

SELF- PUBLISHING

Planning for a Better Book

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Self-Publishing:
Planning for a Better Book

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Introduction

Self-publishing may be the best way to put your manuscript into print. With many works, such as community histories, genealogies, children's books, and some works of fact and fiction, self-publishing is the only way to have your book published. R. R. Bowker recently reported that over 500,000 titles were published worldwide in one year. Many of these were self-published titles.

The fact is a publishing company operates to make a profit. To be profitable they must analyze each manuscript very critically, not only for literary or informational value, but also from a return-on-investment perspective. A rejection notice from a publishing house often means the company thinks the manuscript will not generate sufficient profit or it does not fit their publishing genre specialty. It may be an excellent book that adds significantly to a unique body of literature. However, if a publishing company cannot readily foresee a sufficient financial return on their investment of resources, they are reluctant to accept it.

As profit margins have been squeezed significantly by technological advancement, marketing developments, competition, and other current trends in the publishing field, publishers have by necessity become more stringent in their manuscript evaluations. Many publishers no longer accept unsolicited manuscripts and deal only with known, proven authors. Consequently, self-publishing has grown. The person with creative ability, writing skills, tenacity, and desire to communicate often must look to self publishing. The alternative is to file the manuscript away only to be read by a few close confidants.

Self-publishing can be profitable. It can also fill a need for information as with genealogies and historical books. Self-publishing can be quite utili-

tarian and useful in providing information. Self-publication can also be quite personally gratifying. Hence, there are numerous reasons to consider self-publishing.

Authors who have spent many hours researching, writing, rewriting, editing, proofreading, and all the myriad of other things needed for a great manuscript will naturally want to see their efforts culminate in a printed book. *Self-Publishing: Planning for a Better Book* is written to aid in seeing your book become a reality. Its purpose is to help eliminate some problems before they arise and save you money and time. It is the result of years of experience printing books for authors, church groups, historical societies, fraternal and social organizations, and others willing to self-publish.

Self-Publishing will help you choose the proper paper, the correct binding, the best printer, a great cover design, etc., to insure you get the book you want. It covers the following:

- a. Quality of the finished book
- b. Costs of printing and self-publishing
- c. Different types of binding
- d. How to select a printer
- e. Pricing the book to sell
- f. How to prepare the manuscript
- g. How to handle photographs
- h. Selection of the proper paper
- i. Selection of cover materials
- j. Marketing
- k. Copyright issues
- l. Other important items

It is written as a service to the customers of Mennonite Press, Inc. If you have more questions concerning self-publishing, please feel free to write or call:

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Normal Functions of a Publisher

A publisher is a company, organization, or individual that produces books, printed matter, or other media products for sale. Publishing normally involves four distinct functions: 1. Creation of the media and product development; 2. Production; 3. Marketing; 4. Warehousing, order fulfillment, and accounting. Let's look at each of these areas in more detail.

First is the creative process. This is where authors either on their own or in concert with a publisher decide what to write, how to write it, and produce a manuscript. This manuscript reflects the author's unique research, writing, and creative skills. The publisher's role in this process often revolves around working with established authors in guiding the writing process to an end product that will sell in the marketplace rather than a product that only reflects an individual's creativity. There is little value, other than personal satisfaction, in producing a book that few are willing to buy.

Second is the production process. This is where the publisher takes the created manuscript through an editorial process to a finished book. This includes various critical facets such as editing, proofreading, cover design, page design, font selection, obtaining International Standard Book Numbers (ISBN), getting endorsements, etc.

Third is marketing and sales. This is often the most difficult and most expensive of all the publisher's responsibilities. Selling books is not an easy or quick task. It is the process of identifying potential buyers, finding them, and then convincing them that your book adds value to their life. Giving books away is not selling.

Fourth is warehousing, order fulfillment, billing, invoicing, inventory control and tracking, royalty payments, accounting and reporting, etc. These functions wrap up the publishing process. These are essential to provide the products to either intermediate or end customers. This last function includes billing and, the fun part, making bank deposits.

Self-Publishing Finances

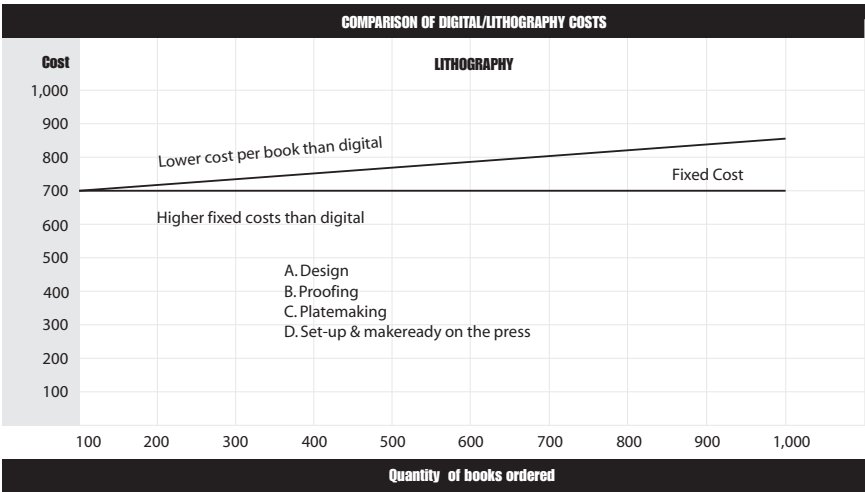
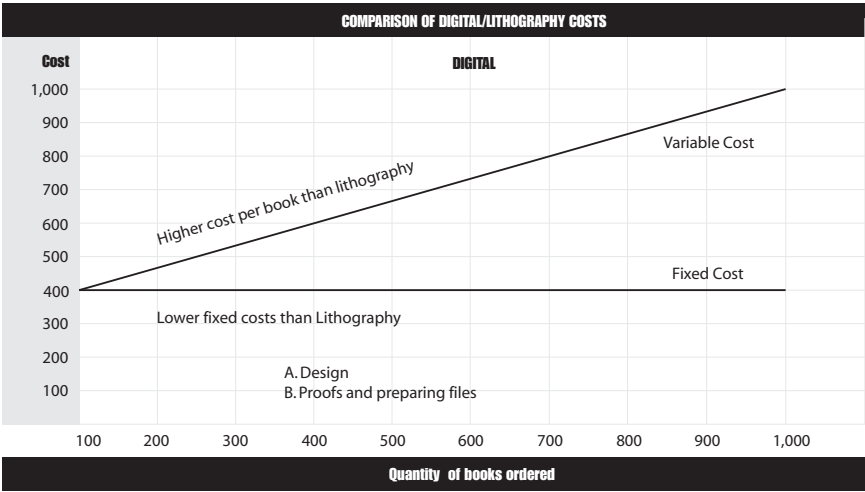
All the above publishing functions add to the total cost of the book. A publishing rule of thumb is that a book must sell for at least six to eight times the price of printing. Hence, a book costing \$5 each to print should sell for \$30 to \$40 retail. Book production requires high initial costs of editing, design, writing, research, formatting, etc. Unless costs are spread over a large quantity of books, the cost of an individual book can be quite expensive. It is this mathematical and financial fact that normally keeps publishers from printing books in small quantities and deters them from publishing books with limited sales potential.

