

Draft2Digital to Acquire Smashwords, Creating Self-Publishing Juggernaut



Combined Company will Publish and Distribute 800,000+ Titles from 250,000 Authors and Publishers

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Draft2Digital, LLC and Smashwords, Inc., two pioneers in ebook self-publishing, today announced that Draft2Digital will acquire Smashwords. The acquisition unites the industry's two most innovative and author-friendly publishing platforms into one, enabling the new Draft2Digital to drive even greater success for authors, publishers, and sales partners.

Draft2Digital and Smashwords are key catalysts behind the dramatic rise of self-publishing over the last fourteen years. Their publishing platforms enable 250,000 authors and publishers around the world to publish, distribute, market, and manage over 800,000 ebooks and 11,000 print on demand paperback books.

The combined company will operate under the Draft2Digital name and will be headquartered in Oklahoma City. All Smashwords and Draft2Digital employees are expected to join the combination.

Kris Austin, co-founder and CEO of Draft2Digital, will lead the combined company as CEO. Mark Coker, founder and former CEO of Smashwords, will join the Draft2Digital management team as Chief Strategy Officer and board member.

Both companies are entering the acquisition profitable and debt-free.

"I'm pleased to welcome Smashwords authors, publishers, employees and partners to the D2D family," said Kris Austin. "Early in our discussions with Smashwords, we each immediately realized we can accomplish so much more for the indie author community by working together than working as competitors. The resources we once expended creating duplicative systems can now be redeployed to ramp up our R&D investments in next generation tools to empower authors and publishers."

"I'm thrilled to join forces with Draft2Digital," said Mark Coker. "Over the last decade, I've come to deeply admire Draft2Digital's team, technology, and commitment to authors. Our shared business model is a key to our two companies' success. We put authors first. By design, we only make money when our authors make money. This aligns our interests with

the interests of our authors. Together we will lead the next chapter of the indie author revolution.”

The combination is expected to yield significant benefits for authors, publishers, retail and library partners, and readers.

- **Draft2Digital authors** will gain access to the Smashwords Store and its myriad exclusive book marketing tools, including Smashwords Coupons, self-serve merchandising, Author Interviews, and the patent pending Smashwords Presales tool for book launches. Sales at the Smashwords Store have grown consecutively each of the last five years, with December 2021 sales up 20% over December 2020. Draft2Digital’s erotica authors can look forward to expanded distribution enabled by Smashwords’ proprietary erotica certification system, which allows retailers to carry erotic romance and mainstream erotica with greater confidence.
- **Smashwords authors** will gain access to new tools that simplify print and digital publishing and drive greater success. Among these tools are D2D Print, the company’s Print on Demand service for paperbacks (currently in beta, which authors can join at <https://draft2digital.com/printbeta/>); improved metadata management tools for better book discoverability at retailers; automated end-matter for series books; payment splitting for co-authors and collaborations; and more payment options, including direct bank deposits.
- **Retailers and libraries** served by the companies can expect greater title selection and unmatched merchandising recommendations. The new, merged company will offer retailers, subscription services, and libraries unprecedented data-driven insights into the world’s largest dedicated catalog of independently published books. This represents a unique and first-of-its-kind offering that Draft2Digital believes will improve the publishing industry.
- **Customers of the Smashwords Store** can look forward to an improved store experience and an increased selection of books from the many great authors and publishers distributed by Draft2Digital.

“This acquisition is great news for indie authors,” said Joanna Penn, host of the Creative Penn podcast and bestselling author who has followed each company since its founding. “Two of the industry’s strongest advocates for indie authors are combining their unique toolsets, technologies, and energy to do more for the indie community. There are exciting years ahead!”

What's Coming Next

The acquisition is expected to close on March 1, 2022.

To minimize workflow disruption for authors, publishers, and sales partners, the two platforms will combine their systems in gradual and incremental steps.

Authors and publishers of both companies can continue utilizing their current platform of choice with the understanding that over time the authors and publishers of both companies will gain access to a common dashboard, common distribution outlets (including distribution to the Smashwords Store for current D2D authors), and an expanded suite of new and improved tools for book publishing, distribution, and marketing.

Draft2Digital will broadcast a live Q&A session for authors and publishers on Wednesday, February 9th, at Noon Central, with Kris Austin and Mark Coker, moderated by Kevin Tumlinson, Draft2Digital's VP of Marketing & PR. Kris and Mark will share additional insight about their plans to support the indie publishing community and welcome questions from the audience.

Visit <https://D2DLive.com> for links and launch time, and to attend live on either Facebook or YouTube. The live broadcast will be recorded for future inclusion in the Draft2Digital podcast, *Self Publishing Insiders*, and will be available as a blog post at Draft2Digital.com/blog.

Additional FAQs about the acquisition can be found at:

<https://smashwords.com/united>

<https://draft2digital.com/united>

About Draft2Digital

Founded in 2012 and headquartered in Oklahoma City, Draft2Digital is the world's leading publishing platform for self-published authors and independent presses. The company offers a broad suite of free and powerful automated and self-serve tools that authors and publishers can use to build and grow their publishing businesses. This includes tools to simplify ebook and print publishing, distribution, metadata management, and marketing. Following its acquisition of Smashwords, Draft2Digital will serve more than 250,000 authors and publishers that collectively publish over 800,000 books worldwide. Visit Draft2Digital at <https://draft2digital.com> or follow on Twitter [@Draft2Digital](https://twitter.com/Draft2Digital).

About Smashwords, Inc.

Founded in 2008 by Mark Coker, Smashwords was an early pioneer in ebook self-publishing. The company's platform made it possible for writers to professionally produce, publish, and distribute ebooks at no cost. As a distributor, Smashwords was the first to open multiple major retailers and library ebook services to self-published authors, and worked in partnership with sales partners and payment processors to establish systems, standards, and professional best practices to foster a thriving ecosystem of indie-friendly booksellers and libraries. As of December 31, 2021, Smashwords was publishing 590,000 ebooks supplied by 150,000 authors, publishers and literary agents. The company was originally headquartered in Los Gatos, Calif, and most recently based in Pacific Grove, Calif. Visit Smashwords at <https://smashwords.com>, or follow the store at [@Smashwords](#).

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