



Self-Publishing Assistance

by Bobbie Thompson

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Self-published by author

with assistance from

www.BookMyWordsAssist.com

FOREWORD

So, you're interested in learning how to self-publish your book. You've come to the right place to get information to help you make your decision.

I've known Bobbie for over a decade. She's very successful in whatever she chooses to tackle. Her sense of professionalism shines in this publication, This little booklet is packed with valuable information about publishing, especially self-publishing.

In this short, but direct book Bobbie explains the pros and cons of each of the three methods of publishing, and offers a forth option that makes it easy to reach your goal of self-publishing. Written in a plain simple style, the information is easy to understand.

You are the master of your goals, so you choose the method that best meets your needs. The information in this little booklet contains valuable information to help you make the right choice.

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Publishing

You've written your story, and the idea of self-publishing appeals to you. To help you decide if self-publishing is the right option, it might be a good idea to have some general knowledge of the various avenues for publishing to make an informed decision. That's the purpose of this little booklet, to share briefly about the three standard ways of publishing, which are: Traditional Publishing House, Publishing Press (aka fee-based publishing), and Self-Publishing.

Although each avenue for publishing is discussed briefly, the focus of this document will be on self-publishing and a few things to think about if you are considering self-publishing.

Traditional Publishing House

If you google 'Traditional Publishing' you'll get a list of various publishing houses, some names you may be familiar with, such as Random House, and some you may not.

With traditional publishing houses, you can't just stick your manuscript into an envelope and mail it to the publishing house. You must first retain a literary agent to submit your work to publishing houses on your behalf.

A traditional publisher can pay you an advance for the rights to your work, but purchasing the rights also gives them a certain level of ownership and a great deal of control over your work.

Unless you're on the level of, let's say Dan Brown of '*The DaVinci Code*' fame, chances are probably slim to none that you'll have a traditional publishing house offering you advances on your book. But I am a firm believer that 'all things are possible,' so who knows what your future holds?

Fee-Based (Publishing Press)

Fee-based publishing companies come under many guises, including that of a publishing-press. You sign a contract with the fee-based publisher which charges various fees to publish your book. The fees charged by a fee-based publisher depends on the one you choose and typically range from around \$2,000 for 'publishing' your work up to \$10,000 for additional services they might offer.

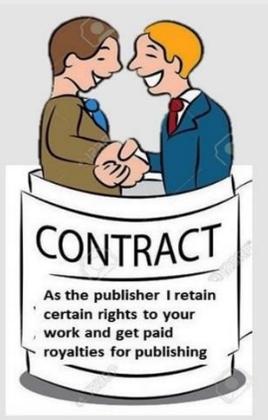
If you google 'how do I publish my book' you'll find a huge number of companies (fee-based) willing to help you publish; for the right price of course. Then the next time you get on social media after doing your google search, a good many of the advertisements on your page will be from fee-based publishing companies. You won't have to worry about finding a company, they will come looking for you. Just be sure to do your due diligence when choosing a fee-based company to publish your work.

Some traditional publishing houses have formed fee-based publishing companies to meet the growing demand of authors wishing to publish. For example, Hay House is a traditional publishing house and also the parent company of Balboa Press, a fee-based publisher.

Do a little research and you're likely to find a traditional publishing house is the parent of a multitude of publishing press or fee-based publishers. As a matter of fact, the *big-dog getting into the little dog's business* (i.e., a traditional publishing house forming a fee-based publishing company) is fast becoming a lucrative avenue of income for the *big dogs* (or traditional publishing houses).

I found a book available on Amazon entitled 'How to Write a Book: Writing a Novel that Sells' by Dan Brown and wondered if it is the same aforementioned Dan Brown of 'The DaVinci Code' fame. If so, I guess not only publishing houses, but authors are also taking a stroll down 'little dog' avenue to cash in on the opportunities.

A publishing press or fee-based publisher is sometimes referred to as a 'hybrid' publisher because it's a mix between 'traditional publishing' and 'self-publishing.' Like a publishing house, a publishing press or fee-based publisher retains certain rights to and a level of ownership of your work. The fee-based publisher earns 'publisher' royalties on your book which, in some cases, can be greater than the royalties you earn as the author.