However, from the cost standpoint, an individual or organization (such as an historical society) does not always need to make the same level of profit or return on investment as a publisher. Additionally, the expenses and overhead of a non-profit organization or individual can be significantly lower than a publishing company. Many self-publishers want only to recover their costs and in some instances are willing to subsidize a publication. Non-profit organizations often use voluntary workers and, therefore, do not have to recapture those costs in the book's price. Hence, a self-publisher can often sell a book for printing costs, postage, other incidental expenses (such as telephone and travel), plus a minimal markup and still feel quite satisfied. This is not to say that one cannot make money by self-publishing. It is possible for a self-publisher to make a reasonable financial return on their investment. However, the book must be well written, about a subject that interests a certain group of people, priced right, and marketed correctly.

The following graph illustrates the impact of quantity ordered on the printing price per book. Whether one is considering digital printing or lithography (litho), as the quantity of books increases, the total price will always go up; however, the unit price per individual book will decrease as the fixed expenses are spread over more and more copies.

Types of Printing

There are basically two distinct methods of printing books: Digital and conventional lithography (litho). The digital printing process creates a



toner-based image from digital files similar to a high-speed copier. Advantages of digital printing include being economical for short runs and the ability to quickly turn around work using customer-generated files. The disadvantages of digital printing are that quality is not as high as lithography (especially on the covers) and it is more expensive than litho on runs in excess of approximately 500 copies.

Conventional lithography first entails making a printing plate that must be mounted on a printing press. In the printing process a press puts a precise amount of ink on a variety of paper surfaces at speeds that are much higher than digital printing. The costs of pagination, making plates,

and getting the press ready for printing make the litho process much more expensive and time consuming than digital printing on press runs of less than approximately 500 copies. However, once the litho press gets rolling, it far out-produces digital equipment. Advantages of lithography are: 1. Costs per piece drop with higher quantities, and 2. Higher quality, especially with special colors, metallic inks, and precise color matching.

As can be seen from the hypothetical example above, the first book printed digitally will cost approximately \$400. The first book printed litho will cost approximately \$700. This is a result of the high initial cost. Five hundred books printed litho costs approximately \$780 and \$700 if printed digitally. One thousand books will cost \$870 if printed litho and \$970 if printed digital. This is only an example for illustrative purposes. Actual book production costs vary considerably depending on the number of pages, the quality desired, the number of pictures, the type of binding, type of paper, etc.

The graph further illustrates the fact that even as a self-publisher, the quantity printed is an important influence on the cost per book. The more books a self-publisher can sell, the lower the cost per book. A lower cost per book allows the self-publisher to set a lower selling price. The lower selling price per book, all other factors being equal, the easier it is to sell. An example of this is a genealogy for a large family as compared to one for a small family. A large family with many relatives publishing a 200-page book might be able to sell 1,000 books for \$10-\$20 each. However, a smaller family could not sell 1,000 books and may have to be satisfied with selling only 100 books. The small family may have to price their genealogy at \$30 each to cover costs even though it may have fewer pages. Hence, quantity is a major factor in determining total cost, selling price, margin, and profit potential.

How Many Books?

The question of how many books to print remains. There is no simple formula for this. Essentially, the self-publisher does not want to produce more books than can be sold or to run out of books and turn buyers away. However, of these two options, it is probably less of a financial risk to be short rather than be overly optimistic with one's sales projections.

Following are hints to help reduce the risk of purchasing either too many or too few books.

The self-publisher must carefully assess the market for their book. For example, a community history will usually have very few sales outside the immediate area. Determine the number of families in close contact with the community. Of course, older and community-active people will likely be the most interested. The maximum market might be one book per household—probably an unrealistic goal. Determine the number of households and deduct the number where there would be little interest. Local booksellers, gift shops, community organizations, and others could merchandise the book in order to increase sales over time. Ask people questions concerning their interest. Gather this information together and make an educated and calculated guess as to how many books might be sold. This figure should sometimes be tempered by the fact that people will often promise to purchase something, but when it comes to actually paying for it—that’s a different story.

Another approach is to sell books before contracting with the printer. This is not always easy as many people prefer to see what they are buying. However, especially for genealogies and community history books, pre-selling can be very helpful in reducing the financial risk. A problem with this procedure is establishing the price before printing. In doing this, one must be careful to communicate to a printer the full details and specifications of the book to be printed. Only when given accurate and complete data can a printer give a firm bid. If specifications change, the final price will reflect those changes.

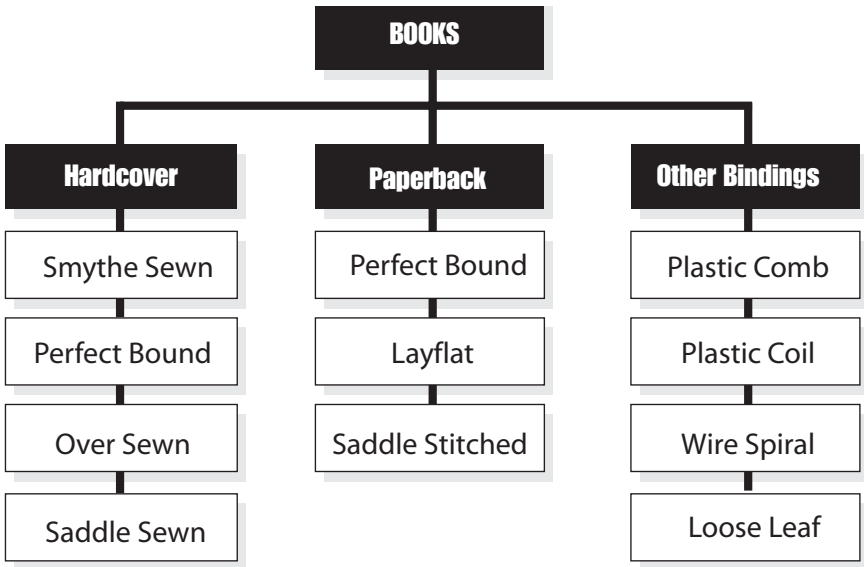
One solution to the pricing question can be to take pre-sold orders for the books within an anticipated price range. Payment collection could be made when the books are delivered and all costs are better known. Another possibility in book financing is to collect funds from other interested parties and to put this money into a trust account to cover the book’s production costs. The advantage here is that the money for printing is collected before production and one individual does not have the full financial risk. Obviously, financing a self-publishing project prior to marketing depends greatly on the type of project. A community history; history of a college, university, or other organization; or a genealogy may better lend themselves to prior-publication financial support. On the other hand, a novel might be very difficult to garner prior financial backing.

In almost all cases the printer wants to be paid before or when the books are delivered. Consequently, the self-publisher will normally pay for the books before they are sold. Any money collected to defer these costs will reduce the self-publisher’s financial risk.

Types of Books

Books come in many sizes, shapes, formats, bindings, designs, and qualities. The type of book a self-publisher selects determines the price, ease of selling, perceived value, durability, and ease of use. The following paragraphs describe many of the various alternatives, listing advantages and disadvantages of each.

A chart of the various alternatives would look like this:



The hardcover or case-bound book is the most durable of all bindings. It is also usually the most expensive to produce. Hardcover books that are Smythe sewn have all the pages sewn into the book with a heavy thread. The hardcover (case) is glued to the text with binder's glue, cheesecloth, and end sheets. The result is a strong, durable protection for the text pages. Advantages of the hardcover sewn book are its durability, high quality, and the possibility of selling at a higher price because of the perceived value. The Smythe-sewn book also readily lays flat when opened. The only disadvantage is the additional cost compared to some other bindings.

