

Writing as a Retail Business A Guide

By

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WRITING AS A RETAIL BUSINESS

A GUIDE

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2nd Edition 2016

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Published by

Angelic Communications

Cape Cod, MA 02660

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ISBN-13: 978-1530134625

ISBN-10: 1530134625

Introduction

Each book published, each manuscript written becomes the author's own inventory to offer for sale to the public, either through the traditional publishing route or the Indie self-publishing route. No matter which route you choose, it stills boils down, in professional terms to a retail business. One manuscript or ten, this is the inventory in the Author's store.

Writing as a Retail Business is an overview, a guide, pointing the way to creating an actual business, small or huge, from your writing. I've kept the guide "brief", planting seeds for the author to edit, much as a plot ready to manifest.

If you have one book or twenty, you have the basis for a small business. Here is where you can make the decision to go from a writer (meaning your writing is no longer a hobby) to an author/entrepreneur (getting serious, and using your writing as a legal business, with actual income to support your lifestyle). This is not an easy decision, especially for writers, because writers are artists. To make this decision, you, the writer/artist, has to switch your thinking from your left brain (creative) to your right (logical). (UGH!) My struggle with this was lengthy until I read about Plato's Chariot, and understood the concept of balancing both realms.

I still struggle at times, because of that Mystic side of my life. I publish in both Visionary Fiction and Visionary Non-Fiction. It makes little difference which sides of the genre you work in, you're still an artist creating writing, (your creative brain.) What you do with that manuscript afterwards becomes the business (your logical side of the brain).

This little guide, my podcasts, blogs and websites are all part of my marketing, my Imprint, which I touch on in a later section. It has been an exciting and fulfilling journey for me and something I would like to share with fellow writers. I watch many of you sit there with your finished or almost finished manuscripts and wonder “Where do I go from here?”

It is my hope that this guide will point the way; give you some insights, ideas and inspiration to help you capture the excitement of this new digital age. The possibilities are endless... and keep growing every day.

I can only share what I have discovered and learned over the years, and offer those resources and ideas. The rest is up to you. You can try some of the techniques, and ideas and see if they work for you. Who knows? We may see your next manuscript on the New York Times Best Seller List! Hooray!

Happy Writing,

*

Dedication:

*This guide is dedicated to my Dad.
He taught me all about being an
Entrepreneur. .*

The Three Parts to an Indie Authors Life

The Writing – (All about you)

The Publishing – (All about the book)

The Marketing – (All about the reader)

SNAPSHOTS

FIRST SNAPSHOT

Who I am and how I got here.

Before I started writing, I was in retail. I worked in retail stores selling clothing, rugs, wherever I could get a job. I also worked in two women's consignment shops. Then I decided to sell real estate (not very successfully) but took all the training and did the listings. Eventually I ended up running a small real estate office here on the Cape. All during this time I was studying for my Bachelors, Masters and finally my Doctorate.

My career in serious writing started in 2000 when I wrote my doctoral thesis. A doctoral thesis is set up in a specific format. I bypassed all the rules and presented my thesis in the form of a bound book. (Audacious Author even then).

After that I worked full time and began writing part time. What I wrote then was terrible; please pardon the language (it sucked). I have since discovered that this is the norm for every aspiring writer. (Phew) I returned to writing church bulletins and doing copy for a small publication (I got paid for that) and confined my personal writing to after hours. I persevered.

Every self-help book I read on writing pointed to one thing. They all advised aspiring writers to *write about something you know*. Well, I knew about Angels because I talked with them all the time (yes, I did and still do.) so I wrote a book about them. At that time, books about Angels were not on any traditional publishers list. There wasn't even a category that the book would fit in. Were there any readers for this stuff? I was writing for a very small market. Not many people wanted to read books about Angels.

It is interesting to note here that I still continue to write to that small market.

Here is where I began to explore self-publishing.

Somehow, I was led to BookLocker.com. Would they consider publishing a book about Angels? Yes, gladly. And that was the beginning of a long relationship with Angela and Richard Hoy and their publishing business. It was also the beginning of my relationship with their cover designer, Todd Engel of Engel Creative.

I published four print-on-demand (POD) books with them and just recently a fifth. I recommend them highly. Here is their link:

www.booklocker.com

In 2008, a young company (Amazon.com) was starting a new program for writers who wanted to publish their manuscripts. They had this new reader called a Kindle and needed stories for people to read on this electronic gadget. This was a DIY project (Do It Yourself). They offered free manuals and guides. That's when I became proficient with KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing) or publishing in e-book format. (The creation of that digital world.) From there my books went flying onto KDP. I created a publishing entity: Angelic Communications which is my own publishing house. My books on KDP are published under this name.

I had never thought about using my books as a business, although I was probably getting to that point. I wanted my books to create enough additional income for me to eventually purchase a house or a place of my own where I could write. I wasn't completely clear on how to do that, I just knew that I could. At that point I discovered Joanna Penn of The Creative Penn. She is definitely someone to check out. I can only say good things about her. She has been a HUGE inspiration for me.

Here is her link: www.thecreativepenn.com

ABOUT RETAIL

Retail is retail no matter what product you are selling: Cosmetics (Mary Kay) yes, I even did that for a short time, Houses (Real Estate) told you about that, Clothing (Gap, August Max), crystals and stones (Little Shop of Crystals). Did I mention I had three of these shops at three different times and locations? One was in Vero Beach, Florida and two were here on the Cape. I recently closed the third crystal shop, and put the entire store inventory on-line.

