The Linky Blog Guide to Your Multi-format, Multi-purpose, Multi-use, Multi-published, Multi-delivered, Multi-revenue eBook

Writing, Designing, Publishing, Marketing
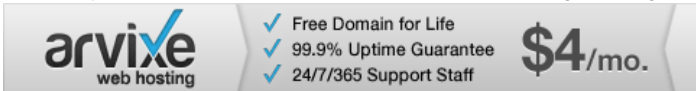# & Automating a World–Class
eBook

brent riggs | linkyblog.com

Thanks for reading my book. Please check out this first page of great resources, information, links, and services I want to share with you.

If you are reading a printed version of this book and would also like the electronic version so you can click on the links and read from your computer, please email me and I'll send it to you: brent@brentriggs.com
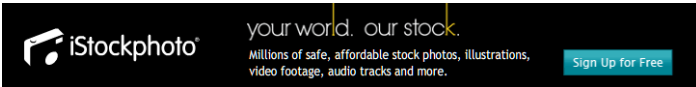

I have used Arvixe hosting for years and recommend them to all my clients and subscribers for website and blog hosting:

You can find all my books and resources here:
http://www.brentriggs.com/stuff

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Linky Tools Guide – Writing, Designing, Publishing, Marketing, and Automating a World-Class eBook

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About Brent

Twenty-five years ago, I was doing graphic arts by hand in a little print shop. That was before personal computers. Many of you reading this probably can't imagine life without computers. They came on to the scene when I was in my early '20s. Technology has ended traditional publishing as we know it, traditional news as we know it, traditional education as we know it, and traditional visual arts.

The Internet opens up the entire world and removes constraints traditionally dictated by well-entrenched industries. A global audience and market is just on the other side of your keyboard.

We live in a time when extra income and financial security is more important than ever. Blogging and publishing great information as eBooks is legitimate, enjoyable, and profitable.

Electronic products and "online business" are the frontier of home-based business, side businesses, and the self-employed. The ENTIRE WORLD is literally your market. **It's mind boggling.**

My "side" income from 24/7 online business now far exceeds what my income ever was an employee. I'm just an average Joe. I've built a great online business, so can you... eBooks can be a great way to do that. No matter how big I make this eBook, this topic is too much information to squeeze into one publication so you need to make sure you are signed up to Linky Blog, where I will be continually posting lots of great information about eBooks, online business, passive income, blogging, and personal finance in general.

A little bit about me:

- I have spent 25 years working in graphic design, marketing, and writing.
- When the internet came along, my design interests transferred over to web development and programming.
- I've started, ran, and owned many businesses and those experiences have led me to pursue "online business."
- I've published a dozen or so titles so far (which I consider a short list because I can't write full time yet); I've got a LONG list of others planned.
- I own/operate several popular sites like linkytools.com and linkyfollowers.com.
- I was a Drill Sergeant for many years; worked on the Space Shuttle program; received a black belt in Kenpo; have 7 going on 8 kids (adoption in progress); and am married to the most wonderful wife a man could ever dream of having.
- I am grateful for the opportunity to do what I truly love and achieving my own success while serving and teaching others.

I'm on your side and cheering for you! Email me anytime: brent@brentriggs.com.

Brent

Table of Contents

If at any point while reading this book you have a question, feel free to contact me (brent@brentriggs.com). My subscribers are given first priority in my email inbox, so be sure to get your **FREE subscription** at www.linkyblog.com.

Tell others about this book:

Quick Reference Guide

For your convenience, I'm going to list the typical steps I take with each book I produce so that you can quickly see where you are in the process and if you are missing anything.

You may not understand these points now but you will by the time you read this book:

1. Decide on a topic.
2. Think of your book title and subtitle.
3. Write your sales page or back-cover content.
4. Get feedback from your potential audience or Editor to help you fine tune and improve your sales page or back-cover content.
5. Create your book outline from your sales material or back cover.
6. Write your content.
7. Have the content edited and proofed.
8. Get some initial feedback from potential readers and respond with revisions if needed.
9. Repeat the cycle of revisiting your content and then having any changes edited and proofed.
10. Insert graphics, images, and clipart (this step can be done whenever it works best).
11. Design the interior layout/format of the book.
12. Design the cover of the book.
13. Output PDFs for print, download, and email.
14. Output Kindle version.
15. Upload to on-demand print service.
16. Create sales landing pages online.
17. Setup payment methods like PayPal for the PDF version; on-demand print and Kindle payments can be handled at those sites (such as CreateSpace and Amazon).
18. Create confirmation pages where user is taken after purchase to download book or receive order fulfillment information.
19. Announce and market your book.

If at any point you have questions about these steps or need some help, feel free to contact me (brent@brentriggs.com). My subscribers are given first priority in my email inbox, so be sure to get your **FREE subscription** at www.linkyblog.com.

During the almost 20 years I have been working online, I've lost track of the number of services, tools, software, and resources that I have bought and tried. I can't even imagine the amount of money I could have saved if somebody with the appropriate experience would have pointed me towards a list of proven resources and shared with me why I should use them.

In this section, you will find all of the favorite "must-have" tools and resources that make my online business run like a well-oiled machine. You can always read the marketing a company puts out, but there is nothing like having a personal explanation and recommendation from someone with proven credibility and honesty.

One of the online-business income streams I have is "affiliate marketing." Affiliate marketing is discussed later in the book but a definition here is helpful: affiliate marketing is when you sign up to recommend a product or service and you receive a commission for doing so when a sale is made. Most of the resources below are affiliate programs that I am involved in. By including this section in the book, not only am I giving you a great

Must-Have Resources, Tools, & Software

list of fantastic tools, I am also showing you (in a real-world example) how to use affiliate marketing.

I do not recommend products and services that I am not willing to back up with my reputation. It is common to see books or blogs that are built specifically for promoting affiliate marketing, with no regard to whether not there is a true personal recommendation or any experience with that product. It is basically just advertising; sometimes the advertising is even backed up with dishonest claims.

Everything I have listed and recommended in this section is a resource I risk my reputation on and recommend wholeheartedly. The last thing I want to do as an online business mentor and expert is to influence people to waste their money on junk, gimmicks, scams, or get-rich-quick nonsense.

Of course, I cannot guarantee a perfect experience between you and another company or service, but I can give you confident recommendations based on my experience, expertise, and two decades of fine-tuning my business.

If you have any questions that you would like me to answer before you consider purchasing or using anything recommended, feel free to contact me: Brent@BrentRiggs.com

Ninja Affiliate

I will share more about affiliate marketing throughout this book. The best way for you to find out about the Ninja Affiliate software is to watch their video at their website.

Let me say this loud and clear: GET THIS SOFTWARE FOR YOUR BLOG. It is truly a "must" have. All my books and blogs benefit from this software; however, the software is far too involved for me to explain it all in a couple of paragraphs.

Click here to sign up and watch the Ninja Demo …

Arvixe Hosting

All of my blogs and websites are hosted on Arvixe. I have numerous hosting accounts and three servers that house the "Linky" family of sites.

Arvixe has stellar customer service. They have never failed to quickly and effectively respond to any issues I have brought to them. All hosting companies have hiccups… the question is: how fast do they respond and fix things?

Arvixe is the best blog- and website-hosting you can get. They offer every kind of hosting for any type of business need; but, if you are reading this book, you probably want WordPress blog hosting. Click here to get WordPress hosting from Arvixe for about $4/month.

Aweber

Aweber is the serious blogger's choice of email-list subscriber management and broadcast tools. Ten years ago, there wasn't even another serious option. There are some other good email-marketing companies out there now, but Aweber is still among the best.

With Aweber, you can manage your subscriptions, do email-marketing campaigns, setup new-user campaigns, automatically monitor your blog for new content and then email it your list, do split testing, and a whole lot more.

Aweber is a fantastic service that I have relied on and recommended for many years.

Find out more about Aweber, click here…

CreateSpace

CreateSpace is Amazon's on-demand print service. On-demand printing is the ability to publish a book, and it is only printed one at a time when they are ordered. You do not have to keep an inventory.

The best way I know how to share the benefits of CreateSpace with you is to provide the list of features from their own home page:

- **Free and Easy Tools**
  Do-it-yourself and finish fast with tools like Interior Reviewer, Cover Creator, Preview, and Image Gallery.

- **Higher Royalties**
  Place more in your pocket with some of the best economics in the industry. View Earning Royalties video.

- **Comprehensive Book Services**
  Get the help you need to complete your book with

our affordable design, editing, and marketing services.

- **Always Available**
  Your work is manufactured to meet demand, so your title is always in stock. There are no upfront costs and no need to carry inventory.

- **Wide Distribution Options**
  Expand your book's availability through Amazon.com, Amazon Europe, your own eStore, and Kindle. Plus, reach more readers with the Expanded Distribution option.

- **Help when you need it**
  Get answers fast over the phone, by e-mail, or join our Community and discuss your ideas, questions, and more with folks just like you.

Find out more or sign up for CreateSpace here…

iStock

There are lots of stock images and clipart services. The truth is: you get what you pay for. iStock.com is a world-class stock-image and clipart provider.

I use them almost every single day. I'm a graphic designer at heart and by trade. I know good images and art. You can't beat iStock. This is not the least expensive option, but what you get is well worth the investment.

Sign up for an iStock account here…

Elegant Themes

There is just no excuse for an ugly blog today. There are an abundance of high-quality, stunning WordPress themes available. Elegant Themes is one of my two favorite sources and I have used many of their themes on my own work and for clients. From the website:

Stellar Design
Design is our art and our passion. We craft WordPress Themes with a pixel-perfect eye for detail and a high standard for aesthetic excellence. Let us help you make your website amazingly simple, beautiful and professional.

Advanced Features
Our plethora of Shortcodes, Page Templates, and Theme Options give you full control over your website.

Manage your site like never before by using the countless powerful features that come packaged with all of our themes.

Unparalleled Support
We put a ton of effort into providing top-notch WordPress tech support to all of our customers. With our dedicated support staff, you can be sure that you will have your blog up and running without a hitch regardless of your experience level.

Create your Elegant Themes account here…

WPZoom

This is my other favorite theme provider. WPZoom concentrates on professional WordPress themes with tons of features and functionality. If you are looking for a function-specific theme (like a magazine blog, or a portfolio or video-centric blog), WPZoom has some incredible choices. From their website:

- Professional & Impressive WordPress Themes

- We provide top quality premium WordPress themes at amazing prices with excellent lifetime support included.

- Professional Support & Documentation

- Flexible & SEO Optimized Code

- Advanced Theme Options Panel

Click here to visit the WPZOOM site…

Optin Skin

Optin Skin is a WordPress plug-in for creating and tracking the best, highest converting sign-up forms. From their website:

#1 Split-Test Your Way to Higher Conversion Rates

#2 Fully Customize Our 18 Default Designs

#3 Draw Attention to Your Opt-in Forms with 'Fade'

#4 Impressions Only Count If Your Form is Seen

#5 OptinSkin Can Power Your Custom Designs

#6 Place Skins Anywhere On Your Blog with One Click

#7 Make More Money With an (Optional) Affiliate Link

#8 Works with All Email Marketing Services

Check out Optin Skin here…

Premise

In my opinion, Premise is the only choice for lead generation, membership sites, and landing pages. From their website:

Access
Build secure membership sites, sell ebooks, software, and other digital downloads, do advanced lead generation, take recurring payments with automated member.

Acceleration
Perform split-testing from the WordPress interface, optimize your landing pages for search, discover new tactics and strategies with included copywriting and optimization seminars.

Action
Quickly and easily create 8 critical landing page types, control fonts, colors, and styles without code, included custom graphics, and copywriting advice from the WordPress interface.

Vertical Response

Vertical Response offers full-featured email marketing, social media, and surveying. From their website:

Event Marketing
Easily manage, promote, and sell tickets to your next event with VerticalResponse Events. We make it effortless to create a sell-out event in minutes.

Online Surveys
Get instant customer feedback. Create, send, and analyze professional surveys with ease.

Direct Mail Postcards
You create online; we print, mail, and send full-color direct-mail postcards for you. No minimums!

List Management
Grow your subscriber list the right way with our free opt-in form, and mail smarter with our robust list segmentation tools.

Go here to get more details…

InfusionSoft

This is actually a service that my twin brother Bruce Riggs recommends and trains his small business clients to use. This is a full featured, comprehensive online sales management system. Bruce says it is the best; and trust me, Bruce knows what he is talking about.

Their website says: The ONLY all-in-one sales and marketing software built for small business.

We've built everything you need—CRM, e-commerce, social media and email marketing—into a single, powerful system that automatically converts leads into new customers and grows sales from existing ones. So you can focus on your business or your life. Or both. Imagine that.

Find out more about InfusionSoft…

The Linky Blog Guide to:

Writing, Designing, Publishing, Marketing & Automating a World-Class eBook

Write Once, Publish Multiple: expert advice and lessons learned from a guy who has published over a dozen books already!

Introduction

eBook: the common term for a publication usually created as Word document, saved as a PDF document, and then electronically delivered.

You can find any number of books and blogs that address the topic of writing and publishing an eBook. What you'll find out there is a bunch of eBooks about writing eBooks from folks who have published only one eBook about how to publish an eBook! Whew…

The Xerox effect is in full force: copies of copies of copies. Same old, same old… yawn. And most of them have one eBook: the one they published on how to publish an eBook. Not exactly a wealth of experience.

It's like the online business expert who has never made a penny online except selling their how to make money online book

This duplication of material by dozens of bloggers exposes a lot of inexperience and a lack of knowledge about what is
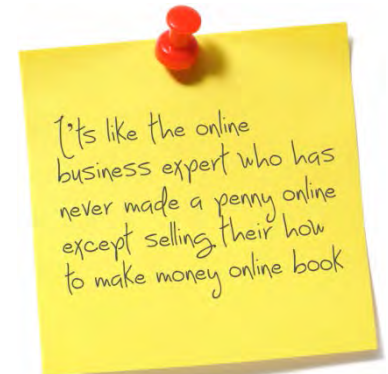
possible when you self-publish your great content in electronic or print form. There's a lot more to an "eBook" than just a PDF download. I'd like to see the term "eBook" evolve into something more accurate.