Not all hardcover books are sewn. Some hardcover books have the text pages cut and glued together in a process call "perfect binding." This process is the same as with the normal paperback book except the cover is hard. In a book of this nature the appearance is that of a case-bound

sewn book, but it is no more durable than a paperback. The book also will not lay flat when opened. The only advantage this binding process has over the paperback is that with first appearance it looks like a high-quality hardcover binding and can command a higher price point. This binding is more expensive than a paperback but usually a bit less expensive than a Smythe-sewn book. It should not be used on books where heavy use is expected or long life is desired.

The oversewn book is assembled and stitched 1/4 inch from the spine through all the pages. It is then bound with a hard cover (case) in the same manner as a Smythe-sewn book. This produces a durable book with a quality case binding. However, it will not naturally lay flat when opened. This binding is often used to assemble magazines or booklets into volumes. It offers a less expensive alternative for hardbound books in small quantities.

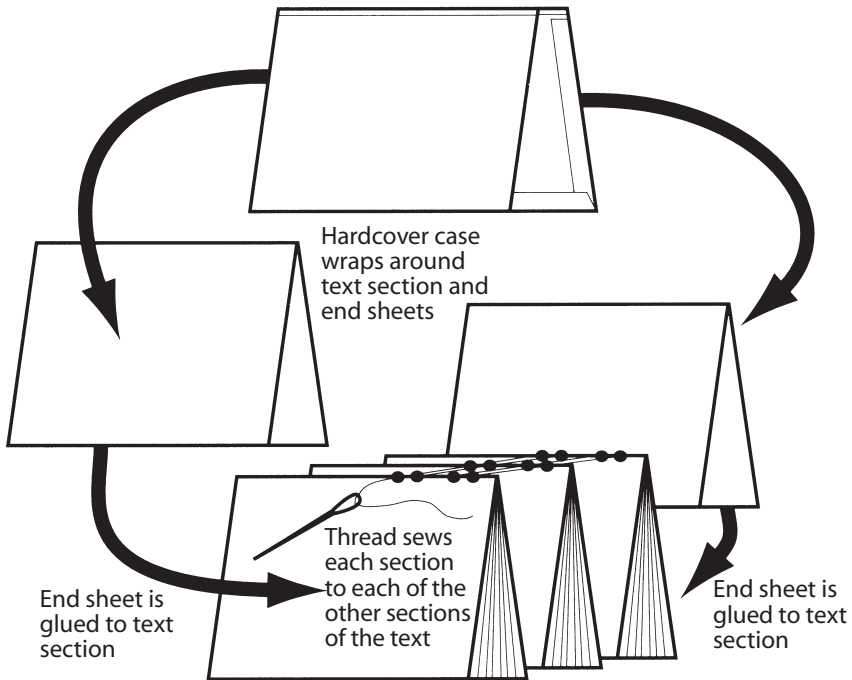
The saddle-sewn hardcover book is restricted to books with approximately 96 or less pages, depending on the thickness of the text paper and dimensions of the book. In this book the spine of the text is sewn with a strong thread. The hardcover or case is then glued to the text with cheesecloth and end sheets. The result is a book of high quality with a durable binding. Of course, this binding is also more expensive than other options.

There is a tremendously wide range of cover materials available for all types of hardcover books. These range from textured paper that simulates cloth or leather to actual high-quality cloth and genuine leather. The price of the binding varies depending on the cover material selected. There is also an extremely wide selection of colors and textures.

The case-bound book is often covered with a dust jacket that wraps the hard cover with protective paper. The dust jacket is normally printed and laminated for enhanced design presentation and protection purposes. A dust jacket allows for tremendous latitude in designs and colors as well as gives the ability to print additional information on the inside flaps. The dust jacket also allows for a relatively simple foil stamping of the case while spending the majority of one's money on attractive design for the jacket.

The lithocase hard cover book is a method of obtaining most of the advantages of a dust jacket without the additional expense of case binding plus the dust jacket. The lithocase hard cover book has, instead of book cover cloth, a printed sheet of paper glued to the cover boards. The printed cover is normally laminated with an inexpensive polyester or nylon film to provide scuff resistance, enhance gloss, and make the cover resistant to wear and tear. The lithocase cover allows the cover designer to use the full range of design techniques, colors, and photographs in designing an appealing cover. Lithocase covers are often found on children's books.

HARD COVER BINDING (SMYTHE SEWN)



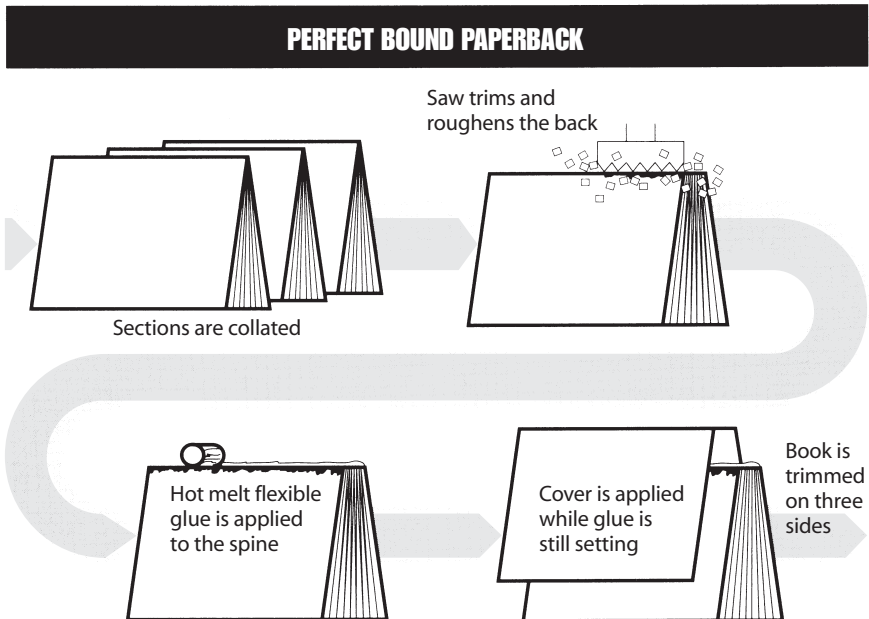
Paperback (perfect binding) is another option. The perfect-bound book has all the sections collated together, cut and ground on the spine to expose individual pages, and then glued together by applying a heavy coat of hot-melt glue to the book's spine. The hot-melt glue is liquid at temperatures above 350 degrees Fahrenheit when it is applied to the book's spine. As the glue cools it becomes solid yet flexible and holds the individual sheets together in book form. The cover is adhered to the text before the glue cools too much. The cover is usually a heavy paper (approximately .010 to .012 inches thick) that is coated on one side. Cover papers are manufactured specifically to withstand the normal use requirements of a book.

The main advantage of paperback books is that they are inexpensive compared to other types of binding. This can be important if your budget is restricted. However, a perfect-bound book is significantly less durable than a hardcover or case-bound book. The pages may become unglued if subjected to heavy use. The glue may harden with age, and after many years the pages may come out. Also paperback books do not naturally lay flat when opened.

Layflat binding (sometimes referred to as Otabind) is a variation of perfect binding that allows the book to open relatively flat. This is done by gluing the pages to a strip of tape and wrapping the cover paper around, affixing it to the tape on either edge of the spine, but not on the spine itself. Layflat binding is more expensive than perfect binding, but can be significantly more durable for workbooks, reference books, and other books that require moderately heavy use.

