A close-up, vertical stack of numerous books with varying thicknesses and colors, creating a textured, layered background. The books are stacked in a way that shows the edges of the pages and the spines, with some books slightly offset from others.

makeuseof

your guide to
self-publishing.
from print to kindle
and beyond!

by Christian Cawley

by Christian Cawley
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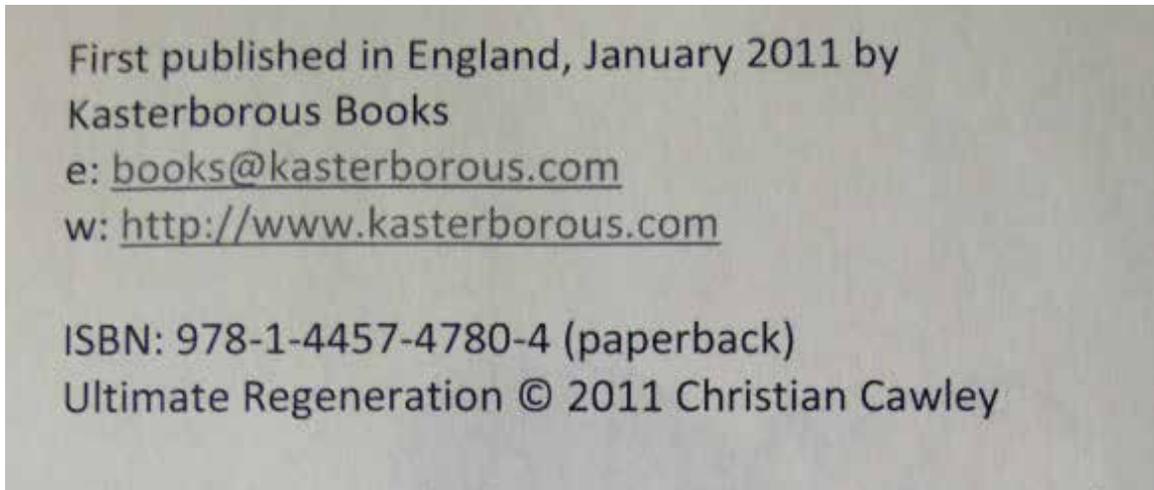
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1. Can Self-Publishing Make Your Book a Reality?

They say everyone has a book in them. For those of us fortunate enough to spend the time developing a fiction or non-fiction project, the moment of completion brings a mix of immense satisfaction... and a confused, horrified reality:

“How on earth am I going to publish it?”



As it happens, the publishing industry is in the middle of a huge transition. Large publishing houses attempt to consolidate their positions under threat of new players such as Amazon and its Kindle devices, and the associated eBook sub-industry – not to mention print-on-demand specialists such as Lulu.com.

Agents, too, are finding their roles changing, focusing on an ever-smaller and more rigorously defined group of clients while trolling Amazon looking for ‘The Next Big Thing.’

This industry malaise has resulted in more of the very thing it has been trying to combat – individual, unsigned writers taking matters into their own hands and self-publishing, bypassing the publishing houses and getting listed on Amazon without even the sniff of an agent.

But what is self-publishing?

1.2 Self-Publishing Explained

Self-publishing isn't a new phenomenon – people have been doing it for decades, if not centuries – but in the past self-publishing was restricted to a small number of wealthy, unsigned writers who were able to spend money on “vanity publishing.” It's different now.

With a completed book and a lot of luck, some writers can find an agent and get their book published. This will usually involve quite a bit of promotional work, but in the end this sort of effort usually pays dividends.

What is interesting is that the self-published title also relies on promotion – a lot of it. Factor in the task of having the title correctly laid out and proofed, having a cover designed, and choosing the correct medium for publishing (you might choose a cost-effective print-on-demand solution, rely on Kindle or Smashwords, or both) and you'll quickly realise that self-publishing is quite a difficult process, relying on you to basically act as a one-man publishing house.

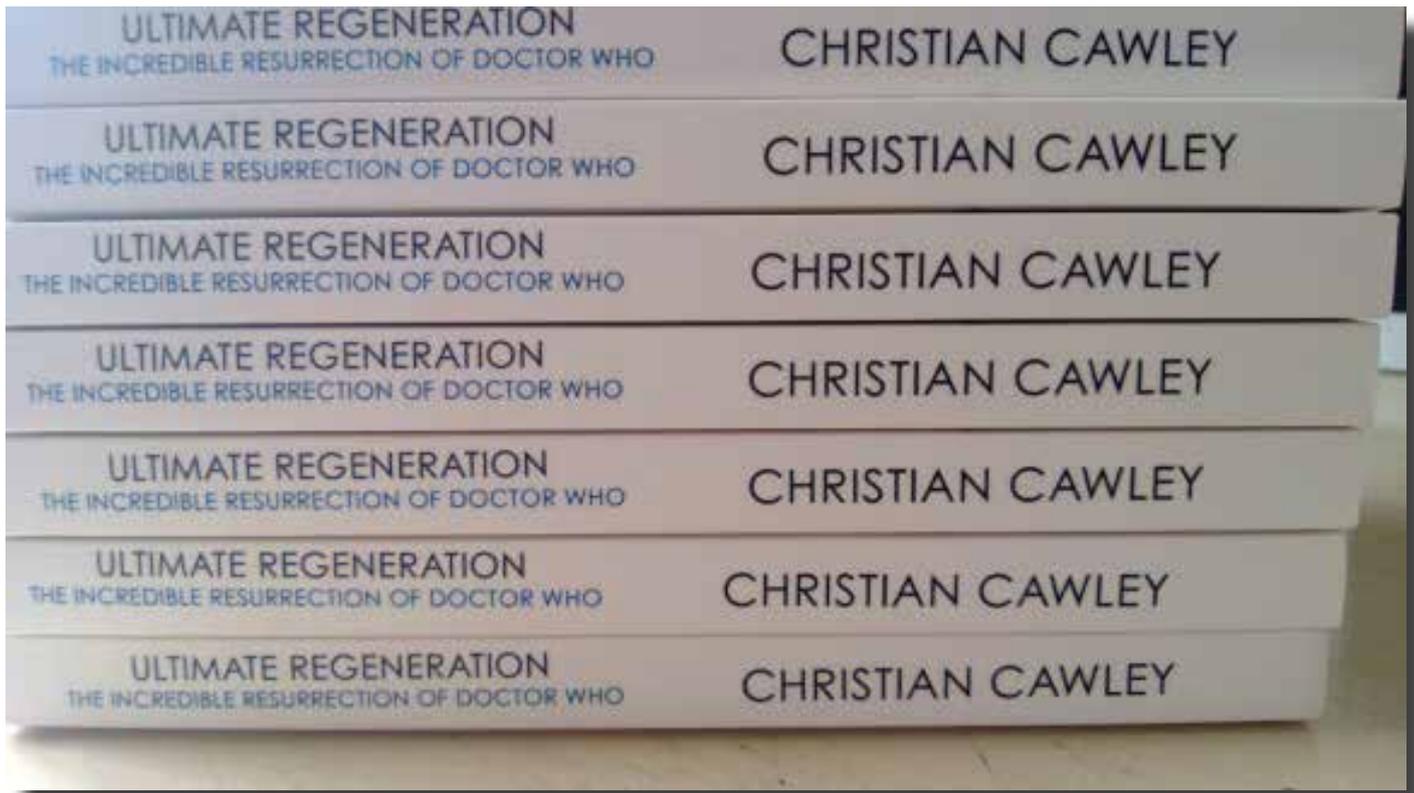
1.3 Options for Self-Publishing

Don't be put off by this. There are a few things that you still need to know.