Write Once, Publish Multiple

That phrase is the simplest way I can describe a more full-featured and useful approach to self-publishing. You write the content one time but you publish it in a variety of formats.

While there are other formats, I believe the three most popular and productive are 1) electronic/PDF, what we now call an "eBook"; 2) actual printed hardcopies or paperback versions using on-demand print services; and 3) publishing to Kindle (which is the reading device promoted and used by Amazon (you can also take the Kindle concepts that are discussed in this guide and apply them to Barnes & Noble and the Nook device - which is similar to the Kindle but not nearly as popular).

Vocabulary constantly evolves - especially when it comes to technology. Very few people have the influence to catch the perfect wave that enables them to coin a new term, but at least for rest of this book, I am going try for the sake of clarity. "eBook" just

doesn't cut it anymore. We need a more descriptive term for what an eBook has become:

- **m**ulti-format
- **m**ulti-purpose
- **m**ulti-publish
- **m**ulti-use
- **m**ulti-deliver
- **m**ulti-revenue

mBook

When you see the new word "mBook," I am referring to your written electronic content being published in multiple formats: 1) a PDF, 2) an on-demand-print hard copy, and 3) submitted to Amazon's Kindle service (or Nook). It is delivered in multiple forms: electronic and print. "Multiple" is the keyword because it describes what the eBook has evolved into.

To make it simple throughout the rest of this book, I'm going to write it like this: "mBook."

eBook

Traditionally, an eBook was the electronic digital version of your written content in a format known as PDF (Portable Document Format) and read with free software called "Adobe Acrobat Reader" or "Adobe Reader" for short. This is an almost universal file format that pretty much anyone with a computer can open and read.

The PDF file format allows you to embed media, hyperlinks, and other forms of interactivity. PDF's have security features and are best known for their ability to retain all your formatting and style accurately.

On-Demand Print

The final product of a print version (whether it's on-demand or traditional) is simply the traditional printed hardback or paperback book. It is a physical printing of your book. The "on-demand" aspect is a fairly new

and remarkable service that could have been hardly imagined 10-15 years ago.

In the past, creating a printed version of a book was a very long, drawn out, and terribly expensive ordeal. In the end, you had several thousands of copies of your book (or more) with the hope that you could sell them all and not lose your investment.

With on-demand print services, you upload your book online to a publisher (they typically have easy-to-use step-by-step wizards) and the book is only printed when it is ordered - even if it is just one copy. The price per copy is usually higher than if you buy printing in bulk, but the fact that you do not have to keep an inventory or ever handle the physical books yourself makes on-demand printing very popular.

On-demand printing is a remarkable and fantastic development, especially to those of us who have been in the publishing industry for a long time and realize how ridiculously expensive and tedious it used to be to have a book printed.

Kindle (or Nook)

Kindle is Amazon's publishing format and these books are read on Kindle devices or using the Kindle Reader software. Barnes & Noble has a similar device called a Nook;   the Kindle format, however, is far more widespread and popular so that is the device and format I will discuss in this guide. You can apply the concepts to a Nook format as well.

Kindle use has exploded and it seems destined to become as popular as any other reading platform. As an additional incentive to create a Kindle format, your Kindle book is immediately available to the vast Amazon market.

Yes, You Need Your Own Book

When I talk to people about books, I commonly hear responses like "I'm not an author" or "I have no idea how to write a book." That does not matter. You can hire people to help you write, design, and lay out your book, as well as proof and edit it. It is the finished product that matters, not whether or not you did all the work yourself.

There is a healthy selection of good software, services, and contractors that can help you produce a high-quality mBook. We'll get more into the details later but for now I want to tell you why every blogger and online business person should have an mBook.

Credibility

Without trying to explain the obvious, there's just something about having a published book that gives you credibility. It implies you are knowledgeable about your industry or topic. It sends a message that you are an expert or an authority regarding the subject matter.

It sends a message of confidence to your audience. Publishing makes most people think "wow, you've got a book. You must be somebody."

Having a book sends a message of confidence, authority, and credibility.

You can quickly ruin that impression by publishing a crummy book, but the fact that you have a book gives you a head start and leg-up within your niche or online community that others do not have.

Expectation

It is becoming the norm that if you promote yourself as an expert or authority, you will have some sort of published proof of it.

A book you can hand someone, email to them or deliver to them from Amazon is something most people look for from an author.
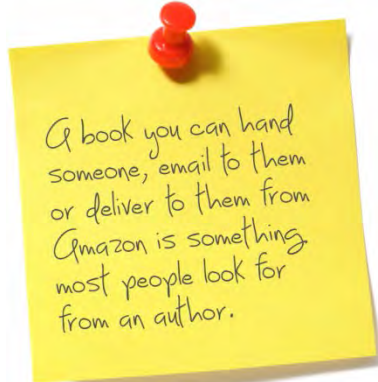
An mBook meets the expectation that you have quantified and defined your expertise in written form - proving you know your stuff. In the online business and blogging world, an mBook is something people automatically look for and expect from "guru" or "expert." Do not disappoint them.

Marketing

An mBook is a perfect thing to give away, sell, or promote. It is an excellent way to market your online business, blog, expertise, and knowledge. What is really cool is that inside your mBook you get to

continue to market yourself, your blogs, and your other products.

The mBook itself is an advertisement for you and your online business. Within your mBook, you have the opportunity to further market other parts of your business. It's like having your own little mini-advertising agency.

Incentives

An mBook is a perfect incentive to offer to new subscribers to your blog, or as an enticement to open the doors of opportunity with your audience.

> Tip: mBooks make great incentives, gifts, and giveaways because they have low to no cost.

A well-done mBook (given as an incentive) provides value to your readers and can be traded with potential audience members for things you want from them such as an email subscription, survey participation, or some other kind of audience engagement.

Since mBooks have a low capital investment (often virtually zero once you know what you are doing), they are even more appropriate to use as incentives because it's not costing you hard cash every time you give one away (I am referring to the electronic

versions of course; the print versions can be an expensive promotional item).

Standing Out in a Crowd
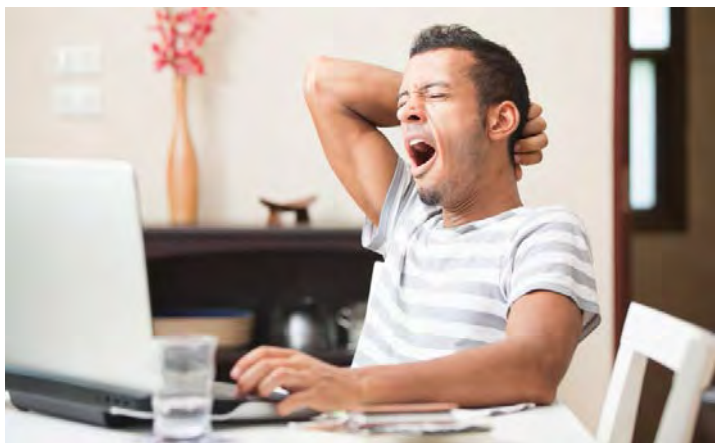
While most online business gurus (and a lot of bloggers) have an eBook, there are very few that stand out as high quality in both content and design.

Your goal should be to stand out from the mass of mediocrity that exists in the eBook market today.

You need to stand out. Invest the time, resources, and effort into creating an mBook that rises above the humdrum, yawn-invoking, "been there done that" mass of eBooks out there.

- If you are not a great designer, hire one.

- If you are not are a great writer, contract an experienced editor and proofer.

- Use high-quality images and graphics. Do not settle for anything less than a book that screams "WOW" when people get their copy.

Should You Publish Multiple Formats?

Should you publish multiple formats? The short answer is "yes" because you need to offer different formats for people who like to read content in various ways. Readers are fickle and spoiled today. If you do not have the format they prefer, that is often enough reason for them to not inconvenience themselves by purchasing your mBook.

PDF

The PDF version has always been the preferred format for email delivery, downloading, reading on a multitude of devices, and printing eBooks on personal computers.

None of these formats require a high capital investment, they are easy to create from a single version of the original content, and it does not cost you any additional money to have all three versions available for purchase or delivery. Also, publishing in all three formats looks more professional and gives the impression that you know what you are doing.

Print

There is no compelling reason to avoid offering an on-demand print version, and there is a long list of benefits.

The on-demand feature means you do not have to purchase an inventory, it costs you nothing to make it available, and it gives many readers the choice they prefer (a hard copy).

If your PDF is formatted to a standard print size, you can actually use the same PDF to upload to your on-demand print service. At worse, you have to create a second PDF with the page size and layout that is appropriate to print but that's a small time investment with big benefits.

I typically choose a PDF layout that works for both the electronic version and the on-demand print version to save time and work (this book is a great example). Then I will purchase 10 or 20 printed copies to give away or display when appropriate.

You wil frequently read other bloggers advising new authors NOT to offer a print version. My response is "why not?" The cost is nothing and the benefits many.
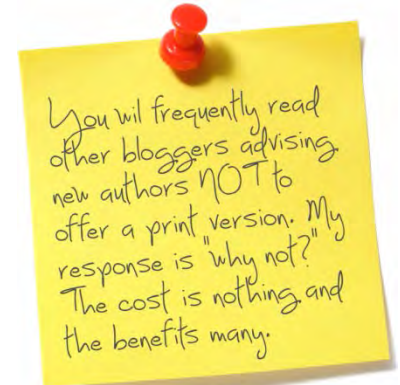
There is nothing like holding a high-quality print version of your book. Feels good!

It is a great feeling of achievement and satisfaction to hold your very own book. I've been doing print publishing since before the Internet came along and I understand the credibility, branding, and effect it has on your overall business and marketing to have print version of your books.

Do a print version! Don't let someone convince you it's not worth it and that no one cares about print anymore.

Kindle

Kindle is relatively new on the timeline of world history but has become outrageously popular at a record pace. The Kindle devices, software, and the ability to read Kindle in a web browser have made the format widely used. It is not a format that you want to ignore.

Almost everyone I know who has begun to read books on a Kindle swear by it and routinely purchase books

in Kindle format. If your book is not available in Kindle, not only are you losing potential readers and customers, you are also sending a signal that you're not up to speed with the latest publishing formats. Kindle is not hard to publish; once you have done it a couple of times, you will find it is just another easy step in the process.

Having all three popular formats gives your readers options, presents you as serious and up-to-speed technologically, and opens up the widest possible reading audience.

So yes, you should do multiple formats every time you publish an mBook.

Creating Content

Up to this point, we have gone over conceptually what an mBook is and why you should publish multiple formats. Now let's get down to business and discuss how to actually make all this happen.

Of course, the first thing you have to do is write something. From my own experience, I am going to

share with you a great way to go about creating your content.

Decide on a Topic

What are you going to write about? That is the 64-million-dollar question, isn't it?

If you have a blog, most likely you have identified your expertise, area of knowledge and experience, or a subject you are passionate about.

If you are going to write about something, in a sense you become an "expert." Remember: what makes someone an expert is that you know more than the audience you are addressing.

If you are reading about how to publish, you've probably already picked a topic but if not visit www.linkyblog.com for lots of tips on choosing one.
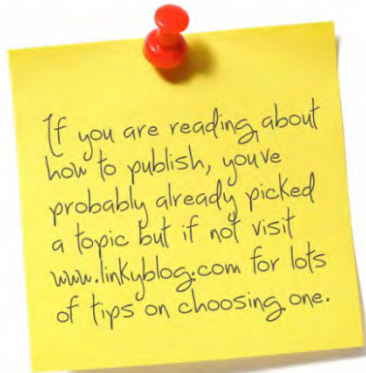
You are an expert if you know more than your audience and they want to know what you know.

You do not have to be an elite-level guru or the "world's most knowledgeable." You just have to know something that someone else wishes they knew – that makes you an expert. An "intermediate" is an "expert" to a "beginner."

Keep that in mind as you think about what to write. Many people get bogged down and never start writing because they are afraid that someone who knows more is going to tell them how stupid they are.

Identify your target audience and their knowledge level. You become an expert for them when you publish something they don't currently know but want to learn.

- What are you good at?

- What do you have experience in?

- What have you learned lessons about?

- What do you have inside knowledge of because you are in a specific industry?

- What hobbies are you really good at?

- What are you passionate about?

"What would you **like** to write about?" Sometimes that is a better question than "what am I qualified to write about?" Even if you do not have a lot of current knowledge or experience on a topic, if you are passionate about it you could do research and gain the necessary knowledge.
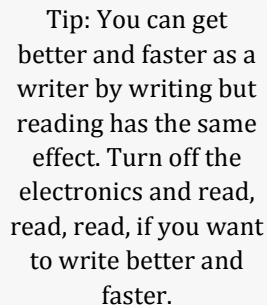
What life experiences have you had that would benefit others? Who have you known or what have you seen that other would want to read about?

All these ideas so far are geared towards the person who is still unsure what their book is going to be about.

Let's move on with the assumption that you've decided on your topic.

I am a prolific writer, which means I put out a lot of written content on a daily basis.

> Tip: You can get better and faster as a writer by writing but reading has the same effect. Turn off the electronics and read, read, read, if you want to write better and faster.

Some of that comes from a natural gift for writing but much of it comes from simply exercising my writing muscles. Good old-fashioned hard work and practice.

The more you write, the better you get, and the more you can produce in shorter times.

From my experience writing literally millions of words, thousands of blog posts, and publishing more than a dozen books, I want to tell you the process I use for writing my book content… the same process I used for writing this book.

It may not exactly fit your style and personality (and that's okay), but this is the method I have developed that works very well for me. I am happy to share it with you.

Start With an Outline or Mind Map

The first thing to do is to create an outline or mind map of my content. I prefer to use an outline format but a lot of people like to use mind-map software. Mind mapping is a way to visually outline your book using symbols, whereas outlining is just good old-fashioned text in an outline format.

