

Conversations

Get Your Book Published

*How to Choose Between Self-publishing,
Traditional Publishing or Pay-to-publish Options*

Second Edition
Updated & Expanded



A conversation with self-publishing consultant
and editorial project manager
Marla Markman, Markman Editorial Services

Jacquelyn Lynn

Conversations

Get Your Book Published

*How to Choose Between Self-publishing, Traditional Publishing
or Pay-to-publish Options*

Second Edition

*A conversation with self-publishing consultant and editorial project manager
Marla Markman, Markman Editorial Services*

Jacquelyn Lynn

TUSCAWILLA CREATIVE SERVICES

Contents

Introduction

Why Publish a Book?

The State of Publishing

The Primary Paths to Publishing

Finding Self-Publishing Resources

Cost of Self-Publishing

Terms You Should Know

A Special Offer from Marla Markman

About Jacquelyn Lynn

Introduction

Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen came up with the idea of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* in 1993. The two were motivational speakers and the book was a compilation of the best 101 stories they told in their presentations. That first *Chicken Soup* book has sold more than 11 million copies and spawned the best-selling trade paperback series of all time, with more than 250 titles.

But when Canfield and Hansen first presented their idea to New York publishers, they were turned down by every one of them (some stories say more than 100 publishers rejected the book). Finally a small Florida-based health and wellness publisher decided to give the book a chance.

Today, Canfield and Hansen might have skipped the trip to New York or at least stopped pitching to publishers at the first couple of rejections and instead published the book themselves.

If you're looking to add "published author" to your credentials, you have more options than ever. But all those options can be confusing, and making the right choice so that you can create a quality book that will help you achieve your goals without getting ripped off depends on a number of variables. A few years ago, I sat down with self-publishing consultant and editorial project manager Marla Markman to get the information you need to choose the path to publication that's best for you. Because this is such a rapidly-changing industry, we recently talked again to update and expand this guide.

Marla is a publishing professional and award-winning editor with 30 years of experience creating, editing, and managing nonfiction content for a wide range of media, from magazines and books to websites and marketing collateral. I first got to know Marla when she was with Entrepreneur Press, the book publishing arm of the media company that publishes *Entrepreneur* magazine. Marla was instrumental in launching the company's trade book division, where she acquired, developed and edited many top-selling books, including more than a dozen of mine. She left Entrepreneur in 2008 to create Markman Editorial Services and fulfill her own entrepreneurial dream.

In *Get Your Book Published*, Marla walks you through the traditional and self-publishing processes, pointing out the advantages and drawbacks of each so that you can make the decision that is best for you.

Something that makes both Marla and me angry is the increasing number of companies out there that offer publishing services but are more interested in separating authors from their money than in producing quality books that authors will be proud of and consumers will want to buy and read. We spent a lot of time talking about how to identify and avoid those companies. We also talk about how to find legitimate, high-quality service providers that will help you produce a book you'll be proud of.

Are you ready to find out how to get your book published? Let's dive in.

Jacquelyn Lynn

Why Publish a Book?

Jacquelyn Lynn: Before we get into the specifics of how to get a book published, let's talk about why knowing how to do it is important. Who is likely to want to know how to get a book published and why should they want to publish a book?

Marla Markman: Most people who are getting books published these days are coaches, entrepreneurs, business people, CEOs—anyone who wants to establish themselves as a thought leader. Having a book immediately establishes your credibility, which could generate more business and speaking opportunities.

In my business, I deal with a lot of coaches—wellness coaches, leadership coaches—and people who want to build up their speaking careers, such as motivational speakers, that type of thing. It's important for them to have books.

The other class of people that would want to publish a book would be fiction writers. There have been many success stories of fiction books that are selling like gangbusters because they're inexpensive to produce and sell, and can be easily churned out once you have a successful formula.

JL: Like Fifty Shades of Grey? It started out as a self-published ebook.

MM: Yes, like *Fifty Shades of Grey*. There are a lot of self-published books that are like that, both fiction and non-fiction, that are success stories, that have done really well. Some of them have done so well that traditional publishers have picked them up. I have clients who were picked up by traditional publishers after self-publishing.

JL: Is there another category of author who might be interested in getting a book published?

MM: I'm not sure if you want to call this a separate group, but memoir writers are a big group. A memoir can be non-fiction, a hybrid of non-fiction and fiction, or it can be completely fictionalized but you're basing it on your story. You might have a memoir that you use to establish your credibility or as a self-help book, like if you're writing about how you got over a tragedy in your life. You can turn that experience into a book that you can use to get speaking opportunities. However, even though having the book out there may give you credibility, in general memoir books are very difficult to sell.

JL: Because if you're not famous, who cares about your story?

MM: Right. You have to have a very compelling transformation story for anybody to care.

JL: Of course, if you just want to put your story down on paper for your family, you could write your memoir and publish it. You shouldn't expect a whole bunch of strangers to buy it, but the story is recorded.

MM: There are a variety of reasons why you'd want to create a memoir. If you're not interested in or don't need to have sales and you just want to write it for a legacy for your family is one reason. Obviously you can't expect it to sell a great deal. But that's okay, if that's what your mission is. Or, as I've said, if you have a compelling story and you want to use that to get consulting or speaking engagements, writing and publishing your memoir is an effective way to do that.

The State of Publishing

JL: Your career as an editor began with a traditional publisher. How has the industry changed since "back in the olden days"?

MM: Back in the olden days when we had David Hasselhoff in a hot tub on the cover of *Entrepreneur*. [Laughing]

JL: Yes, back in those days. But seriously, I'm talking about back in the days when the only way to get a book on the market was to get a contract with a traditional publisher, and that was difficult. How have you seen the industry change for the three major groups: authors, publishers and readers?

MM: Like you said, when I worked for a publisher, really the only way to get a professional quality book was through a traditional publisher or perhaps through a good vanity press, which we'll talk about later. And a vanity press was cost-prohibitive for many people and it also had a negative connotation attached to it. But the difference is now it's easy for virtually anyone to produce a quality book that reads and looks like any one that's been published by a traditional publisher.

That's why, like you said earlier, there are so many books now like *Fifty Shades of Grey*, that have become bestsellers and even movies, even though they began as a self-published book.

For readers, the industry has changed as well, in large part because of the advent of inexpensive ebooks, they are as little as 99 cents, and e-readers [Kindle, Nook, iPad, tablets, smartphones], which are becoming very pervasive. In some cases, ebooks are selling more than traditional books. And audiobooks are huge now. The growth in audiobooks is outpacing ebooks. It's easier and cheaper than ever for readers to get the books that they want and consume as many as their time allows.

JL: One of the more interesting trends in publishing is the growth in audiobooks. How is this affecting the industry in general and indie publishers in particular?

MM: It is making it so that you have another channel to offer your potential buyers. Audiobooks have grown tremendously and they are actually surpassing the sales of e-books.

JL: In total sales or in growth?

MM: Both. The last statistic that I read is they have grown by 30 percent in sales and readership. I always encourage my clients to produce an audiobook because I think the more formats your book available in, the better. People are responding more to audiobooks because they can listen to them anywhere while they are doing other things, like commuting or working out. Audiobooks are not as inexpensive as ebooks, but the potential for sales is good.