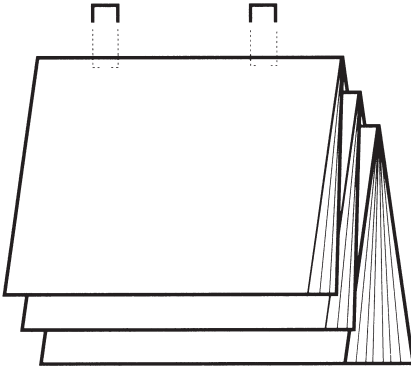
A saddle-stapled book (sometimes termed saddle-stitched) means that the folded sections of the book are shingled over each other like a saddle over a horse. The spine is then stapled with two or three wire staples. The cover is almost always a paper cover and usually a heavier weight paper than the text. The main advantage of this binding is that it is probably the least expensive binding option available today. Durability is relatively good, but not as good as a hardcover sewn book. Saddle-stapled books are generally limited to no more than approximately 96 pages, depending on the weight and thickness of the text paper.

Plastic-comb binding describes a process where the sheets are punched with holes on the spine and a plastic comb type of apparatus is closed through the holes to hold the book together. Plastic-comb books have the advantage that they lay flat when opened. This is especially important for books designed for reading while performing a task. Two good examples are cookbooks and craft books. Plastic-comb binding costs are probably compa-

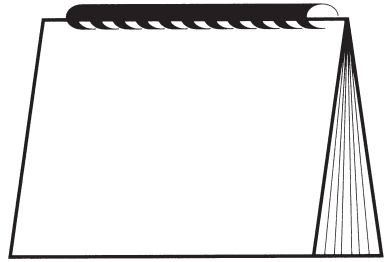


OTHER BINDING METHODS

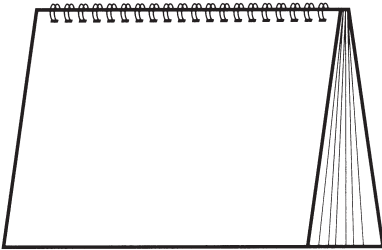
Saddle Stitched Book



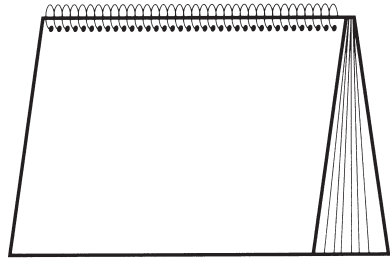
Plastic Comb Binding



Wire-O Binding



Plastic Coil Binding/Wire Coil Binding



nable to the paperback perfect-bound book. They are not extremely durable if subjected to a lot of use. The cover material is usually a heavyweight cover paper. Another advantage of plastic comb is that pages can be added or removed, if done carefully. Plastic-comb bindings are available in most basic colors, including black, white, green, blue, brown, and red.

Plastic coil-bound books are similar to plastic comb except that the medium holding the book together is a continuous smooth plastic coil. The pages are punched with holes to accommodate the coil. The coil-bound books tend to open easier and cause less wear on the sheets than the comb binding. Also, sheets are less likely to bind when pages are turned.

The two basic types of wire-spiral bound books are Wire-O binding and continuous spiral. The Wire-O binding is actually a series of wire loops that go through the holes punched on the spine of the book. Most Wire-O bindings are limited to a book no thicker than $5/8$ inch. The

true wire spiral is commonly used in notebooks and cookbooks and is one plastic-coated wire that spirals through the holes from one end of the spine to the other. Neither type of wire spiral binding can be removed without destroying the wire. Sheets can easily be removed simply by tearing them out, but if a sheet is to be added, the wire must be removed carefully and then a new wire strung on the book.

Looseleaf notebooks can be used for binding some books. They are normally expensive and can sometimes cost more than a hardcover binding. Looseleaf notebook covers can be printed and come in many sizes, colors, and textures. They can be cloth as well as stiff or floppy plastic. The main advantage of a loose-leaf binder is the ease in adding, moving, or removing sheets. They also lay flat. However, they lack durability and sheets can easily be torn out.

Selecting a Printer

When the publishing project has moved along to the point that it is possible to specify the quantity, size, and kind of binding, it can be taken to a printer for an estimate. Selection of a printer is more than choosing one with the lowest price. One very important thing to remember is that once the book is printed, the mistakes, errors, or poor printing are apt to be noticed by everyone who reads it. It is extremely important to select a printer with book printing experience. Not all printers have the knowledge, systems, personnel, and equipment to produce quality books.

An important aspect of selecting a printer is to find a printer with whom you can actually talk. Whether it is on the phone, via e-mail, or in person, it is important to be able to discuss your book project with your printer. Consequently, it is important that you are matched with a customer representative who understands self-publishers' needs as well as the book printing process. Mennonite Press personnel have been working with self-publishers for years. They have the knowledge of both self-publishing and printing.

As a printing buyer, one should generally beware of the very small printing plants and copy shops, as they usually are managed and equipped only to produce business forms, letterheads, and other short-run work where quality is not of primary importance. There are exceptions to this, but they are rare. Also, for the self-publisher, the very large printing plants

are usually managed, equipped, and geared-up to produce large orders and long runs. Consequently, the best buy for the self-publisher is usually found with the medium-sized printing plant with 20 to 50 employees.

Always ask to see samples of books the printer has recently produced. The main things to evaluate when assessing the sample books are: The pictures should be clear and sharp; the type should be printed distinctly with black unbroken letters; and the binding should be sturdy, strong, and of high quality. Ask how many books per year the printer produces. If it is twelve or less, the printer probably lacks sufficient experience.

When seeking a quotation from a printer, you should provide at least the following information:

1. Quantity (you can get prices for several different quantities).
2. Size (5½" x 8½", 6" x 9", and 8½" x 11" are the most common book sizes).
3. Type and weight of text paper (50 and 60 pound text weights are common).
4. Color/colors of inks for the text and cover.
5. Type of binding.
6. Number of photographs to print black and white.
7. Will the printer be formatting the pages from a customer-provided file or is everything already formatted and ready to print?
8. Will there be any full-color printing? If so, the customer must inform the printer of the number of photographs and whether the printer or the customer will be providing the scanned files.
9. Number of typewritten manuscript pages or word count of the finished manuscript.
10. Will there be any artwork required for drawings, charts, graphs, etc.?
11. If copy is provided on disk, which software program was used?
12. Is the manuscript edited, proofread, and ready to print?
13. Is the cover designed or should the printer make arrangements for cover design?
14. Will text photographs or other elements "bleed?" Bleed is a term used to denote where the image goes to the edge of the paper. This requires the printer to print the image larger than the finished page size to allow for extra trim and can sometimes add to the cost.

If you are getting quotations from more than one printer, it is vitally important that all bidders are given identical specifications. This is the

only way the financial issues of quotations will be comparable and can be analyzed fairly. Of course, there is also the subjective (quality) aspect of selecting any printer. You need to look at printing samples and be assured that comparative printers are capable of printing to your specifications and will provide the quality that you want within the time frame needed. Look at samples and ask for references.

Establishing a Selling Price for Your Book

Establishing a selling price is a very individual process depending on whether or not there is a profit motive in the self-publishing venture. If there is no profit motive then the author/publisher can give all of the books away—after all it is his or her book. However, if there is a profit motive, the self-publisher must know all the costs involved in order to arrive at a total cost figure. Selling a book or publication through a bookstore, gift shop, or other retail establishment usually requires 40 to 50 percent of the retail price to be given to the retailer. This margin percentage is what the bookstore uses to pay for their operating expenses as well as profit. Remember, this discount may be somewhat negotiable and the publisher should usually try to give as little as possible yet still get their book on the retailer's shelf.