Here's what a modern mind map looks like if you are unfamiliar with them (in reality it can be any diagram or flow-chart map that lays out an idea in a way YOU can understand):

I will just refer to traditional outlining for the rest of this section but keep in mind that you might want to check out mind mapping to see if that works better for you.

Write Down Your Title

I do not always decide on a title up front and it often changes, but I do write something down that conveys the overall intent and message of the book. Then I write a subtitle which may also change before I am done, but it keeps me focused on the secondary message and direction of the book.

Create the Chapter Titles

Again, the specific wording of the title or chapter headings may change as you actually write the content, but they serve as a roadmap for you to follow

as you get going. Don't think you are stuck with whatever you write in the outline, you can always change it as needed as you develop the content. Next I develop chapter titles for the entire book (which gives me a step-by-step outline of exactly what I want to cover in the book).

Create a Sales Page or Back Cover

What is the best way to come up with chapter titles and subheads? I thought you would never ask. The simple answer is this: I create the sales page or back cover.

The common reaction to my method is that both the back cover and sales page should come AFTER writing the book so it will reflect what is in the book. However, in my experience, creating those first makes perfect sense.

Creating your sales page or back cover first is THE best way to organize your book and make sure it delivers what you promise to the buyer.

The sales page or back cover says: "read my book and in it I'm going to teach you this, and that, and the other thing, and finally I'm going to show you how to…"

I typically write a bullet-point list that tells the reader exactly what to expect inside. For the book you're reading now, I created a list of things that you will find inside this book. That list became my chapter headings:

- Why You Should Have a Book

- Should You Do Other Formats?

- Creating Content

- Mistakes to Avoid - Lessons Learned from My First Dozen eBooks

- Standard Organization and Parts of an eBook

- Designing, Formatting, Layout, Cover

- Get Ready for the World

- Automating Sales

- Your eBook Sales Page

- Marketing Your eBook

- Affiliate Sales of Your eBook

You may look through this finished book and realize I eventually decided to change some chapter titles from my original list. That's okay, it usually happens that way; but by writing the bullet list for my sales page and the back cover of the book first, I developed the outline quickly and easily.

It also means that you end up getting what I promise you in the marketing of this book. I trust you can see what a great technique it is to write your sales page (or back cover) first.

Another benefit is this… if you look at your sales material (or have others look at it) and think: "that sure is boring, I don't think I'd buy that book" then you know other people are not going to buy it either. Once you get your sales page or back cover

I hope you get this whole sales page, back cover thing. It really is an excellent way to come up with the outline for your book.
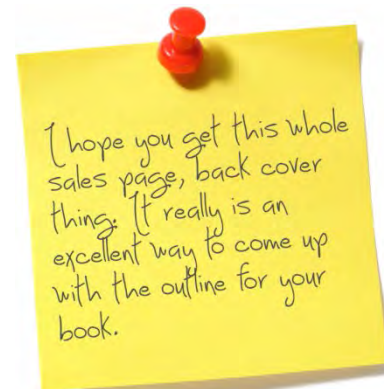
to the point where it is engaging and persuasive, then you know you have a good outline for your book.
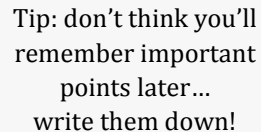
Next, **create subchapters and/or subheadings**. Take each chapter individually and think about them as a "standalone" document, as if they are a blog post or book by themselves.

Think about what a sales page or back cover would have just for that chapter. Using an advertising format, how could you convince someone to buy or read just that chapter? Create a bullet list for each chapter.

For example, the following is my chapter heading and subhead list that I *originally* had for this chapter (I say

Tip: don't think you'll remember important points later… write them down!

originally because I might have changed the content as I progressed; remember, the outline is important and should keep you focused but it is not set in concrete). You will notice that I even have some bullet points in the subheads for further reminder and clarification about what I wanted in this chapter. This does not have to be well written; it's just to remind you:

- *Decide on topic*
  - o *What are you an expert at*
  - o *Get your readers input…*
- *Outline or Mindmap*
  - o *Topic*
    - ▪ *Chapters*
    - ▪ *Subheads*
    - ▪ *Content*
- *Software*
  - o *Simple template and styles will save you a lot of grief later*
  - o *Show a sample of Word file with Styles set up first*
    - ▪ *They can be changed later but need to be setup right to begin with*
  - o *Voice dictation or Keyboard*
- *Write It*
  - o *Treat each chapter like a blog post*
    - ▪ *Use them later on your blog to promote your book*
    - ▪ *Easier to write in chunks*
  - o *Proofing*
  - o *Editing*
- *A Trick*
  - o *Look up similar books on Amazon or Google and see how they are being written, what content they have, what's included*

You may not understand everything that I wrote in that outline but it was intended to just make sense to me. Your own outline will serve as an overview and a roadmap to keep you just as efficient as you write.

Once you have your title, chapters, subheads, and some bullet points for reminders, all you have to do now is write the content. If you are pretty knowledgeable about your topic, you will find the actual content writing is the easy part because you already know what you want to write. The hard part is getting your thoughts organized in a logical and interesting structure.

I have found this outlining method (based on creating your sales page or back cover first) is easily the most efficient and productive way to write an mBook.

Software

There are lots of software programs you can use to write and format your book. I have been using both Apple and Windows software for a couple of decades and I have access to pretty much every piece of major page layout, design, and publishing software that industry professionals use. However, I realize that most of you reading this do not. My recommendation is Microsoft Word.

Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word is available on both platforms (Mac & PC) and is synonymous with word processing. If you do not have Microsoft Office and can't afford it, OpenOffice is a free suite that is similar enough to Microsoft Office that what I tell you here can be applied pretty seamlessly.

If you go searching for debates or reviews about Microsoft Word, you are going to find more arguments/debates than you care to read. The fact is, 99% of typical folks will use about 10% of the capabilities of any word processor so arguing about which one is better is a waste of time when either of them will do a great job. Microsoft Word is widely supported, easy to learn, and popular – popularity is important so that you can get help from other people.

Microsoft Word converts into PDF formats and allows you to format for Kindle. It is easy to create the right page sizes, columns, margins, insert images, do headers and footers properly, apply styles, and set up sections and reference items such as a table of contents and indexes. For creating mBooks, Microsoft Word is an ideal choice.

If you think you might like to do some of your own image work, artwork, or cover design, some of the other software options include a drawing or paint program. Since this book is geared towards beginners who just want to write, I will not be teaching you how to use graphic-design software. If you have no clue about how to produce images or art, your best bet is to hire a designer or get some training on basic graphics. You can get designers on sites like eLance.com.

Another option would be to simply put the word out on your blog that you need help – you will probably get a lot of responses. For the most part, bloggers are quick to help other bloggers.

You can also hire an on-demand print service like CreateSpace to do your layout and cover design; then you can take that file and use it for your PDFs and Kindle formats as well (they provide you a PDF download after they create it your content/cover).

Common Functions You Will Want to Use

You don't have to be an expert at Microsoft Word to use it effectively. The basic things you want to know how to do are:

- Set up a page size
- Set up margins
- Set the columns (if necessary)
- Set up headers and footers
- Properly use sections
- How to apply styles
- Inserting a table of contents
- Including an index (if your book needs one)
- Endnotes and footnotes if you are using a lot of reference material

When you are writing the actual content, you will need to know how to:

- Insert images, shape, or text boxes.
- Basic formatting tasks like bold, italics, underline, and text alignment.
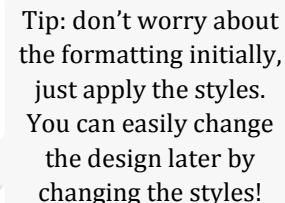
That may look like a long list but it's only about 10% of the functionality of Microsoft Word and all of these items are fairly easy to learn. It probably will not take you more than a few minutes to learn the necessary skills for any of the above functions or features.

Styles

The most important feature in word processing, that will save you the greatest amount of time and grief, is the use of "styles." Do this little exercise to quickly grasp what styles are:

1. Type some sample content out in plain text: a title, a chapter heading; subhead and some sample body content (a couple of paragraphs of text).

2. Highlight the title; now look at the Style Menu at the top of your document screen.

3. Click on the "title" style from the toolbar to apply it to your title.

4. Select your chapter headings and apply "heading 1" to those.

5. Go to your chapter subheadings and highlight those. Apply the "heading 2" style.

6. Select the body content and apply the "normal" style.

Now you know the basic concept of applying styles. All chapter headings within your book will look the same as will your subheads and body content. If you change the style setting for a specific item like "Heading 1" then everywhere that style is used in the document will be changed. See how powerful and efficient that is?

> Tip: don't worry about the formatting initially, just apply the styles. You can easily change the design later by changing the styles!

Styles are so integral to successfully using MS Word that you should learn them first thing as you start.

The power of styles is this: you can go in at any time and change the formatting and appearance of the styles and your entire document will be updated because you have given each part of your document a specific style. If you choose not to use styles, then you will be forced to go through and make formatting changes from cover to cover, page to page, every time you want to change how the content looks.

Here is some instruction straight from the help file inside of Microsoft Word:

Style basics in Word

Microsoft Word 2010 makes it easy to use styles without having to know much about them.

Using styles

Instead of using direct formatting, use styles to format your document so you can quickly and easily apply a set of formatting choices consistently throughout your document.

A style is a set of formatting characteristics, such as font name, size, color, paragraph alignment and spacing. Some styles even include borders and shading.

For example, instead of taking three separate steps to format your heading as 16-point, bold, Cambria, you can achieve the same result in one step by applying the built-in Heading 1 style. You do not need to remember the characteristics of the Heading 1 style. For each heading in your document, you just click in the heading (you don't even need to select all the text), and then click **Heading 1** in the gallery of styles.
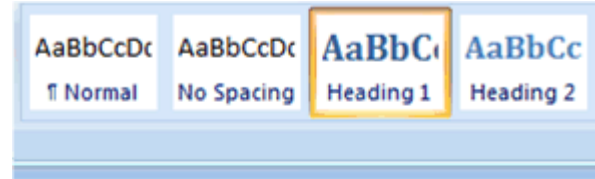
Galleries of coordinated items

On the Insert tab, the galleries include items tha your document. You can use these galleries to ir other document building blocks. When you crea with your current document look.

If you decide that you want subheadings, you can use the built-in Heading 2 style, which was designed to look good with the Heading 1 style.

1 The Quick Styles that you see in the gallery of styles are designed to work together. For example, the Heading 2 Quick Style is designed to look subordinate to the Heading 1 Quick Style.

2 The body text of your document is automatically formatted with the Normal Quick Style.

3 Quick Styles can be applied to paragraphs, but you can also apply them to individual words and characters. For example, you can emphasize a phrase by applying the Emphasis Quick Style.

4 When you format text as part of a list, each item in the list is automatically formatted with the List Paragraph Quick Style.

If you later decide that you want headings to have a different look, you can change the Heading 1 and Heading 2 styles, and Word automatically updates all instances of them in the document. You can also apply a different Quick Style set or a different theme to change the look of the headings without making changes to the styles.

Built-in styles turn on timesaving features

The built-in styles (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.) provide other benefits, too. If you use the built-in heading styles, Word can generate a table of contents automatically. Word also uses the built-in heading styles to make the Document Map, which is a convenient feature for moving through long documents.

Character and paragraph styles

Word provides several style types:

- **Character** and **paragraph** styles determine the look of most of the text in a document. Some styles work as both character and paragraph types, and these styles are known as **linked** styles.

- **List** styles determine the look of lists, including characteristics such as bullet style or number scheme, indentation, and any label text.
- **Table** styles determine the look of tables, including characteristics such as the text formatting of the header row, gridlines, and accent colors for rows and columns.

Character, paragraph, and linked styles

Character, paragraph, and linked styles appear in the **Styles** group on the **Home** tab. You can quickly apply a style from the gallery of styles. To see more information about each style, click the **Styles** Dialog Box Launcher.

The **Styles** task pane opens.

1 Paragraph styles are marked with a paragraph symbol: ¶. You can see the paragraph symbol in the Quick Style gallery as well as in the Styles task pane. Click anywhere in a paragraph to apply the style to the entire paragraph.

2 Character styles are marked with a character symbol: **a**. Click anywhere in a word to apply the style to the entire word. Or you can select more than one word to apply the style to more than one word.

3 Linked styles are marked with both a paragraph symbol and a character symbol: ¶**a**. Click anywhere in a

paragraph to apply the style to the entire paragraph. Or you can select one or more words to apply the style to the words that you selected.

Character styles

Character styles contain formatting characteristics that can be applied to text, such as font name, size, color, bold, italic, underline, borders, and shading.

Character styles do not include formatting that affects paragraph characteristics, such as line spacing, text alignment, indentation, and tab stops.

Word includes several built-in character styles, such as Emphasis, Subtle Emphasis, and Intense Emphasis. Each of these built-in styles combines formatting, such as bold, italic, and accent color, to provide a coordinated set of typographic designs. For example, applying the Emphasis character style formats text as bold, italic, in an accent color.

To apply a character style, you select the text that you want to format, and then you click the character style that you want.
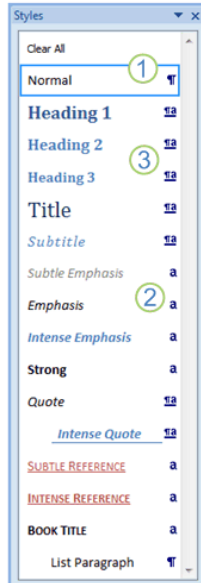
On the Insert tab, the galleries include items that coordinate with the overall look of your docum
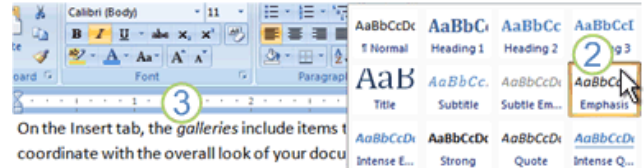
1 Click in the word you want to format.

