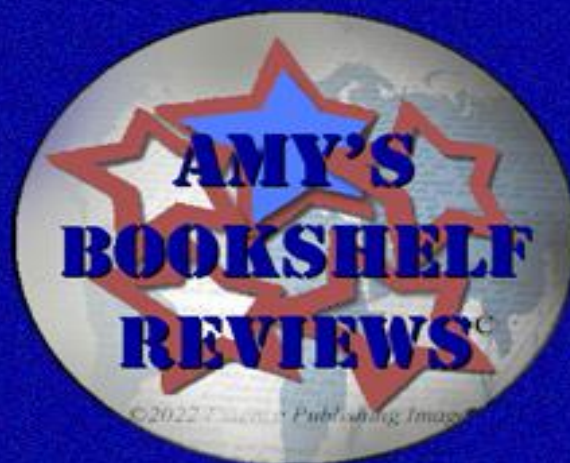


Authors Informational Booklet

A free publication from Amy's Bookshelf Reviews



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Authors Informational Booklet

By

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews

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Essence Publishing

<https://essenceenterpriseus.com/essence-publishing>

Malta, New York

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Whether a new author, or a current one, but still new to the publishing process, here is a free checklist of things that you have options to do, and it also shares the benefits of each item.

Writing was the easy part. Your work has gone through several drafts, whatever your writing style, genre, and book length. Just when you think it is *publish ready*, read it aloud, and see if there is anything that should be edited. Dialogue comes through better if you read it out loud and see how it flows or doesn't flow.

So, now your book is "publish" ready.

When you were editing your book and getting it ready for that second pair of eyes (an editor, professional or personal, but not you), there are many things to think about.

Your Book

- Does your book have a title? Hopefully, yes. If it does, does the current title fit the book? Yes, good. No? Why not and what would be the best title? (Sometimes, if you have chapter names and chapter titles, using a chapter title for the book's title ties it all in. However, you don't need to have chapter titles, at least have chapter numbers.)
- Also, you don't have to write "a novel by" and the penname. Just your title of the book, and then your name.
- In one sentence, can you say what is your book about?
- What is the book description? You don't want to give too much away, but you want it catch a reader's eyes. Sometimes, ending the description with questions about the story, can add interest to the reader. Ex: "Will Jane find the revenge she desperately seeks?"

What's next?

- Do you want an Agent?
- Do you want a Publicist?
- Publishers?

What type of publisher are you looking for? Traditional (many but not all require an agent as representation). Small Press. Hybrid (Paying for publishing packages, some include marketing and other things). Independent Publishing (Publishers that assist authors in publishing their book, costs vary from publisher to publisher). Do it yourself (Publishers like Lulu.com (print and digital), Amazon's KDP (print and digital), Smashwords (digital only), Ingram Sparks (print and digital) where you go through the process of publishing it yourself. Or you can hire someone to DIY it for you (selfish plug, I do this all the time for authors).

- ISBN (International Standard Book Number).

Authors can purchase a batch of these numbers, or whatever publishing company you choose (even DIY), you can get an ISBN for the book.

- Library of Congress Number:

If you want your books to be officially copyrighted (they are as soon as you write Copyright and the year on your book's information page), and you want your books to be available for library, you can sign up on the Library of Congress website. Create an account, and before the book is published, apply for your LOC number. They usually get back to you within a week, sometimes a day or so). <https://locexternal.servicenowservices.com/>

Exterior of the Book

Book Covers:

- Can you create your own book cover? If not, hire someone to create your book cover, and make sure they read your book first, so they know what it is about. Also, make sure you have creative input, and if you select a cover they created for you, you now have the rights to the cover (but always credit the artist).
- Digital books only need the front cover
- Print books need a front cover, spine and back cover, and best put together in a PDF format

NOTE (Not Recommended): Many DIY publishers will have their own templates of covers, where the author just fills in the information, but there are hundreds or even thousands of authors who choose that, so the book cover is not unique from others.

The full publishing process can be very daunting, even to the most experienced author, because technology is always changing, and reading trends change.

