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J Leif Jensen and Associates



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So, you want to be an author...



Not only are less people reading and buying books, the overall promotion process of a book has shifted. Be ready if you want to get into this game.

For most books the marketing today is done by authors, not by publishers. "Achieving publishing success is 5% writing a good book and 95% marketing." Is today's mantra in publishing.

So, it makes more sense to be self-published since most of the responsibility rests on you anyway Plan to self-market the hell out of your books. Websites, social media, podcasts, book signings, speaking engagements and free copies to those who will review and publish those reviews are good ways to start the process.

Overall, this can be a great marketing resource for your business and your personal brand.

Today the average U.S. nonfiction book is unfortunately now selling less than 250 copies per year and less than 3,000 copies over its lifetime. Very few titles are big sellers. Only 62 of 1,000 business books released in 2009 sold more than 5,000 copies, according to an analysis by the Codex Group (New York Times, March 31, 2010). So the odds are against you, making your fortune. But you can get your message out there.

While adult nonfiction print unit book sales peaked in 2007 and have declined each year since then, according to BookScan (Publishers Weekly, January 2, 2012). Similarly, bookstore sales peaked in 2007 and have fallen each year since then, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (Publishers Weekly, February 14, 2012). So there are fewer readers to get your message.

For most books the marketing today is done by authors, not by publishers. Publishers have managed to stay relevant in this worsening marketplace only by shifting more and more marketing responsibility to authors, to cut costs and prop up sales. In recognition of this reality, most book proposals from experienced authors now have an extensive (usually many pages) section on the authors' marketing platform and what the authors will do to publicize and market the books.

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So, it makes more sense to be self-published since most of the responsibility rests on you anyway, and so plan to self-market the hell out of your books. Websites, social media, podcasts, book signings and free copies to those who will review and publish those reviews are good ways to start the process.

Economics of self publishing

In theory, an author published through a small press that sells 100,000 ebooks at 99 cents, earns an annual salary of \$12,000.

To earn \$40,000 per year, that author would have to sell 333,333 books per year. For independent authors, being self-published through Amazon, they earn 34 cents per 99-cent e-book sold.

The authors put time and energy into their creations, ideas, research, outlining, drafts and then the final writing, cover artists, editing, and more. On average, a self published author of an e-book will be lucky to make any money....

So plan accordingly. Have your advertising and marketing plan in place, you'll need it.

Read more to see the actual numbers to back this up.

Self-publishing is almost as rigged against the author and the publishing world. Looking at a breakdown of the dollars and cents details, a 99-cent price point for independent authors, being self-published through Amazon KDP, they earn 34 cents per 99-cent book sold.

The authors put time and energy into their creations, ideas, research, outlining, drafts and then the final writing. Then there are the other associated costs to publishing a quality book, including cover artists (\$125-3000), editors (\$800-5000), marketing, etc.

Let's play with some numbers, if the cover design costs of \$350, and the editing job costs \$1400, then divide by 34 cents, the author would have to sell 5,134 books just to break even, and that's nearly impossible without an additional amount for advertising.

At this point in our calculation the author has received no income for actually writing the book. While keeping in mind that most self-published authors sell less than 100 copies of their ebooks.

These figures came from an article I read. But in conversations with a graphic designer I know, the numbers tick and tie in a general fashion. He has illustrated a couple of kids books and is working on a series of graphic novels.

So plan accordingly. Have your advertising and marketing plan in place early.



Idiom of the Month
Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater

Meaning: look for avoidable errors so you don't remove something good with the bad

Origin: This idiom allegedly comes from a time when the household bathed in the same water; first, the lord would bathe, then the men, the lady, the women, the children, and the babies last. The bath water is said to have been so dirty that there was a risk of throwing the baby out with the water once everyone was done bathing!

Idiom

OF THE MONTH

Featured Client:



ALL SEASONS
Screen Printing & Embroidery

All Seasons Screen Printing & Embroidery

All Seasons has been providing high quality screen printing and embroidery services to the Chicago area since 1985. They do a lot more than just T-shirts and have over 80 years of combined experience in screen printing and design.

All Seasons Website

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