2 Move your cursor over the Quick Styles to see a preview of the formatting in your document. When you point to a character style, only the word where you clicked is formatted. When you point to a paragraph style or a linked style, the entire paragraph is formatted. Click the character style that you want to use.

3 The word that you selected is formatted with the characteristics of the style that you chose.

Paragraph styles

A paragraph style includes everything that a character style contains, but it also controls all aspects of a paragraph's appearance, such as text alignment, tab stops, line spacing, and borders.

For example, you can have a character style called Alert that formats text as bold and red. Additionally, you can have a paragraph style called Headline that formats text as bold and red. But the Headline paragraph style also

centers the text horizontally and adds 24 points of space above the text.

In this scenario, if you select a paragraph and then apply the Alert style, all the text in the paragraph is formatted as bold and red, but nothing else about the paragraph changes. However, if you select the paragraph and then apply the Headline style, the text become bold and red, extra space is inserted before the paragraph, and the paragraph is centered between the left and right margins.

Word includes two built-in paragraph styles: Normal and List Paragraph. By default, Word automatically applies the Normal paragraph style to all text in a blank, new document. Similarly, Word automatically applies the List Paragraph paragraph style to items in a list — for example, when you use the **Bullets** command to create a bulleted list.

To apply a paragraph style, you select the paragraphs that you want to format, and then you click the paragraph style you want.

Note To select a single paragraph for applying a paragraph style, you can click anywhere in the paragraph. To select more than one paragraph, click anywhere in the first paragraph and drag to anywhere in the last paragraph that you want to select. You do not need to select the entire paragraph.

Voice or Keyboard

One other thing you might consider is the use of voice-dictation software like Dragon Naturally Speaking.

The use of Naturally Speaking has become more and more popular. I have been using it for almost a decade. Originally, it took a good amount of effort to get it to work accurately but after years of improvement, it is very accurate. The program comes with helpful tutorials and advice to get you writing via voice dictation within minutes of opening the box (or downloading the software).

Some people find the speed of voice dictation is too fast to allow them time to organize their thoughts as they speak them. The time that it takes to type something on a keyboard gives your mind additional time to formulate sentences - many people prefer that. I find being able to dictate something off the top of my head is a more productive way of writing.

> Tip: I voice dictate the first draft with no concern for editing. This "brain dump" gets content on the page. I then can go back and edit carefully.

The typical process I use is to go into my outline and voice-dictate each section off the top of my head. Then I go back and read it, cleaning up the content.

Voice dictation is pretty accurate but you will end up with some phrases that were not what you intended. Some of the interpretations by the software can be pretty humorous. I have to constantly check to make sure "Linky Blog" is not published as "Kinky Blog"!

When I use voice dictation, I usually read through my documents a couple of times before I send them off to my editor. I will share more advice on using an editor and proofer a little later.

If you've never used voice-dictation software, you should give it a try. Depending on your writing style and how you organize content, voice-dictation could be a huge time saver and help you produce much more content than if you rely solely on your typing fingers.

Writing the Body Copy

Okay, you've got your outline done, your Word file set up, you're ready to apply your styles… now you've got to do the hard work of writing the body of content. You will find endless advice out there from authors and bloggers on the best way to write body copy which only proves one point: there is no best way.

What I call "the best way" is simply what works best for me based on 20 years of experience and given my personality and skills. It may or may not be the best way for you. Give it a try and see if it works for you.

Treat each chapter like a blog post (or a series of posts). There is a secondary benefit to approaching your chapters this way. Each chapter (or excerpts of it) can actually become a blog post later that you publish as a teaser to promote the entire book. Each chapter could also become its own blog posts series in a spinoff of the book.

Continue to go from chapter to chapter, and subhead to subhead, simply filling out and explaining that chapter title or subhead, while methodically and systematically progressing through your book. Completing the body copy this way allows you to easily measure your progress and know how much is left to write.

Using an Editor

Editing your book is a little different than proofing (which we will discuss next). Having your book edited by a professional is the process of allowing someone to read it and make suggestions on how to improve it. It might be suggestions to delete or add content, rewrite passages, or organize things differently. It might be suggestions or helpful criticism of your style, choices of phrasing, or just giving you a general, objective, and honest opinion about whether the book is any good. It really depends on the style and experience of the editor and the relationship you have with them.

One thing you want to be sure that you do not do when it comes to editing and proofing: do not take it personally.

> Tip: do NOT get defensive about your Editor's feedback. Accept it and use it to improve your book. No one but you and your Editor will ever know some of your original writing was awful.

Carefully read their suggestions and consider them without emotion. Either reject or accept the recommendations based solely on only one consideration: **does it improve the book?**

It's not personal. You want your Editor to be objective, hard-hitting, and unafraid to offer opinions and advice (if they are, get someone else!). If you have an editor who simply doesn't understand your style; and the vast majority of their recommendations don't help you, find a new editor. Whatever you do - don't take it personally. Editors are there to help you put out the very best content you can.

Remember, your readers never see the original sloppy mess that spills out of your head. They only see what you decide to publish, so there should be no bruising of your ego or perceived diminishing of your reputation if your editor has to present you with a lot of suggested improvements. It's actually good news to hear "this stinks" from your Editor and not your audience. Embrace the editing process and enjoy the higher quality of writing you end up with.

I appreciate my editor so much and the editing process is so helpful for me, I don't even want to mention her in the credits because someone will steal her away!
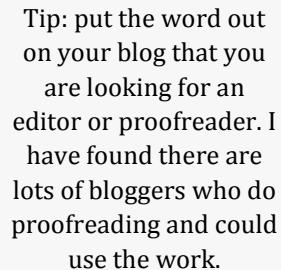
Is an editor totally necessary? Only you can decide. If you are a new author or not a really gifted writer, then an editor is invaluable. Use one. If you are both experienced and gifted, the book itself might determine the need (certain topics need editing more than others).

I have been writing for almost 15 years and I still use an editor because I want objective opinions from someone I trust. I want to know if what I'm writing is interesting and engaging. I produce so much content, I want my editor to make sure I don't get in a rut or simply fool myself about the quality.

You Absolutely Should Use a Proofer

You cannot proof your own work - that's a fact. Proofing is the process of correcting typos, fixing punctuation, and making sure the grammar is right.
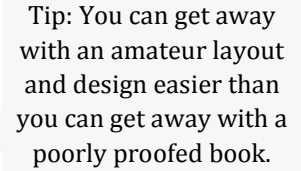
> Tip: put the word out on your blog that you are looking for an editor or proofreader. I have found there are lots of bloggers who do proofreading and could use the work.

I've never known anyone who can proof their own work effectively. That is because your mind simply wants to see it as correct, even if it's not. There's nothing like reading over your own stuff ten times and then publishing it only to find mistakes. It happens, trust me.
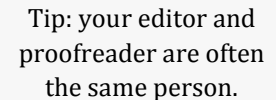
Proofing is a technical inspection of your writing. It can also involve fact-checking and making sure there are no layout or formatting glitches.

> Tip: You can get away with an amateur layout and design easier than you can get away with a poorly proofed book.

There is hardly a greater killer of your credibility or authority than publishing a poorly written book full of typos and punctuation errors that sounds like it was written by a third-grader (due to bad grammar). There's only one way to tell if your grammar is good: have your writing proofread.

> Tip: your editor and proofreader are often the same person.

Even if you decide not to use an Editor, you should spend the money and have a professional proofreader clean up your content.

A Trick I've Learned

After 20+ years of design work and 15 years of writing, I've learned a few tricks to make all this easier, more efficient, of higher quality, and more productive. The idea is basically this: don't reinvent the wheel.

There are design companies, publishers, and authors out there spending lots of time and money on art, layouts, covers, formatting, and book ideas. Research them. Find the stuff you like. Figure out what has been successful. Then mimic that success.

Don't reinvent the wheel.

Mimic what is successful.

Find an eBook that's really well done and looks great. It does not have to be the same topic as yours. If it is laid out well, has a nice cover design, and is the quality that you want to present to your audience, mimic it. Use the same styling and format. Don't reinvent the wheel.

I do not mean RIP OFF what they did. I mean copy the style, the structure, and the general design. You will use your own

> Tip: your designer will often charge you less if you've already picked out a design you like and they don't have to dream one up.

images/art and colors, maybe different fonts, but overall you are getting a head start because you have identified a great design. Use that as a general guideline.

There's nothing wrong with mimicking success. Designers have always built off the great design of others. There is nothing new under the sun, only interpretations, improvements, and the expression of your style based on what has already been done.

Go to Amazon.com or search the Internet to find sample designs that you like. I enjoy visiting Barnes & Noble's (or other bookstores) to look through books for styles and designs that appeal to me.

Researching other designs is the most important trick I can share with you. You get a big head start... look for great examples and mimic them. Do not reinvent the wheel.
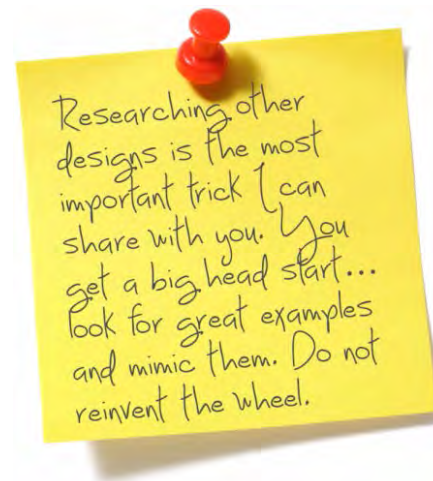
Mistakes to Avoid – Lessons Learned from My First Dozen eBooks

I've published a bunch of mBooks, have a long list of future titles in various stages of production, and I have helped many people through the process of publishing their own books.

Along the way, I have learned a lot of lessons and made a whole lot of mistakes. By communicating those to you, maybe you can avoid some of the pitfalls that cost me both time and sales. In no particular order of importance, here they are:

Mistake: Ugly Design or Format

Never settle for anything less than a great layout or design. In my younger days, I was a lot more impulsive and in a hurry. Even though I had the skills as a graphic designer to produce a professional layout, I would sometimes be so anxious to get a book done and published that I would settle for something mediocre. For many people, it is not impatience that causes them to put out a visually questionable book, it is a lack of graphics skills or an artistic eye.

If you are not a bona fide professional graphic designer, do not trust your own emotions. People fall in love with their own personally created graphics and formatting very easily. Regardless of objective criticism, they can't be convinced what they produced is amateurish and/or just plain awful. Don't let your emotions drive you.

If you want to do your own designs, be smart about it. Run them by a lot of people and get their objective and honest opinion. If you can, get a professional graphic designer to look over your work and give you an honest opinion. I can't emphasize enough that you must keep your emotions out of this process. It does not matter what you think of the design. It matters what your potential viewers and buyers think.

Here are a couple more tips that will help you avoid an atrocious design: start with a pre-done MS Word book **template** and use the many available sources for good-quality **stock images and clipart**.

There are lots of companies that produce Microsoft Word templates for various book formats. They will already have built-in styles and page formatting, leaving you with a mostly ready-to-go file that just

needs your content. You may have to change the size of the pages or the margins but the important work of setting up styles and sections will already be done.

Combine a predesigned template with high-quality images and clipart from a site like iStock. Many of my graphics are from istock.com. Even though I could draw them myself, it is not worth the time it takes when you consider the relatively low price of services like istock.com.
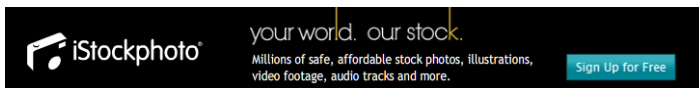
You will get another tremendous head start on your book and be assured of a nice layout by starting with a template and utilizing stock art and images.

Mistake: Forgetting to Market Inside of Your Book

When I published my first couple of books, I was so used to the traditional layout and contents of print books that it never really dawned on me to consider the opportunity we have within an mBook to effectively market our online business, blogs, products, and other books. It's like a hybrid of a magazine and a book. A "magook" or "boogazine." Nah, let's stick with mBook.

The first few pages of magazines are usually full-page ads. I do not put full-page ads in my own mBooks (yet) but there is no reason you can't.

Tip: you know how magazines usually have ads on the first few pages? Who says your book cannot have ads like that?

If you have advertisers appropriate for your content, go for it. Who says you can't fund an entire book with advertisers and then give it away for free? Magazines do it constantly.

As for other marketing in your mBook, make sure people know about your blogs, your sign-up offers, your other mBooks, your bio, any regular events you participate in, etc.

mBooks can be updated at any time; and since the print version is on-demand only, it is important that you realize you can go in and revise your mBook any time you have reason to update the material or include new marketing information.

Got a new product? Got a new service or a big event coming up? Go back to your previous mBooks and put in a big advertisement for it on one of the opening pages. Once the

> Tip: mBooks can be updated any time. Make sure you include new marketing information in previously published books.

event is past, go take it out of your publications. If you have a lot of published items, it could be a considerable amount of work so only you can decide if it is worth the effort. I just want you to be aware that you can make changes to your mBook at any time - sometimes the tendency is for writers to think that "once published, it's done." That's no longer true.

Mistake: Not Utilizing the Technology

Electronically published books can contain a lot more than text and images. While you can't put active links or video into the print version, you can still host them on web pages and type out the links to the items.

In your digital versions, you can have active hyperlinks (like this) to anything on the Internet. You can even have forms and video in your PDF; but I would recommend you create separate webpages for those and link to them (like this) so that people can get to them from any version of your mBook (if the external

media changes, the links in your mBooks are still good - you do not have to update them).

The point is this: we live in a new era where a "book" is much more than printed words and images. It is a hybrid of technology that brings together everything the Internet has to offer. Make sure you take advantage of that.

Mistake: Not Repurposing the Content in Various Formats

I wrote my first book after I had been blogging for several years, mostly because books were too expensive to print. Keep in mind this was just a few short years after the Internet really became known by the general public. On-demand printing, PDFs, and Kindle, etc., were still a few years away. The first book I ever wrote was delivered electronically to my readers as a word-processing file and then I published it on a web page. Cutting edge!

