Publishing E-Books For Dummies

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Publish, market, and sell your own e-book Although creating an e-book seems fairly straightforward, it is not. You need to select and create a variety of formats that will be read on a variety of e-reader devices--and market and sell your book in a variety of ways. Before you take the plunge, get this practical guide. With clear instruction and sensible advice, it will help you navigate the often confusing, time-consuming, and costly world of self-publishing an e-book. The book gives you solid marketing tips for selling your e-book, including using blogging and social media and how to build an online platform. It also discusses key technologies you'll encounter, including Smashwords, iBooks Author, Amazon, Microsoft Word, Open Office, Calibre, WordPress, E-junkie, and others.

Helps readers navigate the confusing, time-consuming, and often costly world of self-publishing an e-book Provides both technical how-tos as well solid marketing advice on how to sell your e-book using Facebook, Twitter, Goodreads, and other social media sites Covers essential technologies, such as Smashwords, iBooks Author, Amazon, Microsoft Word, Open Office, Calibre, WordPress, and E-junkie Explores e-book devices, including Kindle, Kobo, Sony Reader, Nook, iPad, and other tablets Delves into the nitty-gritty of e-book formats Before you self-publish your e-book, start first with Publishing eBooks For Dummies.

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From Reader Review Publishing E-Books For Dummies for online ebook

Fey Truet says

This book has been a tremendous help to me. If you're an unpublished author and want to publish--but don't know whether you should step left or right--then consider letting Ali Luke lead you out of the ignorance of having no direction.

Basically, she's been there and done that, and the one who has had no experience that has experienced is probably the one you should listen to. Luke takes us step-by-step through self-publishing as she knows it. She gives us helpful sites, hints, and must know knowledge. From where she starts you, you can navigate and make your own way.

Thank you Ali Luke. You're an inspiration and big help to us all.

Lacey Louwagie says

I found this book to be superior to APE: Author, Publisher, Entrepreneur. How to Publish a Book as a handbook for self-publishing, and it was indispensable as I worked on the release of Rumpled, especially in the technical aspects of preparing a clean and professional file. Like most "for dummies" or "idiot's guide" books, this one is not necessarily compelling reading if you're going to sit down and read it straight through, but it offers valuable and easy-to-follow instructions for various aspects of publishing e-books, from securing cover art to preparing the file to marketing. It also takes into account that many writers may be on a tight budget and offers lower-cost alternatives while not downplaying the importance of professionalism.

While the encouraging tone is reassuring, one of my main criticisms of the book is that I think it sugar coats the reality of self publishing a little bit, setting high expectations with the rare authors who have made it really "big" going this route. I think it would be easy for inexperienced authors to have an inflated expectation of their success. Still, those who have read this book probably have a slight advantage over those who don't, and I would recommend it without hesitation to anyone planning to publish an ebook. Read it quick, though, because technology changes fast and I expect it may be out of date before too long.

Kayla Marie says

This is one of those great books that you don't have to sit down and read from cover to cover, although you can do that also! The sections are separated in a way that you can skip to the ones that are the most helpful for you and go back to them later when you need them. This book contains a lot of information for people who are publishing their first book as well as seasoned authors who are looking for tips to sell more copies of their self-published books. The information provided can also be used for print versions of your book as well.

This book has extensive information about marketing your book and gaining a fan base, although I think if you were to follow all of its advice, you may not have much time left over for writing, especially if you have

another job and other responsibilities. That being said, the information is laid out clearly in a way that is easy to understand and you can pick and choose which marketing tips to try depending on what your own personal definition of success is.

Frank McAdam says

I had already read Publishing E-Books for Dummies by Ali Luke early last year when first planning to publish a novel online. I was then at work on another piece of fiction with which I have since grown dissatisfied and decided to shelve. At that time, however, I found Luke's book extremely informative and so decided to reread it in its entirety when recently preparing my novel New York Sonata for placement on Amazon.

In spite of its obnoxious title (how I loathe paying money to a publisher that refers to its customers as "dummies"), Publishing E-Books is actually as comprehensive a guide as one could hope for when initially approaching Amazon and other self-publishing sites. Luke's style is thoroughly engaging and easy to read as she guides the novice writer in this often confusing task. She offers a number of strategies and tips I probably would never have thought of on my own.

