

Annotated Booklist

Here is my annotated booklist. I have broken down the list into the top choices and related books of interest, and further broken these lists down into general publishing books, publicity/marketing books, and related business books. Those who publish books should read some books. They are very cheap education. Those who do not study publishing fail at publishing.

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Other Books

General Publishing

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Marketing and Publicity books

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Top Choices**General Publishing***The Complete Guide to Self Publishing*

Marilyn and Tom Ross, (Writers Digest Books, 2002.) 521p. indexed \$19.99.

ISBN 1-58297-091-2.

An encyclopædic work that covers the entire process in detail. Read it or at least skim it cover to cover. As you go through the process at each stage check the index and reread the Ross book in detail on the pertinent subject.

The Self Publishing Manual

16th revised Ed. Dan Poynter, (Para Publishing, 2007.) 472p. indexed \$19.95. ISBN 1-56860-142-5 The other encyclopædia of self-publishing. You need one or the other. If you can afford it, buy both.

The Publishing Game: Publish a book in 30 Days!

Fern Reiss, (Peanut Butter and Jelly Press, 2003.) 251p. indexed \$19.95.

ISBN 1-893290-85-9.

Reiss has done *her* homework and put together a unique schedule of actions for publishers. Her step by step approach is unmatched. She is also a clever publisher herself. She split her book into two, making double revenues for about the same page count as Ross above. She obtained the elusive LOC CIP¹ for her books. Her cover by well-known specialist Mayapria Long is topnotch. The interior is done in MSWord and some readers have complained about gross typesetting errors. The book is updated roughly annually.

Unlocking the Secrets of Publishing

Sylvia Hemmerly, (Inkling Press, 2002.) 95p. indexed \$12.95.

ISBN 1-892104-10-5.

Call this the digest version of the others. Publishing pro Hemmerly has summarized the important points clearly and concisely. This slim volume lists the important media contacts by state, the important prepub reviewers, offers an analysis of distributors vs. wholesalers and so on. This book is a personal favorite. I like it so much that I will be reprinting it next year under the Wexford Press imprint.

The Fine Print

Mark Levine, J.D. First Edition (e-book, Booklocker.com, 2005) 317p. \$27.00

Third Edition ISBN 97800982455-7-8 (print book, Bascomb Hill Publishing Group, 2008) 321p. \$17.95

Anyone considering using a subsidy publisher should get this book. (Of course, anyone considering a subsidy publisher should really look at true self-publishing instead.) It cuts through the hype and rates firms according to their terms, conditions, and pricing. This book has content and comparisons not available anyplace else.

Levine's book has gone through three editions. The third edition of this book is the one to get. The third edition has four special features:

¹ Library of Congress Catalaloging in Publication data block.

- It lists 45 subsidy publishers, grouped by quality.
- It lists and analyzes the contract terms and conditions of each vendor listed.
- It rates each vendor, based on contract terms and other criteria.
- It gives financial advice on the financial aspects of subsidy and e-book publishing.

E-book publishers will find the e-book edition still a very valuable resource. For print book publishers the third edition is the one to wait for.

Publicity and Marketing Books

Plug Your Book!

Steve Weber, (Weber Books 2007) 203 p. indexed \$24.99

This first effort concentrates on online book marketing. It is resource-rich, and the resource references are embedded in the text rather than being collected in appendices or a bibliography. In trendy areas such as blogs, myspace, Amazon Shorts and tag based marketing this author is ahead of the pack. The author has looked into the many marketing ploys of Amazon, some of which most of us have never heard of.

The formatting of the book is idiosyncratic and could stand some expert help. And the price is high. But the content is a smasher.

Aiming at Amazon

Aaron Shepard, (Aaron Shepard Publishing) 174 p. indexed current Amazon price \$16.00

Aaron Shepard has made it his business to keep up with all the facets of marketing books through Amazon. Through his diligence AAA has become the primary source-book for publishers who deal with Amazon. Now in its second edition it is a must-have. Shepard has refined a methodology built around printing via LSI and offering the book at short discount (20%) on Amazon.