The next book I wrote was delivered as a traditional eBook in PDF format - but they were not being called "eBooks" at that point. I just called it a "digital book" or something but I still only had one format available. I wrote several eBooks after the term "eBook" became popular and delivered those in PDF format. Then I got a wild hair to record them and make audio versions.

Having multiple formats for your book is standard fare now, so you don't have any reason to not consider it. Many new authors just write the book, publish it one time in one format, and consider it done.

There's more to repurposing your content than just different formats. Repurposing can also mean breaking it down into blog posts, creating e-learning modules, courses, workshops, and other training material. There are really no rules about how many different ways you can use the same content.

Strive to be creative and fresh when you repurpose your content so you that can attract different segments of readers who prefer a variety of presentation methods. I now use the same content (or portions of it)

from an mBook in many different ways both online and off. You should too.

Mistake: It's Not about You, It's about the Reader

Writing a book can be an ego trip, especially if it is successful; you will always have to fight the urge to make the book about your needs and your satisfaction instead of the readers' needs and satisfaction.

Whether the book is free or someone is purchasing it, if it doesn't satisfy their needs, engage their interests, or even stroke their ego, they are not going to read it or buy it.

Too many authors write something they are emotionally satisfied with, but without regard to whether it will do the same for the reader. From the beginning of your mBook project, you should be asking yourself objectively (and asking others to give you their opinion): "is this book interesting, engaging, and worth the investment of time from a reader's point of view?"

If I were the reader, would I be glad I read this?

If you are just looking for a pat on the back from those whose opinion you seek, you will learn the hard way when no one buys the book… or from the reviews out on the Internet (from people who don't care about you personally) that are relentlessly brutal and honest.

Mistake: Nobody Cares How Smart You Are

It doesn't matter that every word you write is true if no one knows what you are

talking about because the vocabulary is 20,000 feet over the reader's head.

A lot of people want to impress by tossing out as many "$12.00" words as they can even if their target reader is not going to understand or care. That's a surefire way to make sure no one ever reads your book.

You impress readers by writing in an engaging style and at a vocabulary level that fits your target market. It should be easy enough to read that it's not uncomfortable but challenging enough to engage the intellect and emotion. Comfortable but intelligent… from the reader's viewpoint.

Write to Fit Your Target Readers

Mistake: Not Utilizing Feedback

As a blogger/writer, it takes a while to grow a thick skin and get over being upset about critical comments, bad reviews, and people who unsubscribe. It is natural that this bothers you when you're first starting out. I can promise you that after a while you get used to it. It's just part of the experience.

It is human nature that most people do not say anything when they like your stuff, but are quick to sound off if they have something negative to say. So expect most of your random feedback to be mildly to wildly negative.

Get used to it and learn to embrace it as a good source of hidden gems: in the midst of the criticism, you will find occasional nuggets of feedback that will really help you to evolve and improve.

That's the "random" feedback. The planned feedback is a different animal. You can actively seek feedback by the use of surveys, encouraging comments, and enthusiastically answering (and soliciting) questions. Don't be afraid to simply ask your readers what they think of your book or blog or product… good or bad. Ask them for feedback. It makes them feel important to get to offer you their advice and opinion.

A final word about the criticism…

When you do get criticism, treat it as a form of useful feedback. I'm not talking about the stupid stuff where people are just being jerks. Delete that nonsense and forget it. But, if it's respectful and honest criticism, you had better pay attention.

Turn your emotions off and read through it with an open mind, while considering which parts of it are true and useful. Be thankful you can use it to improve what you do.

If you feel like the criticism is genuinely wrong, disregard it and be thankful people take the time to send you feedback. Don't take helpful criticism as an emotional personal attack (you'll get good at recognizing personal attacks from the "negative but useful" comments).

Feedback in all forms - whether unsolicited or not, negative or positive, written, verbal, or whatever form it takes - is a valuable tool for improving your writing and products, and for brainstorming new material. Allowing (and responding to) feedback helps engage your audience and makes them feel like they are part of what you're doing. Make it a public and purposeful part of your process.

DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY. It will eat you up if you allow criticism to get to you.

Standard Organization and Parts of an mBook

The publishing industry has been turned on its head in the last decade. All the rules are now broken. Anyone who says you must do things in the "traditional book publishing way" is simply trying to guard their territory and protect a dying industry. The digital age and on-demand print services have totally and forever

changed the content-publishing world.

However, that doesn't mean you should throw out what traditionally works nor does it mean you should ignore the expectations of your readers. People have come to expect certain elements inside a book, no matter what format it is delivered in. Let's define the basic elements of any typical mBook:

The Cover

Whether it's the actual printed cover of a physical book or the first page of your PDF file, the expectation is to see a well-designed cover showing the title, subtitle, author's name, and graphics that support the overall message of the book.

Do not skimp on the cover design. It is the only first impression you will get.

Do not skimp on the cover - either in time or investment. If you need to hire a graphic designer, do it. Or find an artist wanting to get some exposure and offer them a big credit just inside the cover for their contribution.

Your cover can scream: "I'm an amateur, I don't care how my book looks and my content is probably as bad as this cover" or it can assure the viewer: "The content inside this book is just as interesting, well done, and high quality as this cover."

Front and Back

Don't forget that you have a front and a back cover. Most eBooks I have seen only have a front cover but neglect to include a back cover. I think that is a mistake.

The back cover on a print book makes sense because it becomes the advertisement for someone considering buying it. The back cover of a PDF or Kindle version confirms to the reader that they made a good investment and that they got what they paid for (the final thing they see is what you promised would be in the book). It also leaves them with a last look at the author, a website

address, or short biography. You might think of something to offer them as a reward for reading your book like bonus report or a heavy discount on another product you offer.

Fine Print, Legal Stuff, Disclaimer, Copyright Language

Because of our lawsuit-happy culture and regulatory obsessed government, you have got to have a typical "fine print" page that contains copyright information and all the legal mumbo-jumbo that nobody ever reads. You have to cover your butt; and even if it seems like a waste of space, inclusion of all this language makes it look like you know what you're doing.

To me, it's like that absurd teeny tiny print you see on the TV commercial that's 5000 words long and appears for all of three seconds. Nobody cares and nobody reads it - but you have got to include it.

The best way to figure out what you need for fine print is simply to look at other books. Go to your bookstore and look at the standard stuff that most of the books have and simply do your own version of it. Some of the standard blah-blah-blah is:

- Copyright information

- Permission or restrictions about use
- Disclaimers about advice or claims
- Any copyright violations are unintentional
- Income potential varies by person

About the Author

Most books have traditionally contained information about the author. With the emergence of eBooks, websites, and blogs, it is expected that you will find a pretty healthy biography of the author. This not only represents the qualifications and credibility of the author, but it also gives the author a chance for further marketing.

Writing an effective biography allows you to list some of your major accomplishments, and should include your blogs and your flagship products. It serves the dual purpose of establishing credibility as well as advertising those items to the reader. Make sure your

biography includes major online achievements, with a general description of them and links to them.

In my opinion, your biography should not read like a job resume. Write it the same way you write the rest of your book: using an engaging, interesting, and comfortable style to tell people who you are, what you've done, and why your personal experience and credibility should give them confidence that reading your book is a good investment of their time.

Table of Contents

With only a very few exceptions, every book should have a table of contents for the convenience of the reader. How detailed you make it is up to you.

Inserting a table of contents is easy in Microsoft Word because you designate which styles are going to be included in your table of contents.

Depending on my content, sometimes I will choose only "heading 1" and maybe "heading 2" as the two styles Word will automatically compile into the table of contents. You have to find a balance. You do not want the table of contents to be so detailed that it is a pain to find anything - but you don't want to be so sparse that it is not really useful.

Make sure the last thing you do is update your table of contents so that the page numbers are accurate. Nothing is more frustrating than

> Tip: make sure the last thing you do is update your table of contents so the page numbers and links are correct.

finally finishing the book, producing it in all three formats, even ordering a couple of dozen print copies… only to find out you did not update the table of contents and it is inaccurate (I only know this because I have made this mistake… more than once).

Body Content

This is the bulk of the book that contains the content. I am pretty sure you would notice if you forget to include this part.

Index

Only you can decide if an index is useful given your content. Microsoft Word makes it pretty easy to create an index. You simply go through your book designating keywords to be included in the index. When you insert the index, it automatically generates a list with all those keywords and the pages they are found on.

For each book I write, I try to look at it from a readers viewpoint and ask myself honestly: would an index be useful and add value to this book? If the answer is

yes, then I spend the time and effort to put one in (if your book is long, it can take some time designating which words you want to be indexed).

Links

The PDF and Kindle formats allow active links that can be clicked on directly inside the electronic document. Of course you can't do that in print, but you can type out the link. To accommodate print AND keep from doing multiple versions of the original content, I typically create an active link in the content but then follow it with the actual URL in the text.

There are different types of links you might want to include in your mBooks: links back to your other products and services, to your blog, and to other online items that relate to your business. Link to any resources you reference in your book for the convenience of the reader.

In other words, if you mention your twin brother's awesome sales- and management-training blog (bruceriggs.com), go ahead and link to it for the added convenience of your readers.

Affiliate Links

Another type of link is an "affiliate link." When you discuss certain products or services that you have an affiliate relationship with, be sure you link to them using your affiliate address.

If someone is immediately interested in pursuing that product or site, instead of opening a browser and

typing in an address to that site (losing your affiliate referral in the process), they will use the active link in your document; then you will get credit for the affiliate referral.

Affiliate links are a great way to make some extra income and offer your audience some fantastic resources you have personally checked out for them.

One caution about affiliate links: if you are simply writing a book (or blog post) for the excuse of overhyping and aggressively recommending products and services you have an affiliate commission relationship with, it's going to turn people off.

People appreciate honest recommendations of products you've used and are proud to refer, but if your intent is to simply pimp affiliates while hoping for some clicks and dollars, your reputation and integrity will suffer over the long haul.

Be sure that all your affiliate recommendations can be backed up by your honest testimonial and integrity. At least that's my opinion. You'll find a lot of "online

business experts" who will coach you to write content filled with affiliate links for the sole purpose of making money regardless of whether you truly find them valuable to your readers. You have to decide which viewpoint you're going to embrace.

There are affiliate links in this book. There's no need to hide that fact or trick people. If you are giving them a heads up about good stuff, they will appreciate you and be glad if you make a few bucks from links.

Advertising

We mentioned this earlier but your mBook needs to contain appropriate advertising. You should have ads for your own online business. Do not be afraid to sell advertising to other related businesses as well.

Think "magazine" when it comes to advertising. The only rule is "there are no rules."

Think of your mBook more like a magazine than a traditional book. People have come to expect that a magazine starts out with two, three, or more pages of advertising. I am not sure I would put half a dozen

pages of advertising in the front of my book, but I certainly would do two or three full-page ads for appropriate related products and services (you can even advertise affiliates). Advertising sales are another source of revenue. If you have an established audience, approach an advertiser and tell them with certainty that your book will go into the hands of a hundred thousand people (or whatever size your audience is).

Of course you do not have to have 100,000 readers… whatever size your audience is will dictate the amount of money you can charge for an advertisement. Remember, there are no rules anymore about what you can or can't do when you self-publish.

I see a hybrid version of magazine/books becoming very common. I am certainly going to do my part to make sure it becomes common!

> Tip: don't forget the ads for your own stuff. You have your readers attention. They will appreciate knowing about your other products and services.

Don't forget to include advertising for your own products, services, and blogs. How you do that is up to you. You might have one page that lists all of your stuff or you might dedicate a single page to major parts of your online business. It's up to you to decide what is appropriate for your book and what brings the most value to your readers and your business.

Design, Format, Layout, Cover

Sometimes I can't decide which is more fun: writing the content, or designing the layout of the book. Doing the format and artwork is really fun because you finally get to see how your book is actually going to look. It is like putting carpet or flooring samples over a bare floor in a newly built home – you can really start to see the end result of your hard work and choices.
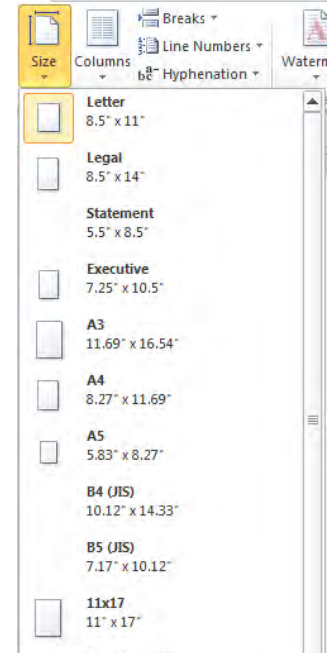
Based on my experience, I am going to tell you what I think about, plan, and consider as I begin to transform the content into an actual layout and design.

Page Size

I take a different approach to page size than most of the eBook authors I know. The majority of eBooks I run across are formatted for a computer screen and purely electronic delivery. There is nothing wrong with that if you don't mind doing another version of the layout for the print version (which you should do). To save time, I typically choose a page size that not only works on a computer screen but is also a common print size as well.

I realize there is no size that will perfectly accommodate both electronic and print versions, and I do get some occasional criticism that my PDF format does not fit the typical computer screen perfectly.

In my experience, for the extra work and duplicate copies you have to keep to do one format for PDF, another format for printing hardcopies, and still another format for Kindle or Nook, it is much more efficient and less likely to cause errors or inconsistencies if you choose one format that views reasonably well in any environment. This book you're reading right now is a compromise between all the different viewing formats.

Since the printed version has the least flexibility and the most constraints on the page size that you can use, I start there. A typical letter-page size (8.5 x 11) is a common book format for printing; and, of course, it works well on your own

> Tip: the printed version has the least flexibility; start with a size that works for print if you don't want to deal with multiple copies of your book.

personal printer too if you want to print out the PDF. If your book is not very long, the letter-sized format can make for pretty thin book with very few pages. It's kind

of large for a printed book and also not the most attractive size - except for workbooks.