For instance, proofing and styling of your basic document are things that you can rely on a third party for. Naturally some payment will be required, but a heck of a lot less than if you were vanity publishing.

Similarly, unless you're also an artist, you will need assistance with the cover of your book. Sure, these are all expenses, but they're also one-off outlays. The old adage “never judge a book by its cover” is rarely followed, so it is vital that

you spend money on this. Note, however, that there are options for those of you on limited budgets.



Finally, there is the actual task of publishing. There are many services that offer self-publishing:

- *Amazon Kindle*
- *Smashwords*
- *Lulu*
- *CafePress*
- *WattPad*
- *Nook*

Each of these services offer electronic publishing to popular marketplaces such as Amazon Kindle, iBookstores and Nook, print-on-demand services, or both.

If you're going down the self-publishing route, you'll find that you regularly rely on one or more of these services.

1.4 What Types of Book Can You Self-Publish for Riches?

Don't think that self-publishing leaves you limited to writing endless romantic fiction in order to generate income on Amazon's Kindle Store, or trapped producing comic books or how-to guides. Any of these, and many more, can be published through Kindle, Nook, a print-on-demand service, or even in bulk through a real printer (something we'll explore later in this manual).

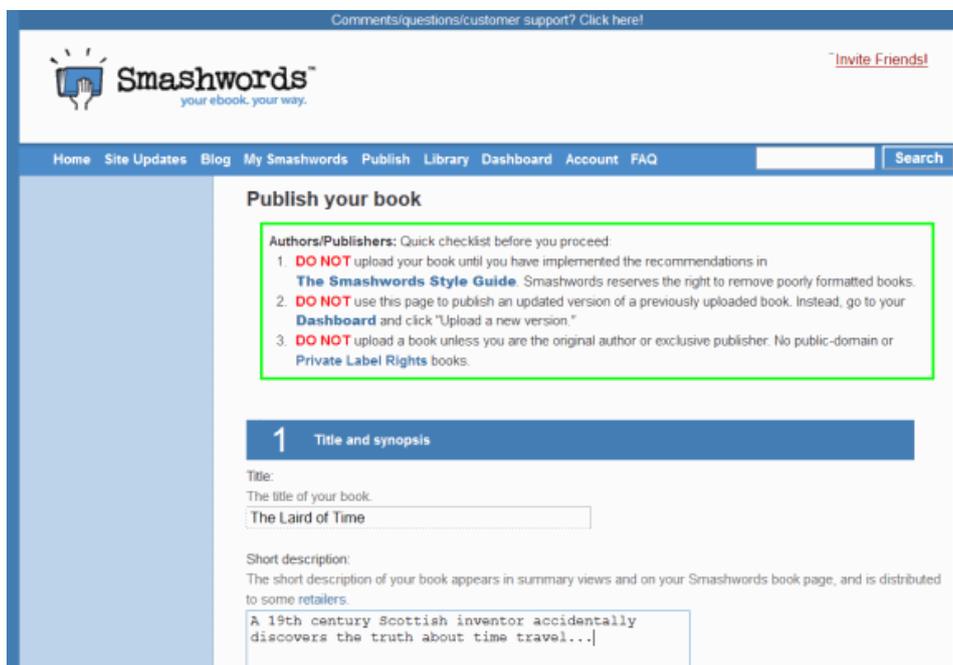
Unless you're an extremely talented writer who has struck literary gold and has a marketing campaign to match, you're unlikely to see a huge wad of cash rolling in from Kindle, or find a publisher or agent breaking your door down for your signature.

However, think of self-publishing electronically and in print as having your own publishing company that can "farm out" many of the complicated tasks such as printing and proofing. Essentially, you can publish any type of book you want, something that probably wouldn't be possible with an agent or a publishing contract.

1.5 Is Self-Publishing Really the Answer?

It might seem strange to start a guide on self-publishing by attempting to discourage you, but there is good reason.

This is a potentially long and drawn-out process, and if you don't start out in the right way – choosing the right tools, hiring the right proofing agent and cover artist – then you will regret it later on.



To decide if self-publishing is the answer to your dreams in regard to your book (whether fiction or non-fiction) then you need to know what you want from Smashwords, Lulu or Nook. With a clear outcome defined, you can then plan more effectively.

1.6 So, What Do You Want from Self-Publishing?

You shouldn't go into any project without having an idea of what your intended end result is, and self-publishing is certainly no different.

There are various outcomes available from heading down this route, from using it as a means to sell your books on Amazon and the iBookstore to positioning yourself with an agent and/or publisher. Naturally, the latter will require a lot of hard work, dedication and focus – not to mention good sales on Amazon and a bit of luck, but there are several accounts of writers who have been fortunate enough in this respect.

If you're hoping to make a lot of money from self-publishing, however, think again. Unless you're one of the lucky few plucked from obscurity and signed to a major publishing house, you'll still have your mortgage, bills and probably even day job to worry about after you have completed the self-publishing process. This isn't a project that will deliver riches – instant or otherwise.

What it can do – if you're particularly dedicated – is bring in some extra income, and perhaps even allow enable you to make personal appearances at events.

There is, of course, that other great outcome: creating a book that people can purchase and read.

2. Preparing Your Book

Whether you have already written your book, are in the process of doing so, or haven't even started yet, you should be proceeding with an idea of your preferred medium in mind for the end product (and yes, even your collection of sensitive poetry is a "product" – after all, you're trying to publish it, right?).

The reason is simple. You might choose an eBook, print on demand, or self-publishing in bulk, but to do so you will need to spend time editing your work into a suitable format for use with your chosen service.

Understanding which format to choose will affect the way in which you lay out your book. Knowing this in advance can save a lot of time later on.

2.1 Researching Your Book's Format

Page size, book length and colour (for the cover and any interior art) are all extremely important elements that you should be aware of in the early stages of writing your book.

After all, you don't want to find yourself hacking the book down and reformatting your intended layout simply because the publishing service cannot or will not support your artistic vision. Instead, if templates are available (for instance, Lulu.com and various online short-run comic book printers offer these) download and use them as you write your book.

Being aware of the formats offered by print on demand and wholesale publishers or the requirements of your chosen eBook service is extremely important to the overall success of the project.

2.2 Awareness vs. Panicking

If you're already quite far through writing and don't wish to be distracted, finding out how you need to format the title can wait until you finish.

Avoiding additional problems on top of sourcing photos/tidying up plot holes/juggling your book with your domestic life might prove to be a wise choice.

The real lesson to take away at this stage is that at some point in the future considerable editing may be required. You can avoid some of this by starting with a compatible layout and format in mind. Use a template from your chosen publishing service to achieve this, or be aware that when you finish writing, the real work is only just beginning...