Following is one method of establishing the sale price where a profit is desired. Basically, it is a simple matter of totaling all the costs, plus a profit, plus allowance for the bookseller's discount where applicable.

Establishing the Price of a Book

Author's fee for writing the book	\$2,000
Printing costs (\$4.00 each)	8,000
Editorial costs	800
Artist's fees for cover design	400
Postage and other incidentals	80
Subtotal	<u>11,280</u>
Self-publisher's Profit @30%	<u>3,384</u>
Total	14,664

Total books printed 2,000 = \$7.33 per book.

Adding the bookseller's discount allowance (total costs/.50) means that the retail price point needs to be twice the costs or \$14.66. Under this scenario, the suggested retail price may be rounded up to \$14.99 or \$15.99 each in order to make allowance for possible lower sales, promotional copies, and other contingencies.

This price point is 3.75 to 4 times the printing cost of the book.

Of course, freight and packing costs are charged to both retailers and end users in addition to the book's price point.

When profit is not a motive and the self-publisher only wishes to break even, total all the costs that are desired to be recovered and divide the sum by the total books ordered (quantity you expect to sell). This will give the price per book. Add to this an allowance for the bookseller's discount to allow for books being sold through bookstores or other retailers. Also add 10 to 20 percent to this price to allow for promotional copies and give a cushion in case all the books are not sold.

Cost Analysis

Every book-publishing project is different and requires an individual approach to cost analysis and pricing. It is important that the self-publisher either gets quotes for costs or estimates anticipated costs for the various items related to research, writing, editing, printing, and marketing the book. The cost analysis example that follows essentially starts with an estimate of the total revenues (income) that can be anticipated from selling the book. The total expected income is a function of the total number of books one anticipates selling times the anticipated income per book (accounting for any discounts, promotions, or special prices offered, as well as returns or free copies).

This is a sample of a calculation sheet used by a for-profit publisher but can be used as a guideline for self-publishing as well. Obviously, some costs that a self-publisher incurs are personal by the self-publisher or may be provided by volunteers.

Publishing Cost Analysis

Title: *Narrative Christian Counseling*

No. of pages = 208

MSRP \$34.95

Binding = Hardcover

First Printing Quantity	2000
Less Anticipated Returns (10 percent)	- 200
Net Units Anticipated to Sell	1800
X Retail Price	\$ 34.95
Gross Sales	\$62,910.00
Less Anticipated Discounts (50 Percent)	\$31,455.00
Anticipated Total Revenues (Income)	\$31,455.00
Less Cost of Goods:	
Development Costs	
Content Editing @ \$3.00/page	\$ 624.00
Copy Editing @ \$3.00/page	\$ 624.00
Indexing @ \$3.00/page	\$ 624.00
Typing and Design @ \$3.00/page	\$ 624.00
Proofreading @ \$2.00/page	\$ 416.00
Jacket/Cover Design	\$ 700.00
Photos	\$ 0
Corrections @ \$.40/page	\$ 83.20
Color Scanning	\$ 0
Total Development	\$ 3,695.20
Paper, Printing, Binding	\$ 8,800.00
Freight In	\$ 200.00
Total Cost of Goods	\$12,695.20*
Gross Margin (Income less Cost of Goods)	\$18,759.80
Less Other Provisions:	
Bad Debt Allowance	\$ 400.00
Inventory Write Off (10 percent)	\$ 1,395.12
Total Provisions	\$ 1,795.12*
Gross Profit	\$16,964.68
Less Direct General & Administration:	
Sales Commissions (Author Royalties)	\$ 2,516.00
Marketing	\$ 3,000.00
Warehouse/Fulfillment	\$ 3,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 200.00
Total Direct G&A	\$ 8,716.00*
Contribution to Profit	\$ 8,248.68
Total Contribution (PROFIT)	\$ 8,248.68
*Total Cash Investment	\$23,206.32
Return on Investment Percentage	= 35.5%

Note: Inventory write-off includes unsold books, the cost of damaged books, and review copies given away for promotion.

The income is adjusted for the various costs involved in the project. The first category of costs is called cost of goods. The cost of goods includes both the costs involved in development of the manuscript and the printing costs. The development costs are those expenses that can be anticipated to bring the raw manuscript to print—ready for printing. These expenses will vary depending on the complexity of the manuscript, the skill of the writer, the firm or person hired to do the design, proofreading, copy editing, etc. Printing costs are those charged by the printer to take the finished manuscript to a completed book.

You should include a discount for various provisions that you anticipate, such as an allowance for write-offs (just in case all the books do not sell).

You then estimate all the general and administration costs you will have in marketing, warehousing, paying someone to pack and ship books, and other costs involved in getting the books to the customer. If the self-publisher does these functions, then they have a choice of whether or not to pay themselves.

The anticipated income less the cost of goods, provisions, and direct and general administration will provide one with an anticipated contribution to profit.

This anticipated profit, divided by the total amount invested, gives an anticipated percentage return on your investment.

Preparing the Manuscript for the Printer

With widely used computer word processing, manuscripts generally are provided to printers in two formats, either computer disks or pdf digital files. To keep costs as low as possible, the manuscript file should be edited and corrected before submitting to the printer. All printers charge for author alterations and any changes made after the file is given to them. Printers do not proofread a customer-provided file. It is entirely up to the self-publisher to assure that grammar, spelling, captions, etc., are correct. Proofreading and editing services are sometimes provided by the printer for an additional charge.

Desktop publishing and word processing have contributed significantly to the ability of people to self-publish. Use of these technologies

can save money, enhance design, speed up the process, and improve the overall appearance of projects.

The term desktop publishing is somewhat misleading in that it is not publishing at all. It is simply another way to do typesetting and design. Desktop publishing involves the use of a personal computer and software that allows keyboarding of the manuscript. In its simplest form it is a word processor. In its more sophisticated form it includes not only keyboarding but also the manipulation of artwork, photographs, color use, page formatting, text and cover design, and many other typographic treatments. The high-end desktop publishing systems interface with the Internet, other computers, scanners, high-resolution printers, film and platemaking devices, etc. They are used for Internet communication, Web downloads, and a myriad of other functions that are essential to publishing books.

There can be considerable savings for the self-publisher who creates the manuscript on a word processor that is compatible with a printer's design and publishing system. Further, the self-publisher can present the printer with a file that is professionally ready for their system and save considerable cost. However, if the files are not done correctly and require the printer to change and/or correct errors caused by the self-publisher there will be additional charges.

It is very important for an author who does not have adequate page design and formatting software and knowledge to communicate with their printer early in the process. There is always the possibility that the printer can give advice that will be helpful and save the author both time and money. Most printers who work frequently with self-publishing customers are able to accept a range of word-processing software programs. However, if you happen to be using some antiquated software package there is the possibility that the printer could have trouble reading your files. It is a good idea to provide your printer with a test file.

It is common that printers will take the edited manuscript file and do the formatting for the self-publisher. Formatting entails the design of the page by determining the type font, type size, line length, spacing between lines, running heads, placement of page numbers, margins, headline styles, design of chapter headings and placement on the page, and all the other factors that determine the typographic treatment and presentation of the book's internal pages.

