

DIY Book Marketing Tools

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by [Julie-Ann Harper](#)

Book marketing tools should be part of your comprehensive marketing plan. A plan based on research, knowing your audience, and monitoring absolutely every marketing component you undertake.

Marketing is my passion. Many years ago as a marketing lecturer I would stand in front of thousands of businesses or university students and use the following quote to commence my talks:

"Fifty percent of marketing is wasted, you just don't know which fifty percent."

Nothing has changed when I talk to authors; this quote still stands. Time doesn't permit me to go into the intricacies of book marketing in too much detail here, suffice to say that if you want to be successful then book marketing is imperative, not optional.

The Publishing Process

There are five main aspects of the publishing process and many tools for each which are available on the [Authors Wish](#) website within these segments.

1. [Writing](#)
2. [Editing](#)
3. [Design](#)
4. [Process](#)
5. Marketing

There are corresponding blog posts from me on each of these main aspects, but this post touches on the tools I find best for the book marketing step specifically. While each step of the overall publishing process is important, making sure every piece forms a successful whole is vital. Here are a few tools to help you manage your book promotion.

Know Your Audience

You can't market properly without having an understanding of your audience first. How you position the messaging around your book is determined by your audience's interests and needs.

In order for your book to be what they're looking for, you need to know who they are and where they are.

- **Find My Audience** is an audience discovery platform for authors and publishers that applies associations, such as [genre](#), themes, and similar books, to social media feeds to help you find potential readers for your book.

Social Media Marketing

You could spend all day monitoring and participating in your various [social media channels](#), but realistically, you probably have other priorities for your day. Engage with your audience in real-time for 15-minute increments throughout the day to be present, but utilize a social media management tool for the rest to keep you from going down the social media rabbit hole.

- **Hootsuite** helps you manage your [social media marketing](#) across several platforms from one tool. Schedule posts for when you can't actively be on your social media platforms, see who has mentioned you or shared one of your posts, and much more. The best part is that the most basic level of Hootsuite's service (which does pretty much everything you would need) is completely free. Sign up, play around with it, and see if you like it.
- **BuzzTrace** is only in beta but is one to keep an eye on (it will launch in March). It has been likened to Hootsuite on steroids. It is an online software that helps publishers and authors discover who's talking about their book, and use this buzz to get powerful action driven reports and analysis to advise the user on how to sell more books.

Book Reviews

Book recommendations from trusted sources sell books, not only direct to your consumer, but to libraries and bookstores as well. With so many books in the marketplace, it's helpful to have people saying nice things about yours in particular, but understand that just because you pay for a review, that doesn't mean it will be positive, so be certain your book is where you want it to be before you submit it for review.

- **Kirkus Indie** produces professional, unbiased book reviews for self-publishers from one of the most prestigious magazines in publishing. Traditional publishers, librarians, and booksellers hold Kirkus in very high regard, so it's great that there's an indie version as well.

Book Sales

Book marketing goes hand-in-hand with sales. After all, you get the word out about your book with the intention of selling it. Here's a tool that helps you do both in one swoop.

- **Aerio** (which is currently only available in the US) gives self-publishers an unprecedented range of direct retailing and social marketing capabilities. Established as a direct-to-consumer solution, self-publishing writers can offer their eBooks and print books to customers directly from their websites or through their social media. You can

build your own independent platform of readers and realize real income directly from your own publishing efforts.

Three Phrases to Book Marketing

Authors must understand that there are primarily three phases to a marketing plan:

- 1) before you publish
- 2) before your book is released
- 3) after your book is on the market

Unfortunately many authors are talked into spending obscene amounts of money after the book is on the market in the hope of generating sales.

Writers may be solitary beings but author publishers don't have that luxury. Relationship marketing and an [author's platform](#) require integration and constant contact with your target audience, from the very early stages of your book's inception all the way through until it is laid to rest (if ever).

I do not own the tools or programs recommended, but my company and team members have purchased, assessed, and reviewed them all and have compiled the ones we've found to be the most practical for the DIY self-publishing journey. You can find more details on the tools and services we recommend at [Authors Wish](#).

