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Writing an e-Book Needs Software – Free is Best!

By Grant McNamara

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If you've been keeping track of Internet trends then you'll be aware of the huge potential of promoting and selling e-Books. E-Books are becoming a common medium used on the Internet. An e-Book is simply a book, that can be read on a computer. Many books now aren't even published in hard copy.

Perhaps you're considering writing an e-Book, well if so read on. This article explains some of the mystery and might well save you a heap of cash.

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Many e-Books are used as a mechanism (often indirectly) to promote web sites. Authors of e-Books gain credence from the fact they've achieved publication, not to mention the information their book contains.

Creating an e-Book is technically very simple (once the text of the book and any associated artwork has been completed). In order to create an e-Book we need a software product. The software takes the manuscript developed in a word processor and converts this into an e-Book.

The resulting e-Book created by the software will usually be in one of three forms; either a PDF document file, an executable file (called an exe file type) or an 'ebo' file (the e-Book system used by Microsoft).

PDF, which stands for Portable Document Format, is the file extension for e-Book (along with any other document) created with Adobe Acrobat Writer. This is the de facto standard used in the commercial printing industry. If you plan to have hard copies printed then you should seriously consider using the PDF format.

An alternative is to use an e-Book software system called a compiler. Such products effectively do exactly the same task as Adobe Acrobat Writer, but the output is an executable (which is the file name suffix of the resulting file). Most such compilers are priced at around US\$100.

And the third alternative; the Microsoft ebo file system which is making dramatic inroads. It is still relatively new, but like most things Microsoft do, once they decide they want to be the market leader, competition beware!

So this raises the question of which type of e-Book is the most appropriate. Deciding the answer to this question depends on several factors, not least of which is how the e-Book is going to be marketed.

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I alluded above to Microsoft tending to become market leaders. It is worth noting that both Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble have picked the Microsoft Reader system as the future industry standard. They, along with several other publishers are very busy making their e-Books available in this format for on-line purchase. In the free category several Universities are making e-Books available, again using Microsoft E-Book as their delivery system.

About the Author: Grant McNamara has over 20 years experience in IT, and specializes in multi-lingual web site and software development and training. His web sites are <http://www.selling-it.com/> and <http://www.translateme.co.nz/> <mailto:grant.mcnamara@selling-it.com>

Marketing for Writers When Writing Just Isn't Enough

By Caterina Christakos

Many writers write for the experience. Others dream of having a number one best seller. Both are wonderful reasons for writing. What many fail to realize is that these two do not have to be mutually exclusive. With a little research, you can enjoy writing incredible stories and see to it that they generate a profit.

The first thing that is needed is a business like attitude toward the process. From day one you must:

1) Know your niche.

Research which books are popular in your genre. Go to bookstores and start reading popular authors in your field. Also pick up writing magazines and see what publishers are looking for today.

2) Know your audience. If you are writing for children, for example, know the developmental stage that a child reading your book needs to be and cater to them.

Ex. A five year old would not be a good candidate for a chapter book.

You can also talk to your future readers and find out what really sparks their interest.

Ex. If you are a sci-fi writer, you can go into sci-fi chat rooms and ask what books are the most popular and why. Also ask what they feel is missing in this field. Do they want a return to some of the earlier styles of sci-fi books or an even more futuristic approach?

3) Write from this knowledge.

Once you know what your audience wants, create your story and characters around that theme. Give them what they want, what they crave and you have a better chance of creating a book that they and publishers will love.

4) Pre – market. If you are self-publishing, you can give away a free chapter of your book on hundreds of sites to spark an interest and get feedback. You can also send out press releases right before your book is about to be releases. Prweb.com is a great place to send out free press releases.

5) Network – Contact the webmasters of writing sites online. Submit your book for pre-review. Go to writing chat rooms and offer to answer other writer's questions about your book or writing in general. Do book readings at your local library or bookstore. The more people that are exposed to you and your book, the better the chance of it being a success.

Those are just a few examples of pre – marketing. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of other free ways to gather interest and get feed back.

The more information that you have before you write, before you market and before you go to press, will determine your chances of creating an enjoyable and profitable book. Remember you can be creative and profitable. Just start from a place of knowledge and the rest will follow.

Caterina Christakos is the author of How to Write a Children's Book in 30 Days or Less. For more writing tips and articles go to:

Marketing for Writers When Writing Just Isn't Enough
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