The common book size of "6 x 9" prints out well on personal computers if you designate your PDF printing dialog to scale the page up to fit the 8.5 x 11 page. This is the format I use most often because it makes a comfortable-sized book for printing. It's also a reasonable proportion and reading size for your computer screens, although it does not fill up all of the horizontal space when you view an entire page on the screen. The 6 x 9 format is what I most commonly use because my books fall into the category of guides and "quick reads." The typical length of my content usually produces a printed book of around 80 to 100 pages.

I also like the "9 x 7 landscape" format. It is close to the 4:3 or 16:9 proportions of most computer screens; so not only does it print well as a paperback and on your personal printer, it also utilizes the entire area of your computer screen.

For printing a paperback, "9 x 7" is not a very common page size, so it will make your book stand out. It works great for training materials, courses, or workbooks, as well as photography-related books or art instruction.

I have purposely chosen the 9 x 7 landscape format for this mBook you are reading because the last three or four I have published used the 6 x 9 format and I wanted to do something different to show you a variety.

I like the way it turned out for this book because of the amount of graphics and screenshots included. It's a good balance of utilizing space while allowing good-size images and graphics.

Let me know what you think about this layout.

Microsoft Word Styles

I've already discussed "styles" but I want to touch on it again here and re-emphasize the importance of it. A lot of people dismiss styles because they think "I'll just manually format the book as I go" but I'm telling you from experience **that is a huge mistake**.

It is a major-league pain to go through dozens (if not hundreds) of pages trying to make sure that formatting is consistent when you have not set styles.

You will find yourself going through the book over and over and over and over again correcting formatting on individual items - and trust me, you will not get them all. You will end up with an inconsistent format and mistakes, I promise.

It's not really critical that you decide on the formatting of the styles early in the process because you can always easily change the styles later. You can easily and quickly experiment with different formatting until you get what you want.

The important thing is to APPLY THE STYLES TO YOUR CONTENT as you create the content. Consistently apply the correct style to the correct elements.

Hiring a Designer

Let's face it, God did not bless everyone with creative ability or even with an eye for decent design. If you're one of those people, spend a few bucks and hire a graphic designer to help you with the layout and cover. If you are totally devoid of any creative or artistic DNA but you are still bound and determined to do all the design work, there is still some hope for you.
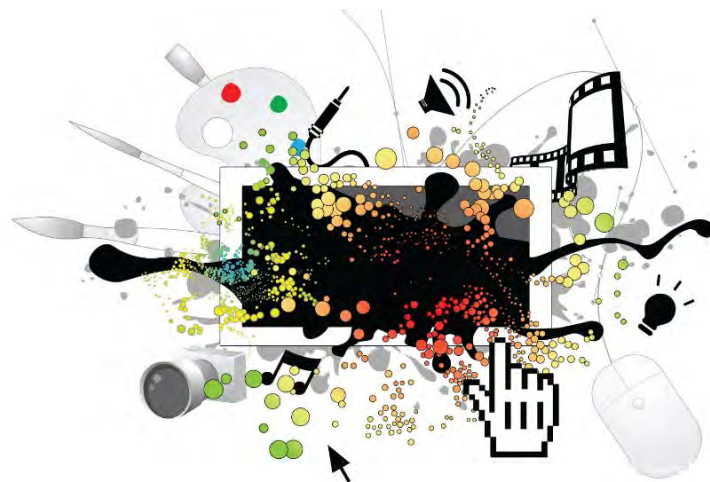
By using the styles in Microsoft Word, you will have an already predetermined selection of style themes that will automatically format your book in a reasonably decent design. By choosing a style theme and consistently applying it, you can at least expect a somewhat well-formatted interior of your mBook. The better choice would be to contract a designer and let them help you create a format.

The cover of your book is a different consideration though because it truly needs some excellent graphic design. You can't just slap an image with a title on the first page if you want a cover that looks like more than

the first page of a report. Here are some different approaches to doing your cover design:

- Hire graphic designer.

- Find another book with a cover design that you like and mimic it.

- Use the cover-design wizards that the major on-demand print companies offer you.

Hiring a graphic designer means you have to invest some money but it also means that you can get a high-quality professionally designed book cover (assuming you want to spend more than five dollars on a designer).

Finding an existing book cover that has a style you want to mimic is a great way to get a head start on your design - whether you are using a hired graphic designer or trying to do it yourself. If you are doing your own cover art, you have to know how to use the software to produce the style you like; but if you are using a graphic designer, they will typically charge you less if you show them the design that you like.

The creative part of designing is usually what takes the most time so if you have done the creative work for the graphic designer by giving them a sample of what you want, you can typically ask them to charge you less.

Most of the major on-demand print companies like CreateSpace include a do-it-yourself book-cover wizard during the process of uploading your title. Once you produce a cover using their wizard, they allow you to download the finished cover in PDF format which you can then use in your electronic versions of your book.

Typically, wizard-produced covers are pretty generic but they will keep you from making any really atrocious design choices. Being a professional graphic designer, I think the wizard-produced covers are boring and slightly amateurish but if your budget doesn't allow you a graphic designer and you are artistically challenged, then a cover wizard may be the right choice for you.
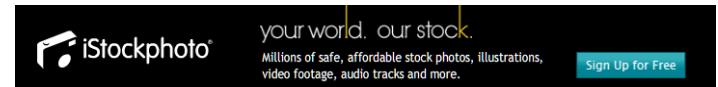
Images and Clipart

We've become "visuals" obsessed. If you publish a book with no images or art/graphics, your book will only appeal to small specific group of readers. For the most part (because of the "People Magazine Syndrome") your readers have come to expect images, graphics, and artwork to dress up anything they read. As a graphic designer, I think books are more enjoyable when you mix up the text with great images and art that set the mood and reinforce the message you're communicating.

There is no excuse for using sorry images and cheesy unprofessional clipart. There are any number of services like iStock that provide world-class stock photography, illustrations, and 3-D images. Be careful of the low-cost or free clipart and photo services. Most of the time the quality is "junk" for lack of a better word and often they come with limitations on their use.

Caution: many people writing their first mBook go out on Google, grab whatever images they find, and slap them into their book. Big mistake.

Every image is owned by somebody. Depending on the level of their passion about that ownership, you could find yourself being sued for copyright infringement or being badmouthed on the Internet for stealing photographic property. Neither of those are good for your reputation and might cause ulcers.

If you are ever tempted to use an image or piece of artwork owned by one of the major stock photography websites without paying for it, you are going to quickly find out why that's a REALLY bad idea. They have lots of ways of monitoring and tracking down the illegal unauthorized use of their copyrighted files. Once they do, you will receive a nice letter from their attorneys demanding a rather large payment for copyright violation or you will face a lawsuit.

Some conspiracy-minded people might think they do that on purpose to make some quick cash; but the point is, it is their property and you should not be using it without paying for the right to use it. So you get what you deserve if you steal somebody's images or artwork to put in your book.

My Best Trick for Creating a World-Class Design and Layout

I have already touched on this technique previously but it needs to be stated in this section too. Do not reinvent the wheel.

Go online to Amazon or Barnes & Noble and find books that have great designs that appeal to you. They don't have to be about your topic, but obviously you don't want a design that is at odds with your content.

In other words, if your eBook is about "How to Sell Vintage Guns and Knives" then you don't want a book design full of butterflies and daisies - no matter how good the design may be.

I enjoy going down to Barnes & Noble's or Borders, getting a cup of coffee, and looking through the store for books with great design. Again, it doesn't matter the topic - I'm looking for an appealing design.

I have been doing professional graphic design for 25 years and I still go through this process for almost every project I do, whether it is a book design, a new website, or anything else that requires creativity. Just the exercise of looking at a bunch of other designs will fuel your artistic juices.

Get Ready for the World

Your content is written. You've got a great page design and a world-class cover. Now you have to output (or publish) the Word file to the various formats and get them ready for the world to buy and read.

I'm taking more of a "teach a man to fish" approach in this section. If I simply babysit you step-by-step through the process, 1) you won't really learn it, and 2) if they change a step or update some software, it will be confusing for you.

Things are always changing on the Internet so it's better to understand the process rather than memorize a few steps.

PDF

This is the easiest format to produce. In Microsoft Word, you can simply use the FILE tab and "Save As":
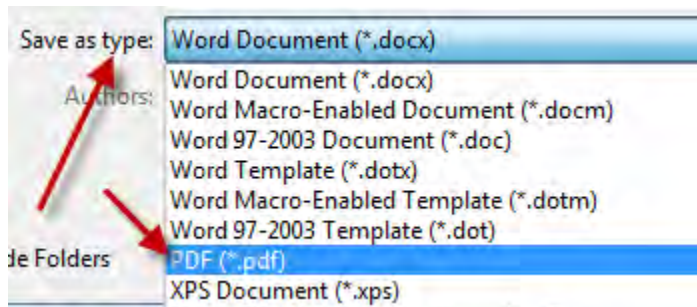
Choose Standard for a PDF that will do well for on-demand printing and printing on personal printers. The Minimum choice gives you a smaller (but lower resolution) PDF good for emailing and downloading online:
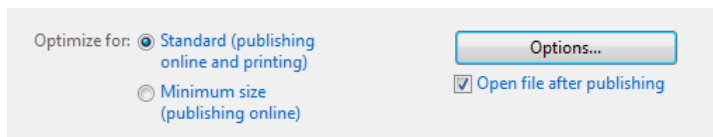
If you plan on publishing several mBooks, consider getting Adobe Acrobat. Acrobat gives you the ability to really optimize your PDF's - giving you the perfect file size and resolution for your various needs:

- A PDF to download online (with broadband connections, this version can be higher resolution which will make the file a little bigger).

- A medium resolution PDF for personal printing.

- A PDF to email (small file size).

- A PDF with high resolution for on-demand printing.

That's the ideal scenario but don't worry… the Standard and Minimum formats output from Word will work just fine.

On-Demand Printing

The on-demand print services use a PDF of your content. You do not have to do anything different with your content (if you start with a book-printing page size; if not, you have to create a version with page size and margins that work for physical printing).

Output a PDF using the Standard optimization choice and then click Options:
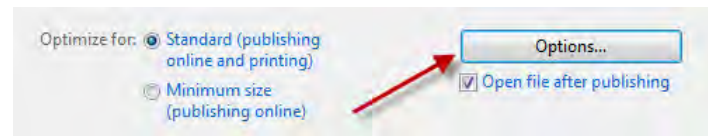
On the Options dialog, check the "PDF/A" option. This will solve a lot of potential problems with formatting and structure that can mess up the PDF conversion process for the on-demand service.

If you cannot find this information, then wait until you get to that portion of the publishing process. They will get to point where they say something like "okay, let's do your cover. Do you want to use a wizard or upload your own?"

If you choose "do my own" then they will give you the exact specifications and measurements of your cover on that screen. You can save the publishing process up to that point, go do your cover, and then go back and finish publishing later.

If you do your own cover, it has to be the EXACT right size, the right margins, in the right format, at the right resolution. That sounds like a lot, and it's certainly something you have to put some effort into learning. Or, you can hire a designer, give them the page specifications, and they should be able to deliver a file ready for you to upload to the on-demand service.

Once you have your PDF ready for the book contents, what about the cover? You either need to create your own, or use the on-demand print service cover wizard.

If you do NOT use the cover wizard, you need to go to the on-demand service site, and look up what the dimensions of your cover should be. Based on the number of pages you have, the book spine width will vary.

The on-demand print publishing process looks like this in general steps:

- Create your PDF for the interior contents

- Create your cover

- Sign up at an on-demand print service

- Follow their instructions on starting a new book

- Upload your PDF

- Upload or create your cover

- Fill in the marketing and pricing details

- Publish

And just like that, you've self-published your first print book. You don't have to buy a thousand copies to get it printed. They print them one-by-one as they are purchased.

> Tip: resist the temptation to order a box of your books at this point. **ORDER ONE ONLY**. Proof the printed version and make sure the results are what you expected before ordering a case.

You may have had to come from the "old school" of publishing to appreciate it, but it is REMARKABLE that you can order one book at a time and it's the same quality as ordering 10,000.

Kindle (or Nook)

There are two parts of the process for preparing your book for Kindle. I'm going to discuss Kindle specifically in this section but the general instruction is applicable to Nook as well.

The first part of the process is preparing a version of your Microsoft Word file for uploading to Kindle. I'm going to show you a very simplified and generalized version of the process because each book will be a little bit different in how you prepare it.

> Tip: you will get to preview and revise your Kindle version as much as you need before final submission to Amazon.

When you upload your book to Kindle, you will get to preview it. Based on that preview, you can go back to your Word document and make adjustments. There is a lot of help and support information available for preparing your book for Kindle - check the Kindle developer site as well as on the Internet.

- Open your Word document.

- Save it as a "Web Page, Filtered." I always give it a filename that says "Kindle version" so I will recognize it.
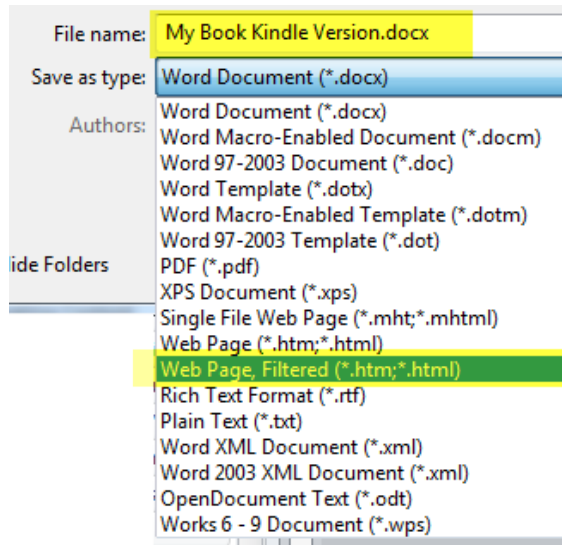
- If you get a warning about some office features that will not be available, click "yes" to continue.