The bottom line is that I'd strongly recommend this book to any writer considering self-publishing an ebook for the first time. It is a great help in understanding what's involved and in simplifying the entire procedure. The chapters regarding Amazon are alone worth the purchase price.

Tyshawn Knight says

This book is excellent and reading it has been a jump start to my writing career. This is the book that explained to me the proper way in which I could use www.goodreads.com to market my books. Previously I thought of goodreads as a fun site to keep track of my reading and to discover books to read. Now I plan to use goodreads to promote my writing.

I am not sure if I will venture into the world of e-books. I am old fashioned and like the feel of pages in my hand. I may stick to publishing actual books instead of electronic media. However, more and more people are moving to e-books, therefore I might be a fool if I don't publish my books electronically.

Yet, even if I do decide to stick to actual paper and ink, this book has clearly told me how to market my book by, blog, facebook, my personal site, goodreads and email.

If you are a writer and need one more idea on how to find another reader, buy this book.

Ty

David Roberts says

The book I read to research this post was Publishing E-books for Dummies by Ali Luke which is an excellent book which I bought from kindle. This is quite an interesting subject which I may do more posts about but in

the meantime I have done related posts on things like blogging & social media on my computing blog at http://scratbag.me Anyway let's look at the subject in hand. A lot of people give away ebooks which is a viable option as it at least gets your name well known. A lot of authors give a book away on a site like kindle for a limited time. There is 3 major formats for ebooks which are epub, mobi & pdf. The kindle ebook reader uses epub & alot of other ebook readers are compatible with mobi. Obviously the kindle or amazon site is the most popular for downloading ebooks. Another good one is http://smashwords.com which sells your ebook on a variety of sites but that doesn't include amazon also if you sell on a 3rd party site you have to them commision. Some other good sites are kobo, barnes & noble & nook which tend to have proprietary ebook readers themselves. Two good sites for publicising your ebook are goodreads & shelfari which are social network sites for readers so you will be expected to rate books by other authors. On goodreads once you rate 50 books you can apply for librarian status & it has more than 9 million members. A librarian can add new books to goodreads although you should be able to locate a librarian via facebook or twitter. It's a good idea to have a self hosted wordpress site as you can sell stuff on your site which is forbidden on wordpress hosted sites. You need to set payments up with paypal & can set up a buy button with http://e-junkie.com Also you might find it useful to get an ISBN number for your book which in the USA you can find at www.myidentifiers.com & in the UK is at www.isbn.nielsenbook.co.uk For actually writing your book a lot of people use microsoft publisher which is reasonably priced. If you want a free option try openoffice, google docs or calibre. Openoffice has lots of features but google docs lets you store your work on the web on what is essentially a web site.

Madeline Breen says

Very informative and detailed. Goes through not only ebook publishing process but also the marketing and editing side, software that can assist with converting files and designing covers. Definitely recommend this for potential writers.

Clifford says

My mistake, I suppose, but I assumed this book would be about the aspects of publishing that are unique to eBooks. While these things are covered, more or less, a significant amount of space is devoted to matters any writer should be familiar with already--the actual writing of a book, the importance of editing, etc. At times, too, the book reads like a tutorial on Microsoft Word, which one can get--in more detail--elsewhere. Similarly, the marketing of an eBook isn't much different from the marketing of a paper book, and so those sections didn't seem terribly helpful, either.

Robert Day says

Read this book if you are in the throes, or have just finished writing a book (fiction or fact) that you are considering turning into an e-book. It'll hold your hand gently yet firmly, and guide you through the next stages.

The advice given is bang up to date and right on the nose - all the latest systems and interfaces are described

faithfully and accurately so it was easy for me to sign up for a brand new Kindle Direct Publishing account, a spanking new Wordpress website and blog and it subsequently taught me how to manipulate all my future minions into buying my wonderful (as yet unwritten) e-book - mwahahaha (can you believe there is an official spelling for an evil laugh? I know - I looked it up)!