Ultimate Guide to Self-Publishing & Book Distribution Tools

August 11, 2015 by [Diana Urban](#)



If you're self-publishing your books, formatting the finished versions and distributing them to retailers can be a complicated process. To make this complex process simpler, several services are available to help authors distribute their books. And since the universe is perpetually on a mission to make your brain explode, all of the service providers are different: They partner with different retailers, offer different royalty rates, have different upfront costs, do or don't offer formatting services, etc.

We don't like it when brains explode, so to save our partners from this headache, we wanted to create the most comprehensive guide to choosing a self-publishing tool that is right for your publishing goals. Note that **there is no single correct choice** or combination of platforms you should use; it really depends on your personal publishing needs and preferences. We simply wanted to provide information about the most popular distribution services in one place for authors unsure of where to find this info.

Why you might want a distribution tool

Distribution tools, while not required for self-publishing, can help you reach more readers and save time. Here are some specific things these publishing and distribution tools can help with:

- **Ereader-friendly formatting.** If you only have your manuscript in a Word doc and don't know anything about how to format your book for ereaders, these publishing tools can help you format your book nicely and convert the files.
- **Centralized metadata management.** Control your book's metadata (price, description, categorization) at multiple retailers at once.
- **Easy addition and modification on worldwide retailers.** Update your price across all regions and currencies at once.
- **Reporting tools.** Keep track of book sales across retailers in one place (or two places, if you work with Amazon directly and use the distributor for everything else).

If you want to skip a lot of reading...

Before diving into the comparisons, let's cut to the chase. At minimum, you want your book to be on Amazon Kindle & Barnes & Noble Nook, since they comprise [70%–80% of all US ebook sales](#), followed by Apple iBooks, Google Play, and Kobo (especially for Canada). You should make your books available on as many retailers as possible to cater to the majority of readers. Next, if you want to see your book in print, you should get a print on demand (POD) distributor to make sure your print book is available for purchase on the major online retailers.

Here is a combination of distributors we often see authors use:

- Work directly with Amazon KDP (but not KDP **Select**) to get your book on Amazon.
- Use Smashwords or Draft2Digital to get your ebook on all other major retailers.
- Use Createspace to distribute POD on Amazon.
- Use IngramSpark to distribute POD on all other major retailers for worldwide distribution.

The information in this post is based on a thorough review of the features and pricing each platform offers, dozens of online reviews and comparisons, and countless forum threads discussing the matter.

[Click here to download a one-page comparison](#) of each of the most popular distribution tools.

BookBub
Distributor Comparison Chart

	BookBub				BookBub	
	Platform	Format	Availability	Availability	Availability	Availability
Available on	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Available in	US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico	US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico	US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico	US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico	US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico	US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico
Click to download						
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BookBub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

If you want to do more reading, here are the details:

Smashwords



Smashwords is the world's largest distributor of independently published ebooks. It has published and distributed ebooks for over 100K authors, small independent publishers, and agents. From our research, this seems to be the most popular ebook distribution tool among indie authors aside from Amazon KDP. The interface is easy to use, even if you need to format the book yourself.

Upfront cost: \$0

Royalty per sale: They take 15% royalties on sales through the Smashwords store and other retailers take an additional 25%.

- Author keeps 60% of the list price for sales through distribution network of retailers. [More details here.](#)
- Author keeps 85% of the net sales at Smashwords.com.

- Author keeps 70.5% of affiliate sales at Smashwords.com.

Payment schedule: Quarterly. [More details here.](#)

Distributes to: Barnes & Noble Nook, Apple iBooks, Kobo, OverDrive, Oyster, ttr, and Baker & Taylor (Blio.com and the Axis360 library platform). *Note:* You must upload to Amazon KDP yourself.