As for my books, they are offered here on-line (E-Books, print books, Audio books). It's all inventory for sale to the public, and if you choose, a retail business.

SECOND SNAPSHOT

Who are you and where are you now?

Congratulations! You've written a book or perhaps several. The creative process is so exciting and gratifying. Getting words on a page, telling a story is a marvelous accomplishment. You should be proud. You finally made it from writer to author. Wave that book(s) as if it were show and tell and it is! You tell your friends and family, send them a copy. You market (tell your friends) your new accomplishment on social media, and sell a few copies in the local bookstores, do a few book signings, and wonder sometimes if that's all there is. This is how I treated my books, like crocheting scarves for Christmas gifts.

During those preceding years, I downloaded and read countless books and ideas about marketing your books and playing the numbers on Amazon. None of that seemed too effective and very time consuming. I read books on selling by the big hitters; Dale Carnegie, Napoleon Hill, Tom Robbins, and *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* several times, did Masterminding, nothing seemed to click for me. I had 16 books on Amazon, some were selling, others, not. I also had another 5 books on my computer screen in process. I was 'off' somewhere, where was my focus? Then I discovered Joanna Penn and her site *The Creative Penn*. That's when everything changed for me. That's when my THINKING changed.

Retail had been part of my life for years, why not treat my books as inventory and use them to power a business. This process isn't always easy for everyone. Sometimes you have to THINK about it and (light bulb) hadn't I just finished writing a book titled: What Are You Thinking? Your Thoughts Create Your World. (Honestly!) Sometimes we need a coconut to fall on our heads. Was that a coconut or what?

THIRD SNAPSHOT

Where are you in this process?

Think about this for a moment. Where are you in this process with your books? Are you out there actively marketing those books from the trunk of your car? Are you still in the process of writing them and editing them again and again? (Procrastinating? I did that for months creating busy work under the pretext of ‘writing’) Are you waiting for one of the BIG FIVE publishing companies to come by your house and offer you a million dollar contract?_OR are you sitting under a coconut tree crocheting scarves for Christmas? Tough questions but necessary; I didn’t want to look at what I was really creating. Then I decided it was time to do something about this stable of books I had created with great intent and make them into a BUSINESS. Anyone who has ever had a retail business knows that you have to actively work at it, and it takes time and a plan. That’s when I turned the corner and decided that I would create a real business using my books as inventory.

Are YOU ready to take your WRITING one step further? Are you ready to make it into A RETAIL BUSINESS?

Here is a little quiz for you that might help clarify where you are now and where you might want to be. These are easy questions and NO there won't be a quiz later. You can answer these questions easily.

Do you LOVE to write?

Does your writing give you satisfaction?

Do others like what you write?

Are your books selling?

Do you wish you could sell more books?

Do you want your books to pay the bills?

Do you want your books to support you?

Do you have a lot more books you want to write?

Do you wish you had more time to write?

Do you believe your writing could become a full-time career?

If you answered YES to some of these questions, are serious about your writing

and think a *serious* career in writing is something you might want to consider, THEN READ ON.

Have you ever considered your writing as a business? I hadn't even thought of it. I already had a small business, a Little Shop of Crystals where I taught workshops. My writing was just a hobby. I wrote booklets for my classes, had a website, wrote a few books and published them on Amazon. Somehow, I wanted more. I also thought my writing was not very good.

So, I joined a weekly writers group in Osterville, and the Cape Cod Writers Center. (This step is highly recommended for any aspiring writer. Find a writers group to help you.). Here I worked on honing my skills (they certainly needed it), and learned a great deal about the craft of writing from other writers of like mind. After 3 years (Of being smashed and trashed by the group) I created another print book, a futuristic story centered on a crystal.

To this point, I had been using only digital formats for the last four years. Going back into print again was not something I was comfortable with. I had previously created four print books with BookLocker.com. Those books had NOT sold too many copies. So, I tried again to see if this time the market would be different. The lessons learned from this print book (again) and the process of book signings, etc. was very enlightening. I was in that same cycle again. I was in the proverbial 'rut'. This was NOT what I wanted to do with my writing, and the traditional publishing route was not my dream. I was far too independent, an Indie Author, an Audacious Author to the core.

As an aside, I am still in that group and each member has become a friend and family to me. They are a unique bunch of exceptionally creative and loving writers. May you have the good fortune to find such a group!

As an aside, many of the group's members are still holding that dream to traditional publish. I certainly wish them success and happiness.

BACK TO WRITING:

I wanted my books to sell, because I felt they had a message for the reader. My intent was and is to inspire the reader. My 'slogan' is WEEI: Writing to Entertain, Educate and Inspire readers. I seriously wanted to earn more income from my books, but knew there had to be a better way, one I was not focusing on, another words, My focus was wrong. My THINKING was off. So, I started to educate myself again, this time with a focus of creating a business using my books as inventory. I downloaded more free books, workshops, podcasts, webinars, and purchased some audio books. I was inspired and re-focused. I have included these resources that I used and the links if you're interested at the end of the book. If you have those same feelings, then stay tuned. That's what this book is all about.

WARNING:

What this book ISN'T about is a get rich quick scheme, or how to work the Amazon system to sell more books. If you are truly interested in creating a retail business with your books it takes time, just like any business. The beauty of creating this type of business is that it will support you for years to come. Others refer to this as a 'Laptop Lifestyle' meaning you can take this business with you anywhere in the world.

