

Publishing Pros and Cons

Every publishing method has an advantage and a disadvantage. What's right is what's right for you.

Control? Prestige? Money?

Who is in control?

Traditional publishers make the final decisions on everything once you have signed on the dotted line.

Self-publishers have total control over their books.

POD's allow authors to publish pretty much however they want – even to the author's detriment.

The sky is falling?

Are traditional publishers spreading lies to protect themselves, perhaps to forestall the inevitable? Where did traditional publishers come from? Didn't they all start as self-publishers or independent publishers?

Who is my market?

Self-publishers may know a niche market better than a traditional publisher knows and be able to make a good return on investment.

The traditional publisher is looking for a large demographic so may not pick up a niche market book.

Most POD's will publish anything regardless of audience size, which is fine if you are publishing a specialized book for a select group of people.

**5% of the effort is writing and publishing.
95% of the key to success is marketing and promotion.**

Traditional publishers have little time to spend on any one book among the hundreds or thousands they may publish per year.

Self-publishers MUST spend a great deal of time marketing to create significant sales because even though major publishers may not do much they still have incredible avenues of distribution, sales reps, major web sites, catalogs, and one

foot in the door with most book sellers via long-established contacts.

Marketing: Test, test, test

Self-publishers have the ability to quickly adapt the book to marketing results.

Traditional printers pick one marketing path the book design must adhere to until that print run, possibly 10,000 books or more, has sold out.

The Bottom Line

Great book with no marketing = \$0.00.

Decent book with great marketing = \$\$\$.

The publishing team:

Traditional publishers have editors, layout people, printers, packagers, sales people, distributors, lawyers, and accountants, but do they really know what the market wants?

Self-publishing advantage: no agents or editors.
Disadvantage: no agents or editors.

Self-publishers get a BIG learning curve or spend \$ to outsource what they can't do themselves.

Without agents, editors, and graphic specialists the self-publisher must develop a "**Board of Advisors**" to get feedback, feedback, feedback!

POD may have a large staff to service your needs, but you will pay for each "package" they offer.

Could self-publishers be the new agent / filter for traditional publishers?

The decision to publish:

Self-publishers: Is your book ready to publish? (POD's usually don't care)

- editing
- interior design
- cover (front-spine-back)
- marketing plan
- distribution

Self-publisher – Passion overcomes all obstacles.

Traditional Publisher – Buy and publish only what they think will make money, but how often have they been wrong?

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The big payoff:

Self-publishing: 20-25% discount to bookseller and the book print charge – the rest is profit.

Traditional Publisher gives you on average 10% royalty after 50-60% discount to bookstores, 10% to distributors, 10% holdback clause for returns, refunds, and damaged books, and 15-20% to your agent after you pay out your advance.

POD companies give a seemingly decent royalty, but is it really? Cost to set up? Print charge per book? Royalty? (after booksellers discount).

The print run:

Traditional publisher prints 10,000 or more per print run.

Self-publisher can print anywhere between 1 and a bazillion. Self-publisher can also do traditional style print runs with standard printers to get lower per piece costs for “best sellers.”

POD is generally higher cost per book.

(Storage of books?)

It takes how long?

Self-publishers can publish in many formats very quickly; usually within 3-6 months.

Getting published traditionally can take 2-4 years after obtaining an agent and going through an extended publishing process.

Fiction versus Non-fiction

Self-publishing a non-fiction book may be more lucrative and easier to market than self-publishing a fiction book.

One hit wonder?

Traditional publishers prefer authors with more than one book.

Self-publishing is definitely more lucrative when you have more than one book to offer.

Cost:

Traditional Publishing: Time-effort-sanity?

Self-Publishing: \$3K to \$10K

POD: \$500 to ?

Electronic: Free to \$500

In conclusion

How strong is your “**WHY**” to publish?

Why **MUST** you get this book published? (Don’t should all over yourself.)

How much control do you want of the publishing process?

Is the prestige of being a traditionally published author important to you?

Keeping in mind that **continuous marketing** is a given for **ALL authors**, do you have the entrepreneurial drive to be a self-publisher, which can be time consuming, or would you rather focus more on writing the next great American novel?

There is no one right way to publish.

There is only the way that is right for you whether it is traditional, POD, self-publishing, electronic or a combination of all of the above.

Miscellaneous:

ISBN?

Traditional Publisher supplies.

POD companies provide (Good or bad?)

Self-publisher’s get their own.

How many ISBN numbers do you need?

1-10 self-publisher format?

100 – medium publisher

1000 – large publisher



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