Formats accepted: .doc (Word) or epub. [More details here.](#)

Formatting services: Format yourself, then upload it for automatic conversion. They have a comprehensive [Smashwords Style Guide](#) to help. Custom formatting services are not available. But you can also pay someone to format it for you, which costs \$30–\$60.

Print available: No. You'll need to work with a print or POD distributor for this.

ISBN: Included for free, or use your own.

Preorder distribution: Yes. List your book for sale weeks or months in advance. [More details here.](#)

Ebook pricing changes: You can change your price at any time, fairly quickly. It takes 2–5 business days to update if you're Premium Catalog approved, and Apple iBooks pricing usually changes the same day.

Reporting: Daily sales reporting. Barnes & Noble Nook updates every three hours, Kobo every 30 minutes, and Apple iBooks each day.

Coupon generator: Coupons only work on the Smashwords store, but these custom coupon codes are a handy way to give reviewers or contest participants free copies.

Customer service: They believe in DIY, which is reflected on their [contact page](#). They only have a contact form available if you need to get in touch. However, if you get in touch with Smashwords' founder Mark Coker, apparently [he'll answer your questions himself!](#)

Draft2Digital



Draft2Digital is another option for ebook distribution. It handles the formatting, and you set the price of your books, get monthly payments, and see daily reports of your book sales.

Upfront cost: \$0

Royalty per sale: They take 15% royalties. [More details here.](#)

Payment schedule: Monthly. [More details here.](#)

Distributes to: Amazon Kindle, Barnes & Noble Nook, Apple iBooks, Kobo, Scribd, Tolino, Page Foundry, CreateSpace.

Formats accepted: .doc (Word), RTF, epub.

Formatting services: Conversion to epub, .mobi, PDF, and paperback included. [More details here.](#)

Print available: Yes. They'll create a single paperback copy of your book for a fee, but there are no POD services.

ISBN: Included for free. They automatically assign an ISBN to your book, but digital stores will continue to show the publisher name you choose.

Preorder distribution: Yes. List your book for sale weeks or months in advance.

Ebook pricing changes: Change your price at any time. Their system also sends you an automated email when your book price changes at each retailer, which is handy.

Reporting: Includes daily sales reporting. Reports updates as soon as they're available in dynamic, easy-to-read charts.

Coupon generator: No.

Customer service: They offer 24-hour phone and email support, and they have a basic [Knowledge Base.](#)

BookBaby



BookBaby is another self-publishing and distributor tool. Unlike Smashwords, it also distributes to Amazon, but many authors prefer to work directly with Amazon instead. The upfront cost can be off-putting for some authors. It would take at least 600 sales of a \$0.99 book to break even, and that's if the sales happen directly via BookBaby. If you also account for retailer revenue, this sales requirement is even higher. However, if you're confident in your ability to sell thousands of copies, or hundreds at a higher price point, BookBaby doesn't take a cut, so this pricing model could be better for you. They also offer POD and worldwide distribution, so you wouldn't need CreateSpace if you wanted to consolidate your publishing partners.

Upfront cost: \$299 for ebooks, POD starts at \$199, cover design and other formatting services available. [More details here.](#)

Royalty per sale: They take zero in royalties. Author keeps 100%.

Payment schedule: Quarterly. [More details here.](#)

Distributes to: Amazon Kindle, Barnes & Noble Nook, Apple iBooks, Kobo, Copia, Gardners Books, Baker & Taylor, eSentral, Scribd, Flipkart, Oyster, Ciando, EBSCO, Vearsa. [More details here.](#)

Formats accepted: .doc (Word), epub, PDF.

Formatting services: The \$299 cost includes ebook file conversion, formatting of up to 50 graphics, an ebook proof, and quality assurance testing on each ereader. [More details here.](#)

Print available: Yes. POD starts at \$199, and they distribute to online retailers and bookstores. [More details here.](#)

ISBN: Costs \$29 to get one through BookBaby, but you can also provide your own.

Preorder distribution: Not for ebooks. For POD books, yes, but you need to get in touch with their customer support team to get it set up.

