

# Also use Nook Press to publish your own book—free!

I've been selling my e-books through Nook Press for four years and it's a **good way to get your book posted for sale at Barnes and Noble**, which runs it. (Its platform was earlier known as Pubit!)

It's probably **the easiest free ebook press site to use**. (The others most used are Kindle and Smashwords.) Simply go to Nook Press.com and there are three choices: E-Book Publishing, Print Books, and Help Services. If you want to publish and sell your books through them, go to the first. If you just want them to print your books, the second, and if you need help putting the book together, the third.

Just follow the submission directions in the publishing section, (My book, [How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days](#), will ease your march through the steps, if needed.)

There are usually **two perplexing areas** in the free publishing formats: (1) **who you can talk to**—actually talk to, or at least type to and have them immediately type an answer back, and (2) **how many copies have you sold**, when, and when will those royalties be paid.

(1) **Live assistance is great at Nook Press**. If you have questions it will tell you where to go and how to do it immediately.

(2) **Easy enough here too**, if you remember that you get paid 60 days after sale and you are paid for all of that month's total sales. For example, if you sold a book in March, you will be paid at the end of May. (They will send you an email telling you it is en route [to your bank account] at that time.) So if you sold \$42 worth (say six books) in March, you will be paid

the \$42 at the end of May. Go to the SALES button and it will tell you the number of books sold the present month, how many were sold last month, and you can go down a list of previous months and it will tell you specifically which books were sold during those earlier 30-day periods. (There's also a graph on the SALES page telling the number of books sold each of the past six months.)

I need that by-the-month information (in our example, for April) because it tells me exactly which six books were bought that month. That's important to you if you have more than one ebook published by Nook Press. For me, I own a publishing company and I submit the books written by my five authors (see [www.meetingk-12needs.com](http://www.meetingk-12needs.com)), plus me. So I need to know which books by which authors (and the royalty for each) they are paying. That's so I can pass that royalty on to them.

That's it. **Consider adding Nook Press to your selling force.** If nothing more, it's another publisher in your growing in-print domain. **Your kids will shriek with delight.** So will your spouse when those additional royalties get heavy in your account!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

P.S. If you want to **read other comments**, usually how-to, in the 400 or so blogs at this site about any of the "open publishing" sites, go to the **SEARCH** box at the top, right, of the first page of this blog and type in the publisher's name (one at a time). The blogs will be lined up for you to read! What are the other related publishing outlets you might want to know about? Try Nook, Kindle, Smashwords, BookBaby, Create Space, Amazon, Lightning Source, Lulu, Scribd, Blurb, iBooks, and Kobo.

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# Creating Book Covers That Work...

It's fun to look through a professional book designer's eyes to share what works for them—and what doesn't! Particularly if you're a publisher having to buy such art and design.

Joel Friedlander, a San Rafael designer, shared some of his [Self-Publishing Roadmap](#) program's contents, at the Nov. 10 BAIPA (Bay Area Independent Publishers Association) meeting, mostly on screen so we could see covers of all kinds to see how they excelled or, in some cases, defied reading and comprehension.

Here are some of the key points I got from the fun presentation:

- \* Be sure to sign some kind of contract, even a simple letter, if you are buying a cover or design. You want total ownership/all rights, though the designer is encouraged to use the work in his/her portfolio or display. You don't want to find out later that you just bought a license—for the first edition!
- \* The cover must grab potential buyers because it says something they want, like what the book is about, its tone, what benefits it will bring the reader/buyer, and because it looks professional.
- \* Can you tell the kind of book it is from the cover? Fiction, nonfiction, its genre, does it say something new and important, does it establish a market position?
- \* Does it tell its content's scope (50 ways to...), is it

exciting or cutting edge (best selling ideas), carve out a specific part of a larger topic (two-hour job search, how to get paid on the spot), or does the cover continue to brand the author on several covers?

\* Niche covers are the easiest: if the buyer is mentioned, bingo. But the artwork can't unsell the idea or contents.

\* There are four reasons covers fail: the text is illegible, you can't detect the genre, there's no hook (why should the reader care?), or they just stink (graphically incompetent—stink is my word, not Joel's).

\* You can do the covers yourself but usually the artist brings the needed professionalism through years of training and good covers...

\* The three conceptual tools the designer has to solve the buying problems are contrast (so the eye zeroes in), focus (you have something to look at), and position (where the focus sits in the cover)...