Many customers are neither trained in this area nor have the proper software and knowledge to achieve the ultimate in design. Although

books may seem to be relatively simple, there actually are some very important typographic design techniques that can make the type more legible, attractive, and readable. For example, excess spacing between lines may add pages; too little space between lines and lines that are too long make it difficult to read. Some fonts are more legible than others. Using running heads helps the reader keep track of the chapter they are reading.

Proofs and Proofreading

The proof is extremely important in the printing process. Different printers have different proofing systems, but all rely on the customer's approval of a proof before final printing.

You may receive page proofs created on a digital copy machine. These can be used for final proofreading and making last-minute editorial corrections.

Additionally, you should receive a comprehensive proof that represents how the book will appear in its final form.

The cover proof should be in color and, as nearly as possible, represent the colors and treatment of the final product. Please keep in mind that proofs today, especially the color cover proofs, are created on a digital output device. Although digital proofing devices should be calibrated to the printer's press, there are color hues, values, and shades that can be reproduced digitally but cannot be duplicated on the press, and vice versa. Hence, there is always the possibility that the color proof will not match the printed piece across the entire gamut of colors. Although there have been significant strides made in color management in the proofing and printing processes, as long as the proof is produced with one technology and the printing done on another, there will be differences.

The most important thing the self-publisher needs to know about proofs is that the proof becomes a legal document in cases where there are questions regarding the final product produced. If the customer does not write on the proof that such-and-such needs to be changed or corrected, there is a good chance that the printer will not correct it. Customers must take proofs seriously as the final word before the project is completed.

With all printers, it is the customer's responsibility to very carefully check each proof and clearly mark all corrections or changes. A red pen is best for proofreading marks. Please refer to the chart on page 19 for

MARK	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
¶	Start new paragraph	¶ fine papers. Chillicothe grades are
no ¶	No paragraph. Run in	no ¶ fine papers. Chillicothe grades are
⌋	Move to right	⌋ Chillicothe grades are
⌈	Move to left	⌈ Chillicothe grades are
⌞	Lower letter or word	⌞ Chillicothe grades are
⌟	Raise letter or word	⌟ Chillicothe grades are
tr.	Transpose	tr. Chillicothe are grades
wf.	Wrong font	wf. Chillicothe
lc.	Lower case letter	lc. Fourscore and seven years ago
Cap.	Capital letter	Cap. The united States
C+Sc.	Caps and small caps	C+Sc. The united states
C+Lc.	Caps and lower case	C+Lc. THE UNITED STATES
rom.	Put in roman type	rom. The United States
ital.	Put in italic type	ital. The United States
bf.	Put in boldface type	bf. The United States
stet	Let it stand. Disregard previous correction	stet Fourscore and seven years ago
e	Delete (take out)	e Fourscore and and seven years ago
sp	Spell out	sp The (U.S.)
X	Broken or imperfect type	X The letter "t" is broken
?	Turn a reversed letter	? Fourscore and seven
#	Insert space	# Our fathers brought
Eg#	Equalize space	Eg# Our fathers were brought
∪	Less space	∪ Our fathers were brought
=/	Insert hyphen	=/ It happened in midweek
(/)	Insert parentheses	(/) Prepositions (at, in, of) are
□	Indent one em	□ Homeyn rode away
∩∩	Insert quotation marks	∩∩ Sing Yankee Doodle Dandy
sp?	Spelling questioned	sp? The city of Springfield

standard proofreading marks. Also, each page with a correction should be identified with paper clips or tabs. It is very important to be extremely thorough and meticulous in proofreading. Check all spelling, punctuation, omissions, numbers, layout, indexing and cross-referencing, color reproduction, etc. A signed proof is authorization for the printer to either make another proof or proceed on as directed by the customer.

Changes made after the printer starts work become expensive. Most printers charge for “customer alterations” (CA’s), sometimes referred to as “author alterations” (AA’s) or changes. Alterations generally become more expensive to make the further into the production process they are made. Therefore, if changes must be made, they should be made on the first proof rather than later.

Photographs

If the self-publisher provides the scanned photographs as an integral part of the file for the printer to use, it is obviously their responsibility to place them properly, have the captions correctly positioned, etc. However, if the printer is to scan photographs and put them into the formatted book they need to know what photographs go where and what captions go with the appropriate photograph. Hence, it is the responsibility of the self-publisher to identify photographs and write the captions.

The customer should indicate the size and shape of the photograph if they want something specific. Otherwise, the printer will make the choice as to size, shape, and placement in the text during the formatting process. Know your printer’s capabilities well as some book printers do not format pages, but only work with provided files that are formatted and ready for printing.

Never write on the back of a photograph with a ballpoint pen or pencil. If pressed too hard, this will score the photograph and could cause a line on the front that may be visible when printed. Some felt-tipped pens are not suitable for writing on the back as they may smear easily and transfer to other photographs. Probably the best way to label photographs is to tape a tab to the back so that the identifying writing is visible from the front. Everyone involved should be careful not to handle photographs roughly or fingerprint the picture. If at all possible, photographs should be selected that have very black dark areas and very

white light areas. Generally, the greater the contrast between whites and blacks or dark colors the better reproduction. It is not always possible to select a picture based on optimum contrast, but a good printer can actually improve some flat and faded photographs. In the final analysis, it is the content of the photograph that is most important.

Black and white glossy prints may be preferred by printers for black printing, however color prints, slides, digital prints, etc., are also acceptable. Printers normally will scan the photographic format provided and will enlarge, reduce, or crop them to fit in the appropriate space allocated in the text. Files from digital cameras, disks, and other digital forms may be used as well. Ask the printer for specifications for use.

When reproducing black and white from color, some detail may be lost, depending on the colors in the original photograph. Most digital scanning processes will record red as black, and light blue as white. For example, a lady in a red dress in front of a black wall may stand out quite clearly when viewed in color. However, when reproduced as black and white, the dress may blend in with the wall so there may not be as clear a distinction between the dress and the wall. However, the reproduction of a color photograph as black and white is generally acceptable. The self-publisher should remember that if photographs are an important part of the book, the printer must be able to accurately reproduce them. Today's scanners and software allow for a high degree of manipulation and adjustment of the photograph for changing tonal values, cropping, color correction, and various other aspects of the picture. However, there are still some limits as to what can be done.

Picture captions should be presented on a separate sheet of 8½ " x 11" paper or a file separate from the text manuscript rather than written on the back of the photograph. The caption needs to be keyed by number to correspond with the photograph in order to make sure the printer puts the correct caption with each photograph.

Selection of Paper

Book paper comes in a wide variety of grades, colors, textures, and prices. As can be expected, higher grades of paper cost more. In essence, the self-publisher should choose the paper that fits the requirements of the book. A genealogy, for example, should be printed on paper that

will last a lifetime without yellowing or deterioration. A cookbook or children's book has limited requirements for archives, but greater requirements to withstand rough and frequent use. Photographs reproduce their best on a smooth-coated paper, but this paper is often more expensive than uncoated paper and may be difficult and expensive to place randomly throughout the book. The trade-off with pictures is the efficiency and lower cost of printing them on the book paper used throughout the book and perhaps getting a lower quality reproduction. However, a printer that is knowledgeable about book printing can often reproduce photographs quite acceptably on a smooth, uncoated white sheet used in many books.

Book Text Paper

Following is a description of various book text papers. The basic categories are coated and uncoated.

Uncoated book paper is manufactured in grades that are only slightly higher in quality than newsprint up to a very high-quality sheet that will last for centuries. If quality is not as important as price, the self-publisher should tell the printer that the book is to be printed on an inexpensive paper. However, if longevity, appearance, perceived value, and quality are important, ask for high quality paper. Most book printing papers today are non-acidic, but it is wise to request an acid-free paper that will not deteriorate and yellow with age. It may be more expensive than some other grades of paper but is often well worth it.

