

Self Publishing from Beginner to Paid Professional

A Clear Success Roadmap
for Aspiring Indie Authors



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Charles Johnson Jr.**

Ojula Technology Innovations

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1. What's the Best Publishing Method for You?

Are you struggling to decide how to publish your masterpiece? There are so many options that it can be overwhelming. We've been there, and in this book, we share our perspectives from personal experiences and extensive research.

After trying a variety of publishing paths, we've successfully published hundreds of books. Hopefully, our advice will result in you having an easier time of it as you choose how to publish your own books.

There are three main ways to publish books: **traditional, self-publishing and hybrid**. As you'll see in this article, no single method is best for all authors. Your preferred approach will depend on your skills, interests, and temperament.

Each method has its benefits and drawbacks. Learn about each so you can make a more informed decision regarding which route is best for you.

1.1. Traditional Publishing

Historically, the traditional publishing company has been the primary way of publishing a book. Even though this option is still available, a lot of authors are now switching to the self-publishing or hybrid approach for the reasons I explained below.

This is how the traditional publishing typically works. An author writes a manuscript and finds a literary agent to represent him/her. The agent pitches his/her book to various publishing houses to find one that will publish it. If the agent is successful, a publishing house will go through the steps needed to get the book to market. Such steps include editing the book, creating a book cover, and so on. Once the book is published, the publishing house will proceed to distribution and marketing. In exchange, the publishing house takes a percentage of the sales of the book.

However, there are some authors who choose to bypass the literary agents. Instead, they pitch their books directly to publishing houses. There are a few publishing companies that have processes in place to evaluate solicitations directly from authors. Therefore, finding an agent is not always necessary.

Pros of traditional publishing:

- They edit the book, produce book covers, market, and do a few other services
- There's little or no cost to the author of the book

Cons of traditional publishing:

- They select a very few number of books, therefore there's a high chance of rejection

- Authors often lose editing control and marketing decisions

1.1.1. Who Should Consider Traditional Publishing?

If you're in a hurry to get your book published, traditional publishing might not be for you. Many authors and literary agents spend years pitching books to publishing companies without success. Also, you might want to avoid traditional publishing if you don't want to expose yourself to a long string of rejections. Traditional publishers reject more than 95% of book submissions they receive, so your odds of a traditional publisher accepting your book are low.

1.1.2. Who Should Avoid Traditional Publishing?

This option is typically effective for writers with already established credentials or extremely compelling writing styles. It is ideal for authors who enjoy writing and are willing to hand over the editing and marketing to someone else.

1.1.3. Tips for Succeeding with Traditional Publishing

If you want to go this route, getting a credible literary agent can help. You can find agents on sites including PublishersMarketplace.com, QueryTracker.com, and AgentQuery.com. Do your research to ensure your agent is effective and ethical before signing with them. You can do this by checking referrals, reviews, and even Better Business Bureau ratings to learn more about potential agents. Also, do a quick Google search to ensure agents you're considering aren't on any watchdog lists.

1.2. Self-Publishing

Book retailers and wholesalers now make it possible for authors to publish their own books. You can do this with nothing more than an electronic file containing your manuscript and a bank account to receive your royalty payments. Some publishing platforms even provide free book covers and other services in exchange for the rights to sell your book.

This approach requires authors to go beyond writing into the areas of editing, proofreading, formatting, and more. To create a high-quality book, an author must have diverse talent, a willingness to learn a variety of skills beyond writing, or access to people who can help with publishing-related tasks.

Many self-published authors hire experts to do specific tasks for them. Freelancing platforms such as Fiverr, Freelancer.com, and Upwork have now made it easy for authors to connect with people who can perform tasks typically managed by publishing companies. For a reasonable fee, many authors can hire editors, proofreaders, formatters, and marketers for their books. The sites mentioned above also give authors access to designers who can create book covers, promotional videos, and advertising campaigns.

The quality of freelancing services varies widely, so do your research before choosing someone to provide services for you. Many freelancing platforms supply ratings and reviews from authors who have used their services, so read those reviews carefully.

It's also important that you create an account with each publishing platform yourself. That way, you control the way your book is printed, distributed, and priced.

Top platforms for self-publishing include IngramSpark, Amazon's KDP, Apple Books, and Draft2Digital. There are many others to choose from, and authors aren't limited to just one. It's often a good idea to publish on multiple platforms to maximize your book's potential customer base.

Pros:

- Authors maintain control of their books' content and promotional messages
- It can be done for little money

Cons:

- Requires significant research to learn the steps and processes
- Includes some risk of content piracy if authors use unscrupulous freelancers for services

1.2.1. Who Should Consider Self-Publishing:

If you have a passion for learning and are willing to develop a variety of new skills, self-publishing might be for you. If you do it yourself, it might give you a reason to learn editing, formatting, graphic design, and marketing. You can always find freelancers to help, but that requires research and adds to the expense of publishing.

1.2.2. Who Should Avoid Self-Publishing:

Does the idea of managing complicated processes overwhelm you? If so, self-publishing might not be for you. It requires a significant amount of project management to navigate your book through the editing, publication, and marketing processes.

1.2.3. Tips for Succeeding with Self-Publishing:

Tap into a variety of resources to support you during your self-publishing journey. There are social media communities, professional associations, and other author groups dedicated to helping writers get their books to market. They can provide guidance to help you find credible publishing services and techniques to overcome obstacles you encounter during the process. You can also find online classes to teach you the steps needed to publish your book.