Ebook pricing changes: You can change your price once every 60 days. Technically you can make more changes, but it takes 1–3 weeks for retail partners to make the adjustments requested.

Reporting: Their author accounting dashboard reports sales as soon as they're available from retailers, but does not update daily. [More details here.](#)

Coupon generator: No.

Customer service: They offer email, phone, and live chat support, and have a comprehensive online [Knowledge Base](#).

Amazon KDP



Amazon KDP lets authors convert and distribute their ebooks for Kindle. You can make changes to your book at any time, and the publishing process is fast — books appear on Amazon within 24 hours. There are two options to publish directly on Amazon: KDP and KDP Select.

KDP: This program allows you to publish your book on Amazon. KDP is non-exclusive, so you can use other retailers as well.

KDP Select: Enrolling a book in KDP Select requires the digital format of that book to be available exclusively through Amazon for at least 90 days. During the period of exclusivity, you cannot distribute your book digitally anywhere else, including on your website, blogs, etc. You cannot use another distributor like Smashwords, BookBaby, or Draft2Digital during this time, although you can continue to distribute your book in physical or audio format. However, this program comes with some benefits:

- If you enroll your book in KDP Select, your ebooks will automatically be available in the [Kindle Unlimited](#) program, a subscription program where members can read your book for free. Authors earn royalties on every book borrowed through Kindle Unlimited.
- KDP Select also offers authors two promotional tools: Kindle Countdown Deals and limited-time free book promotions.

Upfront cost: \$0

Royalty per sale: Amazon offers two ebook royalty rates:

- Author keeps 70% of the list price for books priced between \$2.99 and \$9.99 in certain regions, including the US, UK, and CA.
- Author keeps 35% of the list price for books priced between \$0.99 and \$2.98 or over \$9.99 in the US. The range for the 35% royalty rate varies by region, but you can find details [here](#). You can learn more about royalties [here](#).

Payment schedule: Every 60 days following the end of the calendar month during which the sales occur. [More details here](#).

Distributes to: Amazon only.

Formats accepted: .doc (Word), PDF, HTML, RTF.

Formatting services: Format yourself, and KDP will convert your book for Kindle. Learn more about Kindle formatting [here](#).

Print available: Not through KDP, but CreateSpace, which is owned by Amazon, integrates very well for POD.

ISBN: An ISBN is not required to publish content with Kindle Direct Publishing. [More details here](#).

Preorder distribution: Yes. Customers can order your book as early as 90 days before your book's release date. [More details here](#).

Ebook pricing changes: Change your price at any time. [More details here](#).

Reporting: Real-time reporting lets you track orders as they're placed and track royalties as payments are processed. You'll also see a graph providing daily order totals to help you discern sales trends for your books.

Coupon generator: No.

Customer service: They only have an [online form available](#), but they have an extremely comprehensive [Knowledge Base](#).

CreateSpace (print only)



CreateSpace is owned by Amazon and makes it easy for indie authors/publishers to print copies of their books without needing to order in bulk. The quality level is high, and CreateSpace now offers the choice between matte and glossy covers. There are two basic levels of CreateSpace distribution:

- **Standard distribution:** Your print book will be available at Amazon.com, Amazon Europe, and the CreateSpace eStore.
- **Expanded distribution:** In addition to the above, your print book will be available at select bookstores (such as Barnes & Noble) and online retailers, CreateSpace Direct (which includes certified retailers), and libraries and academic institutions. This option requires a CreateSpace ISBN, and you cannot also use IngramSpark POD services if you have this enabled.

However, CreateSpace is not a **worldwide** distributor for retailers other than Amazon. For worldwide distribution, you'd need to use a combination of CreateSpace Standard Distribution and IngramSpark.

Upfront cost: \$0

Royalty per sale: In most cases, CreateSpace takes 40% when you sell on Amazon and 60% for expanded distribution sales. [More details here.](#) You can also use their royalty calculator [here.](#)

Payment schedule: Monthly.

Distributes to: Amazon (standard distribution).

Formats accepted: .doc (Word), PDF, HTML, RTF.