This guide is about how to build a successful **RETAIL BUSINESS** with your **WRITING**.

FOURTH SNAPSHOT

What You Will Discover in This Guide

Self- Publishing vs Traditional Publishing

Determining Your Rights

One Manuscript – 9 Possibilities

Think Globally - The Digital Age

Small Business Options

Expenses

Employees or Sub-contractors

A Business Plan outline

Your Imprint

Your Inventory

A Scalable Career

Marketing

Royalties

A Plan for Each Book

Resources – all in one place.

FIFTH SNAPSHOT

Who Are You?

DEFINE WRITER

*“A **writer** is a person who uses written words in various styles and techniques to communicate ideas. Writers produce various forms of **literary art** and creative writing such as **novels, short stories, poetry, plays, screenplays, and essays** as well as various utilitarian forms such as **reports** and news articles. Writers' texts are **published** across a range of media. Skilled writers who are able to use language to express **ideas** well often contribute significantly to the **cultural** content of a society. The word is also used elsewhere in the arts – such as songwriter – but as a standalone term, **"writer"** normally refers to the creation of written language. Some writers work from an **oral tradition**.”*

Source: Wikipedia

DEFINE AUTHOR:

*“An **author** is broadly defined as “the person who originated or gave existence to anything” and whose authorship determines responsibility for what was created. Narrowly defined, an **author** is the originator of any written work and can also be described as a writer.”*

Source: Wikipedia

When you become an Author, which indicates you have written and published something or are in the process of doing so, then your writings can become a profession or a career, if you so choose. When you define your writing as a business, your writing then becomes your profession or your career. !!

NOW, you can stay there and just be an author, rest on your laurels and play with those fifteen or twenty copies, wondering who you can give them to – OR - you can step over and become an AUTHOR/ENTREPRENEUR. (Here is where the real fun begins!)

DEFINE ENTREPRENEUR

:

*"The **entrepreneur** is "a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk." Rather than working as an employee, [an entrepreneur] runs a small business and assumes all the risk and reward of a given business venture, idea, or good or service offered for sale. The entrepreneur is commonly seen as a business leader and **innovator** of new ideas and business processes."*

(Don't you love that?)

*“Entrepreneurs perceive new business opportunities and they often exhibit positive **biases** in their perception (i.e., a bias towards finding new possibilities and unmet market needs) and a pro-risk-taking attitude that makes them more likely to exploit the opportunity. Entrepreneurial spirit is characterized by innovation and risk-taking.”*

(Take a deep breath.)

*“The exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities may include actions such as developing a **business plan**, hiring the **human resources**, acquiring financial and other required resources, providing leadership and being responsible for the venture's success or failure. **Joseph Schumpeter** (1883–1950) stated that the role of the entrepreneur is “**creative destruction**” and the changes and “dynamic **disequilibrium** brought on by the innovating entrepreneur ... is the ‘norm’ of a healthy **economy**.”*

Source: Wikipedia

This is such a great description for a writer who is already a visionary (story line, plot, plan), an organizer (notes, ideas, characters), and a manager (of time and skills). The only thing missing here is the actual, physical 'business or enterprise'. That's the easy part. Read on.

DEFINE INDIE AUTHOR

What is an independent author?

At ALLi, “independent” is an inclusive description and always relative (everyone needs support to write and publish well). Some of our members are fiercely indie-spirited, as DIY as it’s possible to be. Others are happy to collaborate with a publisher where that seems advantageous, some working with paid publishing services, others with trade publishers.

So, what marks out an indie from other authors? The Alliance allows that you are an independent author if:

You have self-published at least one book.

You see yourself as the creative director of your books, from conception to completion through publishing and beyond.

You expect that status as creative director to be acknowledged in any partnership you negotiate, whether a paid author-service, or in a deal with trade-publisher or agent e.g. if you have an established author platform, you should receive a higher royalty rate and advance than an author who does not.

You recognize that you are central to a revolutionary shift in publishing which needs to move from seeing the author purely as a resource (in the new parlance ‘content provider’) to respecting the author as a creative director, with much to offer — and be rewarded for — in each step of the publishing process.

You are proud of your indie status and carry that self-respect into all your ventures, negotiations and collaborations for your own benefit and to benefit all writers.

Quote from ALLI The Alliance of Independent Authors.

<http://www.allianceindependentauthors.org/ask-alli/>

SIXTH SNAPSHOT –

Scalable Income

Each book you write is scalable income.

This term was a completely new concept for me. I had no idea what it meant. After researching it, I discovered that I really liked this idea. It fit so well with writing novels or books.

Scalable Income –

A scalable profession allows you to make more money without an equivalent increase in labor or time.

An Author writes a book one time and his effort is the same (basically) whether he or she sells 500 or 500,000 copies.

Source: Ben Casnocha

[*http://casnocha.com/2009/03/scalable-vs-non-scalable-careers.html*](http://casnocha.com/2009/03/scalable-vs-non-scalable-careers.html)

Every author who writes a book is creating scalable income. He or she is creating what I call INVENTORY. The more inventory you create the more income. (Accounting 101) And you only have to do it once.

Example: “A” works at a computer for company “B”. She makes \$15.00 per hour. If she works 40 hours, she earns \$600.00. To earn more money, she would have to work more than 40 hours. (Non-scalable income) See the difference?

