

foreword by best-selling author Holley Gerth

A woman with dark hair, wearing a light-colored trench coat, is seen from behind, swinging on a swing set. She is holding the chains of the swing. The background is a blurred city skyline at sunset, with warm orange and yellow light. The title 'self publish' is overlaid on the right side of the image. 'self' is in a bold, black, sans-serif font, and 'publish' is in a larger, white, distressed, sans-serif font.

self publish

moving from idea to product

erin ulrich & teri lynne underwood

self-publish

moving from idea to product

sample

erin ulrich & teri lynne underwood

foreword by best-selling author Holley Gerth

Copyright ©2012 Erin Ulrich and Teri Lynne Underwood.

All rights reserved. Any unauthorized reprint or use of this material is prohibited. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without express written permission from the author/publisher.

Published by Here We Go Productions, LLC, www.herewegoproductions.com.

Design and layout by Phil & Erin Ulrich, [Design by Insight](#).

Edited by Sandra Peoples, [Next Step Editing](#).

Contents

Foreword	
Introduction	2
The Content	
You've Gotta See This! Crafting an Attention-Getting Title and Subtitle	6
So, What's Your Book About? Developing Effective Summaries	8
Where in the World Should This Chapter Go? Organizing Your Content	11
Editing: Making Sure Your Mistakes Don't Distract from Your Message	14
The Design & Layout	
Your Cover Is Talking—What's It Saying? The Strategy behind Quality Design	18
What's on the Inside Counts, Too! Internal Design and Features	22
The E-Publishing Jungle: Choosing the Right Formats for Your Book	25
To Print or Not to Print: Is Print on Demand Right for Your Book?	28
The Audience	
One Size Fits All, or Does It? The Basics of Identifying Your Audience	32
If You Write It, They Will Come: Identifying Your Target Audience	33
"No One Has Ever Written Anything Like This Before!!" The Reality of Competition	35
Really, Though, My Book Is Unique: Unique Selling Proposition	37
The Delicate Topic of Author Branding: An Honest Look at Building a Platform	38
The Marketing	
Do I Really Need a Mini-Site? Finding the Best Fit for Your Book's Online Presence	42
Facebook and Twitter and Pinterest, Oh My! Developing a Social Media Strategy	46
Getting the Word Out: Building a Multi-Faceted Marketing Plan	47
Conclusion	52

Worksheets

Developing Your Title	55
Determining a Subtitle	57
Writing Great Summaries: The Premise	59
Writing Great Summaries: The Descriptive Summary	63
Writing Great Summaries: The One-Sentence	67
Choosing the Right Editor	69
Creating a Workable Timeline	71
Mapping Out Design Ideas	73
Choosing the Best E-Formats	75
Print on Demand: Yes or No	77
Identifying Your Audience	79
Researching the Competition	81
Crafting an Amazing USP (Unique Selling Proposition)	83
Determining Your Social Media Reach	85
Brainstorming a Marketing Plan	87
Choosing the Best Marketing Tools	89
Do You Need a Mini-Site?	91
Branding You	93
Branding Your Book	95
Preparing to Sell	97
Resources	101
Notes	104
Acknowledgements	105
About the Authors	106

Foreword

If you're here then we have something in common. We both love words. And anyone who loves words wants to get them out in the world. We live in a time when there are more ways to do so than ever before. Sure, there are challenges. But I'm convinced there has never been a better time to be a writer.

And what may look like a challenge can actually turn out to be an opportunity. For example, deciding which publishing path to take. I've connected with fantastic companies and I've also done projects on my own. In both scenarios, you need partners who are passionate about you and your work. That's exactly what you'll find on these pages through Erin and Teri Lynne.

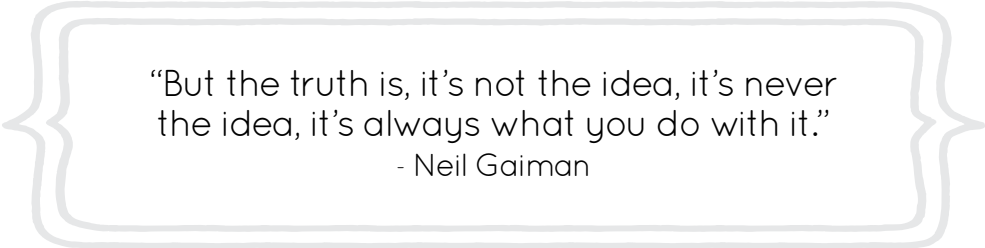
They'll give you . . .

