

The most important / most profitable reason to self-publish

I enjoy and learn a lot from Bob Bly's frequent missives. (See www.bly.com). We sort of walk and work the same side of the street regarding professional writing and publishing, and we both agree on the importance of strategizing first, then following up with processes that work.

So the other day when Bob offered five reasons or situations where self-publishing should seriously be considered, I found myself nodding and uttered an aging "yep" at every point.

Alas, I had an extra "yep" unuttered, so I thought it fair in this blog to add number six to the list. We agree that self-publishing (1) can be a means of getting your words in print, (2) it will let you can control your tome's contents and design, (3) if you can market well, by self-publishing you can sidestep the big-house foot-dragging, (4) when your book is complementary to your greater purpose of displaying your expertise (as, for example, using your book to secure related speaking engagements), or (5) when self-publishing is the best (and perhaps only) way to get your words and ideas past the older, established houses so potential readers and buyers have a chance to see and decide about the merits of your independent offering.

The missing reason—the unuttered "yep"—for me trumps the other five. I think that **self-publishing** and **niche publishing** are potentially the two halves of a **golden egg**.

In fact, they have walked hand in hand long before "open" publishing made it possible for any writer to ignore the major houses and see their work in print. Many did profitably self-publish long ago, like Dickens, Twain, and General Roberts (of

Roberts' Rules of Order). But when the focus swung from books for general markets (risky indeed) to tightly targeted or niche markets, and pre-testing (usually through direct mail testing) allowed the publisher to define the specific buyer demand, then self-publishing let the niche publisher create publications with finely honed titles tailored to pin-point targets. It became a potentially risk-free investment since the publisher would then be able to print the number of books needed to satisfy that predetermined need.

We're not in disagreement here since Bob sells solid products about niche publishing and my [Niche Publishing—Publish Profitably Every Time](#) also extols (and explains) the “how's” of niching and pre-testing. I simply wanted to remind my readers that niche publishing continues to be a lucrative path (I think *the* most lucrative) in the grove of self-publishing.

Incidentally, blogs being structured as they are, I probably have 40 or 50 related blogs about “niche publishing” hiding right behind these words for further perusal, if interested. Just type “niche” or “niche publishing” (no quote marks) in the SEARCH box above and Word Press will kindly stack them up for you to read. (Since in my mind niche publishing and **empire building** can be almost synonymous, you are invited to check “empire building” too!)

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett