eBook Tips

Write an Ebook
21 Resources for Writing an EBook
(When You Have No Idea What You're Doing)

You know you should publish an eBook. It's done wonders for other bloggers and entrepreneurs. But the process seems so overwhelming — and where will you find the time? Here are 21 tips and resources that will help you get started, keep you motivated, and help you navigate the trickier parts of the eBook publishing process:

WRITING

1. Book Coach or Developmental Editor

If you have no idea where to begin or how to turn your brilliant idea into a real product, find someone to guide you. You can hire a book/publishing coach or developmental editor to help you create a content and marketing plan and timeline. Or just pull together a mastermind or critique group to help you vet ideas.

2. eBooksSuck! (but they don't have to)

This eBook by Hungry Entrepreneurs is a comprehensive guide to eBook conception, creation, and promotion by 44 writers and entrepreneurs who've been there and done that.

3. Collaboration

Is writing not your sweet spot, but you know you have a message to share? Bring other writers into the project! Putting your heads together will produce more brilliant ideas than you ever could alone, and splitting the duties will allow you all to produce an eBook without any one of you taking on a massive burden.

4. Wordplay

This blog by author and mentor K.M. Weiland shares practical advice on writing your story. Get writing tips for topics ranging from character development to pronoun choice to editing tips.

5. Aliventures

The blog by Writer'sHuddle founder and Publishing E-Books for Dummies author Ali Luke offers guidance on blogging, writing, and publishing fiction and non-fiction.

6. The Editor's Eye

In this 'practical guide to transforming your book from good to great,' book coach and editor Stacy Ennis walks you through the writing and editing process. Ennis provides some of the most comprehensive and practical advice I've ever read for approaching a book project.

EDITING

I recommend reaching into your community to crowdsource the editing, feedback, and other support your eBook needs, but if you have the funds and prefer to hire, try these platforms:

7. Writer.ly

Writer.ly 'is a marketplace connecting writers with the people they need to create their books and get them sold.' Hire freelancers in editing, design, marketing, and more.

8. Freelance Brokers

Browse sites like oDesk or elance for affordable contractors to edit and proofread your manuscript, write sales copy, and more.

DESIGN

9. The Book Designer's Monthly EBook Cover Design Awards

This monthly post at TheBookDesigner.com is a rich resource for cover design feedback and advice. Submit your cover before publishing for direct, personal feedback from author Joel Friedlander, or just check in monthly to learn from his critique and praise of others.

10. 99designs

99designs allows you to host a contest for your cover, logo, website, or any other design. Set your price, explain what you're looking for, and select a winner from dozens of design submissions.

EBOOK FORMATTING AND CONVERSION

11. Scrivener

This software from Literature & Latte is a steal at $40 ($45 for Mac)! Use it from the start of your project to organize notes and chapters, then compile everything and convert directly for PDF or multiple e-readers.

12. Press Books

If you're a WordPress user, you'll love this online eBook publishing platform on the WordPress framework. Like Scrivener, you can use PressBooks to organize your project and convert to multiple formats. It comes with a higher price tag, but unlike Scrivener,

PressBooks includes the ability to work with a remote team and to distribute directly through popular eBook retailers.

13. Book Design Templates

Author Joel Friedlander and technical expert Tracy R. Atkins created these tools to solve the problem of "getting a good-looking, industry-standard book interior from a word processing program" without spending hours navigating the ins and outs of MS Word.

14. Smashwords Style Guide

If you prefer to DIY, pick up this free eBook from Smashwords creator Mark Coker. It offers simple, step-by-step instructions to create and format your eBook using Microsoft Word.

DISTRIBUTION AND SALES

You're probably already aware of Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and iTunes. Here are some alternative platforms that keep more control in your hands when selling and distributing your eBook. (Note: None of these applications delivers books directly to the reader's device, like retailers do. Readers must download your book file and load it manually onto an e-reader.)

15. e-junkie

E-junkie is by far the simplest and most affordable e-commerce site used by most bloggers. For as low as $5/month, they'll host your digital products and manage payments through PayPal. Just create a sales page at your website, add an e-junkie 'Buy' button, and you keep 100% of your profits!

16. Ganxy

Use this beautifully-designed app for selling your digital products or giving them away through promotional campaigns. The company prides itself in putting control in the author's hands (unlike major retailers) and making the reader experience as seamless as possible. Keep 90% of your sales when you sell direct, and include links to retailers to give buyers more options.

17. Gum road

Similar to Ganxy, Gumroad lets you upload your digital file and create an attractive sales page for it. The service also has a 'pay-what-you-want' feature, so you can let customers choose how much to pay for your product, and makes it easy to capture customer emails.

18. Smashwords

This distributor of indie eBooks allows you to publish your eBook and distribute it through Smashwords and through almost any major retailer of your choice, just by uploading a Word

.doc.

LAUNCHING AND MARKETING

19. Duolit's Weekend Book Marketing Makeover

This free tool (and tons of others) from Duolit will help you find new readers and fit book marketing into your busy life.

20. MyBookTable WordPress Plugin

This bookstore plugin allows you to create a user-friendly and professional-looking book sales experience through your own WordPress website.

21. Crowdfunding

Made popular by Seth Godin's successful campaign for The Icarus Deception, authors are becoming wise to the benefits of funding a book project through a 'pre-order' rather than a 'fundraising' campaign on platforms like Indiegogo and Kickstarter. Also check out sites like Pubslush and Publishizer, crowdfunding platforms dedicated to book publishing projects.

WRITTEN BY:

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