It is also a mini publishing howto, certainly not in the class of Poynter, Ross or Reiss, but useful to the novice who does not want to plow through the longer works, and pointed directly at the online marketplace. It is a brief book to be kept handy and reread frequently.

Updates are posted on the website <http://www.aaronshep.com/publishing>.

Sell on Amazon

Steve Weber, (Steve Weber) 189p. indexed \$18.95

ISBN 978-9772406-4-7

Weber covers alternate Amazon strategies not mentioned by Shepard, such as Fulfillment By Amazon (FBA). This book goes into the mechanics of these other methods in considerable detail. While not restricted to books there is enough book-related material to make this another must-have for Amazon sellers. The two taken together cover Amazon pretty well. There is very little duplication of information.

Grassroots Marketing for Authors and Publishers

Shel Horowitz, (AWM Books 2007) 290 p. indexed \$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9614666-3-4

Despite similar titles there is almost no duplication between this book and Horowitz's earlier classic, *Grassroots Marketing* listed below. This book is tightly focused on marketing for publications. And although there is an edition of this book available from subsidy publisher Infinity.com the author is unsparing in his commentary about the subsidy breed. This is a solid presentation from a marketing and publicity pro, with real world samples of marketing materials prepared by the author for clients. Topics such as web site building that are skimped or ignored in other marketing books are covered here. I consider this book a bit pricey but well worth having on your bookshelf despite a few annoying errors in the index. It is also available through subsidy publisher Infinity.com, which may explain the high price.

From Book to Bestseller

Penny Sansevieri, (PublishingGold.com, inc 2005) 254p. indexed \$18.95

ISBN 1-890158-71-2

Sansevieri is a marketing specialist, and it shows. The book is current, concise, complete and very readable. It has both breadth and depth, covering press releases, radio interviews, prepub and postpub reviewers and so on. She gets down to the details of which book reviewer does which genre.

I am underwhelmed by the layout and the cover. These defects are outweighed by the content. Buy this book or the Fern Reiss book listed below. Both are excellent.

The Publishing Game: Bestseller in 30 Days!

Fern Reiss, (Peanut Butter and Jelly Press, 2003.) 251p. \$19.95.

ISBN 1-893290-88-3.

This is the mate to Reiss' publishing book above. It covers the marketing end of the process, and was written first. The two Reiss books taken together, come close to matching Ross or Poynter for total coverage. Some material is repeated however. Like the other books in the series the book uses a calendar-based organizational scheme.

1001 Ways to Market Your Book

John Kremer, (Open Horizons, 1998.) 702+p. indexed \$27.95.

ISBN 0-912411-48-1.

Marketing is the most important topic and this is the most comprehensive book on the subject. The plus sign above is not a misprint. Kremer pulled two chapters out of the book and made them a free download for purchasers. His reason? He thought the book would sell better if it were a little less hefty—the marketing mind at work. The book has been updated regularly and is now in its fifth edition. However some material is dated.

Grassroots Marketing

Shel Horowitz, (Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2000.) 306p. indexed \$22.95.

ISBN 1-890132-68-3.

Publicity writer Horowitz describes in detail ways to make marketing chicken soup out of chicken feathers. He explores ethical no cost and low cost ways to push your product. It rivals the Kremer book at a much lower page count.

Your Guide to Marketing Books in the Christian Marketplace

(2nd Ed.) Sarah Bolme (Crest Publications, 2009) Indexed 226 p. \$23.99

ISBN 978-0-9725546-8-8

Obviously this book is a must-have for those marketing to the Christian marketplace. With no hype, no padding and lots of pertinent information it is the book to consult.