\* It's almost impossible to read red type on a black background, and totally so if the cover is converted to b/w because both look black!

\* On the contrary, type reversed (in white) on a dark background jumps out.

\* Covers that are hopelessly busy don't work, and a potpourri of type fonts are almost as confusing...

\* Joel judges ebook covers each month, and shares examples (with lots of other good ideas) at his blog: [The Book Designer](#).

\* At least you must study lots of other covers (perhaps at Amazon) in the same category or genre to see what works. Joel studied a pizza cookbook cover and found that every book in the market had a picture of a pizza on the front!

\* Most books (at least nonfiction) need both a title and subtitle. The latter is particularly where you use keyword metadata so you attract Google-types.

\* You can even use multiple subtitles if they aren't confusing.

\* Targeted testimonials work very well to attract buyers. (Almost all are free for the asking, in exchange for the name and expertise exposure.)

\* Joel uses a solid red border around some of his ebook front covers so they stand out in the thumbnail listings.

\* A designer price range? You might pay \$35-50 for an ebook front, many professionals are in the \$200-500 range, and some receive \$3,000 if they are involved in helping create a marketing idea or program.

\* The cover isn't an extension of you (your cat on the cover because she's your best buddy), unless it's a book just for you. Otherwise, if the book is commercial it must compete.

\* Must you license fonts? No. There are lots of free fonts at [fontsquirrel.com](http://fontsquirrel.com).

A last reminder, from me. For paperback (or cloth) covers you need a front, back, and spine. Getting the spine dimensions right is extremely important, so have the designer work with the printer there. But ebooks are a front-only blessing where text clarity and color are the keys. Few ever actually see that cover in more than a thumbnail collection of covers, so the title and your name are the most important elements, and you may as well set little type in Finnish since it will be illegible.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

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# Keep your book title to yourself—at first!

The danger of broadcasting your book title too early is that others may write and publish it before you do!

“No way,” you say. “They’d have to do the research, get the interviews, write the draft, get it proofed, and have it printed in just a couple of months—or at least before I go to press.”

That’s the very issue. Unless you are weeks from the book’s release (or even a month or two so you can get some pre-print testimonials for the book and its cover), there are plenty of wordsmiths out there who can wrap almost any book up in a couple of weeks, particularly if you give them the words and details. In the interim, before they get a paperback out, they can publish the book digitally almost as fast as they can submit its copy and cover to Kindle, Nook, iPad, and other ancillary publishers. (Sorry, but I tell them precisely how in [\*How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days\*](#).) Even worse, they can just announce their coming book right now, using the very same title, subtitle, and benefits and promises you plan to use, to the very audience to whom you plan to sell.

Where did they get that title, subtitle, and your selling copy? You told them! None of that is legally protected, right now or even after your book appears. (You can’t copyright titles. Want to write *The Holy Bible* again, with a different cast? You can, though some may catch on.)

Incidentally, you also gave them your outline (the table of contents) and the artwork you have in mind, even some expert

interview material. How can they find out what you think about the topic? Do you have much of the book already shared in blogs, a newsletter, articles, and related writings or books? All there to be directly quoted even though they never say a word to you. All that idea sharing is fair game to build on and quote from.

This is particularly the case in [niche publishing](#), and doubly the case where you want to create an empire to build from where your new book is the core publication, or at least a key publication in your offerings.

It's a delicate balance, when you tell what's in prep and how much you reveal.

One way to get your research material without having to spill many of the beans is to write several different articles that you can later pull into the book. Some of these you may have queried about and thus you have a clear purpose and a printed destination to tell those you wish to quote. Others may be "future pieces" you are putting into [query](#) form.

The time you must expose the guts of the book is when you create a [pretest](#) for a segment of your niche or expected buyers. You need a flyer that likely includes the title, subtitle, contents, author bio, and many of the benefits (or reasons the person may buy that book). You are vulnerable here because you will probably wait to see the pretest responses (again, title, price, contents, and format) before you put the final book together. About the only thing you can do is not include the honchos in the field or the related association(s), other niche authors, and staff of the related publications in the pretest.

Let me give you an example. When we were creating the first standad operating procedures ([SOPs](#)) books for dentists, a few years ago, we took huge steps not to share the good tidings before we sent the first sales flyer to all of the dentists or

specialists. We did conduct a pretest but it was small and to a Nth selection of the full dental mailing list. We wanted 99% of the dentists to first see the book in final, ready-to-buy and -use form so that if any other writers/publishers then popped up with a similar item, it was clearly a copy-cat version. It worked: for years nobody produced anything similar for dentists. And from that core topic we developed an empire, with related books, digital renditions, audio cassette programs, a video, and lots of consulting and convention speaking.