- The knowledge you need to decide if self-publishing is right for you
- A step-by-step plan for turning your self-publishing dreams into reality
- The encouragement and support you need for your book to truly succeed

We need your voice and it's time for you to share it. There will never be another you. Either you find a way to publish that book tucked away inside your heart or we miss out. And you will too. Because there's nothing quite like seeing your words touch the lives of readers in ways you never imagined.

We live in a time when the only thing that can stop you is you. Please don't let that happen. Start your publishing journey. And let Erin and Teri Lynne be the insightful guides who will get you where you truly need to go.

--Holley Gerth, best-selling author



“But the truth is, it’s not the idea, it’s never
the idea, it’s always what you do with it.”
- Neil Gaiman

Introduction

Authoring a book—the dream we share. Crafting our stories into paragraphs and chapters, sharing our experiences to encourage others, these are the motivations of a writer. We cannot escape the need to create. We dare not walk away from the desire to communicate our messages. We know how to put words together. We understand how to draw a reader into our prose. But we also know there is far more to writing a successful book than putting words on a page.

You have an idea for a book and you're ready to take the leap. From one minute to the next you may feel enthusiastic, overwhelmed, expectant, or even a little scared. It's time to embark on a great adventure, and you're not entirely sure what's ahead. You've decided to self-publish.

The landscape of publishing is in a constant state of flux. Opportunities to create a published work are bountiful. But, if we are honest, that landscape can also be scary. We wrestle with the unknown of choosing a self-publishing company, creating the perfect book cover, and developing a marketing plan that will work.

Feelings of uncertainty close in and we wonder if we are able to do this self-publishing thing at all.

Can you relate?

We want you to know you can do this! Self-publishing is an opportunity for you to chase your dream, pursue your goals, and share your story.

Yes, it's hard work. Just like traditional publishing is. Yes, it will take time and effort. Yes, you will have to become a student of the industry and learn to grow in an evolving market. But those steps are just as true of traditional publishing.

The reality of successful self-publishing for the majority of writers is just like the reality of successful publishing for traditionally published authors: **hard work**.

Arriving at the top of the Amazon or Barnes & Noble best-seller lists does not happen without a well-considered plan and a well-written book. Staying there requires excellent marketing and even more work.

Writing a book is simple. Writing a great book is not.

Over the past year, many popular bloggers have leveraged their influence to create resources and tools in the form of e-books and other self-published works. During that same time, countless “smaller” bloggers have also created e-books. Guess which products have had greater success? The truth is both groups have. Crafting a successful self-published product is within the reach of most writers who are willing to put both the time and effort into the endeavor.

What makes a great self-published book?

Content.

Design.

Audience.

Marketing.

When all four of these components converge, the likelihood of success is far greater than when you cut and paste a series of semi-popular blog posts into a Word document, slap a cover on it, add a “Buy Now” button to your blog, and try to sell it.

Just like an excellent book proposal lays the foundation for a great book, thorough planning is the key to a profitable and professional-quality self-published work. Modifying the components of a traditional book proposal for the unique features of self-publishing allows writers to develop a cohesive plan for writing, publishing, and marketing their books.

Self-publishing is, in many ways, an entirely different beast than the traditional publishing world. The learning curve can be steep, and just when you think you have it figured out, it all changes again. However, the development process for a great book is the same whether you publish traditionally or online.

By blending the best information about successful book proposals with the knowledge we have gleaned from best-selling Amazon authors, working with publishers, and our daily business of creating graphics and formatting self-published books, our goal is to offer you a guide for the thorough planning of your project.

What is Self-Publish?

Two years after starting Design by Insight, Erin has built a solid reputation for understanding the intricacies of design and formatting for self-published works. She has an innate ability to capture the author’s intent with graphics and is able to ask questions to help writers hone in on their message and goals for each project. In *Self-Publish*, Erin shares what she has learned from working side-by-side with many authors, several of whom have become Amazon best-sellers.