2.3 What's In Your Book

Whatever you're writing, you should be mindful that many printers, POD and online eBook publishing services will not entertain material that advocates hate speech such as racism and homophobia, and illegal activities.

Similarly, titles containing material that is effectively one or more Wikipedia pages or material from other public domain or sources should also be avoided; most services will remove the book from sale.

For a full list of what material can be distributed, check both the FAQ and Terms and Conditions of your chosen printer, Print on Demand or eBook distribution service. See Chapter 4: Self-Publishing in Print, and Chapter 5: Digital Self-Publishing, for more.

3. Proofing and Editing Options

Regardless of how you self-publish, you will need to ensure that your book passes muster as a piece of writing.

To achieve this, you will of course need to begin by writing a story, collection, guide, etc. that is readable. You should also spend the time and effort redrafting in order to get the piece as near to perfect as possible (with fiction in particular, first drafts are notoriously unreliable representations of the finished, polished book).

Then and only then should you consider proofing and editing the book. There are several ways you can do this.

3.1 Proof Reading On Your Own

Although difficult, it is possible to proofread your own work. However, the methods and success level of doing so might result in you choosing to use one of the options below for proofing.

The reason for this is that proofing work that you are familiar with can be extremely difficult. You will have “lived” with the book for some time, and any errors or grammatical quirks that have found their way into it might have melted into the background.

No amount of normal re-reading will help you to successfully proof the book – instead, you will need to use one of the following techniques:

Create a style guide – in order to achieve consistency, spend a few minutes developing a style guide, enabling you to correctly format text (for instance, you might want to use italics for the names of TV shows in your work). Similarly, if you are writing a work of fiction, consider keeping notes on the characters and locations so that you don’t misname them later in the story.

Don’t proof immediately – not only will this enable you to return to the work fresh, it will also allow you to look upon it with “new” eyes.

Read the book aloud – this might be difficult for a longer book, but hearing your voice reading can help to revise clunky sentences and resolve any spelling and grammar that have been overlooked (even Microsoft Word can miss some obvious errors).

Start formatting – spending time formatting the text and layout as required for your chosen publishing service is another good way to spot errors and quirks in the text.

Many of the tips above can be used in conjunction with the following suggestions.

3.2 Use an Online Proof Reading Service

If you can’t afford a professional to look over your work, the next best option is to use an online proofing service.

You might employ the following tools:

- <http://www.grammarbase.com/check/>
- <http://www.paperrater.com/>
- <http://www.grammarly.com/>

Note that these services (and others) are often limited in the number of words they can check through at any one time. As a free service they can be useful, but like Microsoft Word (or whatever your chosen word processing tool might be) they don’t do a perfect job with grammar, and can cause many distracting false positives in proper nouns and dialects.

As a result these are tools that are worth employing to get you started, but they shouldn’t be relied upon as single solutions.

3.3 Find Someone to Proof Read Your Book For Free

Perhaps a more reliable solution might be to find someone to proof your book for free.

There are several ways in which you might do this. For instance if you are active on social networks and your followers have shown an interest, you might consider taking advantage of your following to find people who would be comfortable proofing your work.

Alternatively, if you are working on a publication with multiple contributors, one or more of them might take a look. After all, they have a vested interest in ensuring that the finished product is of as high a quality as possible.

3.4 Paid Proofing Services

Your final option is to hire a paid proofing expert to take a look at your manuscript and offer their corrections, as well as perhaps some suggestions for making the book a better read.

Paid proofreaders and editors can of course offer a more professional and complete service than any of those services and methods mentioned above. Their advice comes from years of experience, and should prove extremely valuable.

Naturally you should only choose the proofreading service that you can afford, but if you have the budget for a professional you should certainly consider taking up this option.

4. Self-Publishing in Print

There are two basic options for self-publishing – print and electronic publishing.

We'll take a look at publishing eBooks in the next chapter. First, let's break down the print publishing options into their two constituents: printing in bulk and using print-on-demand service.

Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

Printing in bulk:

- *Printing costs are kept low.*
- *You have enough stock to sell at signings.*
- *You can easily supply stock to bookshops.*

Print on demand (POD):

- *Single copies can be ordered and printed as and when required.*
- *You can use a POD service to distribute books without taking up space at home.*
- *Changes and edits can be easily uploaded.*

There is, of course, a lot more to using either type of service successfully...

4.1 Finding a Printing Company

If you predict that you will have a large audience for your book, the best option is to make arrangements with a printing company with experience in printing the type of publication that you are releasing.

There are many printers in North America, Europe and further afield who are equipped to deal with orders for books, comics and magazines. You'll be able to find them by running a web search.

Spending time looking for several printers will be worth the effort, as you will be able to get quotes from them and compare what you'll get for your money.

On the whole, printers come with one of two different types of website. The first will be a basic contact site, with a few details about different printing packages and prices. The second, however, will be a more interactive affair, offering you the ability to specify your requirements and receive a quote based on these details.

Note that the vast majority of printers will require payment up front. You should also be aware that the amount they quote will affect how you price your book.

4.1.1 ISBN Numbers

Pull a book off your shelf and flip it over. On the back you should see a barcode – this is the ISBN number, a unique identifier that tells retailers the name of the book, the author and who published it.

Although useful, ISBN numbers are expensive. Still, if you hope to have your book stocked in a physical store (or most online stores) you will need one, whether you choose bulk printing or Print on Demand.

There is further information about ISBNs in the Appendix.

4.2 Finding a Print on Demand Service

You should perform a similar amount of research when investigating Print on Demand services.

While I would recommend Lulu over any other service, you might find that the formats or pricing options they offer don't quite meet your requirements, so shopping around for the right price is a good plan.

Project List								Delete or Retire Selected	Search My Projects
Type	ID	Title	Status	Discount	Distribution	Your Product	Project		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 13352738 revision:1	kmag#1 [Revise] by Christian Cawley	Draft					Revise Delete	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 13129912 revision:1	Ultimate Regeneration [Revise] by Christian Cawley 978-1-291-03592-6	Draft					Revise Delete	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 11579749 revision:1	Ultimate Regeneration: The Incredible Resurrection of Doctor Who [Revise] by Christian Cawley, Brian A. Terranova	General Access				View/Buy Promote	Revise Retire	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 8623905 revision:3	Ultimate Regeneration: The Incredible Resurrection of Doctor Who [Revise] by Christian Cawley, Brian A. Terranova 978-1-4457-4780-4 Google Book Search Enabled	General Access				View/Buy Promote	Revise Retire	

The thing to remember with POD is that the end product is going to be more expensive, unless you can arrange to print several at a time (and if you can do this, using a standard printer as described above would perhaps be more efficient).

However, with POD you also have a long-running outlet for your book with no storage impact or costs at your end. This alone can prove an extremely attractive proposition.

4.3 Editing Tips to Meet the Printer's Requirements

With a printed book, you are limited in ways that don't come into play with an eBook.

For instance, page counts are based on the way in which the book is bound. This means that in order to keep the price down, you need to edit your book in such a way that the page count remains as low as possible – while maintaining the quality and readability of the text.

There are different ways to achieve this. The most obvious is probably to reduce the size of the font being used, although you can also try a few other tricks such as pushing text to the margins or reducing the height of the gap between paragraphs.

