

# Publishing a Book

## Introduction

This is a guide provided by Southern Heart Publishing Co. as a free service to aspiring unpublished authors. There are other free guides available online from the self-publishing services vendors. But be careful, they want to sell you something. We don't. It is what we do because we have been there. It provides most of the information, other than the creative writing itself, to produce a book. Our service would benefit "undiscovered" novelists and non-fiction authors but might not be useful for technical books or coffee table picture books.

If you are "discovered", have your own agent, editors and traditional publishing company representing you, you do not need us. You may write your sheaves of your manuscript with an old Underwood typewriter or a quill pen and inkwell. It doesn't matter.

We, and most writers today, use a modern computer with a sort of standardized word processor like Microsoft Word or equal. I use Word 2013. It has deep features I have needed to learn to format our .docx files effectively. Word 2013 can readily produce a .pdf file as well with headings (Adobe calls bookmarks) for a live table of contents. These headings are embedded in the .docx file first. We will get into that detail.

## Deciding on a trade book size

After examining dozens of books on my bookshelves with a measuring tape, I decided on a 5 ½ inch wide by 8 ½ inch high book size. This is common for many novels and a standard format for printers. Think of an 8 ½ by 11 standard piece of printer paper folded in half.

## Formatting a page for eBooks

The requirements for e-book formatting are more stringent than for paperbacks. For convenience and consistency, I write my books with two files going at once on two monitors. On the left is the paperback format. On the right is the e-book format. I keep the two .docx files in sync as I write and edit. Microsoft Word has a compare feature where you can check two documents and see any disparities you may have missed just to be certain.

The e-book reading devices require a fluid and dynamic source since the reader (person) may select font type and font size so that the page numbering becomes variable. The software re-assigns page numbering dynamically. This places a number of requirements on the .docx text construction.

With the book size determined, set the page layout size to its matching native size – in my case portrait 5 ½ in. by 8 ½ in. Then set the margins for a pleasing page appearance. I chose 0.5 inch top, bottom, left and right. Note that the text should be in single column.

Use a plain generic text font like Times New Roman. Save any fancy fonts for the paperback version.

Do not use headers or footers (no page numbering), indentations, tabs or hard carriage returns (pagination) for white space between paragraphs. Do not use section breaks to end chapters.

Each chapter title should be of the “heading” style. All else can be the “normal” default text style.

Without use of headers and footers, you won’t need them anyway. Simply end a chapter with a page break. Use left justification for all text lines. Note that this document has been done with e-book formatting requirements. You cannot see them in the resultant .pdf. you are reading.

Without the use of the above, learn to set the paragraph formation with the paragraph editing function. You can have a standardized paragraph design for most of your book with this setup. Spacing between lines and paragraphs, indentation on the first line of new paragraphs and justification can all be set up right here. Once you are used to it and it becomes habit, you will have no desire to use tabbing or carriage returns except for the end of each paragraph.

Your e-book may contain color .jpg pictures inserted in the content.

### **Formatting a page for paperbacks**

You may keep the formatting you have defined for the e-book.docx, but have the freedom to do extra things for the paper print version of your .docx file. First you may prefer a fancier font like Calibri. Second you may use “justified” paragraph setting. This means variable word spacing with the text lining up on both the left and right sides of the page. Most paper books look this way.

General book design suggests you always start each new chapter on the right side as you hold a book open. Since you may now use headers and footers, you can use the footer for a hard coded page number, with even pages on the left and odd numbered pages on the right.

The header may be used to repeat the chapter number or name on pages following the chapter title (heading) opening page or any other purpose you like that repeats within a section break. This is your option. Look at a number of books and see the many ways this is done. Then decide what you like and want.

Your front work, that is the inside title page, copyright page, dedication page, table of contents, etc. are traditionally numbered with lower case Roman numerals; whereas the rest of your book may use Arabic page numbering. You will need a section break between these two areas to permit the shift in the footer page numbering scheme.

Note: Look at several books to see how to write the copyright page. Be sure to protect your intellectual property, use only verified public domain sources for insertion and declare so, or get permission from the primary sources for use of their intellectual property and comply with any declarations they want you to include on your copyright page. If they require use fees for every book you print to sell, you may want to re-think using their material. Obviously all this applies to e-books as well.

The printing vendor may prefer asymmetrical, alternating left and right margins so that the text won’t be buried too deep in the binding crack when you hold the book open. They would like a wider margin at the crack. But Microsoft word doesn’t have the ability to alternate the left

and right margins for every even or odd page. If it did, this would be a ridiculous amount of fussy work.

