

Why Self-publish?

by Ceci Miller, MFA

When I meet an author with a great book concept, one who's definitely the right person to write that book, right away I'll often encourage her to self-publish. This is because I know that, if that author is thoroughly invested in what she has to say, and if she is determined to create a buzz about her message, she'll discover. . .

5 Fantastic Benefits of Self-publishing

Fantastic Benefit #1: Control.

When you enter into a contract with a major publishing house, you're signing an exclusive agreement that prevents your having input into most of the important decisions that will affect your book's perception by the public, and its sales. You'll have very little say about the look and feel of your book cover, the endorsements that appear on the back of your book, or the wording of your press release, for example. And since all of the above elements are critical to giving your book its best chance for bestseller status, such loss of control can pose significant problems. "But don't publishers know better than I what to do to sell a book?" you may ask. Not necessarily. Authors usually know more about their book's subject—and hence, about their target audience (market)—than anyone else. Hey, they wrote the book!

More food for thought about signing with a major publishing house: If for some reason your book doesn't sell quickly and the publisher lets it go out of print, there's often a "waiting period" before the author is allowed to self-publish the book to get it back on the shelves. In the meantime, the reading public sees that your book is "out of print" and a great deal of word-of-mouth damage is done. Self-publishing means that you are at the helm of your book project. Of course, it also means that the responsibility for its success rests in your hands. But when you believe in your message and know that you're going to do everything in your power to get that message out to your target audience, isn't it a good feeling to know that you're the one driving its success in the marketplace?

I suggest a balance of control and delegation. The right publishing ally can coach you through the process of writing and editing your book, and will also advise you to design and market your message in a way that gets optimum results. Your publishing ally may be a book editor, a publishing consultant, a published author, or all three. If she's worth her salt, though, she'll know what it will take to get your book published, and she'll know how to help you make it happen. [Schedule your one-hour consultation](#)

Fantastic Benefit #2: Money.

Why does it make good business sense to self-publish? Consider the following: a contract with a book publisher doesn't win you an ironclad guarantee that your book will ever land on the shelves. If you're a new author, your publisher will allocate **very few** marketing dollars to promote your book. It's sink or swim! If your book does sell well, it will be due to your own hard work and ingenuity—and your reward will be a tiny fraction of the book's total profits. Self-publishing admittedly involves more capital risk, but it also means that the extensive footwork you do to market your book will go to producing income for the person who most deserves it. After all, you're the one doing the lion's share to ignite word-of-mouth about your book. Not only that, you wrote it! Don't you deserve to reap 100% of the profit?

Makes sense, doesn't it?

Fantastic Benefit #3: No Waiting, No Rejection.

The Cinderella story of the little book that gets discovered by a publisher and becomes an overnight bestseller is mostly just that—a fairytale. Yes, it happens. But it hasn't been happening a whole lot lately. In the current publishing climate, with major houses paying gigantic advances to celebrity authors—their "cash cows"—not much is left to spend on developing new talent. Let's be honest: a publisher isn't going to spend many dimes marketing a book by an as yet unknown author. Even to be considered for publication in the first place, you'll need to have an extremely convincing book marketing strategy in place which you intend to implement on your own, at your own expense! Such as the case in every genre from children's books to alternative health to historical novels. First-time authors are being turned away en masse. And since many nonfiction book projects are time-sensitive—well-placed offerings intended to respond to a specific market trend—their authors often while away their precious window of opportunity waiting for agents or publishers to respond to a proposal. It isn't impossible to get a major publishing house interested in a book by a first-time author, but it's getting more difficult all the time. Self-publishing removes the wait (and takes the accompanying weight off your shoulders) saving you the discomfort of rejection on the way to getting your book into print.

Don't wait, and don't bother wading through a mountain of rejections.

[Schedule your one-hour consultation](#)

Fantastic Benefit #4: Independence.

Self-published authors (I greatly prefer the term "independent publishers") are usually people with confidence in their message. Many have already developed a following by giving talks and seminars in areas where they live and work. Experts know when they have a powerful personal message—they don't need a publisher's approval to pump themselves up. Such authors, many of whom are already seasoned professionals, self-publish their books because they love being in the driver's seat of their book project. Rather than gamble that a big corporation will treat their book with the respect it deserves, such an author takes hold of the publishing reins to ensure that her message reaches the widest possible audience.

No one cares more about your book than you do. Get someone on your side who will help you get your project the attention it deserves.

Fantastic Benefit #5: The Power of Belief in Action.

The power of belief in our words is what makes promises good and turns dreams into reality. Authors who self-publish their books believe deeply that others will benefit from reading what they have to say. They have unshakable conviction. Such authors often tell me, "I had to write this book. I just have to get it out there!" Deep belief is the selfless power that drives all true service and makes a difference in the world. Authors with a strong sense of purpose know that they can make their books succeed. They don't want to wait around for a publishing house to "accept" their work. Aware that time is precious, such authors create their own publishing opportunities. They get behind their own message. They launch a campaign fueled with belief in the creative power of intention.

A good publishing consultant knows that the best way to make your book a true success is to help you create and market a message that both of you will be proud of for years to come. Creating uplifting books is a passion. Make it yours, and every one of your books sold will be a vote of confidence in humanity.

[Schedule your one-hour consultation](#)