Sale Price of your book	\$ 10.00
Less Publisher Royalties (40%)	\$ (4.00)
Less Printing Costs	\$ (3.00)
Less Retailer Discounts	\$ (2.00)
Remaining for Author Royalties	\$ 1.00

Self-publishing is the other ingredient making up the ‘hybrid’ in fee-based publishing. The fee-based publisher takes **the same steps you would use as a self-publisher**, only everything is done in the name of the fee-based publisher, not the name of the author.

For example, whether you decide to use a fee-based publisher or be a self-publisher, it is necessary to establish an account with a book printer. When a fee-based publisher sets up that account, it is set up in the fee-based publisher’s name, not the author’s name. The publisher-owned printer-account gives the publisher the ability to print books written by as many authors as they represent.

When the printer account belongs to the publisher, then only the publisher has access to and authority over that account, which means only the publisher can place orders with and receive royalties from the printer. This means if you want, say, 10 copies of your book to give out as gifts, then you have to go to the publisher to order your 10 copies. The publisher charges you the printing and shipping fees for the 10 books, in addition to charging you for the publisher royalties on the sale of those 10 books, even though they are being sold to you, the author. It doesn’t matter who purchases the books, the publisher always takes their royalties from the top. Some fee-based publishers may offer royalty discounts by accepting less than full-price royalties when the purchaser is the author. Some do not.

Also, the printer should want to print a lot of books, that’s how they make money. So a good printer ‘direct sells’ your work to distributors, online booksellers, brick and mortar bookstores, etc., so royalties are due. The printer pays those royalties to the owner of the printer account, and that is the fee-based publisher. It’s up to the fee-based publisher to then send you your portion of those royalties.

The same holds true for ownership of the ISBN for your book. Since the ISBN is purchased by the publisher, and therefore owned by the publisher, the ISBN identifies the owner of your book **as** the publisher, not as you.

This is just ‘the nature of the beast,’ as they say when it comes to fee-based publishers. It’s not ‘wrong’ that they set up their printer accounts in their name, and it’s not ‘wrong’ that they are the owner of the ISBN they purchase. All books, no matter how they are published, even when you self-publish, require a book printer and an ISBN. It’s by handling these and other publishing requirements the fee-based publisher earns the fees you pay them to publish your work.

Fees are paid up-front (some fee-based publishers will allow you to make payments until their fees are paid-in-full) and fees start at around \$2,000 for converting your manuscript into the right formats for both print and ebook, providing an ISBN specific to your book, and providing printing capabilities.

Other services are sometimes offered by fee-based companies, such as editing, cover design, interior design, and marketing. These additional services can carry a price tag of up to \$10,000 and are also usually paid-in-full up-front.

Although there are some high-quality, legitimate fee-based publishing companies around, be sure to do your due diligence when choosing a company to work with. In doing so, I'm certain you can discover instances of authors paying exorbitant prices for such services only to find the fee-based publisher sub-contracts these services out to low-cost agencies, often in low-wage countries. If you're going to pay \$10,000 for something, make sure you get your monies worth. I believe the aforementioned fee-based companies whose parent company is a traditional publishing house are most likely your best bet when it comes to quality fee-based publishing companies.

No matter which fee-based publishing company you choose, unless you're willing to pay the fees for proofreading and/or editing services, it is of utmost importance that you proofread your work before submitting it to a fee-based publisher. If you pay only the fees they require to 'publish' your work, then what you submit is what will be printed. So proofread, proofread, proofread ... OR ... be ready to pay for proofreading and/or editing services, if the fee-based publisher offers such services.

Self-Publishing

Self-publishers are also known as independent publishers. As a self-publisher, it is up to you to learn the in's and out's, do's and don'ts required to self-publish. Every book, no matter how it is published, has certain requirements, and it's up to you to figure out what those requirements are when you are an independent publisher. The requirements, of course, include obtaining the ISBN and a way to print the book, so, YOU purchase the ISBN yourself, YOU establish an account with a printer yourself, YOU learn all the publishing requirements and what it takes to meet those requirements yourself.

Writing is the first step. Just get your words written. Don't worry about anything else other than getting your words written down. I use Microsoft Office Word and think it's probably one of the best (if not the best) programs to use when just getting the words written. If you don't have Word, then any of the free Word compatible programs can be used, such as Apache OpenOffice. After your manuscript is written, proofread, and edited, then you can deal with formatting and/or converting it into whatever is needed to produce a print or ebook version of your work. Just get it written.

