

SEVEN STEPS TO CREATING AND MARKETING YOUR OWN E-BOOK

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What do Dan Brown, Fern Michaels, T.D. Jakes, and Donald Trump have in common? The answer is — they've published E-books or digital versions of books. If authors like Brown and Michaels can make money from E-books, why not you?

E-books are digital versions of books that can be read on computers, special E-book readers, or even on some cell phones. They are easy to create and inexpensive to duplicate and market. You can write an E-book on any subject and have it available for sale the same day that you finish it. You can market it on a blog (free) and sell it using PayPal (almost free). What better way to make some extra cash?

So what do you write about? What have you done or what do you know that you can share with others? How-to booklets sell the best. Since I homeschooled my children, I began by writing about homeschooling. Maybe you're a student whose learned tricks on how to study effectively; a mother of twins with advice on how to raise two at once; or a cook with recipes for losing weight. Pick a topic you know about and start with that.

You don't have to write a whole book, either. Write a small booklet with 15 - 30 pages. People are willing to pay from \$3.99 to \$6.99 or more for something that will improve their lives.

Here's how:

Step 1: Write your book.

- A. Use your favorite word processor such as Microsoft Word to write and design your book. If you're able to use a page layout program such as Adobe InDesign or Quark Express, that's even better. These programs have more flexibility when working with graphics.
- B. Purchase an ISBN number from Bowker (www.bowker.com) and use it on the back of the inside title page, along with copyright information. You'll have to buy ISBN numbers in quantities of 10, but this will motivate you to write more books!
- C. Illustrate your book using royalty-free clip art (www.novadevelopment.com) or hire a professional illustrator. Include the ISBN bar code on back cover, if needed. This can also be purchased from Bowker.

Step 2: Edit your E-Book

- A. Read it out loud. It's easier to find mistakes if you hear the words.
- B. Hire someone to edit the book. It's impossible to edit your own work objectively. I've seen self-published books that were not only full of grammar and sentence structure errors but also redundancies and factual errors.
- C. Hire someone who knows English grammar and style. For nonfiction, hire someone who knows the subject to check facts.
- D. Trust your editor. It's hard to give up words you've sweated over for hours, but the fact is they probably need chopping!

Step 3: Create your E-Book

- A. After your book is complete, convert the book into a PDF document using Adobe Acrobat (www.adobe.com) or Word. Acrobat is a more advanced program for creating and editing PDFs, but Word will work for simple E-Books.
 - a. In Word, choose "Print" from the menu bar.
 - b. Click on "PDF" in the bottom left corner of the print menu.
 - c. Choose "Save as PDF..."
 - d. Click on the "Options" button. This is where you encrypt your book so that it can be read and printed, but not edited.
 - e. Select the features you want to protect (opening, editing, printing, etc.) and enter a password.
 - f. Hit "Save" and you're done!
- B. If needed, use Acrobat or Word to create hyperlinks from your E-book to the Internet.
- C. Use Acrobat to reduce the file size of the document – this will make it easier to download, a helpful, but not essential feature for smaller books without a lot of graphics. This cannot be done with Word.
- D. If you need help learning to use Adobe Acrobat, or any software for that matter, I highly recommend www.Lynda.com. For a small, monthly fee, you can take as many online classes as you want.
- E. Create an electronic cover for your E-Book to use on your Web page or Blog. You can create a free one at Groundbreak (www.groundbreak.com/graphics2.html).

Step 4: Set up a Web site or Blog to sell your E-Book.

- A. Do it yourself using Dreamweaver or other website creation program.
- B. Hire a professional. I hired a professional to create my website, but I maintain it myself using Dreamweaver. I learned to use Dreamweaver on Lynda.com.
- C. Domain names and Web hosting can be purchased at www.godaddy.com and www.ipowerweb.com.
- D. Instead of a Web site, create a Blog to sell your books. My favorite is Blogger.

Step 5: Arrange to take payment.

- A. Obtain a bank account for your business.
- B. Obtain a sales tax permit, if required.
- E. Obtain a merchant account. I use PayPal as there is no monthly commitment and they only charge a small fee for each E-Book that I sell.

Step 6: Arrange to deliver your E-Books

- A. My actual E-Books (in pdf format) are password protected on my Web server. As I receive an order, I respond to the customer by E-mail using an E-mail “signature” (a type of form letter for E-mail). This E-mail provides the customer with a user name and a password with which to access the E-Book. This form E-mail also explains how to download and print the document.
- B. For a fee, you can have your E-Books automatically delivered. One company that provides this service is Payloadz (www.payloadz.com).

Step 7: Advertise your E-Book

- A. Write a monthly or weekly newsletter. (www.oklahomahomeschool.com/newsletter.html)
- B. Write a daily blog. (<http://howdoiteach.blogspot.com/>)
- C. Write for magazines whose readers would be interested in your book.
- D. Advertise in magazines whose readers would be interested in your book.
- E. Offer to speak for free (or for a fee) on topics related to your book. Organize your own workshops and advertise locally. You can do free workshops at the local library, but you cannot charge to attend.
- F. Give away information or other resources of interest on your website. Find a way to meet your prospective customers needs and they will start linking to your site - free advertising. I give away a free E-Book and free forms on my Web site (<http://www.oklahomahomeschool.com/forms.html>)

If you want to sell your book in Kindle format or for Sony Reader, you’ll want to read:

- A. Amazon Self-Publishing service: <https://www.createspace.com/Author.jsp>
- B. E-Books.com <http://www.ebooks.com/information/authors.asp>