But it is also a fine work product to use as an example of how to write and produce a publishing book. Bolme's book goes beyond the specifics of the Christian market to discuss e-book resources, blogging and other more general publishing topics. The cover and the interior layout are commendable. One slight miscue: the three major subdivisions are labeled "Sections" where they more properly could be indicated as "Parts." The latest edition is expanded and indexed. We have not yet seen a review copy but it can only be better than the first edition.

Beyond the Bookstore

Brian Jud, (Publishers Weekly, 2004) 304p. h/c indexed \$49.95.

ISBN 1-59429-002-4

If you are serious about selling non-fiction books via means other than bookstores and Amazon, then this an essential book for you. But it is not the only book you need. The coverage is extensive, and much unduplicated information is found here. But other books cover topics like news/media releases in more detail. Jud is big on charts, outlines and the like. The index is not wonderful but that is a flaw of many books on this **Shortlist**.

Book Layout and Production

Book Design and Production

Pete Masterson. (Aeonix Publishing Group, 2005.) 315p. Index, Glossary \$29.95

ISBN 0-966819-0-1

This book really has no rival in its subject area. Long time publishing pro Pete Masterson has crafted the definitive work. It needs to be on your shelf as the most useful guide available to preparing your book for print. It covers many subjects including of course typography, desk top publishing programs (particularly InDesign) designing books, printing workflow and a host of other topics too numerous to mention. It is not overpriced considering the page count and the 7 x 10 format. It is a beautifully laid out book in its own right.

Disclaimer: I am proud to say I indexed this book.

The Elements of Typographic Style

Robert Bringhurst (Hartley & Marks, Publishers, 2002) 350p. Index \$29.95

ISBN 0-88179-132-0

This jewel of a book illustrates typestyles, ancient and modern and discusses their family histories in a knowledgeable manner. Bringhurst discusses the use of type in loving detail.

The book itself is a magnificent example of the typesetter's and book designer's art. Our copy is well-thumbed.

The Complete Manual of Typography

James Felici (Peachpit Press, 2003) 361 p. Index \$45.00

ISBN 0-321-12730-7

Felici's book has one huge flaw; the type is hard to read. And the price is high. Nevertheless Felici covers much unduplicated material. Users of InDesign in particular will find it loaded with helpful hints. This book deals more with the details of layout of e.g., tables than the others. It is a good companion to Masterson's.

Type and Layout ...

Colin Wheildon et al. (The Worsely Press, 2005.) 176p. Index \$36.96 USD

ISBN 1-875750-22-3

The second sentence of the title covers the theme of this book, "Are you communicating or just making pretty shapes. "

This is a book with a mission, to prove with actual research what is good and what is bad design in advertisements, magazines and cover art. It debunks conventional wisdom without cavil and skewers sacred cows without mercy. Professionals working in either internal layout or cover art ignore this book at their peril.

Perfect Pages — Self Publishing with Microsoft Word

Aaron Shepard (Shepard Publications, 2006) 138p. \$13.50

ISBN 0-938497-33-2

Shepard's credits include children's books, e-books, and now this guide for MSWord users. He uses MSWord to lay out and design most of his books and is the voice of experience.

In short he teaches the neophyte how to do better something many authorities would say shouldn't be attempted in the first place. But the reality is many self publishers choose to lay out their book in the most popular word processor, and Shepard gives detailed, nitty-gritty advice on how to do it better and avoid some of the pitfalls. The book is an easy read, and hits its target market squarely. He pulls no punches, advising for example *against* using MSWord's Master Document feature. There is also a lot of useful advice on typography in general.

But the book needs an index. Shepard is learning how to do one in MSWord so perhaps the next edition will have one.

My advice, don't lay out your book in MSWord, but if you do, then don't even start without this book. The book itself is an indicator of what can and cannot be accomplished with the MSWord tool.