JL: Back to the industry in general. I've heard that traditional publishers are hurting.

MM: I don't think that traditional publishers are really hurting. Yes, they are competing with self-publishers, but there will always be people who want to publish through traditional publishing. And as we'll talk about later, a lot of them have started their self-publishing arms. The only group that is hurting in the industry is the bookstores.

JL: That's primarily because of ebooks and buying on the internet, right?

MM: Right. It's so easy now for people to buy books off the internet that not many people are going into the bookstores anymore. When I worked at Entrepreneur, it was even happening then. We were having to think of non-traditional means to get our books out there. That's when we started thinking of selling on the internet or going into different

places other than traditional bookstores. Like, we started selling to Costco and Office Depot and any place where you could get your book out there because bookstores were just going by the wayside.

JL: I'm an avid reader, but I rarely go into bookstores, and usually it's to do research.

MM: I still go into bookstores. Even though they're waning, I think there will always be bookstores, they just won't be as popular as they were. People are saying that print will die at some point, but it's never going to, because there are people who will always like the feel of a book in their hand.

Another thing that's changing is that the variety of books is wider than ever. Authors are targeting niche markets. Also, most readers don't care or probably don't even realize when they're reading a self-published book. Because if it's done correctly, if you take the time and the investment to produce it correctly and get a high-quality book, nobody's ever going to know it was self-published. It could compete with a book that's traditionally published. Readers just care about the content. They just want it to be entertaining or helpful or whatever they're looking for.

The Primary Paths to Publishing

JL: Before we talk about the primary paths to publishing, let's clarify some of the terms we'll be using. The term "self-publishing" has been around for a long time, but in recent years, the terms "indie publishing" and "independent publishing" are becoming more common.

MM: Indie and independent publishing are the same thing. The Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA), the biggest association in this industry, is trying to get people to use "independent publishing" instead of "self-publishing" because it sounds more professional. They're trying to level the playing field between traditional publishers and people who publish their own books.

Something the IBPA offers that I recommend every author review is the Industry Standards Checklist for a Professionally Published Book. You can download it here: <https://www.ibpa-online.org/page/standardschecklist>.

***JL:** So when we talk about the primary paths to publishing, the two big umbrellas are traditional publishing and self-publishing or independent publishing. Let's talk about the key similarities and the key differences.*

MM: There are actually *three* primary paths. There's traditional publishing, there's self-publishing, and then there's hybrid publishing which combines elements of both.

The key similarities are book quality and marketing. You will end up with a professional quality book if you're a savvy self-publisher. I want to emphasize that means you have to do everything professionally—get a professional editor, a designer—and if you do that right, your book is going to look just like a book that was traditionally published by one of the major houses. The other similarity is marketing, because all books are going to need to be marketed and promoted if you're going to sell them—whether you have a publisher backing you or not.

***JL:** Even when a major publisher takes on your book, a lot of people think, "Okay, all I have to do is write the book, and then I can go do something else because the publisher will market it," and that's not true.*

MM: You're right. Unless you're an A list author, and by that I mean the established authors with track records that the publishers know sell well over time, publishers are going to put your book out and it's only going to be on the shelves for about six weeks, and that's all the time you have to really market your book. The publisher is only going to do a minimal amount of marketing. Once the six weeks is done, if they haven't sold very many copies, your book is just going to get remaindered. That's when you go into the bookstores and you see the books that have the big price discount stickers on them, that have been slashed to \$5 or whatever, those are remaindered books. That's all the chance you get to market and sell your book with a traditional publisher.

***JL:** What are some of the key differences between self-publishing, traditional publishing and some of the hybrid publishing models?*

MM: From the author's perspective, the key differences are risk, cost, distribution and time to press. It's riskier to spend the money yourself with no guarantee of a return on investment. If you go through a traditional publisher, they are going to pay you an advance and then they foot the bill for everything else. Obviously, it's more expensive to self-publish because you have to pay for everything. However, even though you're taking on the risk and putting in all the investment, the good thing is that if everything goes well and

you market your book well and it does well, then the payoff is also higher if you self-publish than if you go with a traditional publisher because you get all of the profits.

Another difference is that if you go through a traditional publisher, you'll have a wider distribution because they have more access to distribution sources. It's difficult for a self-publisher to get into a lot of the big retail distribution areas. It's hard to get into bookstores, sales reps won't take on a self-publisher who only has one book. There are ways to get around that, but it's more difficult.

Of course, time to press is a big difference. If you're doing it yourself, you can get it done in four to six months, versus a year or more if you traditionally publish.

JL: *What about hybrid publishing?*

MM: Hybrid publishing is basically a pay-to-publish model. You pay to publish your book, but you receive royalties on the sales when your book is published. Hybrid publishing is also called partnership publishing, it's a shared risk. You go through a curated, collective acquisitions process—they have to approve your book before they'll take it on. You're paying for it, but they do all the production and some of the marketing for you. With hybrid publishing, you're supposedly going to be in a more exclusive class of books than self-publishing because of the acquisitions process. Another benefit is that the publishers may be able to get your book reviewed by prestigious publications like *Publisher's Weekly* and *Library Journal*. Again, a self-publisher can do this, but it's a lot more difficult for them because they don't usually have the connections.

JL: *So with hybrid publishing, if the book flops, both the hybrid publisher and the author lose. If it's successful, they both make money. It's not like in straight self-publishing, where you have a printer who charges you X dollars for Y number of books, and the printer doesn't care if you sell the books or not. The more books you sell with the hybrid publisher, the better for everybody involved.*

MM: Exactly. You and the hybrid publisher will share in the profits from the book. More and more companies are taking this model, but it's a case of buyer beware. There are some really great ones out there, like She Writes Press is really good, but there are some really bad ones out there, too.

JL: *Describe how traditional publishing works today.*

MM: Today, to be traditionally published, you need several things. A traditional publisher or an agent will want to see track record or at least an established author platform. To be published by one of the major houses, like Simon & Schuster or McGraw Hill, you need an agent. To get an agent, you need to write a proposal and a query letter. A proposal is usually around 30 pages and we could have a whole book just about that. Briefly, it includes two sample chapters, table of contents, a description of every chapter, a competitive analysis, your background and experience, and your marketing and promotion plan. It could take up to a year or more to get an agent who believes in your book enough to want to try to pitch it to a publisher. Once you have the agent, that's just the beginning. Because then it can take up to a year or more for an agent to convince a publisher to take on your project.

Many publishers will even want to see that you have preorders from established contacts, and marketing and publicity tours and interviews already set—it's getting more and more difficult to have a traditional publisher take you on if you're an unknown because the risk for them is so great.

Once your book has been purchased by a publisher, they will pay you a small advance to finish writing your book and then it goes into production. The lead time from there is typically about a year. Once it's published, you'll get royalties based on a percentage of the sale price of the book. The more books that are sold, the more royalties you get. Typically, there's a tier—the more books you sell, a lot of times the royalty rate will go up.

As we said before, the problem is, unless you're an A list author, then you only get about six weeks for the publisher to see how your book is going to perform, and they'll just do the basics when it comes to promotion. You need to actively promote the book yourself.