The surface and bulk of the paper are two important qualities for book printers. A high-bulk paper allows for a lower number of pages per inch (ppi), which makes the book thicker. The lower ppi high-bulk sheets will also have a slightly rougher surface—the smoother the paper's surface, the less bulk and thickness. However, a smooth surface is better for the reproduction of photographs and artwork. Hence, as is often the case in selecting paper, there may be trade-offs.

Uncoated book papers normally come in either white or off-white (natural) shades. White is used most often, but there are times when the richness and uniqueness of an off-white sheet justifies any additional cost.

There are two basic categories of coated book papers: The gloss-coated sheet, sometimes called gloss enamel or enamel, and the dull-

or matte-coated sheet. The biggest advantage of a coated sheet of paper is that it reproduces pictures in their best detail. The coating on the paper causes the ink to stand up on the surface and appear blacker and more detailed. The ink on an uncoated sheet tends to be absorbed into the paper and spread slightly, making the printed image less sharp and detailed. Probably the only other advantage of coated paper is that many people feel that it adds a certain prestige to the book.

Gloss enamel is often glossy to the point that it produces a glare that makes it sometimes difficult to read. The matte- and dull-coated papers, which do not have a high-gloss finish, do not present this problem. Coated papers are generally more expensive than uncoated papers, though this is not always the case.

One of the main requirements of a book paper is opacity sufficient to block out the image printed on the reverse side of the sheet. Book papers of 60 pounds or higher in uncoated grades and 70 pounds or higher in coated grades normally have quite adequate opacity. However, a book with a lot of pages will often be printed on a lighter weight stock in order to keep the book's thickness to a minimum. A 50-pound uncoated sheet or a 60-pound coated sheet is usually the minimum weight for sufficient opacity. There are some exceptions to this such as Bible paper and other highly opaque lightweight sheets. These, however, can be difficult to print and are quite expensive when compared to a commodity-grade standard book paper. Because of opacity requirements, bond paper is normally not suitable for books. There is a misconception that a cotton or rag content bond is required for long life in a book. This is not true. The main requirement for long life is an acid-free sheet. Since bond papers are normally used where typing or printing is on one side only, they are normally not manufactured to high-opacity specifications. Therefore, bond papers are not normally recommended for books.

Many printers keep large quantities of a certain paper in stock and are able to offer better prices when using this paper. Ask the printer about this "house" sheet and its properties. It may be just the paper needed for your book.

Cover Paper

Paper selection for covers is often difficult because of the wide range of choices available. There are coated covers, uncoated covers, and plastic laminated covers in many different colors and textures. It is probably best to discuss with the printer the advantages and disadvantages of the available choices. When using a coated cover stock, an additional overprint of varnish, aqueous coating, or laminating film is advisable on the outside of the cover. Varnish, aqueous coatings, and lamination help protect the ink from scuffing and/or showing fingerprints during use. Film laminating gives the highest level of protection. Film lamination for book covers comes in gloss and dull finish, as well as textures. It is also available in regular and lay-flat specifications (lay-flat lamination tends to curl less than regular lamination in high humidity environments). Mennonite Press laminates many of the book covers it prints, and recommends it for most paperback books. Lithocases and dust jackets for hard cover books are normally laminated for protection, aesthetics, and enhanced wear qualities.

Cover materials for hardcover books come in a wide range of colors, finishes, and grades. It is recommended that a pyroxalin impregnated cloth such as Arrestox be used. This cloth does not pucker or become distorted if wiped with a damp cloth or if held in a sweaty hand. Arrestox cloth forms well to the cover boards and prints or foil-stamps clearly.

Many buckram and starch-filled cover cloths are not water resistant. They may cost less but are not as durable.

A wide variety of papers manufactured for case binding are made to simulate cloth or leather bookbinding material. Many of these are laminated with a very thin layer of polyester film and will withstand a lot of wear.

Genuine leather is expensive and rarely used except for an occasional presentation copy. Leather may cost up to \$30 per book for binding.

Color Printing

The term “color printing” denotes two distinct types of color. The first is “spot color” where headlines, charts, graphs, logos, etc., are printed

in a second or more colors such as red or blue. Spot color will add to the cost of a book, but normally not as much as “full color” or “process color.” Full color, process color, and four-color are synonymous terms and used interchangeably across the printing industry. Full color is the printing of colored photographs or art so that the reproduction is the same or nearly the same as the original. It is more expensive, but there is no substitute when one feels that it is required.

Marketing Your Book

Marketing your book requires an understanding and utilization of the tools available to the self-publisher. One of the basic tools is a website that identifies you as a source for purchasing the book. A basic site would include a photograph of the front cover with descriptive information that includes the price and ordering information. Getting a URL for your website is fairly easy and inexpensive on the Internet with such sites as *godaddy.com*. Designing your site is more problematical and expensive.

Word-of-mouth marketing is one of the least expensive and most effective ways to sell books. You must tell others about your book, provide promotional copies to interested parties with influence, and generate interest. Word-of-mouth marketing includes those who have read the book and are impressed enough to tell others. E-mail information to friends and others you know who might be interested and encourage them to spread the word. Any opportunity that you have to speak at a service club such as Kiwanis or Rotary will help get the word out. Clubs are frequently looking for interesting speakers.

Book signing events at local bookstores are a good opportunity to help spread the word as well. Many bookstores allow self-publishers time in their stores if the book is professionally done and will be of interest to their clientele.

One of the best ways to market your book is through the Internet. With the Internet, you can reach the global community. First, you will need to purchase an ISBN (more information on ISBNs follows) for your book from the ISBN agency since most booksellers require it. The ISBN agency will send you instructions on how to list your book on their *Bowker Books in Print* database. This is a free listing, which Bowker then supplies to wholesalers, distributors, retailers, and libraries around

the world. After that, you can list your book with online booksellers who sell directly to customers. The two most popular online booksellers are Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com. Check with other book retailers such as Books-A-Million, Borders, and others to see if they also offer marketing for self-publishers.

Each website has specific instructions on how to get a book listed on their website. To find instructions on how to get your book listed, click on the website's "Help" menu and follow the links for listing books and submitting content. Be aware that it can take up to several weeks for your book listing to show on the website. You can check the status of your listing by entering the ISBN for your book in the search bar on the website. Some websites will first show a basic listing and then show complete information several days or weeks later. In some cases, you may need to submit your book listing in stages.

Once your book is listed online, you can post purchasing links on your website or advertising material to direct customers to your book. However, now is not the time to sit back and wait for sales. You still need to continue marketing your book through other channels. Remember, no one can market a book better than the author. Even though your book is listed online, it does not guarantee that customers will find it. The website will have thousands of other books in its database. Your job is to make sure your book gets listed in the top thirty.

Books sold through bookstores will compete for the buyer's attention with thousands of other titles. In this highly competitive situation, professional cover design and use of full color are easily justified. The proper use of color and design principles can make a significant difference in sales, especially when retail is the main marketing channel.

In situations where book sales are predominantly made to a more-or-less captive clientele, i.e., a church, community, family, seminar participants, etc., great cover design and use of full color may be less important to the marketability of the book.

The book's cover design is an absolutely essential ingredient in retail selling. That is why professional publishers are willing to spend thousands of dollars developing just the right cover design. So, if you want to sell books to the public, cover design is going to be an important issue.