So they might like you to use a 0.6 inch or more margin to be safe. But the block of text may appear too much like a postage stamp in the middle of the page and unpleasing. I use a standard 0.5 inch margin all the way around. The printer's proof may complain with a warning that this is too close to the edge, just beyond their ideal safety margin. Ignore this. They will print it and it will look alright.

Your paperback book must have black and white or grayscale .jpg picture insertions in the content or else you will pay more for printing with internal color pictures. Your choice.

### **Cover Art**

There are vendors and graphic artists that will create your cover art starting at a minimal fee of about \$300. I did that the first time.

If you have a flair for graphic art and skill with computers, you can use some software like Adobe Photoshop or Corel Draw to do your own covers. Other than the graphic art – text, lines, borders, pictures and the like, there are a couple mechanical considerations.

For an e-book there is only a flat front cover. This can be derived from cropping it out of the design that is described below and cloning a separate file for this purpose.

For a paperback, there is a splayed out, one-piece artwork file with the back cover, spine and front cover looking at it from left to right. The front and back cover segments will use the same dimensions as your page size for this perfect bound book.

The spine width requires some calculation and consideration. The “rule of thumb” I have come up with is that the spine width is an eighth of an inch for each 60 pages. A page is each face of a piece of paper for this purpose since printing is on both sides. For example a 180 page book would be 3 times 60, or 3/8 inch thick. A 360 page book would have a 6/8th or 3/4 inch wide (thick) spine. I build subtle score lines for the spine in my art work to test it out.

This is a very close approximation based on standard printer or copy paper thickness. Trade book paper is a hair thicker and the vendor you work with may display in the electronic proof a slight imperfect fold in the cover.

They may adjust the spine width for you or advise you to make a fine adjustment. It is always best to buy a proof book and examine closely the appearance of the covers, fold and spine, as well as all the internal content, before you commit to quantity purchase.

### **Preparation for submission**

You will be submitting cover art as a .pdf file and content as a second .pdf file whether you are submitting for an e-book or a paperback. Your artwork may have begun as a .psd (Adobe Photoshop) file when you designed it, but it is easily converted to .jpg or .pdf file formats. The resolution I choose is 300 dpi which is typical. Vendors will alarm you with warnings and disclaimers if your artwork (cover or internal pictures) have native resolution that is too low 72 dpi or too high like 500 dpi.

## **Vendors for printing and online distribution**

There are numerous self-publishing services companies like Create Space, Book Baby, Lulu, BookBub and many others. They are all similar. They have many services to sell you for money including cover art design, text formatting, spelling and grammar checking, editing (sort of), printing, online distribution, and marketing and promotional services (they call these their partners) for both paperbacks and e-books. They call this self-publishing but it is really not. They are publishing in your behalf for money; you are not self-publishing. This is the modern publishing world for unknown authors.

That is why we formed Southern Heart Publishing – to do our own publishing, have control over our own process, and own our own selves. With traditional publishers unavailable to us and mostly rejecting the above, we believe we have found a cost-effective third way.

Footnote: It turns out, royalties from those big traditional publishing houses like Simon and Shuster and Penguin Random House pay poorer royalties than self-published outlets. I guess that is alright if you only make a dollar a book when you sell a million.

## **e-Book distribution services**

The output files produced by distribution vendors are .epub and .mobi proprietary formats. Apple iBooks and Barnes & Noble Nook readers use the .epub. Amazon Kindle uses the .mobi, but some of the newer Kindle Fire devices will load and run either.

Supposedly there are downloadable software tools to convert from .pdf to .epub and .pdf to .mobi yourself. I send the e-distributor a .pdf file and leave the conversion to them. There is no charge for his. They made their money by distributing your checked and approved proofs out to the distribution channels. They e-mail you proof files to examine carefully the flat front cover art and internal text content. Check your work carefully before initial submission because you may be charged to re-submit the second time with corrected typos.

## **e-Book distribution outlets**

The e-book outlet for Create Space is Amazon. Distribution is free since Create Space is owned by Amazon. After a waiting period of a few weeks, Barnes & Noble will also pick up and list your book. Most likely, there will be no other channels of distribution that will pick you up.

BookBaby charges about \$150 to distribute your book to the outlets. But this may be worth it since their outlets include Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Apple iBooks, Kobo, Oyster, Scribd, Books a Million, Copia, Gardner Books (Europe), Baker & Taylor, eSentral (Asia), Ciandro, Hoopla, Vearsa (and its affiliates). This should improve your sales opportunities.

## **e-Book and paperback distribution business interactions**

First you must set up a business account with your vendors for printing and distribution. Then when you log on to your account, you can submit your work and go through an exchange of information process, with file exchanges, until you have approved your proofs and the publication is launched (after you pay them as required).