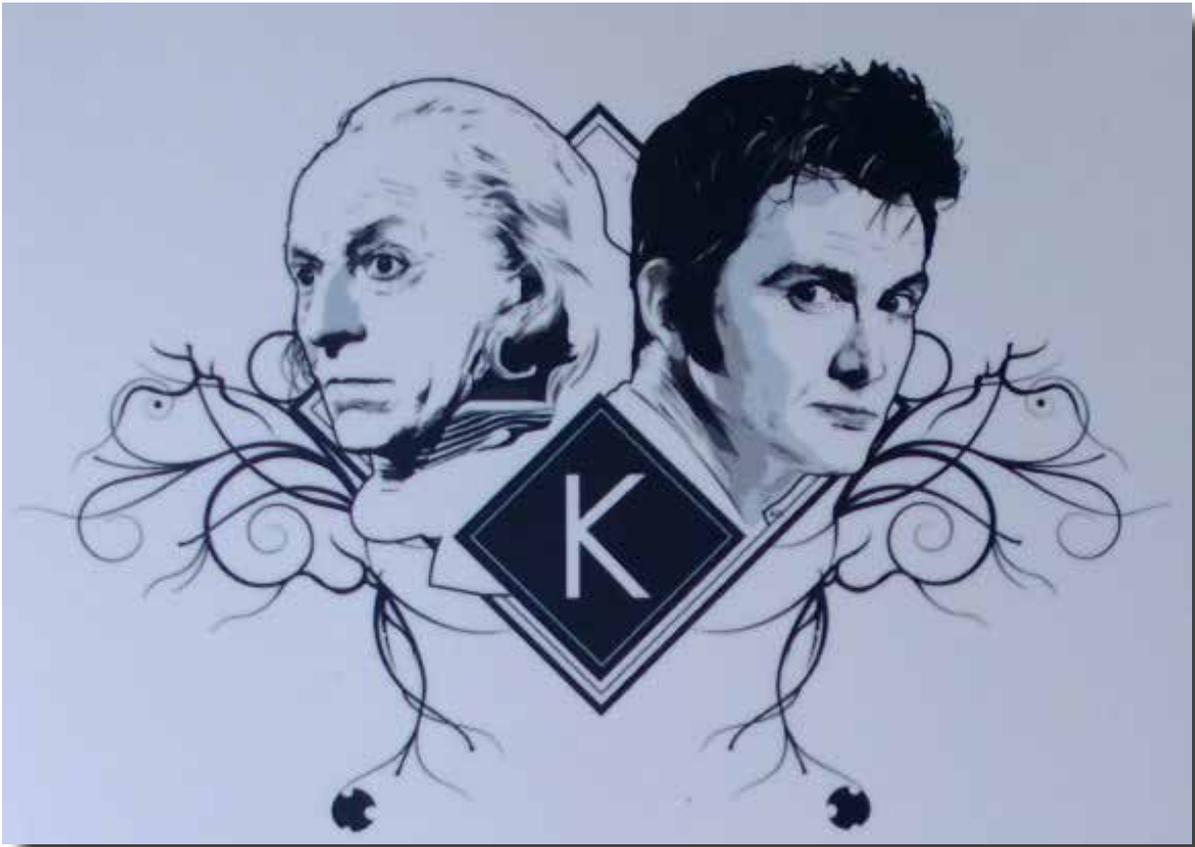
If you have a good eye for such things and are using a modern release of Microsoft Word, you might consider creating your own style for the book, sizing headers and other styles to gain extra space.

As mentioned earlier, you should have downloaded a template for your book from your chosen printing service that will enable you to accurately manage the layout and meet the page count.

By being able to meet the printer's requirements you are able to better manage the price for printing, which in turn can mean a lower sale price, offering your potential buyers another reason to buy the book.

4.4 Finding Cover Art

The vast majority of self-published work in print or on Kindle is by writers who haven't the first idea about providing an attractive cover. While the old adage tells us not to judge a book by its cover, the fact is that many people do. You cannot afford to let a bit of public domain artwork from Wikimedia Commons decorate your book.



Instead, find and contract an artist to provide a good, attractive and relevant – not to mention appropriate – image for your book, offering them payment either as a flat fee or based on sales.

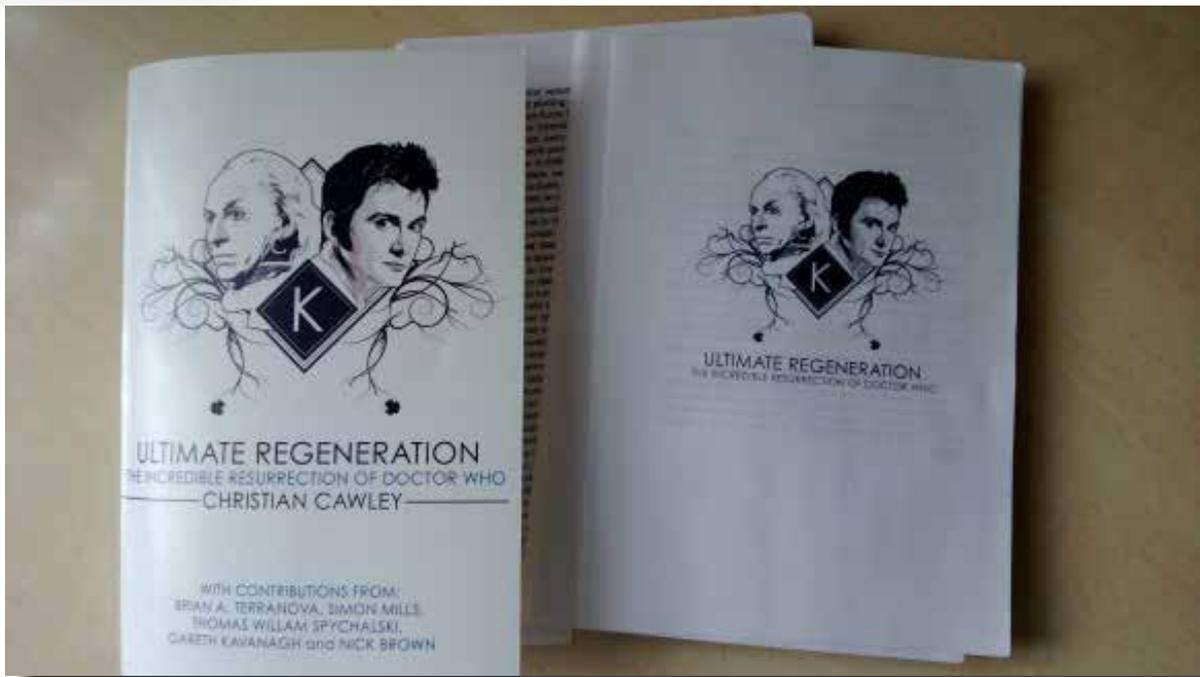
Spend time looking for a good artist or graphic designer on websites such as www.peopleperhour.com.

4.5 Receiving the Proof Copy

Once the book is finished, you will need to save it in PDF format (this is the most common way of doing things), although you should check the printers or POD service's specifications for PDF files, particularly if you are including colour artwork.

