

Resources for Authors

This list originated from questions that authors have asked me. As I researched the questions, my list of resources continued to grow. In addition, many of the links and comments come from courses and webinars I have taken on self-publishing. Along the way, I also offer my own advice, but please research any of these topics on your own.

General Resources

[Nathan's Bransford's blog](#) on everything from finding an agent to creating an author's page on Facebook. See his "Publishing Essentials" on the left-hand side.

A [list](#) of blogs for writers

[Examples](#) of successful queries.

The [Publishing Rants](#) blog has more on queries.

From [Writers Type](#), the perfect length for a novel.

[Guidelines](#) to formatting a manuscript to send to agents.

More guidelines [here](#).

Author Elizabeth Zelvin [explains](#) what an agent does.

Marketing

According to Jane Friedman, a guru on self-publishing, there are two areas that are critical: Having an author website, and having good reviews on Amazon.com and Goodreads.com. Having a series is also key, if you are self-publishing. In fact, the first book may be a loss leader, with subsequent books in a series gaining traction.

Your website should have, at the very least:

- An "About" page with your photo
- An information page for your books, with a media kit
- Social media integration
- Somewhere to sign up for your email newsletter
- And, if you blog, a link or RSS feed to your blog

For more on website elements, see [here](#).

More marketing links [here](#), at the website of noted designer Joel Friedlander.

A [checklist](#) for marketing.

A [post](#) on stealing marketing ideas from nonfiction for your fiction books.

Posts from or about book publicists:

<http://www.tweetspeakpoetry.com/2013/11/07/powerful-simple-tips-on-finding-and-working-with-a-publicist/>

<http://fundsforwriters.com/how-much-does-it-cost-to-hire-a-book-publicist/>

<http://www.womenofmystery.net/2015/06/22/hiring-a-publicist/>

<http://www.thefussylibrarian.com/blog/advice-from-a-former-book-publicist/>

<http://www.jungleredwriters.com/2010/07/hallie-independent-publicist-susan.html>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/holly-robinson/is-a-book-publicist-worth_b_5485362.html

An author's blog on all things marketing: <http://www.blurbisaverb.com/>

Why should you use Twitter? This author [tells](#) you why.

Putting [Google](#) to work for you.

Sometimes, it really pays to advertise. Authors have gotten huge boosts doing it through this [site](#). As well, here's another [link](#) that lists several sites where you can advertise, often for free. This works best when you are doing free giveaways.

<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/marketing/> has series of articles on marketing. Also check out her blog: <http://www.thecreativepenn.com/blog/>

Resources for authors looking to self-publish

If you are looking to self-publish, the most popular combination is [Kindle Direct Publishing \(KDP\)](#) and [Smashwords](#) (the latter will publish your manuscript to all the other e-readers).

The best use of KDP is to take part in their KDP Select program; you must commit to having your book exclusively on KDP for 90 days. In return, you get some big perks, such as access to the promotions manager tool, which controls promotion of free giveaways (a good way to get visibility). Also, you'll be able to take part in the lending library, for which you get paid "rather nicely," sometimes as much or more as what you would get for the sale of your book, according to Jane Friedman. Finally, the Kindle bestseller list is closely watched by everyone in the business, especially agents.

After 90 days, you can upload your book to [Smashwords](#). [BookBaby](#) is another inexpensive way to format and distribute your ebook.

I recommend the book [APE: Author, Publisher, Entrepreneur—How to Publish a Book](#) by Guy Kawasaki

You'll find much more information through [these links](#) provided by Jane Friedman.

J.A. Konrath is a noted author who went the self-publishing route. He talks about it on his [blog](#).

This is a [great blog](#) that focuses on self-publishing.

25 things [you need to know](#) about self-publishing.

And [a follow-up](#) more focused on ebooks.

Mystery author Gigi Pandian had won the prestigious Malice Domestic grant but could not find an agent. She went the self-publishing route. Here, she gives [20 steps](#) to take in self-publishing and [five tips](#).

And the [story](#) of one self-publishing sensation.

What's Print on Demand? Here's a [primer](#) from the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America:

Do you need your own imprint? Read [this](#). And six basic [steps](#) to setting up your own imprint.

Distribution for self-published authors: <https://janefriedman.com/get-book-distributed-self-published-authors-need-know/>

Three how-to videos by authors (from Sisters in Crime). They are a couple of years old, but packed with great information on the pros and cons of e-publishing:

Ellen Hart on [ePublishing101](#)

Libby Fischer Hellman on [ePublishing](#)

Marcia Talley on how to [upload an eBook](#)

Cover / Interior Book Designs

A cover is often your first impression. For ebooks, remember that they have to look good in thumbnail size, as well as look good in both color and grayscale display, since some ereaders don't have color. The cover itself should be clean with big typography. See these [tips](#) from Joel Friedlander here and an interview with him [here](#) that has detailed advice.

Ask me for more!

If you wish, I can provide you with a list of cover designers, interior formatters, book publicists, and website designers.