a few lines from a full-length work. But this can be something of a grey area so the guidelines should not be abused or you might find yourself in legal trouble.

## Obtaining permissions

When you want to use material in a way that cannot be classified as fair use, you need permission from the copyright owner. This material could, for example, include several verses of a song or poem, or entire paragraphs from a book. Always err on the side of caution and get the go-ahead before you publish. You may sometimes have to pay for permission to use the extract, but rather pay a small fee than be sued for copyright infringement.

When it's not practical to obtain permission, for example, you cannot track down the author or publisher, then consider not using the content at all unless the doctrine of fair use can be applied.

It's common practice nowadays for people to trawl the Internet when doing research. The attitude towards re-using information published via digital media is a little more relaxed, provided the source is credited. Bloggers, for example, may view it as a marketing opportunity if you quote from their blog and acknowledge them as the author. But it's always best to check their copyright policy just in case. You are still at risk when copying information from a digital source.

Obtaining permissions can sometimes be a tedious process that involves time-consuming research, lengthy communication, and occasional head-butting. Fortunately, there are people out there who can do it for you, if your budget allows. Some custom publishers will offer the service for a fee. There are also specialised companies and freelancers who will obtain permissions on your behalf – naturally, also in exchange for payment. If you have the time and you want to save money, it's best to obtain the permissions yourself.

## How to obtain permissions

1. Find the contact details for the copyright holder. If the work is still in print, this will usually be the publisher, but if not, it could be the author. If it's a publisher, the company will usually have a rights or permissions department you can contact, the details for which can be found on their website.
2. Compile a **permissions letter** that provides the following information:
  - Your name, address and contact details.
  - Details of the work for which you require permission, including author, title, year of publication, ISBN, and exactly which portion of the work you wish to use; also, the nature of how it will be used. Some copyright holders may request to see the formatted pages on which their work is quoted so that they can assess the context of its use. They may also want to see the imprint page.
  - Details of the book you will be publishing, including the title name, publisher, publication date, print quantity, and price.
  - Audience to whom the work will be made available.
  - The rights that you require – for which country, in which language, and in which format (print, digital, or both).
  - A promise that you will acknowledge and credit the copyright holder and permission granted.
  - A request for the copyright holder to provide permission in writing, either by email or letter.

View an example of an imprint page in Appendix D on page 278.

**# TIP** Permissions timeline and filing permissions received

Obtaining permissions usually takes time and you may be redirected to different people or publishers, so make sure you complete this process well before your publishing deadline.

Remember to safely file away or store your permissions when you receive them. These should form part of the permanent archives pertaining to your book.

**# TIP** Copyright for artwork, quotes, bible verses

**ARTWORK:** Copyright also applies to photographs; cartoons; charts; line drawings; graphs; maps; and screen shots, so make sure that you have permission to use these items. Obtaining image permissions is covered on pages 116–118 in Chapter 8.

**QUOTES:** Many authors use quotes from well-known speakers, celebrities, leaders, and other authors. These are considered safe to use and permission is not required, although the source of the quote must be credited, even if it's 'Anonymous'. Quotes should also be represented word for word. Where there are conflicting versions of a quote, choose the version from the most reputable source. If you cannot quote the text accurately, word for word, rather paraphrase the quote and do **not** place it in inverted commas, for example: Napoleon Hill reminds us that we can only grow and become strong through continuous effort and struggle. (The actual quote is: "Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle.")

**BIBLE VERSES:** Different publishers own the copyright to different translations of the Bible. Most translations give permission for a limited number of verses – usually around 200 – to be quoted word for word, provided your quote makes up less than a certain percentage of your own book. Look up the publisher of the specific Bible translation you'd like to use and follow their usage and credit guidelines. The World English Bible (WEB) is an updated version of the American Standard Version (1901) and is a translation that has been put into the public domain. As such, there is no copyright and it's freely available for use, in any form, without needing to credit WEB. However, if you choose to credit World English Bible (WEB) or use the name, you must faithfully copy the verses as they appear in the WEB.

## # TIP Inserting a copyright credit in your book

When you receive permission to reproduce copyrighted work, the copyright holder may have specific requirements regarding how they wish to be credited. Ensure that this is done. If they have not specified a format, you can do the following:

**TEXT CREDITS:** If you're using content with **permission granted**, insert "© [Copyright owner's name], used with permission" alongside the content being credited (see page 142 for an example).

If you're using content under **fair use** guidelines, insert: "© [Copyright owner's name], used under fair use" or "© [Copyright owner's name], with thanks".

If you're using **Creative Commons** content, you can find guidelines on how to credit the copyright holder supplied with the content. Do as requested.

If you are quoting something from the **Internet**, reference the website and then provide the date you accessed it, for example: Source: [www.quickfox.co.za](http://www.quickfox.co.za), 18/08/2018.

Some publishers also provide credits on the imprint page. If you do this, remember to include the page number that the content appears on, for example: "Page 142 © [Copyright owner's name], used with permission", and if more than one source needs to be credited on that page, include the article name as well: "Page 142: Proofreading and editing marks © [Copyright owner's name], used with permission".

**PHOTOGRAPHIC AND ARTWORK CREDITS:** Photographic and artwork credits are often provided on the imprint page, accompanied by the page number on which the photograph or artwork appears, for example: "Keep Calm and Vector (Shutterstock), cover; Vanessa Wilson pp. 111, 112, 162, 163". Sometimes image credits also appear in small text alongside the photograph or artwork in the book itself, for example: "Copyright © [Copyright owner's name]". This method of crediting is typically found in magazines and journals, but less often used in books. The most important rule when crediting images is to use the method requested by the copyright holder.

View the imprint page of this book for an example of how credits can be included.

Once your book has been polished editorially and all relevant permissions have been obtained, it's time to move to the next stage – adding illustrations and photographs. If this is not relevant to you, skip to Chapter 9 on page 126 to find out how to prepare your manuscript for publishing.