Of course all this bang-up-to-dateness means that it's going to be out of date in oh so short a time - but of course, then there are always new editions to write (ain't it great when you see a plan coming together?).

I love Ali's geek girl style and disingenuosnessness; it's all very endearing. It also adds to the authenticity when she demonstrates, through screen shots, that she's been through this mill herself. I love the advert she snuck into one of the last chapters for... I think it was Play.com - I wonder if they paid her for that. If they didn't, they should have!

This is a really, really really good book, that I read a little too early really; although I'm glad I did because it sharpens the future a little for me in that it gives me the confidence to see that what I want to do can be done.

It just means that I'll have to dip into it again closer to the time - so it's all good.

******update 2018******

And I did. Read it again this year when I'm in the throes of setting up my own publishing company: OJ Publishing. I never read books twice - but this one is worth it.

Chris Aldrich says

I wish I had learned more that I didn't already know here (note: I've worked for over two decades in the entertainment business and have a significant background in the internet space), but this is a reasonable overview book for the complete beginner that's very clear and straightforward with a reasonable number of examples that are easy to follow.

There's a lot of subtlety left out in the rapidly shifting marketplace, particularly as it relates to the politics of what is happening as the publishing industry changes, though she at least alludes to it tangentially.

The sections on promoting/marketing ebooks on one's own were reasonable outlines, but I have a feeling that the actualities of these sections will be lost on most and particularly those without high levels of knowledge about the social media spaces. It's also deficient for helping tyro users who have incredibly small/non-existent social media followings. Users in this category will certainly need a separate "Social Media Marketing for Dummies Book" or something from someone like Gary Vaynerchuck to cover this gaping hole.

I was surprised that Luke's own twitter account didn't have a few Twitter lists of some of the authors she suggested following or other interesting/useful lists of editors, proofreaders, etc.

Even outside of the Twitterverse she could have provided (more/better) lists of resources for more easily finding consultants in the areas of editing, proofreading, and even marketing/PR to cover the portions that serious authors will more likely need help with.

Some of the coding and set up sections for things like WordPress and Calibre were nice to see, but most will need to delve in far further to get mileage out of them. Some of the Calibre code and instructions are also now out of date, but those who are adventurous will ultimately find the correct formatting.

I was also shocked to see that she didn't recommend/cover setting up affiliate codes for one's own web page/social media presences to capture additional referral revenue. Hopefully future editions will also add in emerging platforms like http://99designs.com/ which help authors find/commission portions of the work like book cover art.

For the hobbyist writer, this is a great introduction, but most (including serious/professional authors) will likely find that they're going to need some significant help and require additional resources to know what they're getting themselves into and to best leverage the business side of the business.

Karl says

This is a superb book to assist you on you road to putting together, and selling, your Ebook.

Having self-published a print book many years ago, I new a little about the process; however, there are a lot of nuances that can trip you up when you try to produce your E-book even if you have a handle on traditional publishing. As an example, one of the biggest issues arises with formatting during the conversion process from your original document into one of the E-book formats. If you do it incorrectly it will potentially be a a chaotic mess.

In addition to the creation of your Ebook, there are valuable sections for selling and marketing your book as well.

Overall, this book is a great resource. One area that I would like to see expanded though(Ali if your reading this), is the section on DRM. If possible, and I know that the technology changes quickly, a component on the advantages and disadvantages of the various types of DRM on the market would be beneficial.

Jack says

As a technical writer, I have been busy writing technical stuff, and creating art, that I allowed the e-book scene to (partially) bi-pass me. Now, I have an historical fiction title in the works (The Journal of Rudd) - and some shorts on Africa, apartheid and all that - just sitting on my hard-drive.

Then... one gorgeous Arizona day, a few weeks ago, I was browsing the local library - to stay cool - and happened on Ali Luke's Publishing e-Books for Dummies.

THANK YOU Ali Luke! A whole new vista has opened for me. Let's be clear on one thing. I have never been a fan of for Dummies titles. Never. Ever. Why? I'm NOT A DUMMY! Then again, neither is Ali. The title is very well written, bit of humour here and there, and lots and lots of stuff I did not know about.