Another scenario:

Your e-book is out offered on Amazon.com selling at \$3.99 per copy. This book has a landing page and is offered in the U.S., the UK, Denmark, Italy, India, Canada, Brazil, France, Spain, Mexico, and Australia. (Hope I have all of the countries). You wrote this book once and here you have global scalable income. You can also offer your book on KOBO, NOOK, and IBOOK. You didn’t have to write a book for each site. Scalable income – a scalable career.

YOUR OPTIONS

1. SELF-PUBLISHING vs TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

If you have already published your book(s) with a traditional publisher, that's great! You can still create a business from this guide and make your business and your books a success. Most publishing houses today don't offer marketing services or do too much publicity as they used to in the past, unless you are a very established author with a large 'platform' (following) and books with tons of reviews. Another words, they want established authors in their 'stable'.

Self-published authors, on the other hand, are usually just beginning or have a few books to their credit. They know that their books won't sell unless they market them. OR they think that once their book is up on Amazon, it will sell itself. So sorry to have to tell you this, BUT, that book is not going to move unless you help it out. Marketing is a whole set of skills. I touch on this in another chapter.

Basically, what we are talking about here is
EXCLUSIVITY

With a traditional publisher, your manuscript belongs to your publisher exclusively. Another word, you don't own it anymore because your publisher bought your rights to that work. The duration would be listed in your contract. Some are for 3 years some are for more before you can have the rights to your work or manuscript.

Amazon offers exclusivity in their KDP contract. If you choose this benefit your work belongs to Amazon.com KDP for 90 days when you cannot sell your book anywhere else except on their sites. This option works fine for me because they do all the work and sell my book in thirteen different marketplaces: U.S., UK, Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, France, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, India, Italy and Australia.

When you self-publish, you can choose not to use the 90-day exclusive with Amazon and hold onto your rights then you are free to offer your book on their site, as well as KOBO, IBOOK, and NOOK. Those are the biggest ones. There are smaller sites that you can use also.

www.smashwords.com and www.draft2digital.com these two sites are what I call service sites. You send your book to them and they will shoot it out to additional market places. D2D sends them to www.scribbed.com www.inktera.com and www.tolino.com as well as the original 4. I think of them as agents because they take 15% off the sales (profit) to use their services. You might consider that a savings if you don't want to deal with 8 different dashboards.

Another service you might consider for all aspects of publishing your manuscript is Fiverr. Here is the link: <https://www.fiverr.com/>

For FREE BOOK SITES:

Free book sites are just that. You can offer your book on their sites for free for a limited time if you are doing a launch or free offer.

www.bookbub.com

www.freebooksy.com

www.bookgorilla.com

www.booksends.com

2. DETERMINING YOUR RIGHTS

"It's important to understand what rights you're selling or licensing away, not only to protect your interests, but to keep you out of legal hot water. Understanding rights can also help you make more money on a piece by -- legally -- reselling it again and again.

So, what are rights?

When you write something -- be it an article, short story, book, even a letter -- you automatically own copyright to that material. What you've written belongs to you. You don't have to fill out any forms or send away any registrations; the act of creation itself gives you copyright."

Source: <http://www.writing-world.com/rights/rights.shtml>

If your books are published traditionally, you need to know what your rights are. Sometimes the publisher holds the rights to your work, and that is a limitation for those works, depending on the terms of your contract. If, however, you are self-published, or know for certain the rights belong to you, the possibilities and the opportunities are endless.

Recommendation: pull out your contract and see exactly what belongs to you. Note: Don't be disappointed if your publisher holds your rights to that piece.

Advice: Let that publisher hold those rights. Be generous because there are many more books where that one came from. As an author, you know that your supply of books and manuscripts is **unlimited!**

All you must do is write them!!!

3. ONE MANUSCRIPT – 9 POSSIBILITIES

From one manuscript, here is what you can create:

Print book – hard or soft cover

POD book- (Print on demand)

E-Book – epub or mobi

E-Book with sound

Audio Book

A Series of books

A Novella

Serialize the book in magazines or publications

Your book published in another language.

From one book, you can create all of this scalable income, all of this inventory. Another aspect to writing is **an inexhaustible supply!** What writer has not experienced that next book as he is writing the current one? There is no limit to the inventory you can create.

4. THINK GLOBALLY – THE DIGITAL AGE

Let's face it; we are smack in the midst of a rapidly running current of technology. Almost everyone you know has a cell phone, right? Most of us have upgraded to a more sophisticated version, an iPhone, an iPad, or an Android. Most homes have a computer or a laptop, and internet. Children in kindergarten use computers and iPads and are most proficient on them. (These are all potential readers, by-the-way.)

Technology is moving rapidly and traditional publishing as we knew it has changed and is becoming less and less 'the writer's dream'. Indie Authors are the pioneers for the new publishing industry.

The Authors Earnings Report is published every quarter as they gather the information and report it. It is a great indicator of what is happening in the publishing world, and well worth a look.

Author Earnings Report September 2015

“These “non-traditionally-published” books now make up nearly 60% of all Kindle e-books purchased in the US, and take in 40% of all consumer dollars spent on those e-books.

Source:

<http://authorearnings.com/report/september-2015-author-earnings-report/>

These numbers have increased almost 65% over the past five years. Amazon has 4,102,338 e-books on Kindle to offer, (at this writing) most from Indie self-published authors, and the amount of audio books, 222,220 on Kindle (Audible is an Amazon Company) are growing. Amazon, Nook, iTunes, and Kobo now publish globally.