Now, you've decided how to publish, and who will be creating your book cover, what formats do you wish to publish in? (Digital, Paperback Print, Hardcover Print, Audiobook).

Many of the options listed will do most of those formats. However, audiobooks sometimes are resourced out, to a publishing company that does audiobooks (such as Scribd). Amazon's ACX is part DIY for the process of finding a narrator, and listening to auditions if a narrator even selects your book to read.

The Author's Brand

The name of the author is the brand of that author. Whether it is a real name, a variation of their real name, or a pen name, it is the author's brand. Use an author photo (head shots are the best), or if you just want an image or your initials, you can create your own brand "logo."

Recommended Tasks:

Website: Even if it just one page, about the author and the book. Many websites have free and paid versions of the website, and they have a website builder and templates to help someone go through the process of creating their website. You can purchase a domain name, but only do that if you're using a paid website. The domain name can be whatever you want, as long as it is

available. A note, do not name the website after your book or your book series, unless you will never write another book. A website is best named with the author's penname. (Websites like Wix.com, WordPress and Go Daddy (these are just examples) have both free and paid websites).

Amazon Profile: If your book is going to be sold on Amazon. It is best that the author has an Amazon profile, even if the author currently only has one book. If you have an Amazon account for shopping, you can use this account to create an Amazon Author Central Account (<https://author.amazon.com/home>) or you can create a new account. This allows you to add your books, create a bio, add a photo, and create a specific URL. (It has other options, but those are for you to explore).

All the books that you publish will be listed together, and different formats of the books can also be listed together. Book Series can be created in KDP, and then you can add your titles and the volumes to that book series. On Amazon, it will show that there are so many books within a book series, and if they click on the link, it will show all the books in that series.

KDP is https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/bookshelf where you can also DIY your books. KDP offers print, digital, hardcover, and newly implemented expanded distribution, meaning other sites like Barnes and Noble will have your book for sale. If you want your book to be part of Kindle Unlimited, then the books can only be sold on Amazon. Most books on Amazon.com are also available on their international Amazon sites.

Email Address:

It may be best that you create an email address that is just for your books or writing. This is the email address you would put on your website and connect it to any social media.

Social media:

If you're new to social media, pick one or two that you know you will be able to use, such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook or Instagram.

- **X:** X allows a certain amount of characters (140) and you can post immediately or schedule it. X allows text and images. People can "follow" you on X and it allows you to tag other persons and it uses hashtags
- **Facebook:** If you have a Facebook Profile, you can easily create a Facebook Page. This is best for your books, and use it for your writing and sharing information about your work. People can "Like" or "Follow" you on Facebook. If you set up your Facebook page as a business page, you can also schedule posts on Facebook. If you have an Instagram account, you can connect it to your Facebook page, and also schedule Instagram posts.
- **Instagram:** Allows short videos or Images along with text. It also allows you tagging others and using hashtags.

Video Sites:

- **YouTube:** (if you have a Google Account, such as a Gmail address, you can create a YouTube Channel. You can upload videos, create an introductory video that will play

automatically when someone opens your channels. It allows for subscribers. The more subscribers you get, the more influence you have, and options for monetization. Allows use of keywords, and you can schedule when you want the Video to go live. You can also have it private or limited. Even if you have an email that isn't part of the Google Family, you can still create a YouTube Channel.

- **TikTok:** Create an account. Upload videos and use tagging and hashtags.

Book Reviewers

First, book reviews are very important to authors, and to readers who may want to read your work. Never write a book review for yourself and post it on any site. Also, do not do what they call a "Review Bomb" where you keep posting reviews for other authors that you know, so they will do the same thing in return. This is unethical, and if caught (recently a new author was), and lost her reputation, and was banned from various sites for publication and posting reviews.

Book Reviewers: It is not always easy to find a reputable book reviewer, let alone one that does it professionally without high costs. There are companies that charge to read and review a work, but Kirkus Reviews is very selective in their process, and they offer extras.

There are other book reviewers, like Amy's Bookshelf Reviews that do not charge for reviews, ask (not demand) for donations, and also offer extra options for promotions. Amy's Bookshelf Reviews also lets the author or publisher know when the review has been published and they are provided a copy of the review. Sometimes before a book is released.