Proofreading and editing are vital. I can't stress enough the vital importance of proofreading. Write your story, proofread it, make any necessary corrections, proofread it again and this time read it out loud (you'll be surprised at the mistakes you can catch reading out loud that you miss otherwise). Once you think you've got it perfect, read it aloud again then have someone else proofread it.

You can hire an independent professional proofreader/editor, and their fees can range from a couple hundred dollars up to a couple thousand dollars. For those self-publishers whose budgets are a little tight, you might seek the assistance of a student majoring in English at a local college or university. College kids can usually use a few extra dollars.

Choose a printer is your next step. Finding the right printer takes a bit of due diligence on your part. As a self-publisher, you'll want a good reliable POD printer ... that's Print-On-Demand. Establishing an account with a POD will cost around \$50.

With POD, you can have as few or as many books printed at one time as you desire. This means you're not required to print a large number of books; therefore, you're not faced with finding space to store an inventory of books. The printer will charge you the cost of printing each book ordered and that cost will depend largely on the number of pages of the book. For example, say it costs \$3 each to print your book, and you want 10 copies ... your print order will be \$30, plus shipping.

A good POD printer can make your book available to distributors, wholesalers, brick and mortar bookstores, online book sales, etc. When they do a 'discount' is offered to the purchaser so they can in turn retail (sale) your book at the SRP (suggested retail price) and still be able to make a profit as the seller of your book. Please refer to the earlier picture indicating "Example Royalty Calculations." This explains the 'discount' indicated in that calculation.

When the POD does print/sell copies of your book to distributors, etc., then the owner of the printer account receives royalties on these sales. When you self-publish, then you are the owner, which means those royalties come directly to you.

Format and Format yes, the word 'format' is repeated here because, in publishing, format indicates various different things.

As an independent publisher, before you submit your work to a printer, you want to make sure it's in its 'final' version, and that includes not only being free of typos and being grammatically correct but that everything is properly formatted.

Format can refer to the 'layout' of your book, which includes such things as your font choice, font size, headings, margins, line spacing, page size, etc. A book is formatted according to the book type. A paperback is formatted differently than a children's book which is formatted differently than a coffee-

table book which is formatted differently than a cookbook. Even the genre of your book can dictate different formatting; fiction vs. non-fiction for example.

But format also refers to the ‘form’ (technical format) your document must be in when submitted for production into print and/or ebook. Proper format for production includes ‘PDF’ or ‘doc’ or ‘epub’ or ‘mobi’ or ‘fixed’ or ‘flowable’ or whatever format is required for the desired outcome.

The format required for print is different from the format required for an ebook. So, when you write your book, it must be formatted twice; once for print, and once for an ebook.

If you’re going to use their services to produce a print version of your book, then some printers request you also use their services to have them convert your book into ebook format as well. Ebook conversion service is usually at the cost of between 50-cents to a dollar per page.

If there are pictures on the cover or inside your book, then they must meet certain formatting requirements including ‘resolution’ and ‘DPI’ and ‘pixel’ and ‘JPEG’ and ‘PNG’ and again, whatever format is required by the printer for the desired outcome.

Cover design is another item you’ll need to learn about when self-publishing. If you’re tech-savvy, there are various software programs available to help you design your own cover. However, you should be able to get a ‘good-quality’ cover designed for around \$200. A ‘high-quality’ cover designed by a graphic artist can cost you around \$1,500 or better. The cover design may be another instance where you might want to seek assistance from an Art student at the local college or university.

The printer will provide you with a cover template. Each book’s cover template is specific to that book and is based on the book’s number of pages (which determines the width of the book’s spine), the way the book is bound (saddle stitch, perfect bound, etc.), the size of the book, and the location of the book’s metadata.

ISBN – International Standard Book Number. The ISBN is a 13-digit number used by wholesalers, retailers, libraries, and distributors that identifies your book. Although the ‘I’ in ISBN stands for ‘international,’ each country has an authorized agency that provides that country’s ISBN. Bowker is a US ISBN Authorized Agency.

Each book requires its own ISBN, so you will need an ISBN for the print version of your book, and you’ll need another ISBN for the ebook version of your book. A single ISBN will cost around \$130, but if you plan on publishing more than one book (or the same book in both print and ebook formats), then you can buy multiple ISBN’s and get a break on the cost of each.