Another drawback to traditional publishing is in most cases, the traditional publisher is going to have the final say over the title and design of your book. You'll have input, but they're going to make the final decision. So if you want ultimate control over your book, self-publishing is the better way to go.

JL: *Describe how self-publishing works.*

MM: With self-publishing, you write the book, of course. You get it edited, then get the cover and interior designed, have it proofread, indexed and then write the back cover copy. Along the way, you're also going to need to get an ISBN and CIP code, which is what gets you into libraries if you want to go that route, and a bar code. Those are the basics. Then once it's produced, you could choose to either upload your files to a print-on-demand

service like Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), which is the self-publishing arm of Amazon, or IngramSpark, which is the self-publishing arm of Lightning Source. The beauty of print-on-demand is that you only have to print the number of copies you need, so you don't have to worry about storing thousands of books in your garage.

Print-on-demand is another reason why today is such a great time to be a self-publisher, because before print-on-demand existed, you had to go to what is called an offset printer. With an offset printer, in order to get the unit price down to a reasonable amount, you would have to print thousands of copies of your book, and then you would have to store those in your garage or pay to have them stored in a warehouse. With print-on-demand, you only print the number of copies that you need.

JL: One of the cool things about print-on-demand is that because you're only having them printed as they're ordered, if you find a mistake, you can easily correct it for future copies. Also, if you go with Kindle Direct Publishing and Amazon, the paper book is listed on Amazon and KDP prints it when it's ordered. So people can buy it online and you don't ever have to touch it.

MM: Right. The per-unit price is higher for print-on-demand, but you don't have to order thousands of books at a time, so that makes up for the higher price. And it's still, of course, lower than the retail sales price.

I work with a lot of clients who do a combination of print-on-demand and offset. They do print-on-demand because they want it listed on Amazon so they can direct people to Amazon from their website and people can buy single copies there. But they also do offset when they need a large number of copies. For example, I work with a lot of speakers. If they're speaking to an association or an organization that they can get to pre-order copies for all of their members, then they use the offset printer to fulfill that order.

With an offset printer, if you plan on printing anything over 500 copies, then you can get the per-unit cost down to a reasonable price. It's going to be economical. But anything under that is not worth it to do offset. So a lot of people are doing both.

Back to how the process works: Once you've uploaded your book to a print-on-demand or offset printer, you would want to get it converted into an ebook and then you would need to choose a distributor for that. Most people typically have it distributed through Amazon's Kindle. The two main ebook formats are mobi and ePub. Kindle, which is available only available through Amazon, uses mobi. The other ebook platforms—iBooks, Nook, Kobo, Google Play and others—use ePub. If you want to get it into iBooks and other than Amazon

platforms, there are lots of distributors you can go with. Draft2Digital and BookBaby are two big ones. Or you could go to Smashwords. There are a lot to choose from.

Then the hard part comes, which is marketing. When you self-publish, it's all on you. You can either do it all yourself, which a lot of people do, or you can hire a marketing firm or a publicist to do it for you. It's not anything that's difficult, you just have to know what to do and it takes an investment of your time. The great thing is the more books you sell, the more money you make. You don't have to share profits with anybody, a hybrid publisher or traditional publisher.

Like I said before, there are a lot of self-published books that have done so well, they've been picked up by a traditional publisher. I just had a client who was able to get her book featured in the *New York Times*, and she did that all herself without a publicist. But she was very diligent and very aggressive in her marketing. Because of that, an agent found her and wanted to represent her. So it is possible.

JL: You've mentioned more than once that a traditional publisher could pick up your book if you self-publish and you're successful. I know that happens. But if you're a successful self-publisher, why would you go with a traditional publisher and get 15 percent instead of 100 percent by self-publishing?

MM: That's a good question, and I think that's part of what we're talking about here. There are people who do both—they self-publish some books and traditionally publish others. There are people only do self-publishing. Their logic is: Why would you go with a traditional publisher if you want all the control, you want all the profits? But there are some people who still think that being published by a traditional publisher is the ultimate, the coup de gras. This one particular author that I've talked about, she has a book called *The Joy of Financial Security*, and she's done very well. She was reviewed in *Kirkus*, which is one way to get a lot of people to see your book. And she's been reviewed in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. Her book has done really well. But she said that she still wants that cred of being able to say that she was published by a traditional publisher. So for her next book, she's seeking traditional publishing.

Some people just want to be able to say, "I was published by a traditional publisher," because they think, even though you could still make more money self-publishing in this day and age, traditional publishing still has that credibility.

JL: So it depends on what your goals are.

MM: Exactly. When we were talking about the pros and the cons—a lot people think their route to getting to a traditional publisher is self-publishing and doing it really well. In the case I just mentioned, because she had an agent come to her after her book did really well, and the agent said, “I want to do your next book with you, and I’m going to promote it to X traditional publisher,” she was able for her next book to cut the usual time to market in half. Because if she had started from the beginning, from where she had been a nobody and didn’t have this established credibility with this self-published book that had done really well, she may never have got that agent, or it would have taken her a lot longer. She cut that advance time in half.

I think that’s appealing as well. Some people, even if they think that, okay, maybe I can convince a traditional publisher and agent to take me on, they just are antsy and they don’t want to wait.

JL: I have found this with my clients in the past. I’ve explained how long the traditional publishing route takes, and that you may or may not be able to get a traditional publisher to take your book, but even if you do, it’s going to be two to three years from the time you start to look for an agent and do everything else until you have a book on the market. But if you go the self-publishing route, in six months, you can have a book on Amazon and in readers’ hands. A good book. And most of the time, they choose to self-publish.

MM: I had another client who had a book—it’s about age-proofing your home, the name of the book is *Staying Power: Age-Proof Your Home for Comfort, Safety and Style* by Rachel Adelson—and her book also did really well. She’s been approached by a traditional publisher to publish her book. It’s easier for her to do that now because they approached her, and that wasn’t even an agent, that was the actual publisher. So now she’s cut out a huge part of that waiting time.

JL: Since you mentioned hybrid publishing, explain the process. How does it work?

MM: With hybrid publishing, you still have to give them some sort of proposal. It doesn’t have to be as extensive as if you were trying to get an agent or a traditional publisher. A lot of times, hybrid publishers, like Greenleaf Book Group or Motivational Press, are very aggressive in approaching authors. If they see an author or they see a businessperson—I’ve even gotten approached by some of those companies if they see that I’m a successful entrepreneur—they’ll approach you, and say, “Hey have you ever thought about writing a book, we can help you do that.” Or if they see somebody who is doing really well as an

author, same thing. They say, “We can help you.” Greenleaf has a great track record creating bestsellers. They’ll say, “We can help you do even better than you already are.”

If you approach a hybrid publisher, you submit to them similarly to how you’d submit to an agent or a traditional publisher. You give them a proposal and they either say your book is good enough for us to publish or it’s not—pretty much like a traditional publisher.

From that point on, the production process is essentially the same as being with a traditional publisher. Hybrid publishers often offer different packages which include editing, design and other services. You have to be really careful because some of these companies will have add-on packages. For example, the original deal might not include marketing. I’ve worked with some authors who didn’t realize that their hybrid publisher agreement didn’t include marketing, so they either had to end up doing it all themselves, or they had to pay for a very expensive marketing package as an add-on. There are a lot of hybrid publishers that are very good and they’re legitimate, but not all of them all, so you have to beware and know the right questions to ask.