Formatting services: Do it yourself with their [easy-to-use guides and templates](#), or [hire one of their consultants](#) to help. They also have a variety of [layout and design services](#) available.

Print available: Yes. CreateSpace is print-only and is meant to be used in conjunction with KDP.

ISBN: Included for free, but you can also provide your own.

Preorder distribution: Yes.

Ebook pricing changes: n/a

Reporting: Via KDP.

Coupon generator: No.

Customer service: Via KDP.

IngramSpark (commonly used for print only)



IngramSpark is an easy-to-use POD platform and online publishing tool that provides access to Ingram's global distribution network for print and ebook content. It's a one-stop shop for print and ebook distribution, but has upfront costs and fees in addition to royalties.

The quality of their print books is excellent. Note that if you want to use Ingram in addition to CreateSpace, you must first remove your book from CreateSpace's expanded services, and then wait up to two weeks until it is removed. Also, if you exclusively use IngramSpark for print distribution, note that authors often report that users who order their print book on Amazon are often subjected to delayed shipping.

Upfront cost: Their prices consist of one-time setup fees and annual distribution costs.

Here are the setup fees [according to their website](#):

Title Set-Up Fees	U.S	U.K.	AU	EU
Print & E-Book (set up simultaneously)	\$49	£29	\$53	€36
Print Only	\$49	£29	\$53	€36
E-Book Only	\$25	£15	\$27	€19

Here are the annual distribution fees:

- Book and Ebook Market Access: \$12.00 per title, per year (if submitted at the same time).

- Book Market Access: \$12.00 per title, per year.
- Ebook Market Access: \$12.00 per title, per year.

Royalty per sale: For ebooks, author keeps 40% of the list price if they use IngramSpark's entire ebook distribution network, and keeps 45% if they opt out of IngramSpark's Amazon agreement. For print, you will receive between 45%–70%, minus printing costs. [More details here.](#) You can also use their royalty calculator [here.](#)

Payment schedule: You'll receive your first payment within 90 days, and after that all other payments will be monthly. [More details here.](#)

Distributes to: See their massive list of online retail partners [here.](#) Note that they cannot provide service to Amazon if you're already signed up to KDP. Also, if you currently have ebook content available on Apple, you will need to remove those ebooks from the iBooks store prior to uploading those same titles to IngramSpark.

Formats accepted: PDF for print, epub for ebooks and a JPG for the ebook cover image.

Formatting services: Conversion to epub from PDF available for 60 cents per page. Page count is based on the source PDF. For example, a 100-page book = 100 x .60 = \$60 conversion fee. [More details here.](#)

Print available: Yes, and this is the primary benefit of publishing through IngramSpark. They've partnered with both huge and independent bookstores, online stores, ebook retailers, local niche retailers, libraries, schools, universities, and just about anyone who sells a book in any format. [See the full list of print distribution partners.](#)

ISBN: Requires you use your own. You can obtain an ISBN from Bowker (fees start at \$125).

Preorder distribution: Yes.

Ebook pricing changes: Change your price at any time.

Reporting: You will have access to detailed monthly reporting showing retail sales activity.

Coupon generator: No.

Customer service: You can contact them via [web form](#), by phone, and they have comprehensive [FAQs page](#) and [tutorial videos](#).

If you want even MORE information (hey, more power to you):

Here are the best reviews and comparisons out there from authors who have dealt with these distributors firsthand:

- [10 Questions to Ask Before Committing to Any E-Publishing Service](#)
- [Choosing the Right Distributor: Smashwords vs. Draft2Digital](#)
- [Bookbaby or Smashwords Best for Self-Publishers?](#)
- [IngramSpark vs. CreateSpace For Self-Published Print Ebooks](#)

There are even more options out there, but again, we're not fans of brain explosions. However, if you use another distributor or aggregator, or use a different combination of the above, we'd love to hear about your experience in the comments below!