Traditional Publishing

The First Five Pages

Noah Lukeman (Fireside Books,[Simon & Schuster] 2000) 207p. indexed \$13.00

ISBN 978-0-684-85743-5

Subtitled *A Writer's Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile*

Literary agent Lukeman's book concentrates on the content of the manuscript. The most important component for snagging a good agent and ultimately a publisher is the book itself. While Lukeman highlights the importance of the first five pages much of his advice has applicability throughout the manuscript. But it is what up front that really counts.

78 reasons why your book may never be published & 14 reasons why it just might

Pat Walsh (Penguin Books, 2005) 192p. \$14,00

ISBN 978-0-14-303565-7

Acquisitions editor Pat Walsh gives his slant on the many things that hack him off and the few things that charm him. The realities of the book trade, economic and otherwise, are Walsh's theme, and he does not pull his punches or offer warm and fuzzy encouragement. But he knows where the land mines are buried and does not hesitate to point them out. You will get an education on the realities of traditional publishing, including working with your editor.

The Publishing Game: Find an Agent in 30 Days!

Fern Reiss (Peanut Butter and Jelly Press, 2005) 220p. indexed \$19.95

ISBN 978-1-893290-83-9

This entry in the *Publishing Game* series concentrates on the nuts and bolts of getting a competent agent including the details of preparing the submission packet, query letters and similar topics. Like the other books in the series it takes a chronological approach. It includes contact information on over 300 legitimate agents. Reiss updates her books in this series frequently, keeping the same ISBN.

Business Books

The Permission Seeker's Guide Through the Legal Jungle

Joy R. Butler (Sashay Communications, LLC 2007) 402 p. \$19.95

ISBN 978-0-9672940-1-8

This book yields far more than the title promises. It provides answers about copyright, trademark and the like in areas where most of us would not even think to ask the pertinent question. For example there are special protections against copyright violation claims and defamation suits that exist for certain classes of websites, mailing lists and the like. The complex issue of trademarking all or part of a book title is explicated. Enough. Every publisher, listmom or blog owner needs this book. On a scale of one to ten I give it ten point five.

How to Form and Operate a Limited Liability Company 3rd Ed.

Gregory C. Damman, JD (Self-Counsel Press, 2002.) 148p. CDROM, \$19.95.

ISBN 1-55180-403-4

One of several excellent books from this press, Damman's offering describes in detail by state how to pursue creating a Limited Liability Company. The issues involved in choosing LLC vs. some other form are also discussed. Examples of Federal tax forms are included. The self-loading CDROM creates Articles of Incorporation for your chosen state in MSWord format ready to fill in.

Business and Legal Forms for Authors and Publishers

Tad Crawford, (Allworth Press, 2000.) 192 p. CDROM, Index, \$22.95

ISBN 1-58115-039-3

This is an excellent book that provides all the forms and contracts needed to deal with authors, printers, subcontracters, distributors and so on. The author discusses each form and where appropriate provides a negotiation checklist. The forms are available as tearouts in the back of the book and also on the CDROM in MSWord Doc, WordPerfect WPD and plain text formats. I have the 1999 edition bought used on Amazon. The current edition has similar content.

Other Books

General Publishing

Everything You Wanted to Know About POD Publishing but Didn't Know Who to Ask

.John Harnish (Infinity 2002) 606p. Index \$24.95

ISBN 0-7414-1121-9

There are many things to criticize about this book, from the overlong title to the garish layout. One virtue trumps all the faults. Harnish, an employee of Infinity.com has conducted a survey of authors who have actually used subsidy publishing. Their comments, positive and negative, give an authentic and revealing look at the pitfalls they faced. After reading the 129 pages of responses therein all authors, whether they go the subsidy route or the self publishing route, will be powerfully reminded to do their homework, plan their marketing, seek professional editing and price out their book production costs carefully.

...Get Published Today!