***JL:** What’s the difference between a hybrid publisher and subsidy publishing?*

MM: Subsidy publishers really don’t want to sell your book. They just want to take money from you. Whereas a hybrid publisher, in my eyes, is more respectable, has a better reputation, and their goal really is to be a partner with you.

***JL:** It used to be pretty simple—you either went with a traditional publisher or a vanity press, and you paid the vanity press to produce your book. But now there are so many combinations and types of companies offering publishing services.*

MM: There are so many permutations of publishing. There are also a lot of agents who are starting their own self-publishing services. That’s called agent-assisted publishing. There are agents who find books that they believe in that they can’t find a traditional publisher for, so they are offering publishing packages to the authors. They haven’t been around enough for me to know how well that’s doing. It’s a relatively new method. But I know that is becoming more and more a way that books are getting published.

There’s also what they call author-assisted publishing. That could either be a subsidy publisher, where you buy a package, and it could be pricey and it could be a ripoff, but it might not be. That’s where they edit the book for you and you get a percent of each sale. That method could even include Kindle Direct Publishing, Lulu Press, or Bookmasters.

There are a lot of companies that will offer to design your book and you can either buy the whole package or you can buy it ala cart.

Some of them are fine. Some of them do good work. But have to know how much you're paying for things and make sure to look at the quality. Because sometimes the quality is not there. But sometimes it is. You just have to be careful.

JL: Do your homework.

MM: Yes. I had an author who, as much as I tried to talk him out of it, he had his book designed by [a well-known ebook publisher]. I don't think it cost him much for the design. Initially he only did it as an ebook, and that book won an award. It's called *Mystic Witness* by Larry Alboher. He actually won a global ebooks award, which was through Dan Poynter's organization.

JL: Sounds like he got lucky.

MM: He was really lucky that he ended up with a good product. Overall, if you want a sure thing, you should go with an established entity with a strong reputation that you know is going to do a good job. You want a designer who has a great reputation, that only designs books and not all kinds of other material, who will not treat you as a number and will give you individual advice and consult with you, rather than going to a low-cost service where they may once in a while do a really great job. And that may cost you more than some of the high-profile, low-cost services.

JL: It's not always price, you have to make sure you're getting quality. If you're on a limited budget, you still have to do some serious evaluating of your resources.

MM: That's it. A big benefit of being a self-publisher is that you have that control over every part of your product. I think if you really want to make sure you get the best quality book, you will exercise that at every step. When you go to a company like a KDP or a BookBaby, you're not going to get the individual attention. I think it's best for people to avoid assembly line type situations. Otherwise you're losing part of that control. Even though it seems like you have it, you're really losing part of it.

JL: I've not worked with BookBaby, so I don't know how they operate. But I have published books through KDP for myself and for clients. All they do is the print the book and make it available on Amazon, and they've always done a good job. You need to understand exactly what services they're providing.

MM: Right.

JL: You also need to understand your contract and refuse to accept a low-quality product. Back when traditional publishers were first developing pay-to-publish divisions, I had a client that hired me to write his book and then manage the publishing process. The publisher used a designer that did a terrible job. I really had to fight to get the design changed to something that was decent. But I understood the process and I knew what to do. An author with no publishing experience probably wouldn't.

MM: Exactly.

JL: Years ago there were companies we called vanity presses that were little more than glorified printers. They'd produce a book, send you your several thousand copies, and that was it. How have those companies changed?

MM: I think those companies are what we now call subsidy publishers. They still exist and they're pervasive in self-publishing. They advertise everywhere, the same places that legitimate hybrid companies do. Or companies that are author-assisted. You have to be really careful that you check out the company you're going to publish with.

Some of the big ones are AuthorHouse, Outskirts Press, Balboa Press, iUniverse, Xlibris, Trafford House Publishing—there are quite a few of them, and I'm not the only one to say you should beware of them. It's just that authors often don't know the industry and they don't know how these companies operate. They'll promise you the moon and the stars and charge a lot for it, but they end up holding your book hostage with extremely limiting contracts, where they control everything from the pricing of your book to the distribution. They can choose to sell as many or as few copies as they want. And you have no control over that—even your copyright. And if you want to gain back control of your book, you have to pay through the nose to get out of the contract.

It's just like anything: If their promises sound too good to be true, they probably are. A lot of these companies will have very high-pressure tactics. If somebody is really pressuring you to publish with them, or promising you that you're going to be a bestseller, or say if you don't decide this by today, we're going to pull this price—those people are not good news.

The whole thing is they really don't care about selling your book because they're making their money on the production side. So you end up with no sales. They just want to get a lot of money from you. They'll claim the reason you don't have any sales is because

you're not marketing, or the book isn't getting marketed well enough, so they'll try to aggressively upsell you expensive add-on marketing packages.

A lot of these companies just do really shoddy work. They have shoddy covers, terrible editing and proofreading, anemic book descriptions, poor formatting, incorrect attachment of metadata. They just really don't care about your book. All they care about is extracting as much of your money from you as possible.

***JL:** Are there any good subsidy publishers?*

MM: Not that I know of. At its core, a subsidy publisher is really an author-assisted publisher where you pay for them to help you publish your book, and they do all the production for you, the editing, the design. You can find other companies like that that will help you do that, and are fine, as long as you make sure they're doing a quality job. But the difference is that a subsidy publisher really does not have the author at heart. Their whole point is to get money from you, to just take it and not do anything.

And if you've signed away your copyright, you're stuck. That's why it's really important that you don't give your copyright to anyone else. It's important that you keep your own copyright. A lot of these companies are going to try to take your copyright because they want complete control over your book so that you have to pay them money to do anything else with it.

***JL:** Many traditional publishers have added divisions that are essentially subsidy publishers. What's going on in that arena?*

MM: It's economics. Many traditional publishers have purchased or merged with subsidy companies. The biggest and most notorious is Penguin Random House, which now owns AuthorHouse, which is nothing more than a subsidy publisher. It's a win-win for both companies.

Traditional publishers have realized that having these imprints is a fantastic way to make additional revenue on books that they wouldn't take on through traditional means. And the subsidy publisher gets more customers because being connected with a traditional publishing company gives them legitimacy in unwary authors' eyes.

***JL:** What's the difference between using a subsidy publisher that you pay and who does everything for you verses self-publishing, where you do it all yourself, hire various services and pay for all of that?*

MM: Other than potentially in terms of quality, because subsidy publishes often do shoddy work, the difference is that it will cost a lot more to use a subsidy publisher. They charge a lot for these services. Also there's the loss of control. With a subsidy publisher, you think you have control, but you don't.

JL: So pure self-publishing is more work for you, but you have more control, you can control your costs, quality, everything about the process.

MM: Right. You get to control the quality, you can control the design, you can control the title, pricing, distribution. You have a lot more control when you self-publish. And it does take you more time if you're doing it on your own. Of course, there are ways to alleviate that as well. You can hire a project manager such as myself to do all that for you if you lack the time. But even if you don't hire a project manager, it may take you more time to manage it yourself, but you'll end up with a much better product.

You have to know: Do you have that control? Are you paying too much money? Are you getting that quality?