Thereafter you can monitor your business by adding new titles, viewing sales activity (delayed from actual date of sale) and your accrued royalties from e-books and/or paperbacks.

You will be able to set up an electronic transfer of your royalties to your business checking account, the one you have created as your author, publisher or whatever account. These accounts will be beneficial as a source of information to manage your business, keep track of your finances and have information available for any income tax reporting requirements.

When this is done, or more likely you will do it during this process, you will be required to provide your metadata- all information about you and your book. Create a file for each of your books. For each of these write down the following: your book's title, sub-title, date of publication, author name, author biography, contributor name, contributor role, contributor biography, short description of the book, long description of the book, for fans of (authors similar to you), brief book teaser, keywords (7 or 8 for search engines), your 10 and 13 digit ISBN numbers (if you own them) and the publisher if applicable because you are one.

You will be glad you did. You will be asked these questions over and over in filling out various online forms to all your vendors. It would be difficult to repeat it consistently from memory without this aid. All you will have to do is copy and paste.

Your metadata may be changed and updated online at any time after the initial submission whenever you wish to change or update it. The expectation, and I believe it is true, is that the outlets will catch up with the updates the distributor has received from you.

### **Hardcover printing and distribution**

Presumably Lulu prints hard cover books at a fee based on half of the sales price. We have not used them as yet and don't know the particulars. Create Space does not print hard cover books. BookBaby does but charges so high a price that the author is left a pittance or a loss attempting to sell them at an appropriate price point. They also require a minimum quantity order that ties up a lot of a starving artist's budget.

Your cover artwork will be more complicated. It will require a 5-segment paper jacket including a back flap (about 3 inches wide), a back cover, a spine, a front cover and a front cover flap (also about 3 inches wide) – looking at it from left to right. It will require a separate art file for the hard cover with simple spine and front cover text. So there will be two .pdfs, not one. The spine width calculations are more indeterminate and tentative. It may take a couple proofs until it all fits together correctly. I have done this experimentation for one of my books but only offer this version on a “contact me” basis.

### **Ownership of your Intellectual Property**

Your ISBN will be provided by Create Space for free but the publisher on record, when your books are listed, will be Create Space. There are many vendors, like ISBN Services, that will sell you an ISBN and barcode imprint inexpensively but ISBN Services, or whoever, will be the publisher on record.

If owning your own self is important for marketing or vanity reasons, buy a block of ISBNs directly from Bowker. The companies like ISBN services buy their ISBNs in large blocks from Bowker and then sell them to you cheaply with the publisher on record being them. If you buy

then directly from Bowker, the publisher on record will be your own author's name or your own publishing company should you choose to form one. We have done that as Southern Heart Publishing Co. because it was important to us. And our publishing company have given us better organizational management now that we have and are publishing many books.

## **Marketing and Promotion**

If you are working on a shoestring budget, this is the area where money will be short. The more you can do for yourself, with your own hands, time and talent, the better you can be. Even spending wads of money on outside services is no guarantee you will be "discovered". I have spent small sums on a number of things that I believe helped some but have not reached the tipping point threshold where I have become a roaring success.

I guess you have to write for yourself since the odds are long against you that you will have a lucrative career as a writer.

In any case, here are a number of important things you can do. First create your own website. I created mine with a purchased domain using Wix as my creation tool. It is [www.davidclairejennings.com](http://www.davidclairejennings.com). I edit it and update it several times each week as things change. Second use your personal Facebook and create a linked author's Facebook page as well. Post frequently and keep directing your friends to your website. Have purchasing buttons on your website that take the viewer directly to the online buying checkout; for example your Amazon listing.

Offer your books to bookstores for consignment and request book signing events. You will be able to personally meet your readers and tell them about your book.

Bookstores require 40% of the sales price of your book for a couple of inches on their shelves and transacting their sale at their cash register. The 60% you get will pay you back for the books you bought months ago and you may net a few dollars per copy.

Selling face-to-face to private individuals is the most profitable but the volume will be low.

Donate your books to all your local library branches. They will catalog them and put them on their shelves. You will get some readers reading your books and word-of-mouth may help.

Work with Story Cartel and Goodreads for exposure. There will be no royalty. Try to use these to get good reviews you can post.

Use Facebook "boosts" for a few dollars once in a while when your new book comes out. Spend a few dollars on Google Ad Words. Have your meta-data ready at all times to fill in various requested forms online.

You won't be able to measure how this has helped in terms of bottom line online sales. Your distributor will report raw sales to you infrequently and after delays of weeks or months.

Unless you get a call from Oprah, you won't know or have control of much.

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Still want to write a book? I do.