

AN IVE FOCUS TEXT WHITE PAPER

Steps to Publishing Success

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Editor's Note: There is a lot of good information in this White Paper, but do not expect it to turn you into an instant publisher. My best advice, especially if you are a new writer, is to develop a working partnership with an experienced company—a relation which IVE Focus Text Publishers refers to as co-sociation—where you provide the creative material and an active part in the promotion of the publishing site and the publisher provides the technical expertise and “home” for your book.

Even if your best friend owns a top publishing company, giving you an immediate "in," this does not guarantee publishing success.

First, you have to write a quality book that has a clear target audience. And your book must answer a common problem or need that audience shares. Then you have to develop a marketing plan, and stick to it for at least two years.

Let's begin with the process that should commence even before you write your first word. Begin by reading A LOT. Read both books you passionately love and books you can't seem to make it past page five. Then figure out what the author did in the book you loved, and what was wrong with in the book you couldn't finish. Write down these points so they are crystal clear to you. Read other people's books for inspiration and to discover what you should avoid as a writer.

The next step is to plan out your book. Narrow down your subject, and then divide it into chapters. Each chapter should address a specific aspect of the problem your book is going to solve. In each chapter, break the specific aspect down into several parts. This will help your readers take in your information a bit at a time instead of overwhelming them with every bit of information clogging up the pages until they feel like they're about to go blind. It's not quite spoon-feeding the information to your readers, but it's close.

The next two steps are obvious. Write your book and then revise it. And then revise it again. And perhaps again. Of course, writing is extremely hard, and writing a book can seem like an impossible task. There are many books out there that give you guidelines to help you become familiar—even love—the process of writing and revision. Find a number of books about writing. Better yet, find a number of books about writing the specific type of book you aspire to write. These can serve as roadmaps on your writing journey.

Once you've completed your e-book—and revised it at least twice—show it to someone else whose opinion you respect. If you're lucky enough to know a good editor, see if you have something to barter for him or her to go through your manuscript. Or join a writing group and let the other members critique your work.

Then take all these ideas from other people, and revise your manuscript one last time; then stop! Put down that pen! Get your hands off the keyboard! One of the most important steps to actually producing a book is to know when to stop writing and tinkering with it.

You've finally written your e-book! Pop open the bubbly! Give yourself a night out on the town!

Okay, now that this necessary celebration is out of your system, what do you do next?

How to turn your e-book into Income

E-books are a revolutionary way to publish your book without incurring the costs of print production. All you need is a relevant and targeted subject and some inexpensive software (referred to as a compiler), and you can transform your manuscript into a book. Do not mistake a program like Microsoft Publisher or similar packaged program to do the job. This book, for example, is created using Microsoft Word. When it is completed, it will be compiled and converted using any one of more than a dozen .pdf compilers.

The problem, in terms of actually seeing income from your e-book, is that the market is overwhelmed with e-books. Many of them are not worth the time it takes to download them. Just because the ability exists to easily produce an e-book, does not make it technically worthwhile—or even good writing.

Make sure your book does not simply rehash old material. You injure your credibility as an author by claiming to offer valuable new insights and disappointing your audience with material they've read a zillion times before. So spend enough time writing and revising your book to make sure its content is of the highest quality and presents the most current information. A good book will eventually sell itself; false claims about your book will make it extremely difficult to sell any future books you may write.

Assuming you have determined that you do indeed have a quality product that answers some question or need of your target audience with NEW information, how do you know how much to charge for it? Rule number 1: Set a price for your book equal to its value. An under-priced book will only give the impression that your book isn't worth very much.

To figure out a fair price, estimate how much time you put into creating it and how difficult it was to transform the necessary information into understandable and engaging writing. Figure out how much your time and effort is worth; then price it accordingly. The goal is adequate compensation for your talent, your time, and your effort.

Once you've figured out a price that is high enough to convey the value of the book, but not so high as to be out of the reach of your target audience's mean budget, then it's time to offer it for sale on your website. To attract sales, you will need to develop a promotional campaign, particularly if you are an unknown author.

There are multitudes of books about self-promotion that will guide you in your efforts. Choose a plan that is both creative and professional. Learn how to write a catchy yet informative press release, and send copies of your e-book to sites that specialize in e-book reviews.

Learn how to write powerful sales copy, or hire someone to write it for you. This is an essential. You absolutely need excellent sales copy to sell your book. Make sure the copy includes all the reasons your target audience needs your book, and the benefits they will derive from buying it.

Use graphics in your promotional materials. Beautiful graphics have the power to convey, instantly, quality and value to your e-book. Graphics can also convey the amount of valuable information the book contains, and your careful attention to detail. Professional graphics sell professional books. They assure the customer that the product is what it claims to be.

Consider excerpting pages, or even a single chapter, for articles. You can offer these tidbits for free on your website as a sort of demo of your book. Include an order form for your e-book at the end of the excerpted articles.

Finally, when you set-up your download link, make sure to simplify the process. It's a good idea to offer a few bonuses that make purchasing your book even more enticing, but make sure the bonuses are valuable and high quality. Too many bonuses that are just a load of useless or unrelated stuff will compromise the impression your audience has of your e-book. The goal is to convey to your audience that they are getting a quality product for a good deal. That means applying restraint, especially when it comes to adding bonus items. Too much free stuff offered diminishes your credibility.

Make sure your book is a quality product. Make sure it is relevant and current. Develop an effective marketing plan that includes excellent sales copy and excerpted articles. Then offer your book for sale, and wait for your audience to discover you.