JL: How can authors avoid getting ripped off by these companies?

MM: I recently read a really good blog by Helen Sedwick, who is an author and an attorney, that listed seven questions to ask before choosing a self-publishing company. She says these questions will help you identify which companies will give you the greatest control over the process and result. You should be able to answer the first six by looking at the companies' websites. The last question may take a little more research.

Here are the questions she recommends asking and her explanation for how to evaluate the answers:

1. What is the lowest retail price you may set for your book? Some companies control the retail price of your print book and set it unrealistically high. One company claims its high pricing is author-friendly because it increases potential royalties. Forget it. You may have a terrific book, perfectly edited, with a beautiful cover and interior, but if it is priced at \$20 alongside bestsellers priced at \$15, \$12, or \$8, no one will buy it. To market your book successfully, the price must be competitive. Stay away from any company that will price your book out of the market. You should control the retail price of your book. Period.

2. What is the author price for your book (the price you pay per copy)? You will be buying a lot of books and giving them away to reviewers, bloggers, friends and family,

or reselling them at readings, conferences, and through your website. Use a company that will sell your books to you at a reasonable price. Companies that set high retail prices typically offer to give their authors a scrawny 30 percent discount. So if they price your book at \$19.95, you will pay \$13.96 per copy, plus another \$2 to \$3 for shipping and handling. That's ridiculous. Traditional publishers typically set the price of authors' copies at a discount off the retail price, but in that case, you haven't paid the publisher to produce your book.

For a subsidy or author-assisted publisher, the author price should be the actual printing costs plus a reasonable markup (15-20 percent) and not a discount from the retail price. Why pay more for your copies because the company sets the retail price at \$20 instead of \$10? The printing costs are the same. You will have already paid the company hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars for design, editorial, and marketing services.

A company that sets a high retail price for your book is *not* expecting to make money by selling it to the public. They are going to make money selling it to you at a high author price.

3. What royalties will you earn? You should be able to calculate your royalties online by using different trim sizes, pages and retail pricing. Be suspicious of any company that did not have a royalty calculator on its website. If the website states that pricing, royalties and such cannot be determined until your manuscript is reviewed or formatted (and typically after you have given them your credit card number and paid a nonrefundable amount), keep going somewhere else.

4. Is the agreement exclusive or non-exclusive? You should never give a company exclusive rights to your work. And no options on any other works, formats, movie rights, subsidiary rights, either. These companies are not traditional publishers that have invested capital in your book and want to protect that investment. They are service providers only and are not entitled to exclusive rights or options.

You might not be able to answer this question without looking at the company's contract. A reputable one will post its contract online. Avoid any company that will not release its contract until you sign up.

5. Is it easy to terminate the agreement? You should have the right to terminate the relationship, with no more than 30 days' notice delivered via email. None of this certified mail, return receipt nonsense. After termination, the company may have the right to sell off

its existing inventory, but that's it. It should *not* have the right to continue to print and sell your book, even if the right is non-exclusive.

6. Will you get production-ready files upon termination? If you terminate, the company should give you the final production-ready files of your cover and interior at no or low cost. Not PDFs of your print-ready files, but the actual, functional production files in Adobe InDesign. If you move your book to a new printer without the production-ready files, you'll have to create new files at considerable cost. It is outrageous for company to hold onto these files after you've paid for the design, editing, and layout work. You own the product and should control it.

7. What is the reputation of the company? Go to websites like [Predators & Editors](#), [Absolute Write Water Cooler](#), and [Writers Beware](#) and search for information about the company. Reviews may be available at [The Independent Publishing Magazine](#) site.

Every company will have its share of unhappy customers, so sort through the complaints to get a sense of which ones are legitimate. If you find multiple reports from unhappy customers, stay far away.

Note: To read the full text of Helen Sedwick's blog, go to

<https://www.thebookdesigner.com/2014/06/7-questions-to-ask-before-choosing-a-self-publishing-company/>.

Before you self-publish, read: [*The Simple Facts About Self-Publishing: What indie publishers need to know to produce a great book*](#) by Jacquelyn Lynn.

Finding Self-Publishing Resources

JL: It's unlikely that the average individual, especially a first-time author, would have the skills to take a book through the entire process from concept to published. What sort of help are they likely to need and where do they start looking for it? Let's say they've decided that they want to avoid the subsidy publishers, they don't have an existing platform, they've

only got a small email list or none at all, and a major publisher wouldn't take them on. What help are they going to need to get their first book out there?

MM: To get your first book out there, you're going to need a variety of contractors to help you. You're going to need an editor, you're going to need a cover designer and an interior designer. That's not always the same person. It frequently is, but it doesn't have to be.

You're going to need a proofreader, an indexer, and I would suggest that you also get a copywriter—somebody who is experienced in writing back cover copy, which is the description of your book. I have a lot of clients who want to try and save money there, and they write it themselves and then I edit it, but I don't think that's a good idea. It takes a real professional to do this. Sometimes people think they don't need that because their book may not end up in a bookstore, but a lot of people do read that copy on Amazon, because you can look at the back cover on Amazon. A lot of times that's also the description that you end up using on Amazon. So the back cover copy is really important. Just like the cover is important because it makes that powerful first impression, a lot of people read that description and if it doesn't immediately grab them, they're going to move on. It takes a special talent to be able to describe your book in a way that will grab people.

You'll also probably need help with marketing. You can do it yourself, but you still need to have resources. Or you need a marketing person, a public relations person or a publicist, if you want to hire that out.

JL: Where do you find those resources? Or even a project manager who might be able to find them for you? Talk about what a book project manager can do for you and how that is different from a subsidy publisher.

MM: To answer your question about a project manager: They go under different titles, it might be under project manager, you can also look under book shepherds. But this is basically somebody that guides you through the self-publishing process. You can do it all on your own but a lot of people don't have the time, because it takes a lot of time to find these various people and to manage them, and if you're running a successful business or you're doing your book part-time and you work full-time, you may not have the time to do everything yourself. Or your time may be better spent doing other things besides managing your book's production process. So having a book shepherd or project manager to help you, to guide you through the process, takes a lot of the detail work away and lets you focus

on the big picture. They will tell you exactly what you need to be doing at each step, or they will actually do everything for you.

If you don't have the time or aren't confident that you can figure it all out yourself, you could pay a project manager or book shepherd to manage the whole process. They will find all of the contractors you need for you. They'll find you an editor, they'll find you a designer, indexer, and these will be people that you can trust, if you vetted the project manager and you know that they work with good quality people. The people that I work with, I've worked with for over 20 years, and I know that they do very good work, they're reliable and they have the author's interest at heart.

Then, generally, all you have to do is approve each step. You approve the editing, you approve the cover, you approve the interior design. So it takes a lot of the pressure off of you.

***JL:** What advice do you have for how an author can find a reputable project manager?*

MM: There are a lot of charlatans out there taking advantage of neophytes. Too often they look for the cheapest, fastest route, and they use vendors who don't have proven track records. Many project managers don't really have the experience to shepherd a book to success. Many of them are people who wrote and self-published a book, learned a bit along the way, then decided they could tell everybody else how to create a book. So, as they say, buyer beware—make sure you've done your due diligence to ensure the shepherd has the experience to back up their claims.