That's it. The more explicit you are about a book in the hopper, the greater danger you subject your project to. Is the scenario painted above very likely? Not really, but that one in a hundred occurrence could cost you dearly in lost sales or a lost empire. At the very least, it would ruin my day—and month.

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## **8-step process to publish in Kindle, Nook, iPad, Lulu, CreateSpace...**

What you must do to prep and publish your book through the "[ancillary](#)" (or open) publishers (Kindle, Nook, Smashwords [iPad and Kobo], CreateSpace, Lulu, Blurb, and Scribd is fairly straightfoward, though each has a different submission system (and selling success)).

It doesn't matter much what kind of book it is (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, cookbook, photo, wedding, reunion, family history, and so on). Or if you want to submit your book to one or all of the publishers simultaneously. You can even have POD

copies (or digital downloads) made of your book and compete against them!

I use the following eight steps to explain the details in [How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days](#). All of the steps can be done by any author with even rudimentary grasp of a computer! Or their kid can help.

1. Write your book.
2. Put it in final, proofed, ready-to-roll Word (or Mac-equivalent) format.
3. Slightly transform the final Word bound book manuscript into a Word digital book format—and save both.
4. Also write two descriptions of the book (one 500-1000 words, the other about 150 characters), plus a biography of the author(s), 300-1000 words.
5. Either create a front and back cover for the bound (paperback) edition at the publisher's Web site (free) or have a cover of the book made by your own designer and saved in pdf and .jpg. Also create, or have created, a front cover for your ebook.
6. Convert each of the two final Word manuscripts (#3 above) into PDF format. You now have four master files.
7. Submit your Word digital contents and cover files to Lulu, CreateSpace, and/or Blurb to get your book produced and sold in bound form.
8. Submit your ebook digital contents and cover files to Lulu, Kindle, Smashwords, and/or Scribd to get your book produced and sold in digital form.

In other words, you will write your book, get it in five ready-to-go files (really one text file slightly modified and

two cover files), and submit the files to as many as seven different book publishers who will have your digital book ready to sell in hours and the bound, printed copy in days. There's no middle-person either, though you may want help with the cover(s) and proofing.

The cost to you, minus any outside help you may want (or need): nothing at all for the ebook, \$25 or less for the bound books (for mailing you the final printed copy and cover for your approval.)

It's all kind of a miracle to any author who has tried to publish through the big publishing houses or tried to learn the self-publishing system. Computers simplified, a new business plan appeared a few years back, new doors flew open, and anybody can now be a published author. Contrary to some predictions, that will not end civilization as we know it. It might be a godsend.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

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## **Getting four books in print free in one (long) day**

You might be interested in a fairly simple process that got one office ebook in print and in circulation four times in one fairly long day.

The whole [ancillary](#) or open publishing format is a sort of miracle to those of us who have been publishing since cars had running boards and crank windows. (Don't people hide crank in

the window wells now?) I'm getting the same manuscript out so the chosen publishers can be selling and distributing it while, they say, I sleep. (They can also sell it while I'm awake.)

Here are the details.

A few weeks back I wrote a fairly long report, actually 104 8.5 x 11 pages, called "[Four Special Tools That Get Speakers Booked First](#)." It's about how professional speakers can move themselves near or to the front of the booking line through the use of books, reports, ebooks, half-books, booklets, and tip sheets. Yes, that's six tools but the second, third, and fourth are so similar I count them as one. (Anyway, six tools might scare the talkers back into the woods.)

I never intended to release this as a bound book, rather I prepped it as an ebook which we now sell from our website as a digital download for \$10.

So I took the core material and converted the Word document into ebook format, all to sell at \$9.95 so it stays in the Kindle-Nook 70% royalty range. I restructured the front pages; reduced the text to 11-point Times Roman (12 or 13 for the chapter titles); got rid of the headers/footers, numbers, and symbols; reconfigured the page set-up; tightened up the four images, and made the other changes that make running text in ebooks so ugly. I had about 65 pages of core book left. That I saved in Word.dig, which I sent to LSI ([Lightning Source](#)) for their cost-free (to me) ebook store. One book done!