You’re ready to self-publish if you’ve written your story; proofread, proofread, and proofread again; established an account with a POD printer; put your book into the proper format (layout) depending

on the size/type/genre; converted it into the proper format (PDF, doc, epub, mobi, fixed or flowable) for producing in print and/or ebook; all pictures are in the proper format (resolution, DPI, JPEG, PNG); your cover is designed and meets the specifications of the cover template provided by the printer; and you've purchased your ISBN. All that remains is submission to the printer.

WHEW, it takes quite a bit to self-publish, but anyone can do it who is willing to do what it takes to learn how. Learning can be time-consuming, and, as they say, time is money. But a greater amount of money or profit is often the desired outcome that leads a writer to consider self-publishing. After all, as both the writer and the independent publisher, **ALL** rights and **ALL** royalties remain with you.

What if There Were Another Way to Self-Publish

What if you could **self-publish** without having to learn how to do everything yourself. Well, you can, by self-publishing with the aid of a professional self-publishing administrative assistant provided by “**BOOK MY WORDS ASSIST**,” (see www.BookMyWordsAssist.com).

YOU are the independent publisher; therefore, YOU retain ALL rights and ALL royalties as if you did all the layout and formatting work yourself. For a reasonable one-time administrative fee of \$2,000, the ‘**book work**’ is done by your self-publishing administrative assistant.

A Self-Publishing Administrative Assistant, administratively assists with layout and proper formatting for both print and ebook versions of your book, establishing your printer account (in your name, so you own the account), obtaining your ISBN (in your name, so the ISBN reflects you as the owner). Things you would be required to do if you chose to self-publish alone. Self-publishing with the aid of an administrative assistant means you don't need to learn all the in's and out's, do's and don'ts of self-publishing because your administrative assistant is already experienced in and knows what's required to independently publish.

When you self-publish alone, proofreading your work before submitting it to your chosen printer is of utmost importance. The same holds true when submitting your MS Word (or compatible) document to your administrative assistant to be properly laid out and formatted. Make sure your Word document is free of typos, is grammatically correct and reads exactly the way you want it to read. Your words as they appear in your Word document becomes the words of your book. Your administrative assistant will run your document through ‘Grammarly’ to correct any typos you may have missed during proofreading, but the administrative assistant **does not** rewrite your document in any way.

Your administrative assistant will assist in establishing your account with a reputable POD printer. The fee the printer charges for opening an account is \$50 and will be paid by you to the printer at the time your administrative assistant assists you with establishing the printer account. Your administrative assistant will establish the account in your name as the author which gives you ownership and total control of your printer account. Therefore, all royalties are paid directly to you by the printer when the printer sells your book to distributors, online booksellers, etc.

Your admin assistant will assist in obtaining your ISBN through Bowker. The Bowker account will be established in your name, and you will pay Bowker directly for the cost of the ISBN(s) at the time your account is established. The cost for one ISBN is around \$130. However, this cost can fluctuate if you choose to purchase more than one ISBN at a time.

You will submit your designed cover to your administrative assistant for proper layout onto the printer's book cover template, or your admin assistant can design a simple cover for your book for a design fee of \$150 to be paid at the time the cover is ordered.

Self-publishing with assistance reduces your tasks to submitting your proofread MS Word document (and cover when applicable) to your administrative assistant. Of course, since YOU are the self-publisher, you will be kept informed of and involved in each step of the independent publishing process.

For more information, please visit our website at BookMyWordsAssist.com, email us at BookMyWordsAssist@gmail.com, and be sure to like and share our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/BookMyWords](https://www.facebook.com/BookMyWords)

In Conclusion

Now that you have a general knowledge of the three ways of getting your work published, and are aware that you can independently publish with the aid of a self-publishing administrative assistant, I offer you this comparison sheet to help you decide which option is best for you: Traditional Publishing House by hiring a literary agent to submit your work; Fee-based publishing, sometimes known as a publishing press; Self-publishing which anyone can do by learning all the processes involved; or Independent Publishing with the aid of a professional self-publishing administrative assistant. The decision is yours.

Comparison Chart

COMPARISON CHART				
Task	Book My Words Assist	Self-Publisher (Author)	Fee-based Publish	*Publishing House
write the book	author	author	author	author
proofread/Edit	author	author	additional fee	publisher
establish POD account	author's account	author's account	publisher's account	publisher's account
convert your document into proper layout format	assistant	author	additional fee	publisher
convert your document into proper technical format	assistant	author	additional fee	publisher
cover design	additional fee	additional fee	additional fee	publisher
ISBN	author's account	author's account	publisher's account	publisher's account

* - requires a literary agent