Along with experience, rapport is also a factor. Interview a few and make sure you have a connection. Do you feel comfortable speaking with them? Do they talk above you, or do they take time to explain things? Ask them to explain about their service.

***JL:** What sort of questions should you ask when you're interviewing project managers?*

MM: Ask each shepherd you interview the same series of questions so you can compare. Some basic questions you should ask are:

- How much do you charge, and when are payments due?
- What is included in your fee?
- What is your background?
- Can I see some samples of the work you've done in my genre?
- Can I speak with you on the phone, or will correspondence be mostly through email? If via phone, is there a consultation fee?

- Will I be working directly with the freelancers, or will everything go through you?
- What are the hours I can reach you?
- Will you give me a selection of editors and designers, or do I have to go with one of your choosing?

Of course, also ask for references and check them.

A good project manager will also ask you some initial questions to make sure you're ready for prime time before you sign on the dotted line. Be prepared to answer questions about:

- Genre?
- Book synopsis?
- Target audience?
- Word count?
- Time-frame or desired launch date?
- How do you intend to market and distribute your book?
- Why are you qualified to write the book?
- Who is your competition (other books, websites, blogs)?

***JL:** How much do project managers typically charge?*

MM: There are a variety of fee structures:

- Tiered flat-rate service packages, which include a project management fee, while fees for each service are opaque.
- A percentage is tacked onto the total project cost to cover project management.
- Hourly.
- Each portion of the project, including project management, is charged as a flat fee, itemized, and transparent.

Typically, you do not have to pay the whole fee upfront. It's usually due in portions, like 50 percent in advance, with the balance due upon printing. Or you pay in thirds. Or you pay as each vendor completes their portion, like editing, then cover design, then proofreading, etc.

***JL:** Where do you find project managers?*

MM: There are a lot of ways to find good project managers, even if you don't have a lot of connections in the publishing industry. They include:

- Referrals and word-of-mouth. If you know people who have published a book, ask if they used a project manager and if they were happy with the service.
- Social media platforms.
- LinkedIn. Join groups, like the Book Publishing Professionals or the Independent Book Publishers Association. Ask for referrals or trawl the Q&As and look at the profiles of the shepherds who are influencers or whose responses you like.
- Twitter. Follow project managers and see if you like them, or other book professionals and ask for referrals.
- Association membership lists. Join national and local editorial groups and look at their membership lists or go to the meetings. A few of the groups I recommend are Editorial Freelancers Association, San Diego Professional Editors Network (SD/PEN); your Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) local chapter; and MediaBistro. If you want to publish a book, you should join one anyway for the wealth of information you'll get.
- Writer's or publishing conferences or Book Publishing University, hosted by the IBPA every year.

JL: Just to clarify: If you use a project manager, you still have full control, unlike with the subsidy publishers or even a traditional or hybrid publisher where you don't really have the final decision.

MM: Right.

JL: Earlier you mentioned finding an indexer. How important is indexing?

MM: It depends on the book. I think most nonfiction books need an index. Again, a lot of self-publishers try to save money there by not including an index. It isn't the cheapest thing to do. But I think that it's just another service that adds value for your readers. A lot of nonfiction books have a lot different topics in them, and an index will help the readers so they can find information easily after they've read it. They don't have to try and find it again in the book.

JL: I think if it's a reference style, how-to kind of book, then you need an index. If it's more of a rah-rah, motivational book, I would think that the index would be less important.

MM: Right.

***JL:** I also read somewhere that if you're looking to avoid doing an index, one way to compensate for that is to do a detailed table of contents. Rather than just your chapter tiles, include all your subtitles and that kind of thing. So the table of contents almost works as an index.*

MM: You could that. It's not as detailed as a complete index. But a key point to this whole discussion is to help people decide which route they want to go. If you decide you want to go the self-publishing route and you want it to be successful, as we've said, you really have to make it professional. Part of being a professional book is having an index.

***JL:** Let's talk about finding and working with good service providers. Sometimes a publishing-related service provider such as a ghostwriter, editor, designer, marketer, whatever, isn't trying to scam you, but they just aren't very good or they're not a good match for your project. How do you find the quality providers? How do you vet them, and then then if there's a problem, how do you deal with it? Anybody can put themselves out there and say, "I'm an editor, I'm a ghostwriter, I design book covers." How do you know who are the good ones?*

MM: Something else you have to be careful about is that there are people who have published one book and decide they can hang out their shingle as a book publishing consultant. They think now they have this great system that they can tell other people how to do it. And now all of a sudden they're a book shepherd. But just because you've published one book does not make you qualified to do that for others.

Where you find good people is in other reputable situations. You can either find them from a referral, from somebody else who has worked with them. And that's a great way. Or you can go to LinkedIn, there are a lot of great publisher communities there, like the book publishers forum. You can troll around in there, ask questions and see what people recommend, and then investigate them. There are a lot of professional associations that offer referrals to their members. For example, the Editorial Freelancers Association is a great place to find a qualified editor. The Independent Book Publishers Association has a supplier and services database on their website. That's the two primary ways to find publishing service providers, either a referral or going through a professional organization.

***JL:** How would you answer this: I'm hiring a ghostwriter, a topnotch ghostwriter and I'm paying a lot of money for this person. Why do I need an editor?*

MM: Even the best writers need editors. You need somebody objective to look at the manuscript. When you have a book edited, it goes through various stages. A lot of times it will go through an editor who might be a developmental editor, which means they're looking at the whole picture, and they might be changing the organization around, they might be rewriting paragraphs. Then it goes through a copy editor who just does line editing. Then a proofreader, who is looking at the very small details, looking for grammar and punctuation errors.

Each time it goes through one of these stages, somebody else is looking for something different, and you can't come up with a really great quality book if you just have one person looking at it or if the writer tries to edit it himself. Because there are things that are going to be missed. And in many cases, big things that will reflect poorly on you.

JL: Let's talk about audiobooks. What do authors who want to have an audio version of their book need to know about finding production sources?

MM: I would just say be careful. I've been to seminars and workshops on audiobooks and they try to tell you that you have to hire award-winning people to produce your book. It sounds like it is a really pricey proposition because they make you think that you have to hire these really pricey people, but you do *not* have to do that.

On the other hand, a lot of people think that they can do it themselves and I would caution people not to do that, because it's very difficult to produce a professional-sounding book. You can either go through ACX and have them produce it for them and you can independently hire the voice talent and an audiobook producer to do it for you. I have somebody that I work with who is wonderful and doesn't cost a lot of money.

JL: If you have problem with one of your service providers, how do you deal with it?

MM: If you run into a problem with a subsidy publisher, you're in a pickle. A lot of times, you have to go to a lawyer to take care of that. If you're just working with a designer, then you need to make sure that you have a contract that addresses what happens if there's a dispute. You can try talking to the person and see if they will be reasonable on their own, if they've done something that you don't agree with. And hopefully you'll be able to resolve it by just talking. Of course you want to do that first, but if you can't resolve it that way, you may have to escalate to legal action. That's why you need to make sure that you have a contract in place that will protect you.