Issues I never suspected I would find, and am delighted the author mentioned was formatting your Word.doc with styles before creating and saving in various e-book formats; never heard of numerous e-book portals,

one of them (e-junkie.com) right here in Tucson, AZ (!); in fact had never heard of EPUB or Mobi, whatever. As I said, this whole thing has nearly passed me by.

I enjoy Guerrilla Marketing, and Luke has come up with a good many tips, while not too many are pure G/M issues, some cost, I still learnt from the entire book. What I really like, and I know the from years of frustrated paging through computer titles - Luke keeps the sections SHORT! There are lots of them - that's OK - but they are short and can be read and absorbed in minutes. -

I've learnt so much from this title, that I truly can say I am no longer an e-book DUMMY! Now to pay the fine at the library and return the book.

Great subject, a truly GOOD READ!

=JSB

Bill99 says

If you have considered writing a book or a story or article and then publishing it digitally, here's your book. I highly recommend getting it and reading it cover to cover. It could very well expand your horizons to consider the possibilities. You could easily get quite excited about those possibilities.

.Pdf's, Smashwords, Kindle Direct Publishing, print on demand--those and other ways of getting your words out there have opened a door that was quite hard to get through in times past. There is no substitute for quality writing, whether you hope to publish traditionally or by doing so on your own. But the opportunity is there, waiting, available, very available.

This book like all "for Dummies" books is well organized and accessible. Using the "Contents at a Glance" or the 8-page "Table of Contents," the Index or even Part VI, "The Part of Tens" (3 full chapters)--you can quickly and easily locate what you want to know.

This book takes you step-by-step from the germ of an idea for an e-book or article to the finished product, then to publishing it and marketing it, including details on how to formulate your text (for .pdf, Mobi, Kindle, etc.). To my mind, this is the book to read to get up to speed on what is going on with e-publishing and how you can go about it, with or without hiring from professionals (like editors, marketing experts, and so on).

Also throughout the text, there are frequent screen shots that illustrate, for example, how to work with Microsoft Word, Wordpress, forematting your text for Kindle, Smashwords, and other e-book formats, and even crafting sales pages. It's like a college course, really, but much more reader-friendly than a good number of college text books. It is crystal clear and thorough.

Read this book and you will have a solid grounding in the ins and outs of e-publishing. And Ms. Luke has a way of presenting her information and know-how in a way that makes it not only practical but also easily usable. In fact, much of the information in this book you can put to use right away.

Ali Luke is a published writer, novelist, writing coach, and creator of not only her blog [...] but also The

Writer's Huddle community for aspiring writers. I have been reading her blog for over a year and am a member of The Writer's Huddle--which I have benefitted from and continue participating in. She is a graduate of Cambridge University (English Literature) and earned a Master's degree in Creative and Life writing at Goldsmith's College, University of London.

One more thing about the author: She knows her stuff. She has written and published more than a dozen ebooks, and she has published a novel both in paperback and digital form (Lycopolis, the first in a Sci-fi/fantasy trilogy). In short, she has "been there, done that"--numerous times. Hence she is well-qualified to advise us on the ways and means of e-publishing.

If you own a Kindle, or have the app on your PC or Mac, you can download a free preview containing the entire Table of Contents, Introduction, and the first two chapters.

Highly recommended for anyone wishing to become knowledgeable about what is going on with e-books and how to go about writing and publishing your own.

Louise says

This is a very useful book on e-book publishing, that showed me the basics before I did a longer, more involved course. I needed a quick guide and found this one friendly, down-to-earth and practical.

Ralf Zimmermann says

I am in the process of finishing my first book. What will be a comic book. So I am already thinking of the publishing. I read long time ago something about the e books etc and I knew it is possible but somehow it was still a mystery to me. This book did it all for me. It was like an eye opener. It is simple and enjoyable to read and pretty straight forward. If you want to publish than this is your bible that will tell you the ins and outs. But more than that it also will go in to the related topic of marketing your book. It is like having a website. Well who knows about it and who will come. Similar with your own book. It is important that the right people know about and that you can cater towards them. Now I can go back and finish my book and publish it. Because I learned to know what I needed to know.