

How can you sell your nonfiction book or novel to publishers more than 75% of the time?

This is section 4 of 16 that I will continue sharing at this blog (about two a week) from my seminar “**How to Sell 75% of Your Freelance Writing.**”

While I mostly focus on articles in this series, you can easily sell at least three quarters of the **book manuscripts** that you write. But you must adhere to my formula of only writing when you have far better than a 75% chance of selling.

How is that done with books?

Let's start with **nonfiction**. If you count by titles, 92% of the books published last year, and in recent years, were nonfiction. (The sheer paper weight of books printed might find nonfiction-fiction closer to 50-50.)

Thus it's far easier to sell nonfiction than fiction. And it's far less risky for you.

Let's say you want to sell to a standard publisher. You will create a book proposal before you actually write any of the book itself. It will include a two-page query letter that sells the idea and you as the author, a table of contents, perhaps a synopsis (if you can't fit that into the query), and surely a reference (written source) and resource (oral source) sheet (or two) explaining where the book's key contents come from, with data about each of the sources and roughly what will come from them. You might also have a sales or selling summary telling who will buy your book, where they are, how they can be sold, and what of that selling you will help with.

You send this query/proposal to potential publishers one at a time. (You usually don't need an agent for nonfiction.) Try the best houses first. Only when an editor says yes, we're interested, send me three sample chapters (sometimes the whole book) do you do the full research, interviewing, and content writing.

Unless you write great queries and awful books, if the editors agrees to publish your book, you should easily top sell it more than 75% of the time.

You can actually publish it 100% of the time if you self-publish. If it's a niche book, particularly, go straight to my [Niche Publishing](#) book and not only see it in print soon but make a low-risk goldmine from it! If it's not niched, see Dan Poynter's Self-Publishing Manual.

There's another, easier way to **publish your book 100% of the time**—nonfiction or fiction. Go straight to the [ancillary publishers](#) (see [How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days.](#)) Since there are seven such houses and you can use all seven, your book can really be in print 700% of the time. (Add another 100% when you self-publish it simultaneously!)

But selling **fiction** through standard publishers is a very steep climb, and maybe a 7% success ratio rather than 75% is more likely, if not wildly optimistic. The problem is that you must write the whole book first, then shop it around publisher by publisher. Alas, they aren't eager to see you coming! (It makes more sense to get the book out through an ancillary house, then launch your big-house campaign around a published, selling novel they might want to print and sell.)

Thus you have three options to publish your book more than 75% of the time: only writing and submitting it after a standard nonfiction editor has approved your query/proposal, self-publish it, or use the new ancillary publishing route.

Incidentally, with exceptions, the self-publishing route (especially for niched books) may be the most profitable. The standard route (for nonfiction) will require you to do the least amount of marketing. And the ancillary route is by far the fastest, maybe the most profitable, and surely the least expensive path

Get writing!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. The next section will be about selling 75% of what you send to **newspapers!** (I write about publishing mostly in my free monthly [newsletter](#), if you are interested.)