JL: *I've had clients who didn't want to bother with the contract. They thought it was good enough to just accept my proposal, which basically just covers the price and scope of work, but not the details. This was an issue I discussed with Suzanne Meehle, who is the attorney I spoke with for the Conversations book, [Is Your Website Legal? How To Be Sure Your Website Won't Get You Sued, Shut Down or in Other Trouble](#). We talked about how important it was to have a contract that addresses issues such who owns intellectual property like your website design and copy, and how you will resolve disputes. The same principles apply to dealing with service providers who help you self-publish your book.*

MM: Never let anybody talk you into not having a contract. You just never know. People seem really friendly and you think that nothing will ever happen because they seem like a good guy, or whatever. But you just never know. It's just always better to have that protection.

I've been fortunate that there's only been one time when I had to remind a supplier of the contract. The author wasn't happy with one of my vendors and I had to pull out the contract and remind her that she'd signed it. It was fortunate for me that I had the contract and was able to do that.

JL: *Any advice for new authors in the area of promotion that we haven't already talked about?*

MM: Like I said, you can either do it yourself or you can go and have a marketing firm or a publicist do it for you. Having somebody else do it could be very expensive. Most publicists will charge you in the range of \$3,000-\$6,000 for six months. And there's no guarantee that you're going to get your investment out of it. Shop around. There are marketing firms and publicist companies that are set up specifically for self-publishers. And you can get a deal with them—you can purchase things ala cart or you can maybe only pay for three months. Also you can get into a situation where you pay by the promotion. Say you just want somebody to promote a certain campaign for you. It's an ala cart thing. And there are different companies that do that.

In terms of doing it yourself, there are plenty of opportunities and places you can get information to do it yourself. One great source is John Kremer; he's the guru of do-it-yourself book marketing. His website is www.bookmarket.com. He wrote a book called *1001 Ways to Market Your Book*.

Another thing I suggest you join the [Independent Book Publishers Association](#), because they have a lot of webinars that are really inexpensive. If you're a member, they're just \$19 each. And you'll get great information. There's a woman named Amy Collins who keeps up with the best ways to sell your books on Amazon. I just listened to one of her webinars the other day through IBPA, and it had really, really valuable information. If you went to hear her speak, you would pay hundreds of dollars. Through the IBPA, too, you get all kinds of discounts. You not only get the education, you get all kinds of discounts on ISBNs, printers and all types of other vendors. It's really helpful. They have a two-day conference you can attend every year, you'll get scads of information. They also have chapters all over the country.

The more you talk to people, the more different ways you'll find to promote your book.

Cost of Self-Publishing

JL: We've talked about the fact that it costs money to produce a quality self-published book. What can an author expect to spend on things like cover design, interior design, editing?

MM: It varies so much. You could go to Fiverr or 99designs and get a cover for \$99.

JL: And it will look like a cover that you bought for \$99.

MM: For a competitive cover from a quality designer, you can spend anywhere from \$600 on the low end to \$3,500 if you want a designer who is award-winning. A middle ground probably about \$1,500 for a competitive cover. I work with people of all budgets, and you can get a good cover for \$600-\$950.

The thing you have to be careful of is that the more artwork you add to the cover, the more expensive it is. The more complex the cover is, if you want a specific photo or you need an original illustration, all those things make the cover cost more. The same with the interior.

JL: What are the ranges for interior design?

MM: Interior design can range from about \$5 up to \$17 per page. A lot of people, if you work with them, will give you a flat rate for the book. Probably a middle ground would be around \$8 a page.

Be careful and make sure you know what you're asking for. Some designers add on for different things. Some also charge not just per page, which they call a composition rate, for page composition, which means just flowing in the text and designing each page, they also charge a design fee at the outset. Which means they're charging you a separate fee to come up with that initial design and then to put your manuscript into the design.

Then cost of editing can vary. The most important thing with editing is make sure that you're getting the type of editing that you need. Because a lot of people aren't familiar with what each level of editing involves, they think they just need proofreading but they actually need more than that. Find an editor who will give you a free sample edit. I offer a free sample edit of five pages. That lets my clients see what kind of work I do and it helps me determine what level of editing that you need so I can create a proposal and price for you.

If you're talking about developmental editing, which is the highest level of editing, which is when you're looking at the book as a whole and doing everything from organizing to rewriting entire paragraphs, the cost of that is a lot higher than it is for if somebody is already a really good writer, like you are, Jackie, and who just needs copyediting or line editing. With copyediting or line editing, they're not reorganizing your book. They don't need to help you write transitions. They're just correcting grammar and punctuation, making sure the style is consistent and maybe they're rewriting awkward sentences.

Then there's proofreading, which is looking for formatting mistakes, or correcting grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes.

The cost of all those things can really vary. Developmental editing can run anywhere from \$50 to \$100 an hour. Of course, you need to ask anyone you're considering working with how many hours they estimate they're going to spend on your project if they quote you an hourly rate.

A good place to go to get competitive rate information so you have a basis to start from in your negotiations, and so you know whether someone is too far off the mark, is go to the Editorial Freelancers Association. They have a [page that has rates on it](#). And it will cover everything including copyediting, proofreading, research, ghostwriting, web editing, manuscript evaluation—it covers the gamut and it will give you the low and the high end of what people are charging. So at least you know whether someone you're considering is in the ballpark of the going rates in the market.

***JL:** Taking a look at that can help you plan your initial budget, too. I've asked people what their budget is and they have no idea because they don't know what the costs are.*

MM: Right. Do a little research before you start contacting people so you have some type of budget in mind, so that you're not wasting your time or the time of the contractor that you're speaking to. I've gotten calls from people who didn't want to share their budget upfront. But if you only have \$1,000 to work with, you're not going to get an 80,000-word book edited for that.

JL: I think a lot of times the reason people don't want to tell you their budget is that they think you'll automatically come in with a fee that will take up the entire budget. But legitimate professional service providers don't ask what your budget is because they want to charge you more or come in at the high end of what you're willing to spend. They need to know if you've got a realistic picture of what you'll need to spend to get the whole project done. Also it helps guide them in saying, "If you're budget is only this much, this is how much I can do for you."

MM: Which brings up a point I think is important. If a contractor you're interested in working with comes back with price that's too high, talk to that person before you go to someone else. I've had people go to someone else because they thought the price I quoted was too high. But going with the low price is not always the smartest decision. The cheaper service may not be as good and you won't get the quality you want.

If you want to work with a particular provider but you can't afford the fee they quoted, be honest. Talk to them. You might be able to work something out. Maybe you can have them work up to a certain number of hours and see where you are. Or maybe the person will work on installments, getting paid as the project moves along. Or maybe the person can reduce some of the work to lower the cost. The point is, talk to them. Ask what they can do. Remember that the cheapest person isn't necessarily the best person for the job, and your book is a reflection of you.

I've had clients who came to me because they went with the cheapest person and that person didn't do a good job, and now the client is coming to me to fix it. And they're going to end up spending more than they would have if they had just gone to somebody who was a professional who did quality work in the first place.

As with any purchase, it's buyer beware. Do your homework. Be sure you know what you're getting for what you're paying.

JL: Before we wrap up, do you have any final thoughts?

MM: Which way you decide to go—self-publishing, traditional publishing or one of the hybrid variations—depends on what your goals are, how much time you have, how much money you want to spend, and how much control you want.