48+ Publishing Resources You Should Know About

June 14, 2017 by [Diana Urban](#)



We know authors and publishers are always on the lookout for useful publishing resources, whether it's a valuable industry site, distributor, content management platform, or any other service provider. So we decided to update our list of resources worth considering.

Note that this list is meant to provide a starting point for your research into service providers for a variety of projects, but it's not a fully comprehensive list of every service available. We also haven't personally used or worked with most of these providers, so it's up to you to vet these (and any other) publishing services before investing money. We encourage you to read reviews, talk to fellow book marketers, see if you can do a test or sample project first, and learn as much as you can about a service provider before committing to a big spend. But hopefully the list below provides a helpful starting point for whatever project you're looking to launch next!

Book Development & Editing Services

If you're looking for something more than beta readers or critical partners, you can hire professional editors to review a manuscript. Whether you need help with line edits or are seeking feedback on overarching plot and character development, these can help:

1. [Writer's Digest Critique and Editing Services](#) – a service providing a variety of editing options. Choose between a developmental edit, line edit, proofreading, and more.
2. [Reedsy](#) – a marketplace of editors (as well as designers and marketers). According to Reedsy, “So far only the top 3% of applications (from editors) have been accepted, ensuring that our professionals are a community of the best the industry has to offer.”
3. [Editcetera](#) – an association of freelance publishing professionals — including proofreaders, copy editors, developmental editors, and more — that provides services to both publishers and indie authors.

Read more tips on finding the right editor for a manuscript [here](#).

Cover Design Services

People do judge a book by its cover, and a good one can significantly impact a book's success. Whether you're an indie author just starting out or a publisher looking to update your backlist, consider recruiting a professional cover designer to provide an on-trend, eye-catching cover. If you're on a tight budget, purchasing a premade book cover is a viable option as well. Here are a few options:

4. [GoOnWrite](#) – has hundreds of covers available across dozens of genres/topics, with pricing starting at \$50 per cover with discounts for multiples. James, the designer of all of these covers, offers [custom design services](#) as well.
5. [DIY Book Covers](#) – at an \$87 fee, access hundreds of book cover templates, plus some extras including interior layout templates, an ISBN Barcode Generator, and 3D renderings of the cover once it's ready.
6. [Damonza](#) – offers dozens of premade cover designs for \$195 each, which includes minor changes to the font or colors. They also offer [custom design services](#).
7. [Paper & Sage Design](#) – offers dozens of designs across many different genres for only \$50 per cover (or \$100 for a print + ebook bundle).
8. [Littera Designs](#) – has numerous covers available across many genres.
9. [Cover Shot Creations](#) – offers premade covers in romance, YA, new adult, sci-fi/fantasy, thriller/mystery, and western categories.

Looking to hire a designer that can create a cover that's truly customized to a book and its characters? Check out our list of 19 fantastic cover design resources [here](#).

Book Distribution Services

If you're an indie author, navigating the logistics of self-publishing and distributing your work can be complicated. To make this complex process simpler, several services are available to help authors distribute their books:

10. [Smashwords](#) – offers easy book distribution to most of the world’s largest ebook retailers (excluding Amazon) and thousands of libraries. They also provide free tools for marketing, metadata management, and sales reporting.
11. [Draft2Digital](#) – another option for ebook distribution. They handle formatting, while the author can easily set the price of their books, get monthly payments, and see daily book sales reports.
12. [BookBaby](#) – unlike Smashwords and Draft2Digital, BookBaby also distributes to Amazon, although many authors prefer to work directly with Amazon instead. They also offer print-on-demand (POD) and worldwide distribution.
13. [Pronoun](#) – a new distribution option that also distributes to Amazon. They offer cover design and formatting services, and surface insights along the way. For example, they display real readers’ searches for selected keywords, prices of comparable books, and more.
14. [Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing](#) – Amazon KDP lets authors convert and distribute their ebooks for Kindle, and now offers POD services without needing to use CreateSpace. There are two options to publish directly on Amazon: KDP and KDP Select, which requires exclusive distribution through Amazon.
15. [CreateSpace](#) – a service owned by Amazon that makes it easy for indie authors and publishers to print copies of their books without needing to order in bulk.
16. [IngramSpark](#) – a POD platform and online publishing tool that provides access to Ingram’s global distribution network for print and ebook content. It’s a one-stop shop for print and ebook distribution, but has upfront costs and fees in addition to royalties.