Penny Sansevieri, (PublishingGold.com, Inc. 2005.) 161p. indexed \$15.95

ISBN 978-1-890158-73-0

The full title is *No more Rejections: Get Published Today!* but it is usually referenced under the second part of the title. This is a briefer and updated version of the book she published via Infinity in 2002 and 2003. It is a very special book, aimed at those who wish to use a subsidy publisher. The annotated listing of subsidy publishers has been updated and includes newcomers like Lulu.com. Although Sansevieri now publishes a fine marketing book there are plenty of tips here too. Unfortunately like her other PublishingGold book the layout and cover are plain ugly.

The major sin is one of omission. Sansevieri still speaks of subsidy publishers as "POD Publishers" and does not mention the option of self publishing using a POD printer like Fidlar-Doubleday or LSI.

Self Publishing in Canada

Suzanne Anderson, (Half Acre Publishing, 2004.) 270p. \$24.95 Cdn.

ISBN 1-894208-00-5

Written by an experienced small and self publisher, this book is full of information specific to the Canadian publisher, as well as more general information applicable to all in the self and small publishing categories. There is good coverage on all other the important topics. Unfortunately the layout and cover are pedestrian and the writing style a bit soporific.

While I wouldn't trade in one of my favorites listed above to get it I consider it a valuable and comprehensive addition to my personal bookshelf. Authors and publishers in Canada should however put it at the top of their book shopping list.

Publishing Step by Step

Diana M. Johnson, (Superior Book Publishing Company) 92 p. wirebound \$14.95

ISBN 0-9661504-3-0

Publishers in California will want this workbook for its coverage of the details of government paperwork in that state. Other readers may find utility in the real-world coverage, with facsimiles of forms, of applying for an ISBN or SAN, filing a copyright, the BISG categories, and other useful things.

Despite some useful and unduplicated content the book contains too many omissions and too much suboptimal advice, reflective of the author's own limited research in key topics. So it is recommended with reservations for the content items mentioned above, and not as a general guide.

How to Start and Run a Small Book Publishing Company

Peter Hupalo, (HCM Publishing, 2002.) 160 p. \$18.95.

ISBN 0-9671624-3-2

Hupalo concentrates on the business aspects of publishing more than most, and gives extensive examples of breakeven points etc. based on print runs. He also goes into such minutiae as: whether or not book design services are subject to sales tax.

If Anderson's book is dully presented, Hupalo's is even duller, and the unimaginative cover art does not inspire much confidence. But there is useful business data contained therein. He is however remarkably innocent in some areas such as subsidy publishers.

Marketing and Publicity books

Niche Marketing

Gordon Burgett (Communication Unlimited, 2008) 200 p. indexed \$19.95

ISBN 978-0-976295-2-5

The author has written many books, including at least two with very similar titles. But perhaps he has written one too many. There is too much slop, too many questionable judgments.

The ISBN is from a block of ten, but the author rearranges the dashes to make it seem to be from a bigger block.

In a cost analysis for a self-published offset book, he includes \$1,000 for cover preparation (perhaps a bit low) \$1,000 for illustrations but nothing at all for editing and interior layout. This is sloppy work.

The book contains extensive advice on the preparation of various marketing materials which may be its strongest point.

In sum the reviewer was underwhelmed by this niche book about niche publishing. It deserves to be read, but read with more than a grain of salt for some of the judgments offered.

Low Budget Online Marketing for Small Business

Holly Berkley, (Self Counsel Press, 2003.) \$18.95.

ISBN 1-55180-427-1

This book, one of a series of marketing books from the same publisher, is not publishing specific. It has some very good, if sometimes self-evident advice. It falls in the nice to have rather than the got to have category.

Getting Publicity

Tana Fletcher and Julia Rockler, (Self Counsel Press, 2000.)

ISBN 1-55180-3112-7

Now in its third edition, this book is a more solid addition to the author's bookshelf than the newer book by Berkley from the same publisher, and makes a nice complement to the Horowitz and Kremer books listed above. It gives specific advice on how to deal with interviews, formats for press releases and so on.