In most cases, the printer's website will enable you to upload the PDF, which they will then check and create a proof copy from. These are usually free, and you should check through the book thoroughly looking for any problems that you previously missed. Again, if artwork is involved (such as on the cover) spend some time looking at this to make sure the reproduction is accurate.

You might even take the chance with a proof copy to get the book checked over once again, just to cover all bases.



Once you're happy with the proof copy, you will need to "sign-off" on the transaction. This means that the POD service or bulk printer has been given permission by you to either begin listing the item on their website, or start the printing process. If you choose the former, you should see the book listed for sale later that day. By selecting the latter option, you should expect your printed book to arrive in several boxes within the week.

That's when the real work begins.

5. Digital Self-Publishing

Several digital platforms and marketplaces are available for self-publishing. Let's take a look at the most common platforms – and remember, you can (and should) combine them.

5.1 Kindle

Perhaps the most famous eBook platform is Kindle. Amazon sells millions of titles every year to be read across a range of devices, from its own Kindle readers to smartphones, tablets, and even desktop apps.

Given the ease with which a book can be delivered when purchased for reading on a Kindle device or app and the vast available audience of willing readers, publishing your book digitally for the Kindle platform makes perfect sense.

Start reading *Ultimate Regeneration* on your Kindle in under a minute.

Click to **LOOK INSIDE!**

Ultimate Regeneration [Kindle Edition]
 Christian Cawley (Author)
 Be the first to review this item

Kindle Purchase Price: **£1.74**
 Prime Members: **£0.00** (borrow for free from your Kindle device)

* Unlike print books, digital books are subject to VAT.

- Includes free wireless delivery via **Amazon Whispernet**
- Length: **277 pages (estimated)**

For Kindle Device Owners
 Amazon Prime members can borrow this book at no extra cost from their Kindle devices. [Buy free.](#)
 With Prime, Kindle device owners can choose from over 200,000 titles to borrow for free, as [Kindle Owners' Lending Library.](#)

Share your own customer images

Note that, in order to achieve the greatest reach, your book will need to be reformatted and have a great deal of any of the styling and layout you added removed. This is so that the book will remain compatible with older Kindle models. While more recent Kindles have colour screens, older devices rely on the monotone e-Ink displays and are somewhat limited in how they can display the layout of a book.

Books can be published via the Kindle Direct Publishing service, which is how authors get their eBooks listed on Amazon. Kindle Direct Publishing is free, and pays authors monthly. Note that there is a secondary method, KDP Select, which has a 90 day exclusivity clause with Kindle; this means that you cannot publish your book through another service during this time. KDP Select offers a share of a \$6 million fund to independent authors and publishers.

(Amazon also offers the Kindle Select “library lending” service for Amazon Prime customers. As an author with a book on Kindle you can be invited into this, in which a \$500,000 pot is shared between all signed-up authors. However, unless you are hugely successful, you're unlikely to make any significant income. As the service makes your eBook free for a short period, you're more likely to lose money.)

5.2 Smashwords

Like Kindle, Smashwords is a marketplace and also offers the facility for you to publish your eBook directly through it.

Unlike Kindle, however, Smashwords offers a far wider selection of supported formats/devices, from Kindle to Nook, Kobo, Sony Reader and iOS devices (iPad and iPhone). It should be noted, however, that if you plan to sell through Kindle it is both easier and cheaper to do this directly rather than via a third party.

Like Kindle, Smashwords is free to sign up to and use, and should you be lucky enough to sell your works through it, payment is settled quarterly. Unlike Kindle, however, you can sell your book through the Apple iBookstore, Barnes & Noble, and various mobile apps such as Aldiko and Kobo. This makes Smashwords a hugely attractive alternative to Kindle, although most authors treat it as a companion service rather than a rival – simply because it can offer such

considerable distribution options.

5.3 Bookbaby

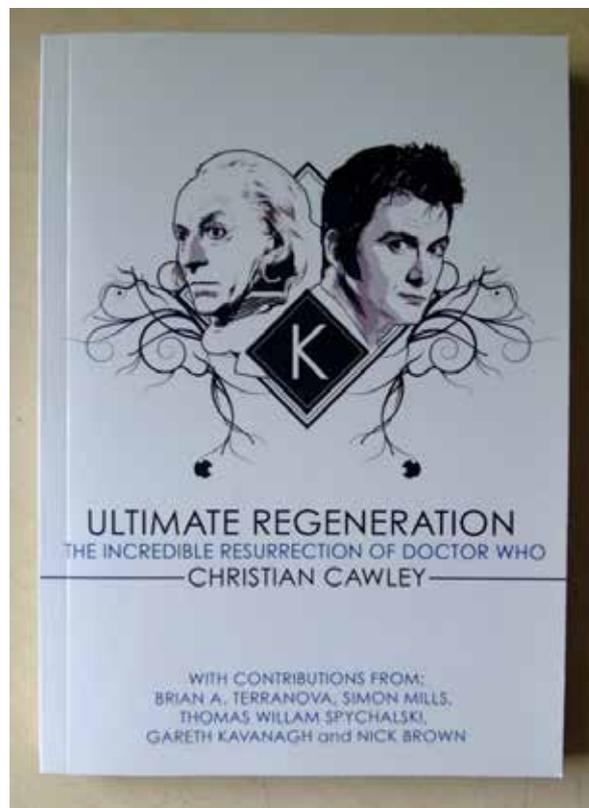
A recent addition to the list of available options for anyone wishing to distribute their book electronically is Bookbaby, which has a wide selection of marketplaces that it can publish your book to. But there is a shortcoming...

Although a good service, Bookbaby charges for any edits and changes you might make, from single commas all the way through to adding or removing a chapter. In addition, Bookbaby also requires an initial \$99 sign-up fee and a further \$19 annual subscription.

While it might pay out weekly, Bookbaby is probably a risk for the vast majority of independent and self-publishing authors. Unlike Kindle and Smashwords, Bookbaby doesn't have an online store – it is purely an eBook generation and distribution service.

5.4 Lulu

Although you can use Lulu to provide a Print on Demand service, it is also a very good option for anyone wishing to have their book published electronically through iBooks and Nook.



Like the other services, Lulu offers its requirements for formatting the document and text in the form of a downloadable guide. You will probably notice that these requirements are very similar, but as with the others you should make sure that your document adheres to them.

Lulu also offers an editing, formatting, cover design and marketing service – for a premium, of course.

For further information on marketing, see Chapter 7: Launch Your Book.

5.5 iBooks Author

Another popular option is iBooks Author, available for Mac OS X and designed to enable the creation of feature-rich books and electronic magazines.

There is nothing lo-fi in the publications created here – aiming your books to be read on the iPad means that you don't have to focus on a document that includes a narrow selection of fonts and images that can be reproduced in mono-

chrome.

With iBooks Author, text, shapes, charts and images can be blended into a professional-looking piece of work, one that can take advantage of multi-touch for some interactive content.

Naturally, iBooks Author may not be suitable for you – on the other hand, it might solve problems Kindle and Smashwords cannot.

5.6 Which eBook Service Should You Use?

The services listed above can all be used to publish your work and even distribute it – but which one should you choose? Which offers the best value for money and ensures that you, a freelance writer of limited means, can generate as much income as possible from publishing your book in this way?