If you're the type of person who is absolutely insistent and your dream is to be published by a traditional publisher, and you're willing to wait the time it takes, go for it. I worked with a lawyer one time, he was a lawyer with a big law firm, and he had all the money in the world to be able to self-publish, he could have sold lots of books on his own, and I told him that. But he really wanted to have that panache of having a traditional publisher's imprint on the spine of his book. That was really important to him.

If you don't want to wait and you want the most control over your book, and you have the money to invest in quality publishing and getting a quality editor, designer, and so forth—because those services aren't cheap—then self-publishing is the way you want to go. Because you get to control everything from the title to the content to who you're going to market it to, and you also get all of the profits.

If you decide to take the self-publishing route, I encourage you to join the [Independent Book Publishers Association \(IBPA\)](#). It's a great organization, it doesn't cost a lot, and you'll get valuable information and contacts.

JL: Just in the last few years, we've seen huge changes in the independent publishing industry. What are your predictions for the future?

MM: I think it is going to continue to go in the direction that it is—it's going to grow and become more professional. More and more authors will turn to independent publishing and the lines between indie and traditional publishing will be more and more blurred. There are going to be more avenues, more choices for authors to get their books published and there's going to be less to distinguish between indie published and traditionally published books.

Thanks for reading *Get Your Book Published: How to Choose Between Self-publishing, Traditional Publishing or Pay-to-publish Options*. If you found the information valuable, please take a moment to leave an honest review on Amazon, Goodreads, or the online review site of your choice.

Check out the special offer from Marla Markman which follows the “Terms You Should Know” section.

Terms You Should Know

CIP: The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity.

Copyediting: A type of editing that generally checks the work for accuracy and consistency in punctuation, spelling, grammatical structure, style, etc. Light copyediting is also known as baseline editing (spelling, grammar, punctuation, usage). Medium to heavy copyediting includes baseline editing plus changing texts and headings where appropriate; flagging ambiguous or incorrect statements; checking previews, summaries and end-of-chapter questions for accurate reflection of content; eliminating wordiness and inappropriate jargon, smoothing transitions, moving sentences to improve readability, and sometimes even rewriting.

Copyright: A form of protection provided by the laws of the United States for “original works of authorship”, including literary, dramatic, musical, architectural, cartographic, choreographic, pantomimic, pictorial, graphic, sculptural, and audiovisual creations. “Copyright” literally means the right to copy but has come to mean that body of exclusive rights granted by law to copyright owners for protection of their work. Copyright protection does not extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, title, principle, or discovery. Similarly, names, titles, short phrases, slogans, familiar symbols, mere variations of typographic ornamentation, lettering, coloring, and listings of contents or ingredients are not subject to copyright.

Copyright notice: The copyright notice consists of three elements. They are the “c” in a circle (©), the year of first publication, and the name of the owner of copyright. A copyright notice is no longer legally required to secure copyright on works first published on or after March 1, 1989, but it does provide legal benefits.

Developmental editing: A type of editing done before or during the production of a manuscript, generally in the area of nonfiction writing, to help the author develop ideas into a coherent, readable work. The developmental editor may help plan the book’s organization, features and other aspects of the project.

Ghostwriter: A person who writes material (articles, books, blogs, etc.) for someone else who is the named author. The ghostwriter may or may not receive credit in the publication.

Independent (indie) publisher: A self-publisher, author-publisher, do-it-yourself publisher or traditional publisher not affiliated with any large corporation or conglomerate.

International Standard Book Number (ISBN): A 13-digit number assigned by standard book numbering agencies to control and facilitate activities within the publishing industry.

Line editing: A type of editing that addresses the quality of the prose, removes unnecessary repetition, restructures sentences and paragraphs to improve the flow, checks word usage, checks for style, consistency, flow and tone.

Literary agent: A professional agent who acts on behalf of an author in dealing with publishers and others involved in promoting the author's work.

Print-on-demand (POD): A printing technology and business process in which copies of a book or other document are not printed until an order has been received. This allows books to be printed one at a time or in small quantities.

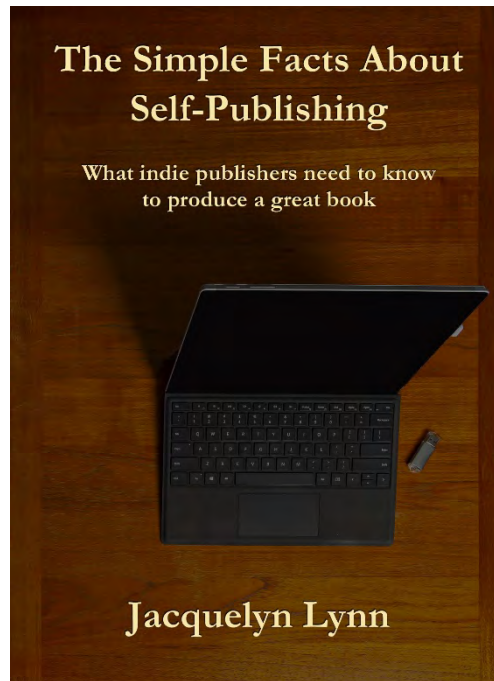
Remainder: To dispose of a book that has been left unsold after a period of time at a reduced price.

Royalty: A sum of money paid to an author for each copy of a book sold.

A Special Offer from Marla Markman

Indie Publishing Step-by-Step

In this special report, Marla Markman walks you through the process of self-publishing. [Tap here](#) to download your free copy now.



[Go here to get your copy on Amazon](#)

What does it take to publish a quality book that will delight your audience and meet your goals?

The Simple Facts About Self-Publishing: What indie publishers need to know to produce a great book explains:

- The three primary paths to publishing and how to choose the one that will work best for you
- The most common mistakes self-publishers make and how to avoid them
- How to produce a book that will look as good or better than the ones from top traditional publishers
- How to identify and protect your book
- How to find the best service providers to help you write, produce, and publish your book

- What resources are available to support indie publishers and how to find them
- How to use your book as a marketing tool
- And much more!

[Go here to get your copy on Amazon](#)

For an updated list of resources Jacquelyn Lynn uses and recommends, visit:

[CreateTeachInspire.com/resources](#)

About Jacquelyn Lynn



JACQUELYN LYNN is an independent publisher and the author or ghostwriter of more than 35 books, including *Choices*, the first novel in the Joyful Cup Story series; *Finding Joy in the Morning: You can make it through the night*; and *Words to Work By: 31 devotions for the workplace based on the book of Proverbs*. She is also the co-creator of a series of Christian coloring books for adults.

Use the links below to connect with Jacquelyn Lynn:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Subscribe to email news](#)

Copyright © 2019 by **Jacquelyn Lynn**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed or transmitted in any form or by any means, without prior written permission.

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher and author are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

Cover Design: Jerry D. Clement

Production: Tusawilla Creative Services, LLC

Tusawilla Creative Services, LLC

P. O. Box 1501

Goldenrod, FL 32733-1501

www.CreateTeachInspire.com

Get Your Book Published: How to Choose Between Self-publishing, Traditional Publishing or Pay-to-publish Options / Jacquelyn Lynn. -- 2st ed.

ISBN: 978-1-941826-34-8