On any day, I can click into my Amazon Author Account dashboard and see in what country, my books are selling, how many I have sold so far this month and I only publish in English. (More possibilities I vaguely mentioned before.) I am always amazed to see my books selling in Denmark or Australia. I could never have accomplished that with a traditional publisher, much less haul my copies around the world. I have the option of sitting in my house, in my pajamas writing and selling my books globally. Imagine that!

5. SMALL BUSINESS OPTIONS

“DEFINITION of 'Business' . *An organization or enterprising entity engaged in commercial, industrial or professional activities. A **business** can be a for-profit entity, such as a publicly-traded corporation, or a non-profit organization engaged in **business** activities, such as an agricultural cooperative.*

Source: [Business Definition | Investopedia](#)

If you have decided to take your writing to creating an actual retail business then put on your business hat, crank up your left brain (or is it your right?) and let's talk about *business*.

You have the option here of creating a legal business and becoming a business owner. This has so many advantages. Here is the link for the Small Business Administration.

<https://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/about-sba>

Here are the main choices from their website.

A Sole Proprietor, *Sole Proprietorship*

A sole proprietorship is the simplest and most common structure chosen to start a business. It is an unincorporated business owned and run by one individual with no distinction between the business and you, the owner. You are entitled to all profits and are responsible for all your business's debts, losses and liabilities.

Source <https://www.sba.gov/content/sole-proprietorship-0>

Limited Liability Company

A limited liability company is a hybrid type of legal structure that provides the limited liability features of a corporation and the tax efficiencies and operational flexibility of a partnership.

The "owners" of an LLC are referred to as "members." Depending on the state, the members can consist of a single individual (one owner), two or more individuals, corporations or other LLCs.

Unlike shareholders in a corporation, LLCs are not taxed as a separate business entity. Instead, all profits and losses are "passed through" the business to each member of the LLC. LLC members report profits and losses on their

personal federal tax returns, just like the owners of a partnership would.

<https://www.sba.gov/content/limited-liability-company-llc>

Cooperative

A cooperative is a business or organization owned by and operated for the benefit of those using its services. Profits and earnings generated by the cooperative are distributed among the members, also known as user-owners.

Typically, an elected board of directors and officers run the cooperative while regular members have voting power to control the direction of the cooperative. Members can become part of the cooperative by purchasing shares, though the amount of shares they hold does not affect the weight of their vote.

Cooperatives are common in the healthcare, retail, agriculture, art and restaurant industries.

<https://www.sba.gov/content/cooperative>

Corporation

Corporation (C Corporation)

A corporation (sometimes referred to as a C corporation) is an independent legal entity owned by shareholders. This means that the corporation itself, not the shareholders that

own it, is held legally liable for the actions and debts the business incurs.

Corporations are more complex than other business structures because they tend to have costly administrative fees and complex tax and legal requirements. Because of these issues, corporations are generally suggested for established, larger companies with multiple employees.

*For businesses in that position, corporations offer the ability to sell ownership shares in the business through stock offerings. “**Going public**” through an initial public offering (IPO) is a major selling point in attracting investment capital and high quality employees.*

<https://www.sba.gov/content/corporation>

Those are the best links for you to decide which one will work for you. Your tax advisor would be your best resource and the one to ask.

Research these to decide which will work for you.

I am a Sole Proprietor and that works fine for me.

You may also wish to ask your accountant or tax person what you would need to do. Each state and country has different requirements.

6. EXPENSES

As a legal business with a Federal ID number and a state tax number (Easy to get on the internet under www.gov.com), you will have certain expenses that you may not have thought of before:

WIFI or Internet expense, hosting fees for websites and some blogs, computer expense (repairs and maintenance), program software (updated or new), phone usage (monthly expenses), courses you may register for and attend, webcams either presented by you or someone else, podcast expense, updating to iPads, cameras you may rent or purchase, audio equipment you may buy, etc. These are deductible as business expenses. There are probably more. Don't overlook any trips you take for research. Remember to keep track of your expenses.

Although sitting in Starbucks using Google Search really isn't a research trip to claim expenses. Sorry!

7. EMPLOYEES OR SUB-CONTRACTORS

Yes, you do have them. If you have an accountant or bookkeeper to do your monthly books or yearly taxes, that is an employee because you pay them. You probably have a graphic designer (book covers or interior design?) and an editor or more than one depending on their function, and you pay for their services, too. You most probably have beta readers, or readers who are not family but who read your manuscripts and give you Honest Feedback, right? I usually gift my Beta Readers with DD Cards or Starbucks cards. Most Beta readers don't expect to get paid, but a thoughtful gesture is always nice. Some authors have virtual assistants.

You will add to the list as your business grows and you decide what you need to delegate so that you can get down to the real business of writing. Your time is valuable and only you can decide where you want to spend it. This might be a good place to think about what you want to do and what you don't want to do.

8. A BUSINESS PLAN OUTLINE

Every business needs some plan, and as an author, you need to think about where you want your business to be in a year, or two or five. How many books will you finish and publish? I have just started to do this, and it does make life easier. I have an overall *yearly plan* and have broken it down into an *accomplish-by-monthly plan*.