From a personal point of view, I would recommend using the killer combination of Kindle and Smashwords, but if you're pressed for time and want maximum distribution for as little effort and expense as possible, then Smashwords by itself is the best option.

However, note that Lulu previously offered support for Kindle, but this has since been withdrawn in favour of iBooks and Nook. Things can change quickly in this industry, so remember to do your own research before making a final decision.

Due to compatibility issues between the different marketplaces, you might find that it proves time-consuming to attempt to list your book on all of them. Some people might advise you to focus on Kindle and the iBookstore in order to get the widest coverage, but there is no real reason to overlook Nook or Kobo, as both are growing platforms.

5.7 Ebook Publishing Agents

There is another option I left until last – that of hiring a firm to manage the editing and release of the eBook for you. We're not talking big publishing houses here, rather, independent outfits and agencies who will be able to arrange copy editing and artwork as well as employing people to format your book for release through Smashwords or another service.

If you have reached the point of no return with editing and formatting (that is, you're not having much luck with it) then utilising one of these services might be your best tactic. It is a good solution, one that will save you a lot of time – the only problem is, you'll be paying much more than the DIY option.

6. Where to Sell Your Printed Book

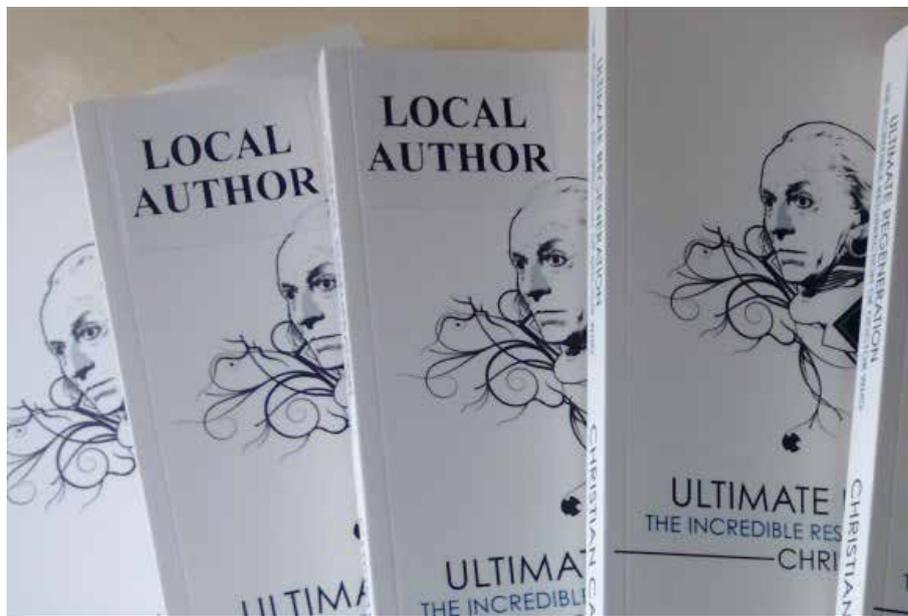
If you prefer to have a physical copy of your book instead of (or alongside) an electronically distributed version, there are various ways in which you can sell the title. Perhaps the most obvious way is to find a bricks-and-mortar retailer (a traditional bookshop), although there is also the option of selling through Amazon or other online retailers.

Additionally, if you have a website or blog of your own, you could use shopping cart software to set up the facility to take orders and manage distribution electronically.

6.1 Finding a Retailer

A great way to get your book noticed is to have it on the shelves of a local bookstore. While it can be difficult to get an independent book onto the shelves of a supermarket or large bookstore chain (such as Barnes & Noble, Waterstones or WHSmith), local bookstores are often very helpful in providing a platform for local authors.

With this in mind, you should head down to your local bookshop and find out if they might be willing to stock your book. You might even find that they would like you to do a signing – something that always attracts customers. We'll discuss this in more detail in Chapter 7.



If you don't have a local bookshop, think about the content and topic of your book. Will it appeal to a particular group of people? Might there be interest from specialist stores in your area?

One such example might be if you wrote a sprawling sword and sorcery tale, and you live in the vicinity of a Games Workshop or similar store with a vibrant desktop gaming community. Dropping into this shop and explaining what your book is about (taking a complimentary copy, of course) might just help you to find a local audience.

6.2 Selling Your Printed Book through Amazon

Despite the immense distribution possibilities of eBooks, what every author really wants is to see their book in printed form, on bookshelves across the land.

What better way to do this than via Amazon, the world's biggest library of books for sale?

Selling a printed book through Amazon is not easy without an ISBN number. Fortunately these can be purchased, although it isn't a good idea to buy just one as they're quite expensive – please see the appendix for more on this subject.



However, you can take advantage of a free ISBN number from a POD service such as Lulu.com, which will then enable you to have your printed book listed on Amazon. Of course, if you have already opted for the bulk-printing option, this could prove frustrating. So what is the best course of action?

Many authors use a POD service, such as Lulu, that sells through Amazon in order to overcome this, using the same ISBN number on bulk-printed volumes to then undercut their own listing. It is an option worth considering.

We've spoken a lot about Amazon so far, simply because this international books-and-stuff selling behemoth is the biggest player around. However, it isn't the only answer, as you'll find out later in this guide.

6.3 Using other online retailers

Beyond Amazon there aren't too many ways in which you can get your book listed on an online retailer's website.

However, there are two good alternatives. First, list your book on eBay, where it is likely to be seen regularly. I would suggest using a 30-day listing, where you specify how many you have available (don't list your entire stock, however – leave it at 10 for the first month, increasing if you have to re-list because you've run out) and then let the listing do the work for you. [These eBay sales tips might prove helpful.](#)

The second alternative is to sell your book through your blog or website. Depending on your setup this can be easy or tough – for instance WordPress users can rely on easy-to-use e-commerce plugins, whereas other websites or those using basic, static HTML will need to use a third party resource such as Gumroad or PayPal to enable sales.

Whether you stock your book in physical form in a bricks-and-mortar store, or Amazon, or another online retailer, or you prefer to rely on electronic copies, there is of course one thing that should be driving you to make your decision – exactly how much you will earn in royalties from sales of your book.

7. Royalties

When you list your eBook or printed book with an online distribution service such as Amazon, Kindle, Smashwords, etc., you will be paid a percentage of your sales. This payment is called a “royalty”, and is a different figure depending on which service you have chosen.

According to Wikipedia [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royalties>]:

Royalties (sometimes, running royalties, or private sector taxes) are usage-based payments made by one party (the “licensee”) to another (the “licensor”) for the right to ongoing use of an asset, sometimes an intellectual property (IP). Royalties are typically agreed upon as a percentage of gross or net revenues derived from the use of an asset or a fixed price per unit sold of an item of such, but there are also other modes and metrics of compensation.

Different media types attract different royalty rates, however. Bear this in mind when you are considering which format and distribution option to choose, as you could find that an initial outlay on a print run benefits you more in the long term (as long as a certain number of sales can be guaranteed) than selling your book electronically.

7.1 The Kindle Controversy

Although Kindle has been credited with launching careers for many writers, it is also a bugbear for many more. Some freelance writers and independent novelists have complained to Amazon and blogged at length over the problems they have faced, from formatting issues and DRM, to poor royalty payments.