- You may get another warning telling you about those features that are lost. Click "continue."

- You will now see a totally different view of your content. Kindle uses an HTML webpage format and web pages have no sections, margins, or page breaks.

- Go through your book and remove extra spaces and empty lines that were caused by page breaks or other formatting. This part of the layout process takes a little bit of practice, and trial and error. You'll use the preview functionality when you upload your book to Kindle to see what your content looks like on a Kindle device. Then you can go back and make changes as needed to your file and re-upload.

  NOTE: Keep in mind that the Kindle device is like viewing a webpage. Forget page sizes, margins, and columns. Yes, Kindle displays content in columns but that capability is part of the Kindle device. Columns are not set in your content.

- Once you have made your changes to the layout and cleaned up the webpage-filtered version, save it and close Microsoft Word.

- Now go to the folder where the Kindle version of your mBook is located.

  You will notice that Microsoft Word created a folder full of images when you did the webpage-filtered version. Select this folder and the Microsoft Word file you created for Kindle. Save

those two items together into a zipped file (you may have different choices in your context menus based on what software is on your computer but when using Windows or a zip program, create a zip file with those two items).
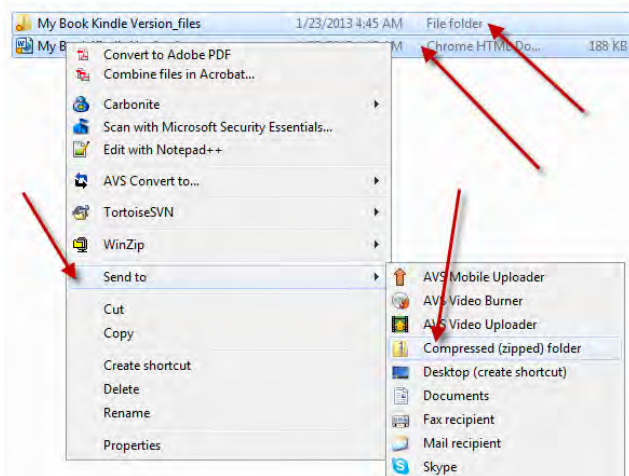
- This zip file is what you will upload to Kindle. Amazon processes both the file and the folder of images to create the Kindle version.
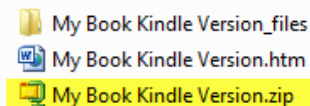
The second part of the process of publishing to Kindle is to go through the step-by-step submission wizard at kdp.Amazon.com.

If you do not have an Amazon account, you will be prompted to create one. Once you have an account and you log into the Kindle Direct Publishing webpage, you will be taken to your book page. Click the "add new title" button to begin the process.

Fill in your book details:

Description (What's this?)

4000 characters left

Book contributors: (What's this?)

Add contributors

Language (What's this?)   Publication date (optional)
English

ISBN (optional) (What's this?)

Now complete sections two and three. These should be self-explanatory; but if you need help, there is help right on the screen:

2. Verify Your Publishing Rights

Publishing rights status: (What's this?)

○ This is a public domain work.

○ This is not a public domain work and I hold the necessary publishing rights.

3. Target Your Book to Customers

Categories (What's this?)
Add Categories

Search keywords (up to 7, optional): (What's this?)

Section four is the process of uploading your cover. Amazon gives you specific instructions on how to format the cover and size it properly. Click "browse for image" to upload your cover:

4. Upload Your Book Cover

Upload image (optional)

No image available
Upload your image

Your book cover will be used for:

- the book cover inside your book
- the product image in Amazon search results
- the product image on your book's detail page

A good cover looks good as a full sized image, but also looks good as a thumbnail image. If you do not upload a cover image, a placeholder image will be used. See placeholder image example. You can change or upload a new cover image for your book at any time.

› Product Image Guidelines

Browse for image...

Finally, you are now at the step of uploading your content:

5. Upload Your Book File

Select a digital rights management (DRM) option: (What's this?)

- ○ Enable digital rights management
- ○ Do not enable digital rights management

Book content file:

| | Browse for book... |

> Learn KDP content guidelines   Upload book
> Help with formatting

When you click the "browse for book" button, the file you're looking for is the zip file we created for your Kindle version. After you have located the file, click the "Upload book" button.

Once you upload your book, you will be shown the preview functionality that allows you to look at your content in a simulated-Kindle-device environment. Use the preview to make sure your content is showing correctly; and, if not, go back and make adjustments to the Kindle version of your Microsoft Word file.

Keep in mind that each time you make changes to the Kindle version of your Microsoft Word file, you will have to save it and re-create the zip file. That revised file can be uploaded to Kindle as many times as you need. Use the preview process over and over again until you are satisfied.

At that point, you will click the "save and continue" button which will take you over to some additional information including pricing (which is all self-explanatory and has instructions).

The process of submitting your Kindle book is very easy after you have done it a couple of times. Your Kindle version will be reviewed by Amazon and you will be notified when it is published. This usually takes a day or so and while there are no guarantees, it seems that unless you violate one of their content guidelines, you'll be approved.

Content Guidelines From Amazon:

- Your books and other content (such as book titles, cover art and product descriptions) must adhere to these content guidelines. We reserve the right to make judgments about whether content is appropriate and to choose not to offer it. We may also terminate your participation in the KDP program if you don't adhere to these content guidelines.

- *Pornography*

  o We don't accept pornography or offensive depictions of graphic sexual acts.

- *Offensive Content*

- What we deem offensive is probably about what you would expect.

- *Illegal and Infringing Content*

  - We take violations of laws and proprietary rights very seriously. It is your responsibility to ensure that your content doesn't violate laws or copyright, trademark, privacy, publicity, or other rights. Just because content is freely available does not mean you are free to copy and sell it.

- *Public Domain and Other Non-Exclusive Content*

  - Some types of content, such as public domain content, may be free to use by anyone, or may be licensed for use by more than one party. We will not accept content that is freely available on the web unless you are the copyright owner of that content. For example, if you received your book content from a source that allows you and others to re-distribute it, and the content is freely available on the web, we will not accept it for sale on the Kindle store. We do accept public domain content, however we may choose to not sell a public domain book if its content is undifferentiated or barely differentiated from one or more other books.

- *Poor Customer Experience*

  - We don't accept books that provide a poor customer experience. Examples include poorly formatted books and books with misleading titles, cover art or product descriptions. We reserve the right to determine whether content provides a poor customer experience.

Once Amazon approves and publishes your Kindle version, it is immediately available on Amazon for purchase.

Automating Sales

One of the most exciting aspects of online business is the automated 24/7 nature of it. You can sell an mBook while you are sleeping and wake up the next day with money in your account.

The general process is this:

- Someone comes to your blog or a sales landing page for your mBook.
- They click the "purchase" button.
- They are taken to PayPal or some other merchant account for order processing.
- After the payment, they are redirected to a page where they can download the mBook.

- Meanwhile, PayPal or the merchant account processes the funds and transfers the money to your bank account.

That is a simplified (but accurate) overview of the process. There are many variations of it and other additions to the process you can learn as well (upselling, marketing, squeeze pages, subscription offers) but I don't want to overwhelm you as you get started.

I want you to understand the basic and simple process of selling one mBook automatically before you move on to learning more advanced processes.

Product Ad or Landing Sales Page

We will discuss sales pages more in depth in the next section but the automated sales process begins when someone in your audience clicks on a link to purchase your book.

The sales link might be a link in a blog post, a product ad on your blog, or an advertising service you've paid for, or it might be a link on a sales landing page created specifically to sell your mBook.

Tip: one of my sites **Linky Tools** (linkytools.com) offers "Linky Ads" at great rates. Linky Ads are displayed millions of times to bloggers.

easiest and quickest arrangement, it is hard to beat PayPal. Sign up for a PayPal account, create a PayPal "buy now" button, and follow their simple instructions on placing that button on your landing page or on your blog.

PayPal or Merchant Account

After clicking on a purchase link or button, the buyer will be taken to the payment-processing page. This might be a page on PayPal or might be an embedded shopping-cart system you have on your blog.

There are many different ways to set up e-commerce or payment systems on your blog. If you are new to the process and simply want to get started with the

I'm not going to go into step-by-step details here because the process of signing up for PayPal and using it is very simple and well documented on the PayPal site.

Your mBook buyer will finish paying for their purchase and will be redirected to a confirmation and order

delivery page that you designate when creating the button for this item.

Order Fulfillment & Delivery

After your audience member has completed the purchase process and been redirected to the confirmation page, you will provide them an easy way to download or retrieve the mBook they have purchased.

Giving the buyer what they paid for is the primary goal of order fulfillment.

On your order-confirmation page, feel free to include other information and marketing. As your online business grows, you will learn to use the order-fulfillment page to upsell other products and services.

Some online businesses go to a ridiculous extreme and you end up being presented with a dozen different offers before you finally get done with the process and often before you even get what you ordered. I'm sure this increases the amount of sales you get during one buying experience from a single user but it absolutely annoys the bug juice out of me.

If something irritates me, I'm certainly not going to turn around and inflict that on my audience so that I can make a few more bucks.

There's nothing wrong with some additional marketing after a purchase, but I don't recommend alienating your buyer by overwhelming them with additional "urgent, your only chance, you'll never see this again" offers. People get tired of manipulative sales techniques.

They came to buy a book, give them a book. Don't attempt to clean out their wallet while they are there.

Customer Service

At any point during this process, the buyer may have a question or experience a problem. Never, never, never delay in responding to a buyer inquiry.

Even better, use the purchase as an opportunity to personally reach out and express your thanks. Ask if they received their products without any problems. I often write a personal note to the buyer when I receive an email from PayPal about the purchase.

This is different from sending out an auto responder ("Thanks for your order!") which is usually pretty obvious. A personal touch builds loyalty and often I get

an amazed response of "wow, I can't believe you wrote me personally."

While I realize that in the grand scheme of things I'm just an average nobody, the person who just bought my book obviously holds me in a certain amount of esteem and hearing from me personally really makes an impression on them. The same will be true for you.

The biggest mistake I think authors and bloggers make as they

> Tip: personal accessibility makes your audience feel connected to you and important to hear from YOU personally.

become more successful is that they become less and less accessible to their audience. It is that personal touch and accessibility that built your audience loyalty in the first place. Hire other people to do the work of your business, but try your best to continue being accessible for personal inquiries from your audience (they don't mind getting "customer service reps" for service issues) if you want to continue to cultivate loyalty over time.

Your mBook Sales Page

A sales page is exactly that: a page that advertises and promotes your book. "Landing page" is a term that has come about because of the Internet. It refers to the page you want people to "land on" from some link located on another page - such as a search engine, somebody else's blog, or a Linky Tools ad. The term "landing page" is synonymous with a sales page.

Before I describe what I think a sales page should be, I need to tell you that I have a different opinion than a lot of Internet marketers. The common sales page that is promoted by most online business gurus is a very lengthy page with tons of information, testimonials (which are simply fake most of the time - but that is a

dirty little secret no one tells you), endless bullet points, a money-back guarantee, and finally a long list of bonus products supposedly worth a ridiculous amount of money - but free if you "order now."

A couple of dirty little secrets: the testimonials are often fake and the bonuses really are not worth $999.

I like to treat my buyers with more dignity. I think those types of sales pages are the "Jerry-Springer-infomercial" approach. If your only goal is to pressure a person to buy your product - without creating a long-term win-win relationship - then this kind of lengthy and manipulative sales page will be perfect.

I decided a long time ago that I was going to take a more honest approach to sales pages. I'm going to present to you the benefits and features of the book or product, tell you what the price is, guarantee your satisfaction, and let you make a decision. I want to create a long-term loyal relationship with you, not twist you out of a few dollars with a hard sell.

How do I know that this type of manipulative, high-pressure landing page is ultimately bad for business?

Because I am completely turned off by them as a consumer. I have always ended up feeling ripped off when it's all said and done. A quick Internet search will show I'm only one of a multitude of people that disdain and pretty much ignore this infomercial-type sales page.

I know there will be a lot of other online business people laughing their butt off all the way to the bank over my comments. That's okay. I certainly like to make money as much as the next guy, but I'm not willing to trade my integrity or a long-term relationship with each buyer just to increase my income.

With that preface, I want to tell you what I think a good sales page consists of and you may decide to make yours more comprehensive or to take the minimalist approach like I do.

The Basic Elements

The basic elements of your sales page should be: the title, subheads, body copy, bullet lists, a "satisfaction guaranteed" statement, and purchase buttons or links. There are tasteful ways to also include authentic testimonials and bonuses.

Headlines

A good headline is going to ask a question, present a problem or solution, and create a desire

> Tip: utilize your editor, proofreader, copywriter, or marketing expert until you really get good at developing effective sales pages.

for the reader. If a headline does not emotionally engage and attract upon first impression, the viewer will most likely not take the time to read the rest of your sales page. This makes the headline the most important part of your page.

Mini Headlines

Subheadings are like mini headlines. They allow the reader to quickly skim the page. You can entice the viewer even more with good subheads (that are in essence little headlines).

Body Copy

The body copy of your sales page should be concise, compelling, and free of gimmicks. Make sure to include a list of benefits the reader can quickly digest.

Keep in mind that a benefit is something that presents an advantage to the reader ("this book will increase your overall net wealth") whereas a feature is just a fact about what your book contains ("a list of 10 ways to save money").

Remember, you are not trying simply to impress people; you are trying to serve your readers (which really is impressive). A list of benefits tells the reader how you can serve them and what the book will do for them.

Links and Buttons

Make sure that the links or buttons used to facilitate the purchase are easy to find and simple to use. The last thing you want to do is convince someone to buy your book only to leave them confused about how to purchase it.

Guarantee

Buyers have come to expect a satisfaction guarantee. I've seen a lot of gimmicks used for this as well. Don't do gimmicks.

Include a simple and clearly stated guarantee that if they are not satisfied with their purchase, you will give them a refund - no questions asked. That's what people want to know and be sure of before they make a purchase. Oftentimes this kind of guarantee will bring someone who is "not quite sure" to the point where they will make the purchase, since they know they have the option of getting a refund without a lot of hassle. It removes the risk and doubt from the purchase.