On a 3 x 5 card, I write the yearly plan which might include some financial goals. More importantly, it might include your projected production goals (how many books you want to publish during the year.) I write these goals down on a 3 x 5 card (a favorite tool on my desk) and on an individual card, I write MY INTENT to accomplish for the month. One month might read:

1. TYL downloads new files into audio (Thinking Your Life)
2. TO YOUR HEALTH edited and republished to Amazon, KOBO, NOOK, IBOOK, and BOOKLOCKER.

3. TYH new cover
4. TYH start audio book
5. Finish chapters 7, 8, 9 for Stones and Clones

Make sure each card begins with I INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH THE FOLLOWING:

You can be as detailed or as 'loose' as you want. I find I do better with loose goals because they can and do change.

I have put together a business plan that you can download for free from my website:

www.audacious-author.com

9. YOUR IMPRINT

“Imprint: verb, to impress or stamp (a mark or outline) on a surface or body” Dictionary.com.

How will you make your IMPRINT in the world of readers? How will they identify with you? How will they find you? Part of your imprint is the genre you write in.

Traditionally writers were advised to write in only one genre, but times and readers’ tastes have changed. They are much more eclectic, and authors are writing in several different genres, even publishing under different names.

Nora Roberts also publishes under J.D. Robb and Steven King sometimes writes as Richard Bachman to name a few.

I publish in Visionary Non-Fiction under Sharon D. Anderson, Ph.D., and my Visionary Fiction under S.D. Anderson.

Your Genre, your Personal Website, Blogs, Podcasts, Social Media; (Facebook, Twitter), is where you declare your Imprinting, where you tell the world what you are doing, and where to find you. I do go into this in some of my blogs which you can access through my website.

10. YOUR INVENTORY

I touched on this earlier. One book: nine possibilities. Some of those may or may not apply here. For this purpose, let's use the following:

One Manuscript:

1. A Print book,
2. An E-Book,
3. An Audio Book,
4. A translation.

(4 possibilities from one manuscript)

If you have written five (5) books and the rights belong to you, multiply that by the four possibilities listed above, you now have twenty (20) pieces of potential inventory. Multiply that out by the four main sites, Amazon, Kobo, IBook and Nook, and you have eighty (80) pieces of inventory.

I currently have 16 books on Amazon (my dashboard) multiplied out 16 X 4 gives me 64 possibilities, and that multiplied by the 4 main sites (Amazon, Kobo, iBook and Nook) makes 256 pieces of inventory.

I could have added the 13 Amazon countries but my calculator just died...

If you want to consider translating your books into different languages; the following are booming markets: Spanish, German and Mandarin.

11. SCALABLE CAREER

From this, perhaps you can see the benefits of a Scalable Career. You only need to write each manuscript once, change it into one of the 9, or all, possibilities and you have a Scalable Career. No wonder they call this “THE LAPTOP LIFE”

Your laptop is portable (desktops are slowly becoming obsolete) and can go wherever you decide you want to live, vacation or write. Several months ago, I downloaded Windows 10 onto my desk top. I really lived to regret it and took the console to my computer gurus to have it removed. They were very busy and told me the wait would be longer than their one-day turnaround. I said I was fine with that as I had a laptop which was gifted to me and I could continue to write on that. During that week, I became hooked on THE LAPTOP LIFE. So much so that I now use my laptop exclusively and my desktop was passed on to a family member for his side-business.

It is interesting to note that my business now travels with me. Some people use their iPads and iPhones for this purpose and perhaps I shall come around to that point eventually. Whatever device you use is your choice. Your scalable career can go anywhere in the world, just like your books.

12. MARKETING

Most authors have a huge fear around marketing and granted, it's time consuming and does take you away from your writing (which you would rather be doing). Owning a store with merchandise or inventory, as a good business owner you know that the inventory or merchandise doesn't fly off the shelves into the hands of consumers, you have to advertise to get potential buyers into your store.

There are hundreds of sites and books on the internet to help you with your marketing. My advice to you is to research this, ask other authors and see what works for them. Perhaps you will start with a blog, try it for a few months and see how that works for you.

I highly recommend **Word Press** for your blog. You can start with their free sites and develop from there. <https://wordpress.com/>

Podcasts are another way to market your books. My Podcasts were created on Audacity for the track (**Audacity** is a free download)

<http://www.audacity.com>

Saved as an MP3 file and uploaded to **PodOMatic**, which is also a free site.

<http://podomatic.com>

A *personal website* is a must. You can do that through your **Word Press** blog site.

Another great site to overwhelm you is this one:

<https://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com/>

Yaro Stark offers great information for free. .

Growing your e-mail list is another marketing tool and you can download information from <http://www.aweber.com> - a great way to get things started. There are so many possibilities; some of those links are listed at the end of this book.

Let's break these marketing areas down into small bites.

A BLOG

This is not as overwhelming as you may think. You are a writer. A Blog is your way to communicate with your readers (the people interested in you and your books). I highly recommend www.wordpress.com the site is easy to navigate, easy to edit and you have a gazillion free templates to choose from. I have two blogs currently out on WordPress: *Visionary Fiction* and the *Audacious Author*. I have changed the sites names several times as they have grown and evolved with me, and also changed the themes.

What to write on a blog? Anything you think your readers and potential readers would enjoy reading about.

Keep them informed with your progress on that new book. Ask them to help you with a title. Some authors offer free advanced copies in exchange for reviews. Your BLOG is a key marketing tool.

PODCASTS

Podcasts are easy, too. You do need a bit more equipment than for a blog.