Sure, there might be an aspiration among many indie authors to get their book in a Top 100 list on Amazon, but it seems that the rather impressive 70 percent royalty doesn’t include delivery charges, which can prove quite high if the uploaded file isn’t correctly optimised.

Furthermore, Amazon has been the subject of a controversy concerning the posting of poorly rated reviews by competing authors. Although this has mostly been dealt with, it underlines the strength that this single marketplace has in the industry.

Additionally, there have been complaints about censorship, and many authors have experienced problems submitting books. If you feel concerned about any of these things, please remember that there are other marketplaces where you can distribute your books.

7.2 Print vs eBook

As you have read above, certain eBook publishers offer a greater royalty payment than others. But how does this compare with print self-publishing?

After the outlay on a print run has been made, you will then have a stock of books to sell. Your main strategy will probably be split between selling online and making personal appearances, with your main aim being to make a profit.

For instance, if 250 copies of a 280-page book cost \$1000 to print, then you will need to price your book above the \$4 per copy mark. There is massive scope to earn much more through printed books than through eBooks, but this does rather depend upon how and where you do your promotion.

As far as Print on Demand books are concerned, the game is a little different. You’ll probably find that the print costs are around 50% higher for single copies (although Lulu.com offers many bulk-printing discounts) but you will want to make sure that the book sells, particularly if it is listed through Amazon. As such you should be prepared to take a lower percentage of the sale price. Of course, if you don’t have the space to store 250 copies (or more) of your book, then this might be an attractive option.

8. Launch Your Book!

There is no point in writing a book, going to the lengths of having it edited, having a cover designed and paying for it to be printed (or even distributing it through Smashwords or Kindle) if you don't pro-actively work towards selling copies.

To do this, you will need a promotion strategy. Different authors take different approaches, largely based on what they're comfortable doing. However I would argue that pushing against these comfort zones is a good way to find even more readers. For instance, you might be reluctant to meet new people, but arranging a book signing can be a powerful way of raising your profile. And what could be better than chatting to people who pay you for something you have created?

8.1 Promoting Your Book

Launching your book can either go well or go badly. The main thing to remember is that you have to build momentum (initially helped by the fact that you have a book ready to sell) and then keep pushing to continue this. There are various tools and methods that you can use to promote your work without spending more than a few minutes of your time each day, and with little or no impact on your budget.

8.1.1 Blog about Your Book

One of the most successful ways that you can promote your book(s) is to write a regular blog, featuring synopses, and brief passages and cover images.

The idea here is to provide a central resource for anyone who wants to find out more about you or your book. Ideally you should start the blog early in the writing process. By updating it weekly you can keep people interested without taking too much time away from your work developing the title. Hopefully by the time the book is ready to publish you will have an audience keen to get their hands on a copy!

Your blog should be primarily about your current book and any others that you have written, but should also include details about how to purchase it.

Various blog software packages are available. If you're not comfortable with installing blog software on a server, however, you should use a free, hosted account at Blogger.com or WordPress.com. These are both simple to set up and require no expert technical knowledge.

8.1.2 Social Networking

I don't think there is a successful author around today who doesn't have a Facebook or Twitter account. Their publishers probably insist upon it, and if the author isn't interested then someone will be running it on their behalf. Of course, you probably don't have that luxury, so should take advantage of at least one free social networking account in order to communicate more directly and intimately with your potential readers.

On Facebook you should do this by setting up a page, which you can do via www.facebook.com/pages/create. If you are creating an author page, then use the Artist, Band or Public Figure option, whereas if you are creating a page dedicated to your book, choose Entertainment (if you don't want to create a page, however, you can use your own Facebook account and via the Account Settings screen activate Followers. This will enable fans to follow your updates, although please note that you will need to create "public posts" for them to read).

With Twitter, all you will need to do is create an account with an appropriate name. Some writers do this in their own name or in the name of their book. Remember that Twitter accounts are disposable in many ways – you might, for instance, create a Twitter account in the name of one of your characters. If you already have a big following you can suggest that your fans follow your book/character account – but be prepared to make regular updates. Services such as Twuffer.com enable you to schedule Tweets, which might prove useful.

Engaging with potential readers on Twitter and Facebook is important, as is striking up a conversation. Twitter is perhaps more suited to this, with Facebook a good "standby" or alternative to a blog. Use Twitter's search tools to find people interested in the topics you're writing about, and follow them. You might also Tweet to them when they post updates, but don't spam them – that is, keep the topic of the book out of the conversation. Only broach this when they respond to your book-centric tweets.

By building a following on a social network before, during and after the launch of your book, you will have a potential audience available to you that might well be interested in the next book you write, and the one after that.

8.1.3 Author Pages

Book buyers are a strange breed. They're not all on Facebook, they're not all on Twitter. In fact, some of them don't even use social networks at all, which is why you will also need to take advantage of some of the other tools available.

Christian Cawley



Born in 1975, Christian Cawley has been writing since he was a small boy, starting with time he honed his storytelling ability and is currently working on his first novel for Kindle.

More recently Christian has worked as a tutorial writer for many technology websites, and Amazon.

He is also a big fan of the British TV series Doctor Who, something reflected in his first charts the revival of the series in 2005 and the stewardship of acclaimed TV writer and

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Note that Goodreads' author program is limited to those that have already had a title published that is available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble/Nook, or self-published through Lulu, although they do allow you to add books that are not listed in their database.

8.1.4 Book Signings

You might feel that bookshops don't really want a new author that nobody has heard of signing books in their shop, but in fact this couldn't be further from the truth. Local authors are in high demand in independent bookshops, as well as in many larger chains. If your book is available in print and you have a bookshop located close to you, it wouldn't hurt to drop in with a copy and find out if they would be interested in hosting you for an afternoon.



Bookshops love to have authors situated in-store to attract shoppers with the prospect of talking to a published writer and buying a signed book. If you don't have a bookshop nearby, perhaps try a store with a suitable connection (for instance, a hardware store if you're writing about DIY).

If you plan to do this make sure you arrange with the store how your books will be paid for (preferably before signing), and what the split is.

8.2 Putting it Together for a Successful Book Launch.

Used individually, these concepts should see you build an audience and sell books. But put together as a wider strategy – the seeds of which you can plant early in your book's development – you should find that finding and building an audience for your book's launch is a lot easier than you might have ever thought.

Book signings are great ways to launch books, but so are online launches, holding Q&As on Twitter or Facebook, or even livecasting a video on YouTube or Ustream.

Whatever you do should be focussed on making you accessible to your audience and making sure that the book is available to buy. This might require some coordination, but it certainly shouldn't be difficult to achieve with careful planning.

9. Managing Distribution

With your book now available to buy, you will need to make distribution easy.