There are book review directories, and when using these, make sure (1) the reviewer reads your genre, (2) they are still active and the links to their site work, and (3) the reviewer does NOT charge you a fee to get a 5-Star Review.

Just because a reviewer may charge for a review, does not mean they are not reputable. If a reviewer charges specifically for a review, they cannot post the review on Amazon, but the review can be entered in the Editorial Review section of the book title (This can be done by using Amazon Central).

If you aren't familiar with social media, some authors don't use it at all or they get someone else to set it up for them and manage it.

Promotions

You want to promote your book, and when it is going to be released. Using social media, blog posts, can help let people know where to find you and your book. Hiring Book Blog Tour companies can help you get some reviews, but not all reviews are guaranteed.

Hiring a publicist can help you with promotions, and they have contacts that you may not have or know about. Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is on several publicists and publishers "go-to" reviewer or book influencer.

Another way is to seek out podcasts that fit your book's niche, or is about books, and see what they offer. Some podcasts are video and some are audio only. As always, do your research.

Promotional Websites:

There are author promotional websites, some offer free services, some want a fee depending on the package and the promotion. Take your time and decide what you can and cannot afford. There are a lot of ways to do things that won't empty your bank account. Whenever possible, sign up for some sites newsletters, information and literary news. There are a lot of sites out there that you can get information from for free just by subscribing, such as Publisher's Weekly, BookLife, Book Riot, as well as many others.

NOTE: Anyone you hire, do your research and make sure they are reputable. Most reputable persons or companies will have a website, and have done what you are hiring them for. For editing, formatting or cover designing services, you should only have to pay 50% upfront and then the rest upon completion. (On a professional note, I have done these services and more, and always offer the 50% upfront, and sometimes, they just pay in full or pay half and half). Also, know your budget. Sometimes services can be very expensive and out of your price range, so you need to search around, and see what services you actually really need (editing, a book cover, a publisher etc) and focus on those. (Another professional note, I always work within an author's budget, depending on the service I provide for them. I always have a regular price baseline, but will work with the author's budget, without sacrificing quality, and I do set a minimum price when I do that).

When I was first promoting my first book in 2005, my promotions consisted of mailers and actual pieces of paper with my book cover and information printed on it, and then I went around to various businesses with actual bulletin boards and pinned them there.

It may seem like I am promoting myself because I do many of the things listed in this booklet, and in a way I am, but I am not telling anyone to be my client so I can do this.

Each thing that I have in this booklet, are recommendations of things the author should do, whether they do it themselves or hire others to do it.

I hope this booklet helps you in some way.

Just a note, any of the outside resources that I mentioned, I am not being compensated for. I just know of them as examples. I have a very large list of resources that I keep track of, not just for myself but for authors, if there is something I think they need to know.

About Amy's Bookshelf Reviews

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is a not-for-profit business, as Amy's Bookshelf Reviews does NOT charge for reviews. Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is a professional book review website, which accepts review requests from any author, and accepts most genres (with a few minor exceptions if the book promotes hatred of any kind). Please, call her Amy, and NOT Shannon (that is her surname).

The mission of Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is to help promote authors and allow them to share their stories using reviews. #ReviewsMatter and they are very important for authors. Reviews can be the baseline for promoting and selling an author's work.

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews reviews examine the characters, story and plotlines, and the author's writing and storytelling abilities.

Amy Shannon owns and operates Amy's Bookshelf Reviews has experience with being a writer with over 30 years' experience. Since 2014, while reading and writing reviews, Amy has created a new Podcast, with the Amy's Bookshelf Reviews brand. She discusses books, authors, does interviews, reviews and literary news.

Need Help with any literary process? Amy Shannon is also a literary Consultant. Over the years, she has received a lot of questions presented by authors, wondering what to do next, or sometimes, they have so much going on at once, they don't know what to do or who to trust. Well, Amy is that person you can trust, even if you don't know it. Amy wants to help authors, do research for authors, and see where they may need to build their brand.

Amy Shannon

Editor. Writer. Book Reviewer. Literary Consultant. Podcast Host.

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