A small microphone – available through Amazon.com. Price range is under \$10.00 for an inexpensive one to an expensive one that is really high tech. Depending on your laptop or computer, they are easy to use and plug in easily.

Here is a simple one.

<http://www.amazon.com/Connectland-Tabletop-Microphone-Recording>

Or you can go really high tech with this one!

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009DHMLEE?psc=1&smid=A35FL3JI2LDDZ3>

Some laptops come already equipped with a microphone.

1. Audacity – a free program to record your voice. <http://www.audacity.com> this program is fairly easy and if you have a teenager nearby to

give their advice and guide you through it, all the better. There is also a drop-down menu where you are guided to save this podcast as a MP3 file. That is the file that your readers can download onto their devices and listen to.

2. Pod-O-Matic - Open an account with Pod-O-Matic (free). Here is where you post the audio version of your blog. This is not really complicated. There are other sites out there to use for podcasts. You can search and find the one best suited for your work.

3. Content - From experience, I write my blog and record that with Audacity. Save it as your MP3 file, post that on Pod-O-Matic. (Capture that link). Next, go to WordPress and post your blog. (capture that link) Now you can send both links out to your e-mail list. Then they have a choice to either read or listen.

E-MAIL LIST

Your e-mail list is probably the most important component to your marketing. Here is where you capture your customers and keep them. The more you grow your list, the more readers you will accumulate. These are your FANS. They are the ones who anxiously await your next book. You need to keep them engaged and interested and they will be your FANS for life. How do you do that?

By being GENUINE.

Your FANS will like you, sing your praises and spread the word about your books. This is one of the components that make Face Book so popular. How do you add fans to your list? There are literally thousands of books, programs and ideas about how to do this. I will share someone I trust and his programs are good because he is GENUINE. His name is Yaro Stark and here is his link:

<https://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com/>

Yaro gives away a ton of information. You might want to check his site out.

You grow your list each time you do a presentation. You ask people to sign up to receive your newsletter or whatever else you want to offer. At the end of your blog, ask the recipient to send it on to others if they feel it will be of interest. The more readers you have the more readers you can help. And isn't that the name of the game? When you have accumulated a big list, bigger than you want to deal with, you might want to check out a mailing house or system.

www.aweber.com or
www.constantcontact.com they offer excellent services for the beginner and for the more established accounts.

WEBSITES

You need a website because..... a website is your store front. Here is where you list your books – your inventory for sale.

Your books may be out there on KOBO or AMAZON or iBook and that's great, BUT, when someone wants to know about you and what you write, the first link you give them is the link to your website. That is where they really find out who you are and what you write.

Anyone can access your books on Amazon, but that is only half of your story, isn't it?

The beauty of your own website is each book that you have written can have its own personal story. You can tell the world that this book took you 5 years to write, etc....

Where and how do you accomplish this? For my first websites, I used Homestead, which at the time was connected to my crystal shop through Quick Books.

My suggestion to you now is to check out the different sites. www.wordpress.com offers not only free blogs but free websites as well. You always have the opportunity to upgrade. .

As for hosting, I recommend www.bluehost.com . There are others out there. Do your research and find the one that will work best for you and your interests.

SOCIAL MEDIA

According to current marketing strategies, social media is a must. This appears to be the best track to take when publicizing your book.

Facebook – Create a business page and promote your books here. It is really simple and easy to do and most authors have a Facebook business page.

Twitter – another media that have helped other books and authors go viral. Sorry, I cannot counsel you on this one as I have not been able to master this aspect of marketing.

Goodreads – You should have an Author's Page on Goodreads. Here is where you get your reviews. Easy to set up and run. Amazon can help you here. Whatever books you have on Kindle can be automatically be posted here.

Amazon Author's Page – an absolute must have.

I was amazed at how professional my book covers looked on my Amazon page. Here is my link:

<https://www.amazon.com/author/andersonsharon>

13.. ROYALTIES

Bet you never thought I would get to this very important part. We all want to get paid for our books, or at least most people do. That is really the bottom line for a business, the profits, what's left over after all of the business expenses are paid.

Our Royalties are our income. Depending on how you have published your books, (Traditional or Self-Publish) the payments can be deposited in your business account or wherever you decide to put the money.

Traditional publishing payments are usually done quarterly. I am not an expert here, so please make allowances.

Because I self-publish on Amazon, my notification of payment is sent to me about mid-month. The actual payments are dropped into my account around the first of the month for the previous month. Another word, a payment I receive the beginning of November is payment for books sold the entire month of September

There is less than a month's delay while all of the payments from the global locations are tallied and sent to Amazon to be finalized, and the currencies changed into U.S. Dollars.

My publisher, BookLocker.com does some of my payments for one of my books. They pay quarterly.

14 A PLAN FOR EACH BOOK

As I was doing my own business plan (Angelic Communications) I wanted to take a good look at each of my books and check them out to analyze why they were sitting on the screen and not doing anything.

Using 3 x 5 cards again, I used one card per book and did a checklist for each one.

Here it is:

TITLE OF THE BOOK IN QUESTION:

TITLE CHANGE?

Does this book need a title change? If it is in print, you can do this by creating a second edition and going through the print process again. If you are publishing digitally, you only need to make those changes in your Microsoft Manuscript saving it as a second edition. If you publish through Amazon.com and their KDP program, you have a dashboard and can make those changes easily BUT I would wait until I had gone through the checklist before making any changes there or to any other site.