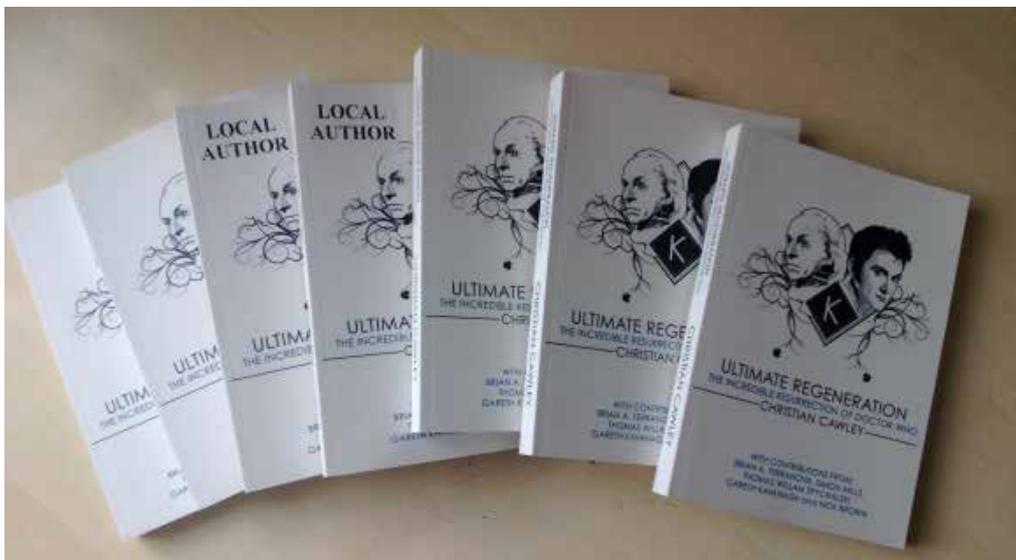
If you have used a print-on-demand company or published your volume as an eBook, then distribution is taken out of your hands. You can effectively sit back and watch the dollars roll in, while actively promoting the book.

Things are a little different if you have ordered printed copies of your book in bulk, however.

9.1 Distributing Print Copies

If you've used POD, then you can skip this section of the guide. However, if you have boxes of books and you're worried about how you're going to sell them, the first thing you need to do is take a look at the steps in Chapter 8 and get your book publicized. You should also ensure that your website or blog is suitably equipped with a link for orders to be placed, using a suitable plugin or perhaps a PayPal Website Payments button (login to PayPal, click Merchant Services and follow the instructions).

Physical distribution will mean many trips to the post office, lots of packaging and labels, and a lot of time. In order to deal with this effectively, you should begin by purchasing the most effective packaging for your book format.



If you've ever ordered a book from Amazon, you will know that they ship volumes in special cardboard packaging. Similar boxes are available to buy in bulk at stores such as Staples or online at eBay.

After ordering and receiving these, wrap your book up in one and head to your local post office. Here, get the package weighed and priced so that you can quote exact prices for orders and make sure you have the right money when you come to post. If it is possible in your area to purchase stamps in advance, then take advantage of this if you think it will save time.

Finally, make sure you are familiar with your word processor's label printing feature, and that you have a means of recording the details of people who have ordered your book and whether a copy has been sent out yet or not.

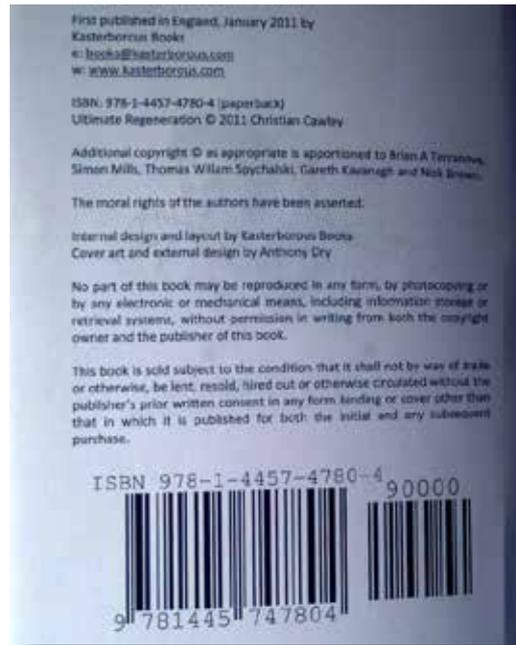
Good promotion and a streamlined approach to distribution will get your copies sent out faster, perhaps enabling you to sell every one of those printed books.

9.2 Organizing Your Manuscripts for Different eBook Marketplaces

Distribution for eBooks is another matter entirely. But don't think there is nothing for you to do here.

In order to manage your book for multiple platforms, you will need to edit the book to suit the requirements of each. Perhaps the best way of doing this is to create folders on your computer for each platform, saving the layout requirements and templates in each along with a copy of your book. By doing this you can closely monitor the reformatting of

the book and easily find it when it comes to uploading to a second or third online marketplace or digital platform.



One of the key differences between different versions of the same manuscript will be the first page. Here you will include the name of the printers, for instance. If you're using Lulu, then you might include the name of the print company, the date of printing and the ISBN. You would also use the page to assert your rights over the work as author, and perhaps introduce your publishing company to the world.

10. Build for Continued Success

So, you've got a book (or at least a strong idea) and you have the means to publish it. Your book has a cover, it has been spell-checked and proofed and given the once over by as many people as you can find.

An attractive, consistent interior design has been applied and your book is formatted for print, POD, eBook, or a combination of all three. Meanwhile, you've been building interest by blogging and social networking and your book is now ready for launch, and everyone knows which eBook platforms, online, and bricks-and-mortar stores they can buy your book from.

You're organised, you know how to approach distributing print copies and should be prepared for selling your book through your own website.

In fact, you've got pretty much all the information you need to begin the adventure of self-publishing in this eBook. Push on with promotion, launch your book and be successful.

Good luck!

APPENDIX

What Is an ISBN?

Created to deal with stock-keeping problems, ISBNs originated in the United Kingdom and were widely used across the world by the 1970s.

Because book titles are not protected by copyright and therefore not unique, a method was required to assign a unique identifier so that, for instance, "How to Cook" by Edgar Rice Paper was not shipped to a retailer or a customer in place of "How to Cook" by Richard Edgar Rice. Every edition and print run of every book has its own ISBN for identification purposes.

Thanks to the growing use of computers in warehousing at the time, the ISBN was an obvious match for the new technology.

Not all books have an ISBN. None of the following tomes require one:

- *Company training manuals*
- *Family histories*
- *Recipe collections*
- *Books used as incentives or giveaways*

ISBNs and Self-Publishing

Self-publishing authors who are going it alone need to have an ISBN if they hope to get their book stocked in bookstores, especially the larger chains (even on a local basis). While a single ISBN costs \$125, there is no need to feel as though the price is restrictive – thanks to services like Lulu you can get your ISBN for free. You might even attempt to bend the system slightly by self-publishing in bulk and then using Lulu to print-on-demand, adding your newly allocated ISBN number to your bulk-printed volumes in the form of labels.

While this is advantageous, it isn't ideal. If you own your ISBN, you will be listed as the publisher; using a free ISBN results in the print-on-demand company or eBook distributor being listed as the publisher. As ISBN numbers are persistent and unique, this will be the case for as long as records exist.

For one-off books, using a free ISBN might not be all that bad, but if you plan on writing more books, you should plan to buy in bulk. You can do this at www.bowker.com in the USA or www.isbn.nielsenbook.co.uk in the UK. Note that although single ISBNs are expensive, buying in bulk brings the price down considerably.



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