With an educational and professional background in public relations and marketing, Teri Lynne provides consulting for Design by Insight clients on developing their projects and achieving their goals. Having attended writers’ conferences and currently pursuing her writing goals through self-publishing while still seeking a traditional publishing offer, Teri Lynne brings her knowledge of writing book proposals and meeting with publishers to help authors improve their self-published works.

Together we (Erin and Teri Lynne) have discovered a passion for encouraging others to pursue their writing dreams. *Self-Publish* is a big step toward our goal of making available excellent information and quality direction for those who endeavor to self-publish their books.

Self-Publish provides you with detailed information about each component of a great self-published work as we guide you from idea to product. We will help you ask yourself the right questions about content, audience, yourself, and marketing. Below are just a few of the concepts we will cover.

Content:

- Crafting a great “elevator pitch” and descriptive summary of your book
- Determining special elements to include and the purpose of each

- Identifying a timeline for completion of your project
- Understanding the multiple formats available in self-publishing

Design:

- Creating an excellent cover and interior layout
- Choosing the right e-formats for your book's content
- Determining if print on demand is a good option for your particular book

Audience:

- Identifying your target audiences
- Understanding the unique characteristics of your target audiences
- Researching the competition
- Developing the USP (unique selling proposition) for your book

Marketing:

- Articulating yourself as a brand
- Identifying your platform
- Creating a marketing plan leveraging your existing reach
- Understanding sales materials and identifying your needs

We want this book to be a valuable resource in your writing library. In addition to using a variety of examples within our book, we have created twenty worksheets for you to use as you put these ideas into practice for your project. There is plenty of room in the margins for you to take notes and jot down ideas as they come to you. Our hope is that by the end of this book, you have written as many words as we have.

Why Self-Publish?

Self-Publish is designed for the writer who values quality and is prepared to devote time to creating an excellent product. Not just another “how to” book, *Self-Publish* is really a “why to” book—why to develop a solid foundation, why to understand importance of quality design, why to choose the best formats for your product, and why to view self-publishing as a legitimate tool for conveying your message.

As you read *Self-Publish*, we hope you will hear our voices cheering you along in the process. We believe self-publishing is not simply “a Plan B” for those who do not receive traditional book contracts. We believe it is a viable and excellent choice for many authors who are willing to work hard and develop a quality project.

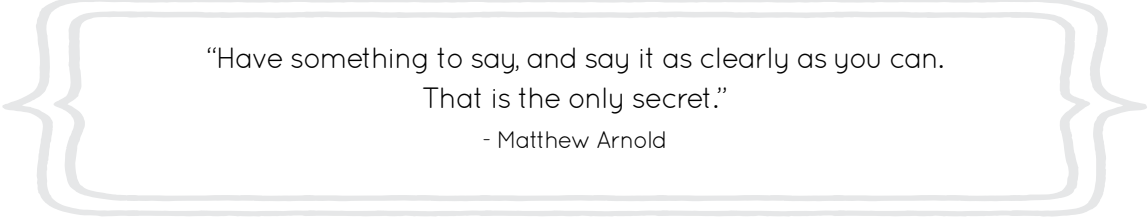
So, you have an idea? Wonderful! Let us help you move from that great idea to a quality product.

worksheets

“The scariest moment is always
just before you start.”

- Stephen King, On Writing

Writing Great Summaries: The Premise



“Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can.
That is the only secret.”
- Matthew Arnold

The premise consists of three to five sentences describing the need for your book. Typically you can develop your premise by answering the following three questions:

What is the reality you are addressing? Describe the problem or need have you identified in your book.

What is the result of this reality? Explain the way this problem or need affects people, circumstances, or situations.

What is your proposed solution? Clarify how your book will provide an answer to the identified problem or need.

Play with these three sentences to create your premise. Try several different ways of crafting a short paragraph that articulates the answers to these three questions. *(Need more room? There's extra space on the next page.)*

**This process may take some time but you will use these few sentences
time and again as you share about your book
both online and off.**

“Forcing yourself to articulate the reason for writing your book assists with clarifying the project scope, the intended audience, and the book’s intended purpose.”

buy the book

Self-Publish is currently available in three formats.
Click the links below to purchase:

[print book](#)

[PDF](#)

[Kindle](#)

selfpublishthebook.com