I had created a plain Jane front **cover** in Word, saved it in .pdf, and then converted that into .jpg. It had a design, the title, a short sub-title, and a by-line. See my free November [newsletter](#) about that process. I sent that to all four markets.

I then modified the core text for Smashwords, Nook, and Kindle.

[Smashwords](#) took the most time because there I had to make the layout fit into ePub so it can be sold to **iPad** and others through their Premium catalog. They ran my Word file through their Meatgrinder and spit it out in a half-dozen tongues. I didn't check the others because once I get it to work in ePub it will work in the rest—and they don't submit to Kindle though they do translate it into Kindle-tongue.

I re-read Mark Coker's style guide again and refined my earlier conversion, but somewhere I had a bug that took me several hours to find and exterminate. Turns out that in Word the rejected markup text was returning from the dead to confuse me and bewilder anybody else. So I sent the file through the Meatgrinder seven times before it looked fine.

I've found that the ePub works well in PubIt's **Nook** system, so I opened it up next. [Nook](#) is easy to use but painfully slow to proof, and damn if that markup stuff resurrected itself a third time, but only in the hardest places to detect! So I had to play with that for an hour or two, and about five submissions. Until it looked good.

[Kindle](#) was last and while I used to cuss Amazon roundly because it was almost incomprehensible to techno non-nerds like me, either I've gotten better at it or they have, because this time I plopped the Word version (ebook converted) and it was 98% ready to go. A half hour later off it went.

Mind you, before wading into this free ebook land I had prepared a **bio** about 1,000 words long, plus a **book description** about twice that length that I could simply insert when the last three asked. I do the description first when my mind is freshest. It is the sales copy (with the title) that will separate buyers from their recession-afflicted funds. At Smashwords I also wrote down the **categories** this ebook fit into, and the **keywords** that might get it called up in Google, to use at Nook and Kindle too.

All that remained was the pesky **ISBN**. Since Smashwords requires one for the iPad section, I used one of their free ISBNs on the premise that this ebook will never become a bound book (in which case I would have used two of my own ISBNs, one for bound, the other for digital books). Nook and Kindle didn't require one, nor does the ebook section of LSI, so that was that.

I'm done, except for calling attention to others that this gem is now available for their desktop, laptop, phone, tablet, or whatever else is about to pop up to befuddle running boarders like me.

The lesson here? **The order of submission**. My book [\*How to Get Your Book Published Free in Minutes and Marketed Worldwide in Days\*](#) should help. It even explains [Blurb](#), [Lulu](#), and [Scribd](#) for the truly greedy or adventuresome!

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

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## What should you publish as an e-book?

Are you wondering if your book should be an e-book, since it's common knowledge that they will soon conquer the publishing world? I mean, why bother to print an old-fashioned paperback or, heavens, a cloth version?

Take a breath. That's common wrong knowledge, and there will still be a sizeable ink-on-paper market (plus other digital variations) for a long time to come, though it's anybody's

guess where and how you will buy (and sell) them.

A point-on article by Dominique Raccach, CEO and publisher of Sourcebooks, in the September [IBPA Independent](#) does a great job of telling what kind of books are selling right now. See "Ebooks: How Far, How Fast?"

Adult nonfiction comprises 42.3% of the physical books sold; 25.2 % are adult fiction, and only 7% are juvenile/children's nonfiction and fiction (from Bookscan). Yet among the 100 (paid) bestsellers in Barnes & Noble's Nookbook and the top 100 (paid books) from Kindle, the nonfiction e-books were only 12 (12%) and 16 (16%), respectively. Raccach concludes that less than 20% of the bestselling e-book titles were nonfiction. "What's selling in e-book formats is primarily narrative."

Add to that her own firm's (Soucebook) numbers: most sales of physical books for adults were nonfiction, and e-books for adults were overwhelmingly fiction.

She says that the most difficult to get right in e-book format are reference and children's books.

What works as an e-book is fiction.

What kind of nonfiction is selling in e-book form? Stories and all linear reading experiences, like memoirs, biography, and history.

My reminder is that in memoirs, biography, and history (for example), it's a small step to produce both a physical book and e-book, and print the physical books modestly unless or until the demands dictates otherwise. It's not an either-or.

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

[www.gordonburgett.com](http://www.gordonburgett.com) / Monthly free newsletter at

[www.gordonburgett.com/free-reports](http://www.gordonburgett.com/free-reports) / glburgett@aol.com / Tweet  
at GLeeBurgett