Not sure which distribution tool is right for your publishing goals? Read our ultimate guide to self-publishing and distribution tools [here](#).

Website Building Tools

A well-designed website is important — not only is it one of the best ways to connect with readers and build an audience, but it also helps communicate an author’s brand. If you don’t have the time or skills to build a website from scratch, consider looking into some of these tools for help:

17. [WordPress](#) – a scalable, free content management system. Although the out-of-the-box layout resembles a classic blog, you can create any sort of site with WordPress: add custom pages, galleries, contact forms, and sidebar widgets, and easily manage comments on posts and pages.
18. [Squarespace](#) – a content management system with ready-to-go templates. You can drag-and-drop to reorder sections, and click-to-edit specific sections — no coding required. Squarespace does not offer a free version — pricing starts at \$96 per year.
19. [Wix](#) – a free website builder that offers more than 500 templates to choose from. The interface is easy to use, and entirely drag-and-drop. However, customization is limited because you can’t access the site’s HTML or CSS.
20. [Weebly](#) – one of the easiest website builders available. It comes with unlimited pages for free, and it’s only \$48 per year to remove Weebly branding and use a custom domain.

Users can easily embed third-party tools like MailChimp sign-up forms using a drag-and-drop code block.

21. [Tumblr](#) – a free blogging and social networking tool. It’s easy to reblog other authors’ and readers’ Tumblr posts, share images, follow other Tumblr blogs, and get followers from other Tumblr users. Many authors thrive on this networking capability.

Check out a more complete comparison of these five tools, including examples of authors using each platform, [here](#).

Graphic Design Tools

To run eye-catching book marketing campaigns, you’ll need to create graphics for ads, email blasts, and more. In fact, social media posts with images are more likely to be shared — tweets with images get [150% more retweets](#), and Facebook posts with images account for 87% of total interactions. These tools can help you quickly spin up stunning graphics:

22. [Canva](#) – a free design tool that lets users search from a library of images, backgrounds, layouts, and fun fonts to quickly drag-and-drop a unique design. They have templates for Facebook posts, Facebook cover photos, Pinterest graphics, Instagram posts, blog graphics, and more.
23. [Designfeed](#) – a free tool that lets users quickly turn text and quotes into images, so you can easily create images for book teasers or inspirational quotes.
24. [GIMP](#) – powerful graphic design software that’s essentially a free alternative to Adobe Photoshop, with advanced tools like layers, masks, filters, transformations, and color adjustments.
25. [Fiverr](#) – an online marketplace of freelancers available to inexpensively hire for a variety of tasks and services, including [graphics and design work](#). If you want more custom design help, this is a great way to hire a professional at a low cost.

Book Marketing Agencies

If you’re looking for help running your advertising campaigns, there are agencies and freelancers that specialize in marketing books. Here are just a few:

26. [AuthorBuzz](#) – a marketing service founded by author and marketer M.J. Rose, offering services to both independent writers and major publishers. They often run BookBub Ads campaigns for clients.
27. [Logical Marketing](#) – a marketing agency providing data-driven, audience-centric research and technical marketing services for publishers and independent authors.
28. [FSB Associates](#) – a digital marketing firm specializing in book marketing. They provide website design, branding, social media engagement, and online publicity services.
29. [Smith Publicity](#) – an agency providing book promotion services, including running book tours, securing media placements, creating social media content, coordinating book donations, and more.

30. [Wildbound Literary PR](#) – a publicity company that helps authors gain exposure for their work via traditional and digital media press campaigns, social media marketing, book tours, author websites, and promotional videos.

