

Resources for Self Publishing

Dear Friends!

I would love to share some of the resources I discovered while writing my books. It was very important to me that I owned all the rights to my work. I also didn't want to spend thousands of dollars using a traditional publisher or allow them to edit the content. I consider myself to be an advanced beginner when it comes to using computers. I hope the info below inspires you to create your book!

Publishing Services

Each of these companies use what is called print on demand (POD) technology which allows you to order any quantity you want. Traditional publishers use off set printing, they print larger quantities at a time to keep the price down which also creates a large inventory. This is still the preferred choice for authors but it is changing rapidly. Here is a list of POD publishers/printers that I recommend:

- 1) **CreateSpace.com** (owned by Amazon.com)
- 2) **Lulu.com**
- 3) **Lightning Source.com** (owned by Ingram Publishing)
- 4) **Author House.com** (owned in part by Barnes and Noble)

Each of these companies offer their own approach. If you need a lot of guidance and support, Lulu.com and Author House would be a great choice. If your passion lies in writing the text for your book but not in creating the book, these two companies have designed their services for you. Author House offers several packages starting at \$600-\$1300. Lulu is more user friendly and cost effective. Lightning Source is owned by the largest distributor of books in the world and offers to act as a wholesaler for your book. I only recommend them to those that have some background in publishing and formatting.

I decided to start with CreateSpace for my second book. They offer themselves as an online printing company with unbeatable prices. A 150 page, 6x9 book costs \$2.75 to print at any quantity. The same book from Lulu costs \$7.44 but they offer more guidance and support. Createspace is geared for the do it yourself crowd, if you need support, your pretty much on your own but they do offer an online forum that I found very helpful. They provide a free, on line Cover Creator that allows you to make your own basic cover using their templates, as does Lulu. They will also provide you with your own ISBN# - this is the bar code on the back of every book that is used to scan the price of the book. Their free ISBN# only allows your book to be sold through Amazon.com. I choose to purchase my own (see below) and used AncientWings as the publisher

which allows me to sell and distribute my book to bookstores and wholesaler distributors. If you don't plan on making your book available to the general public, you don't need this code.

In the end, my book is available through Amazon.com through Createspace and I choose to download the same files through Lightning Source for \$95. They act as a printer and distributor through Ingram and Baker and Taylor, as well as online at Barnes and Noble. (since writing this article, I now use Lightning Source for all of my publishing/printing needs)

Book Interior

Writing your Book

You will need a word processing software in your computer, such as Word, Word Perfect or iWorks (mac users) to create a book document. For PC users, I believe you can use a free program called Open Office. I used the word processing program that comes with Appleworks and copied the text into a Word template(see below).

Formatting your Book

1) **Self-pub.net**. Kimberly offers some great resources for beginners and self publishers. She can format your book interior and create a PDF file for \$99. The text of your book needs to be formatted and transferred into a PDF file to use POD publishing.

2) http://people.lulu.com/blogs/view.php?user_id=135970. Copy and paste this on your browser. Dixie Press is a part of Lulu.com. – they offer free interior book templates. You choose what size you want, download the template, click on the icon and simply copy and paste your text into the template pages. I used the 5.5 x 8.5 template, saved it in a doc. format, emailed it to self-pub.net and she created a PDF file with all the fonts embedded for \$15.

3) **Shutterstock.com** is a good resource for royalty free images. You might want to embellish your chapter headings.

POD tends to print images darker, including the text. I found using a Georgia style font for the text on cream colored paper at 11pt., spaced 1 1/2 times between sentences helped to lighten up the color and make it easy to read. I used Trebuchet style font for the headers and book cover. The text must be embedded into a PDF or the POD printer will use their own default setting. Embedding ensures what you choose is what you will get.

Editing your Book

Google book editors for a complete list of services.

Book Cover

CreateSpace, Lulu and Lightning Source all offer a free, basic program to create your own cover. Self-pub.net offers their own book creator for Windows only. I purchased a software called BookProCover.com. It offers over 50 templates that can be customized or you can create your own custom design. Their basic program costs under \$100. Have fun with this process and plan on spending a lot of time creating a cover design that reflects who you are.

ISBN Number

1) **Publisherservices-us.com/isbnfaq.htm**. If you plan on selling your book through bookstores, you will need to purchase your own ISBN#. It cost me \$125. If you want to become a self publisher, owning your own ISBN# is mandatory.

Book Distribution

Using Createspace automatically makes your book available to Amazon.com. It doesn't, however get you into bookstores. If you want worldwide exposure, Lightning Source will use your PDF files for your book cover and interior as long as you own the ISBN#. They will charge you under \$100 to set your title up with the largest book distributor in the world, Ingram. New Leaf distributors also offer a variety of programs for self publishers that start at \$300 to promote and market your book through new age bookstores. They also offer a National Accounts Program that puts your book in the hands of an agent who will promote your book to the largest wholesalers in the industry.

Enjoy!!

Robert Theiss