

Write & Publish Your E-Book, From Start to Finish

Lesson Four

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Introduction

This is lesson four in a series of articles on writing & publishing an e-book. The series originally appeared in the "A FREELANCER'S LIFE" e-zine, and will be published as an entire e-book course. Until then, I hope you enjoy the techniques I present. What's more, I can guarantee you will write & publish your e-book if only you follow along with each lesson. Future lessons will be available for download in PDF format at:

<http://www.geocities.com/davidware2002/>

Lesson 4 - Publisher Research

I hope you are getting as much out of these 'lessons' as I have writing them. I also want to encourage everyone who reads them to KEEP WRITING.

First, let me start by saying "stay on schedule with your writing." If you have been following along, you should have at least two 'articles' written. That's great! But even better, you have actually completed two chapters for your upcoming book.

Now, don't stray from writing! Pick out another 'sub-topic', and tell me all about it. Don't worry about punctuation, spelling or who will or won't read it. Those things don't matter right now. We'll discuss them later down the road. The important thing now is that you continue writing about one sub-topic (or scene, for fiction writers) EVERY DAY until you have gone through all of the sub-topics on your subject.

By now, you are well on your way to completing your book. So, I will use this lesson to talk a little about deciding where & how to publish.

First, you have two options when it comes to publishing your e-book. The first is to self-publish, which I recommend, and you'll see why in a moment. The second option is to find an online publisher to publish it for you.

Self-publishing means you will have to do most of the marketing, as well as the editing, cover art & all that good stuff. But the fact is, you have more control over your work if you self-publish. And the marketing side of things won't be much of

a problem after we finish these lessons, because I will be covering marketing soon.

With an online publisher, you won't have to worry a whole lot about editing, cover art, etc., because they will use their resources to do it for you. You will, however, be expected to help (heavily) in promoting your book. What's more, publishing your e-book with an online publisher means you will lose some creative control over the finished product.

Further, there are many different formats for e-books these days. For the most part, the accepted format is PDF (Portable Document Format), because it is possible for just about any operating system to use, as long as the reader has Adobe Acrobat (a free reader that most PC's come with).

Another well-known format is to publish in HTML (web language). This allows the reader to open the book in their Internet browser, and read from there. You can even take it a step further, and publish the HTML pages in an executable (EXE) format, which gives the reader a single file that they run from their desktop. If you have read any e-books lately, you have probably experienced one or both of these formats.

You can also have your e-book published in a format readable on a hand held palm computer, though this practice is not nearly as wide spread as publishing in PDF or EXE format.

Your best bet is to plan on publishing your e-book in both PDF & EXE formats. This will give the widest audience the best chance to be able to read it.

Now, here is your assignment for today. This is actually going into the marketing side a bit, and the info you come up with will help in that arena later on down the road.

Take a moment (not too long, as I don't want to take you away from writing!) to write down what format(s) you want to publish in. Then, conduct a search at google.com for "ebook+publishers" (just copy & paste the phrase, quotation marks & all, into the Google search box). Browse several sites, and be sure to see how they publish their e-books. Most reputable firms will have a variety.

Also, take the time to look over a sample contract, if one is available. Again, many sites will have one. Use the following guidelines if you wish to keep track of the information:

Publisher:

Formats Published:

Royalties:

Genres:

Guidelines:

Author Participation in Marketing? (if so, how much do they expect?)

The reason that this is important is because you will most likely find that it would be just as easy to do ALL the marketing yourself, and have the creative control over your book, than to give some of that away and still have to market your butt off.

Now, you may think that I'm a big fan of self-publishing print books, as well. If so, you'd be wrong. You see, e-books are extremely inexpensive to publish. It doesn't take much time outside of editing, and there's no big process to go through. The fact is, a Word document, prepared for publishing, can be converted into PDF in 20 minutes or less. An EXE will only take a little longer, due to the need to format your chapters into separate HTML pages.

I'm going to end here, and discuss e-book publishing software in the next issue.

About the author:

David Ware is a successful freelance writer with over 7 years of experience. His articles have appeared in national, regional and local publications across the U.S. He can be contacted at warehouse@gvii.net for assignments.