Every author knows that writing and rewriting a manuscript; doing the research; getting the manuscript edited, proofread, and taken to the printer can be a long, tedious, exhausting, lonely, and ego-stressing endeavor. The end result of that exhaustive effort will be a book that one

hopes will be read by thousands. There are more than 60,000 new titles brought to the United States market each year. Yours is not the only book out there. Competition for readers is fierce.

Maybe you can't tell a book by its cover, but you can sell a book by its cover. Writers are often anxious to get the publishing process completed, and at the least cost. "Let's get this baby off the press so I can start selling it," is often the writer's sentiment. Then it comes to designing the book's cover. This is not time to get wobbly knees or pinch the purse. Here's why. If you have an exciting, informative book, you want the cover to look exciting and interesting. If your book tells a story, you want the cover to introduce the novel in intriguing ways and pull the person into the story.

Almost everyone would agree that packaging design is important in marketing a product. For example, when selecting a new salsa sauce—the first thing, indeed the only thing, you have to make comparative evaluations are the labels. The label that entices the most customers wins. Customers want to experience what is on the label. The book's cover is your label. It needs to represent, in title and design, the interest and value to be found in the text.

A great cover starts with the title. If you are well known, make your name larger than the title. (But, really now, how many self-publishers have name recognition sufficient to override the title?) Title selection is a critical part of cover design and marketing. The title should be easily remembered, descriptive of the text, short and simple (generally four words or less), and contain words that your audience naturally uses. The subtitle can be longer and add to the description of the text, but here also, brevity, succinctness, and ability to communicate are important.

Mr. Allen McVicker, a book marketing consultant with more than fifteen years experience marketing thousands of Christian titles, lists the following ten most important points in cover design:

1. Seventy-five percent of book sales are based on the cover design. Don't cut corners.
2. The cover must look professional in order to attract attention.
3. Use colors and color combinations that are attractive and geared for your audience. Radical color combinations might appeal to the youth market but turn off older readers.
4. Dark-colored covers tend to get lost in the shadows, especially if your book is placed on lower shelves of a bookstore.

5. Name recognition is very important. If you are not nationally known, then try to get nationally-known people as endorsers. Generally, have no more than three endorsements for the back cover.
6. The title must speak to the subject. If the title is catchy, but not explanatory, then the subtitle needs to explain the subject. In either case, don't leave the customer guessing what the book is about.
7. The book's spine is vitally important. Unless you are well known nationally, your book will almost assuredly be presented spine out on bookshelves. The spine copy needs to be attractive and legible so the title, author, and publisher are easily read from a few feet away.
8. The title needs to be short and pithy (three to five words). Test it with people by letting them see it quickly and then ask if they remember it.
9. Keep the overall design fairly simple. Artwork that is overly complicated can interfere with legibility.
10. Get professional help. However, artists do not always understand the marketing aspects of design. Make sure the design is both attractive and assists in marketing.

Once you have a cover design, test it and the title with people unfamiliar with your book. If something needs to be explained, the elements should be re-examined and reworked until people consistently like the design and are clear about the book's content.

The Verso Page

The “verso” page of a book is the page immediately following the title page. This page is sometimes referred to as the copyright page.

The information on the verso page may adhere loosely to the following outline:

1. Title and subtitle
2. Name of publisher
3. Disclaimers (if applicable)
4. Publisher information

5. Website of publisher/copyright holder
6. Rights reserved statement
7. Credits for extensive use of texts such as the Bible
8. Copyright information
9. Library of Congress number
10. ISBN
11. Acknowledgement of designer and/or editor
12. Printer information including company name and country where printed
13. Date of first and subsequent printings.

Please look at the verso page of this book to see an example.

Laws concerning copyrights change, but the basic purposes remain the same. A copyright is a legal means of protecting the rights of the author or copyright holder over an extended period of time. The copyright holder will be the author unless the author relinquishes this right to some other person or entity.

The self-publisher should include the copyright information in the manuscript. The copyright notice is no longer required by U. S. law, although it is often beneficial. The copyright information is normally printed on the reverse side of the title page. The notice should contain at least the following three elements:

1. The symbol © (the letter c in a circle or the word “copyright” or the abbreviation “Copr.”)
2. The year of the first publication of the work.
3. The name of the owner of the copyright.

Example: © 2009 Mennonite Press, Inc.

The length of the copyright of an original work created after January 1, 1978 is ordinarily for the life of the work’s creator plus seventy years. After that time the work normally goes into public domain.

According to the U. S. Copyright Office, “The copyright is a personal-property right and is subject to the various state laws and regulations that govern the ownership, inheritance, or transfer of personal property as well as terms of contracts or conduct of business.” Copyrights may be transferred to others either permanently or temporarily via a written agreement.

The U. S. Copyright Office states, “In general, copyright registration is a legal formality intended to make a public record of the basic facts of a particular copyright. However, registration is not a condition of copyright protection.” Advantages of copyright registration are:

1. A public record is made.
2. Registration is necessary before an infringement suit is filed.
3. If filed within five years of publication the copyright registration provides “prima facie evidence in court of the validity of the copyright.”
4. Registration allows the copyright holder to register with the U. S. Customs Office for protection against importing pirated copies.

There is a cost in registering your copyright with the U. S. Copyright Office. This must be submitted to the copyright office along with the completed application and two copies of the book. All of these items must be sent in the same package. Mennonite Press will file the proper form upon request or copyright registration can be done via the Internet by the self-publisher. Mennonite Press will make the application and handle the paperwork involved at the self-publisher’s request for a fee. Registration is effective the date that the application is received at the U.S. Copyright Office, regardless of the amount of time it takes for them to process the application and send a certificate.

For further information pertaining to copyrights, you are encouraged to go to *www.copyright.gov*.

Keep in mind that copyrights work both ways. Copyright laws also cover the material submitted to the printer for publication. If a piece of copy or photograph is copyrighted, the self-publisher must obtain written permission from the copyright holder before the printer will use the material. Both the self-publisher and printer may be held liable if copyright laws are broken.

Library of Congress control numbers are sometimes assigned to self-publisher’s books. Self-publishers will want a PCN, which is a control number for books that are not yet published and printed. The Library of Congress PCN is required to be printed in the book if the author wants their book to be catalogued with libraries. If the self-publisher wishes to have the book in the Library of Congress and other libraries, a “Request for Library of Congress Control Number” must be submitted before the book is printed. There is no charge for the control number. However, the book must contain more than 50 pages and be printed in the United

States. Mennonite Press will make application for a Library of Congress number for your book at no charge, if requested. If you wish to get your own PCN you can go to pcn.loc.gov/pcn006.html.

If the Library of Congress assigns a control number, it must be printed on the verso of the title page along with the copyright information. After printing, one copy of the book must be sent to the Library of Congress. All materials undergo a final review in their published form before the decision to catalog is made.

Retailers and book distributors require International Standard Book Numbers, or ISBNs. If you plan to ever sell your book through a retail store you will need an ISBN. ISBNs are controlled numbers and available only through R. R. Bowker. The ISBN helps retailers and others to index your book into their inventory. It also helps people find your book online. For information regarding ISBNs or to order one or more number, go to www.ISBN.org.

An ISBN barcode is required to be printed in the lower right corner of the back cover of the book according to strict specifications for size, color, placement, information, etc. Mennonite Press can obtain this barcode for the self-publisher after the book's ISBN number has been established.

Colophon

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