COVER

Do you think a new cover will enhance the book? If you made a title change, then you do need a new cover. Not sure? Do some research; check out covers in the same categories and see what is selling and what would easily adapt to your book text. This is like buying and wearing a new outfit.

Author's Note: The cover for this book was created by the author on CreateSpace or you can use canva.com a user-friendly site. Here is their link: <http://www.canva.com>

PRICING

Use the same considerations as above. See where the other books in your category are retailing for. Any shop owner knows that price comparison is a necessary decision. That also implies that you don't have to follow the pack and get into a price war.

CATEGORIES

Have you placed your book in the right categories? Sometimes a change here is all that is needed to boost sales.

KEY WORDS

Another listing to consider. Key words are important and keep your book up front for the search engines. Yes, we still use those.

CONTENT

Does the story or the content need to be re-edited? Many times, after a book is published, the author thinks of changes ... we all do it!

AUDIO BOOK

Is this another format you might want to consider?

TRANSLATION

Can you see this book published in another language?

PUBLISHING E-BOOKS

Here is where you decide if you want to use a service for publishing your books or do it yourself. There are two services that I know of, probably more: Smashwords and Draft2Digital (D2D). As more and more self-publishers come into this Indie arena, these services will become extremely popular. I am currently using D2D and find them tremendously helpful and user friendly. I picture this service much like my personal agent. I give them the book and they send it out to the different sites: Amazon KDP, Kobo, IBook, Nook, Scribd, Inktera, and Tolino. Yes, they do take a small percentage, but you have to make that decision, and that is only when the book sells.

I don't want to think of the time it would take me to do all of this individually. Also, just to keep track of this is a nightmare. When would I write?

PRINTED EDITION

This is your decision. If you have a book in your inventory and want to create a print edition, that is up to you. I would recommend BookLocker for their Print on Demand books (which I have used) or Createspace (which I have used several times with great success).

SERIES

If you have written several books in a series, then you might want to consider publishing them as a 'bundle', or offer the first one in the series free so that the rest will automatically be purchased by the reader. This will be covered under Marketing Strategies.

FREE SITES

I will list a few sites you can tap into to offer your book for free: Freebooksy.com BookGorilla.com, and Booksends.com There are hundreds more, I am certain, all that is needed is to Google them... I have used Amazon's KDP promotional offers and had a lot of my books downloaded globally. That was fun to watch...

MARKETING STRATEGIES

This area is very important. Writing and Publishing are only half of the story. Here are some of the key ingredients you really should have.

1. Website
2. Blog
3. Podcasts
4. Social Media
5. Facebook – Author’s page
6. Twitter
7. Good Reads

15 RESOURCES all in one place

Publishers P.O.D.

<http://www.booklocker.com>

<http://www.creatspace.com>

Inspiration and Information

<http://www.thecreativepenn.com>

Publishing Services for E-Books

<http://www.smashwords.com>

<http://www.draft2digitaal.com>

<http://www.scribed.com>

<http://www.inktera.com>

<http://www.tolino.com>

<http://www.fiverr.com>

Free Book Sites:

<http://www.bookbub.com>

<http://www.freebooksy.com>

<http://www.bookgorilla.com>

<http://www.booksends.com>

Author Stats

<http://www.authorearningsreport.com>

Small Business Administration

<http://www.sba.gov.com>

<http://www.gov.com>

Blogs, websites, podcasts, e-mails

<http://www.wordpress.com>

<http://www.audacity.com>

<http://www.podomatic.com>

<http://www.entrepreneurshourney.com>

<http://www.aweber.com>

Book Covers

<http://www.canva.com>

My site:

<http://www.audacious-author.com>

I sincerely hope this guide will be helpful for your writing career (whatever you decide to do). With this guide my only intent is to “plant seeds and ideas”. It is up to you to water and fertilize them.
Happy Writing

THANK YOU

Thank you for choosing this e-book. I hope you've found the information interesting.

If you loved this book, found it useful, and have a moment to spare, **I would really appreciate a short review on the site where you purchased. Your help in spreading the word is gratefully received!**

Also by S. D. Anderson

AVAILABLE IN PRINT ** starred title

Visionary Fiction

Atlantis – The Final Days**

Angels on Assignment

What Should You Do with Your Life?

Stones and Bones**

Something Sinister**

Visionary Non-Fiction

Creating Crystal Grids**

Sacred Grids

Crystal Grids for Light Bodies

What Are You Thinking? **

Cosmic Blueprint**

Angelic G.P.S.

Outer Realms

Raising Your Energy**

Body Blogs for Health**

Children's Book

The Funny Bunny

Spiritual Guidelines Series

Prosperity Workbook

Remarkable Relationships

To Your Health**

Everyone is Evolving

ON WRITING

Writing as a Retail Business**

Creating a Paperback in KDP**

E-Book to Paperback CreateSpace Edition**

NOW AVAILABLE IN PRINT ARE STARRED**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sharon D. Anderson, Ph.D., is an Indie Author/Publisher, dedicated to her craft for more than 30 years. Writing in her genre, Visionary Fiction and Non-Fiction, all of her books, websites and blogs merge a far-seeing perspective of New Age and Ancient Wisdom from Eastern, Western, and Primordial Philosophies.

Living on her beloved Cape Cod, she actively participates in a weekly writers group through the Cape Cod Writers Center, and is a member of the Visionary Fiction Alliance.

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