Online Courses

31. [Self Publishing Formula](#) – offers several marketing courses, including ones for Facebook Ads and self-publishing, led by author Mark Dawson. He also consults for traditional publishers and teaches authors how to use the marketing methods that led to his own success.
32. [Writer's Digest University](#) – offers a wide variety of workshops on every aspect of writing, from plotting and drafting to publishing and marketing.
33. [Manuscript Academy](#) – founded by literary agent Jessica Sinsheimer and conference organizer Julie Kingsley, and offers classes like those you'd find at traditional publishing conferences. Classes cover topics like author branding, marketing 101, publishing law, and much more.

Writer Communities

Use fellow writers as a resource! These forums and organizations provide flourishing communities of writers where you can ask questions, share your ideas, and stumble upon great advice on everything from copy editor recommendations to promotional strategies:

34. [KBoards Writers' Cafe](#) – a very active forum where self-published and hybrid authors congregate to chat about writing, self-publishing and distribution, book marketing, and more.
35. [Absolute Write Water Cooler](#) – a popular forum for writers, with subforums for just about every writing-related subject you can think of, including outwitting writer's block, basic writing questions, genre-specific fiction, script-writing, “ask the agent,” “ask the editor,” and more.
36. [Alliance of Independent Authors \(ALLi\)](#) – offers member-only benefits, including a closed online forum, seminars, and events, as well as other benefits like author guides and an advice center.
37. [Reddit Writing Group](#) – a popular and active subreddit dedicating to writing. Also peruse Reddit for other genre-specific subreddits, including [YA Writers](#), [Fantasy Writers](#), and more!

There are dozens — if not hundreds — more writing communities focused on everything from marketing tips to genre-specific discussions, including many private Facebook groups. You can search Facebook to find some of these, but oftentimes you need to score an invite from a friend. Ask your author friends what communities they're part of to get more info!

Publishing Industry News

If you want to stay informed of the latest industry news and publishing trends, these sources offer a wide breadth of information, with in-depth coverage and expert insights:

38. [Publishers Weekly](#) – a news website that covers all aspects of book publishing and bookselling, including the latest deals, book reviews, and industry trends and news.
39. [Publishers Lunch](#) – a daily report on the publishing community, including trends, news, book deals, job changes, and more. It also gathers 5-10 stories from all over the web and print about the professional trade book community. There is a limited free version, and the premium service costs \$25 per month.
40. [The Hot Sheet](#) – a digestible publishing industry newsletter delivered via email every other Wednesday, reporting and analyzing the developments Jane Friedman and Porter Anderson deem most important for authors. This premium newsletter costs \$59 per year.
41. [Publishing Perspectives](#) – a trade magazine covering the trends, people, and companies shaping the international book business. They offer insight into the business of publishing and writing, from digital innovations to insights into global publishing markets.
42. [The Bookseller](#) – a business magazine of the book industry providing business intelligence and analysis, and includes industry news, author profiles, and more. The print version has been published since 1858, and is one of the UK’s longest-standing magazines!

Publishing Blogs

Still looking for more publishing tips and insights? Blogs written by authors and long-time industry professionals can also be great resources. These are the ones we regularly check for thought-provoking insights based on personal experience and comprehensive industry knowledge. We included their pitches below so you can see what each has to offer:

43. [Mike Shatzkin](#) – “A widely-acknowledged thought leader about digital change in the book publishing industry.”
44. [Writer Unboxed](#) – “About the craft and business of fiction.”
45. [Jane Friedman](#) – “Information and resources for writers, from a 20-year veteran of the publishing industry.”
46. [The Creative Penn](#) – “Helping you write, publish, and market your book.”
47. [Joe Konrath](#) – “A newbie’s guide to publishing.”
48. [The Passive Voice](#) – “A lawyer’s thoughts on authors, self-publishing, and traditional publishing.”

Want an outside perspective on marketing to stay ahead of the curve? Check out 10 non-publishing blogs every publisher should read [here](#).

Is your favorite publishing resource missing from the list? Let us know in the comments below!

Want to share this post? Here are ready-made