Lead Them to an Action

The overall content of your landing page should be leading the viewer to the action of purchasing your book. The buyer should never be left puzzled: "what should I do now?"

Make sure your body copy, graphics, and buttons all clearly present a "call to action" that in essence boils down to: "the next step is to click this button and buy the book."

I have a minimalist approach to sales pages that I admit not everyone will agree with. I'm relying more on my reputation and relationship with the reader than I am on a long, persuasive sales letter:

Once again I return to the same trick I've mentioned a couple of times: go find other successful sales pages and mimic what works.

Just like your book, your sales page should be well-designed, match the style of your book so that they look related in style, and be well written and proofed. No matter how good your book is, if your landing page is not of the same high quality, people will never buy your book.

Things to Avoid on Your Sales Page

Never lie to make a sale. It may work short-term, but you will reap what you sow. I've seen a lot of online business people come and go who made a big splash using gimmicks, exaggerations, and flat-out lies… only to see them disappear just as quickly once people put the word out about them.

This is strictly my opinion, but I encourage you to avoid the 27-foot-long sales page that screams "gimmick and manipulation."

It goes without saying that the fake testimonials fall into the same category; and again, you reap what you sow. If you lie to your readers to get a sale, then do not be shocked when a bad reputation follows.

Don't treat people like they are stupid or try to trick them. I have seen landing pages that fool you into signing up for email lists.

In all aspects of business, the secret to long-term success is honesty, integrity, and the classic "golden rule": treat people the way you would want to be treated or the way you would want them to treat your family. You reap what you sow. I keep repeating that because it is true.

Final Thought on Landing Pages

One final thing, there are LOTS of approaches to creating effective landing pages. I certainly do not think my way (the minimalist approach) is the "best," but it works for me and my audience. You need to educate yourself and find out what works for you.

Split Testing

The other thing you'll want to educate yourself on is "split testing." It's too much to cover in this book but I wanted to throw the term out to you so you can begin learning about it.

Split Testing is simply testing two versions of a page, or ad, or email, to see which one "converts" better (which one gets more of the response you are looking

for). There are lots of great books and blogs dedicated to educating you about split testing including one by Linky Blog that is in the works and may be out by the time you read this.

Marketing Your mBook

If nobody knows about your new mBook, no one can read it or buy it. Marketing consists of two things: 1) letting people know your book exists, and 2) telling them why they should buy it.

There many different ways to market your mBook, both traditionally and using the Internet. Many ways are free and some require an investment.

Free Marketing

Just like you can start an online business or produce an e-book for almost no cost, there are lots of free ways to market your mBook using technology.

Email Signature

Every time you send out an email, make sure that your signature at the bottom is an effective marketing piece. You don't have to copy the same boring format

everyone else uses with your name and a couple of links. Be creative. Think of it as a little advertisement at the bottom of every email you send.

The email signature is a chance to be personal and friendly but also a chance for you to tell people about your new mBook. You might use a little banner ad or a copy of the cover art. You might use the title of the book or even the same headline that you usually use on your landing page. Any of those can link over to your landing page so that whoever clicked on it will get the full marketing message for your mBook.

Here is my email signature but it often changes depending on what new stuff I'm rolling out.

Brent Riggs

Here's my other stuff…
LINKY BLOG: Online Business, Passive Income, Successsful Blogging
My Books & Other Stuff

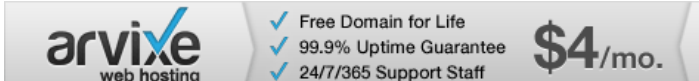**Twitter**: Online Business & Blogging | Personal | Faith
Blogs: Linky Blog | Brent Riggs Blog | Serious Faith
Sites: Linky Tools | Linky Followers
Professional: Riggs Design Works | BrentRiggs.com

Comments

Commenting on blogs is one of the most useful things you can do. It makes other people feel good when they get a comment. Commenting also allows you to build relationships with other bloggers.

If you leave a genuine comment, most bloggers do not mind if you have a link included. The reason I say "genuine" comment is that there are a lot of people who will get on your blog and write "great post!" and then put their name and a link. They don't care about your blog; they just care about getting a link on it. I immediately delete all comments like that.

Don't get me wrong. I don't mind if you come to my blog and your ultimate goal is to leave a link, but at least leave a comment that adds value to the conversation about the blog post. You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.

Discussion Forums

If you have written your mBook on a certain topic, there are probably discussion forms and Internet chat groups you can join that involve people who will be interested in your mBook.

A lot of spammers join these discussion forums and quickly get kicked out. Do not join the discussion forum if you don't want to actually converse about the topic and add value to the forum.

As with comments, it's a give-and-take situation. If you go there to genuinely contribute to the discussion, no one minds if they see your link to your new book or blog. In fact, they will probably appreciate knowing about it.

Creating Buzz

Mentioning your book and throwing out teasers to your audience is known as "pre-advertising" to create a marketing "buzz."

Pre-advertising generates excitement and allows people to start talking about your mBook and telling others about it - before you have even published. You should always create a buzz about new products with your own audience because it gives them time to cultivate enthusiasm for when you finally launch.

Strategic pre-publish marketing via advertising and guest posting can create buzz that will increase your potential for launch success.

A Special Introduction or Rollout Price

By offering a special price when you first launch your mBook, you create urgency about it. People want to buy it at the discounted rate before it goes up, and they hopefully will tell others to do the same.

It's a good form of marketing to have a special introductory price or a "grand-opening price" to generate that extra marketing exposure you otherwise would not get if you simply launch the book at the normal long-term price.

Guest Posting

In the same way writing guest posts for other blogs will get

> Tip: target blogs for guest posts that would have a high interest in your topic.

you exposure and traffic for your blog, it's obvious that guest posting will get you traffic for your new book.

You should specifically target blogs that have an audience that will be interested in your topic. Make sure that you write a blog post of value which establishes your credibility with that audience. Giving them a valuable post increases the likelihood they will be attracted to your blog or mBook.

Just like a traditional author will do book-signings at a multitude of locations to get more exposure for a printed title, the mBook author can do the equivalent by guest posting on relevant blogs.

Paid Marketing

Free marketing is good and you'll do well if you work hard at it, but investing some cash in marketing can pay off big too.

You will have to track the return on your dollar when you pay for marketing so that you aren't simply wasting money. Only you can determine whether or not it is worth the investment. If you're making $2 for every dollar you spend, it's an easy conclusion that you should continue investing in paid marketing techniques.

Online Publications

For every traditional printed publication, there is a similar online publication in the form of online magazines, online newsletters, online trade publications, etc., - almost all of these allow advertising in some form.

Contact the publication and ask for a media kit for information on their advertising rates. By advertising in online publications related to your topic, you can get a lot of highly focused interest; and, with a high level of competition for advertising dollars, usually you can get some pretty inexpensive rates for the advertising.

Pay-per-Click Campaigns

Advertising services like Google AdSense allow you to display ads on their massive search-engine network and you only have to pay them if someone clicks the ad. You can set up as many ads as you want and configure a budget for how much you want to spend each day or month.

The advantage of a system like Google AdSense is that you will get millions of ads displayed all over the Internet.

The disadvantage is that if you get people to click your ads but they come to your landing page and don't buy, you'll end up spending all that money for clicks without making any money from mBook sales.

The other thing you have to be cautious about is that you can very quickly run up a big expense or eat up your budget on Google AdSense if you are marketing inside of a high-dollar high-volume market. Carefully monitor your account. If your budget is being consumed quickly with no sales, then pause it, and consider a different landing page.

If you use Google AdSense, create different ads and test them for effectiveness. Then carefully monitor your conversion rate on your landing page. Again, it does you no good to send 10,000 people to your landing page only to leave them unconvinced to purchase your mBook.

> Tip: if your ads on Adsense aren't getting clicked, try new ads. If your ads are getting clicked but you aren't getting sales, try a different landing page.

Direct Advertising

Direct advertising is where you buy an ad space on another blog or website. You contact a blog or website and get the rates and the sizes for the ads that appear on their location. You create a banner ad or text ad (you might just display the book cover) and you simply pay directly to that blog or site owner for the advertising space.

Think of it like buying an advertisement in a magazine. You may be able to work deals with other blog owners where you trade ads or do something for them in return for ad space. When it comes to two individuals who own their own blogs, there really are no rules about advertising; it's just whatever you agree to.
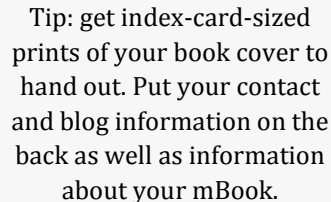
Traditional Marketing

"Traditional marketing" refers to advertising and exposure that is not online. Just because your mBook is an electronic product does not mean you can't do traditional advertising.

Traditional marketing of your electronic items is just as effective as online marketing - if you are reaching the right target audience.

For example, [my twin brother](#) routinely speaks at business groups, corporations, and educational events. At each of these, he has people take out their iPad, phone, or laptop and encourages them to sign up to his blog or visit his landing page right on the spot.

He gives them business cards, printed promotional material, and other literature that is all for the purpose of marketing his online business.

At a minimum, you should have a business card and some sort of small flyer about your mBook that you can just

> Tip: get index-card-sized prints of your book cover to hand out. Put your contact and blog information on the back as well as information about your mBook.

hand out to people. This is much more effective than trying to tell them about it quickly and hoping they will remember.

Affiliate Sales of Your eBook

An affiliate program is most simply defined as other people selling your mBook and receiving a commission (from you) for the sale. Affiliate sales can dramatically increase the overall profitability of your mBook. There are entire services devoted to displaying your product or book to interested people who have signed up to do affiliate sales. You can do your own affiliate program through your blog or you might submit your mBook to one of these affiliate programs.

The real trick to doing well with affiliate programs is to offer a very generous commission. Most affiliate programs (when it comes to e-books) usually pay the author at least 50% of the sales price, if not more. A good strategy to consider is even paying 90% to 100% commission so that you simply get your mBook out to more people and let them find out about you and be exposed to the other marketing inside of your book.

You can buy your own software, purchase hosting services that have affiliate programs built in, or join a third-party affiliate company. If you have your own software, it will track all the necessary information about sales and affiliate referrals; you are then responsible for paying out commissions.

Affiliate services like Click Bank or Commission Junction, two of the most common, already have affiliate systems in place and are very popular for affiliate sales. You need to spend time educating yourself about the features, time investment, administration, and benefits of both the software and the third-party services so you can make a good decision about what works best for you.

Your affiliates who already have some experience will be used to having a lot of marketing materials readily available to them: text ads, banner ads, sales letters, and other promotional materials. Think of it like traditional sales. The company will provide all the materials and sales collateral needed for the representatives to have the greatest success possible. You need to do the same thing as you create your affiliate program.

It's beyond the scope of this book to give you a comprehensive education about affiliate programs because that topic could fill an entire book in itself. You should invest the time to educate yourself about affiliate programs.

Finally…

Writing and creating an mBook will be hard work, but it is a thrilling and satisfying adventure. Once you complete it, publish it, and print it, it's an achievement you won't soon forget.

Even though there are millions of books, there are hundreds of millions of people in the market to buy.

Good content and valuable writing will always be a good product for you to build a business on. Done correctly and with a firm commitment on your part to work hard and persevere, you can build an audience and do well online. Tens of thousands of people do.

Technology has completely turned traditional writing and publishing on its head.

The only rule is that there are no rules.

The only limit is your creativity and personal discipline. Don't be constrained by any guidelines or instruction from me or anyone else. What I've written in this book will help you get started, but there is absolutely nothing constraining you on what kind of mBook you write, how you produce it, or how you deliver it.

The only measure of success is whether or not people read it or buy it.

Let me close with a story to demonstrate how things have changed in a short two decades.

Twenty-five years ago, I was doing graphic arts by hand in a little print shop. That was before personal computers. Many of you reading this probably can't imagine life without computers. They came on to the scene when I was in my early '20s.

I was just starting college to earn a graphic arts degree. Somebody at the print shop had bought some

weird little box called a Macintosh that was sitting over on a table in the corner. It wasn't even plugged in.

I had heard about computer graphics so I got curious and started playing with it, even though no one had a clue how to use it. I was absolutely hooked.

I immediately dropped out of college because I knew that the future of my industry was computers. Over the years, my passion for computerized graphic design morphed into developing websites and online publishing. It was a perfect vehicle for my two most natural gifts: design and writing.

All along the way, I was told that I was taking the wrong career path, and not doing things in a way that would be successful. What they were really saying was: **I wasn't playing by the traditional rules.**

I knew that computers and the Internet had changed everything. I was blessed to be young when computers and the web came into common use. If had been 20 years older, I would have probably been too old and entrenched in a career to really get passionate about online business. Had I been 10 years younger, I wouldn't have got to "ride the wave" from the very beginning of all things "online."

That's me in my early '20's when I worked at Kennedy Space Center doing my first real graphic-design job using Mac computers. No college degree - just a portfolio produced with a computer. The computer and the Internet changed everything.

Technology has ended traditional publishing as we know it, traditional news as we know it, traditional education as we know it, and traditional visual arts.

The Internet opens up the entire world and removes constraints traditionally dictated by well-entrenched industries. A global audience and market is just on the other side of your keyboard.

My point is this: do not let anyone tell you that there is only one way to do your mBook, blog, or online business. Do not let them constrain you to their version of what works.

What works in the online business world one day is quickly replaced by some new creative idea the next. The only limitation is how hard you want to work and how creative you want to be.

I'm on your side and cheering for you!

Brent

Contact me anytime: brent@brentriggs.com | www.linkyblog.com

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Brent Riggs

brent@brentriggs.com | linkyblog.com

Brent is a well-known Internet marketing and business expert, author, and speaker. He is the owner/creator of sites like Linky Tools, Linky Followers, and Linky Blog. Find out more at RiggsDesignWorks.com