

SELF-PUBLISHING CHECKLIST

A road map to guide your self-publishing journey

TheSelfPublishingCoach.com

Finalize the Manuscript

- ☐ Hire an editor
- ☐ Receive the editor's changes and apply the ones you agree with
- ☐ Hire a proofreader
- ☐ Receive the proofreader's changes and apply them
 - Now you've got a clean manuscript – *do not* make changes or additions after this point
- ☐ Create front matter
 - Copyright page
 - Get an ISBN (optional)
 - Decide if you'll have a dedication
- ☐ Create back matter
 - Write an About the Author page with your bio
 - Write an Acknowledgements page (if you choose)
 - Do you have other books? Create an Also By the Author list
 - Anything else you want to have at the back of the book? An author's note? A glossary (for non-fiction)? A thank you page that directs the reader to your website?
- ☐ Write a description of the book
 - You will use this at all the online retailers as well as on the back of your book (if you publish a paperback or hardback) and on your website, if you have one
 - Tip: Go to books in your genre and see how their book descriptions (also called a blurb) have been written
 - What do they focus on? How to they create interest for the reader?

Prepare for Publication

- ☐ Format the book or hire a formatter
 - You'll likely need two versions, one for ebook and one for paperback
 - For ebooks I put the copyright page at the back so that it doesn't take up space in the Look Inside area
- ☐ Have a cover designer create a cover
 - If you are doing both an ebook and a paperback (recommended) you'll need a cover for both.
 - The ebook cover is the thumbnail image you see at the online retailers
 - The paperback cover has a front, back and spine
 - You'll tell the designer what 'trim size' you'd like the book to be, i.e., how big the book will be. Common trim sizes are 5" x 8", 5.5" x 8.5", 5.25" x 8", 6" x 9".

- You'll give the cover designer a page count so that they know how wide the spine should be
- The cover needs to SCREAM that it is part of the genre it belongs to so do some research about what covers look like in your genre and give the designer some examples of what you're looking for
- ☐ Acquire an ISBN number (optional)
 - If you decide to do this, you will need one for the ebook and one for the paperback
- ☐ If you are outside the US, you'll want to get an ITN number so that the online retailers don't withhold 30% of your revenue
- ☐ Decide on 7 keywords for your book
 - Keywords are the words or phrases a reader would use when they are searching for a book to read, i.e., female sleuths, or books about Vancouver, or sci-fi thriller
 - 'Keywords' is a bit of a misnomer, they should really be called 'key phrases' because a keyword can be more than one word, as in the examples above. For example, 'female sleuths' is one keyword.
- ☐ Give some thought to the categories the book will go into
 - These are similar to keywords but each online vendor has a specific set of categories, so you have to choose from pre-selected ones, i.e., mystery, thriller, memoir etc.
- ☐ What will the price of your book be?
 - Do some research into books similar to yours and what independent authors are charging
 - Note that traditional publishers tend to charge far more (especially for ebooks) than indie publishers charge
 - You will have an ebook price and a paperback price
 - The paperback price will depend on how much it costs to print a copy of your book. The online retailer will give you this information when you upload the book files
- ☐ Decide if you're going to use expanded or limited distribution on Amazon

Publish Your Book!

- ☐ In order to take advantage of advertising/merchandising opportunities, many indie authors do the following:
 - Publish directly to Amazon
 - Publish directly to Kobo
 - Use an aggregator to publish to all other retailers (Barnes and Noble, Google, Overdrive, Scribd, Tolino etc.)
 - My recommended aggregator is Draft2Digital.com
- ☐ So you'll need several author dashboards – one at each of these locations
 - Or not! You could use an aggregator like Draft2Digital for all sites – up to you
- ☐ Create an account at the sites you wish to publish directly to
- ☐ Fill in all the fields with the information you've collected / created from the steps above
- ☐ You'll need your author bio to include on these dashboards
- ☐ Upload your ebook (EPUB file) and print (PDF) files as well as your cover files

- ☐ Set your pricing
 - Tip: Don't let the system automatically set the international prices
 - Manually go through and using a currency converter like xe.com figure out the closest price for the various international sites and round up or down to \$x.99
- ☐ Press publish!
- ☐ It will take 24 to 48 hours for the site(s) to approve your book and make it live. (It might take less time but always allow for at least a day's wait.)
- ☐ Once that happens, I recommend buying a copy of the ebook to get the algorithms working
- ☐ You'll also likely want a proof copy of the paperback to double-check for any formatting errors
- ☐ Pro Tip: Create an Author Central account at Amazon, set up your bio with an image, info about you and a link to your blog, if you want. Then claim your book so that your author page and book are linked.

Congratulations! You're a published author!!

P.S. Confused? Stuck? Wanting more support on your publishing journey?

No problem! I can help with that.

I offer custom fitted coaching sessions for authors wanting support on the publishing journey. Email me – alexandra@theselfpublishingcoach.com – to set up your complimentary 30-minute consultation.

I also offer ebook and paperback formatting.

Alexandra Amor
TheSelfPublishingCoach.com