

# Self-Publishing

When deciding to self-publish it is in your interest to gather as much information as possible about the process and possible pitfalls. Finding the right self-publishing service is essential for the successful production and distribution of your book. Services can vary greatly in quality and do not automatically handle things like copyright, design or distribution. [The Australian Writers' Marketplace](#) contains a comprehensive list of self-publishing services that include editing, proofreading, distribution, design and illustration, typing and printing. The Australian Society of Authors also has a list of recommended self-publishing services on their [website](#).

Self-publishing requires you to take commercial as well as artistic concerns into account. You will need a budget you can afford, a clearly defined market and a distribution plan. You will also need to decide on a printer. Some printers will include things like design, distribution and editing. Others won't offer any of these services.

Thorpe-Bowker publishes a free comprehensive guide to self-publishing which can be downloaded from their [website](#). In this guide you will find information on editing and design right through to promotion and distribution. The Australian Society of Authors also has a free paper on [Hints for Self Publishing Authors](#) as well as an article on types of publishers and self-publishers on their [website](#).

## Vanity Publishers

Self-publishers should be wary of vanity publishers. Not to be confused with other legitimate types of self-publishing, vanity publishers exist on the fees paid to them by authors to publish their books, and have no interest in the quality of the book or in helping an author market and distribute their work. Please see our Vanity Publishers resource sheet for more information.

## E-Publishing

E-publishing is a new option for self-publishers wishing to get their work read. Instead of the traditional printed book, e-publishers employ the Internet to publish manuscripts, making them available to a world-wide readership. Because there is no printing involved, e-publishing means your book can be in the reader's hands in weeks instead of months. This also means production costs are lower and royalties are higher. However, because of the nature of all e-publishing, it is important for the author to self-promote and market their work in a way that will get them noticed. Unlike books in a book shop, it is rare that someone will stumble across an e-author by accident.

E-publishing companies come in two main categories: commercial and subsidy. Commercial e-publishers are professional online publishing companies that print only the highest quality texts and make them available through their website and other reputable online bookstores such as Amazon.com. Royalties for writers through e-publishing can be as high as 40%.

Subsidy e-publishers are similar to commercial e-publishers, however, subsidy publishers are rarely selective and tend to publish everything submitted. When submitting through such websites, authors have far greater control over the formatting and layout of their work as often no editing is done. For this reason, it is important to ensure your work is properly edited. See our Resource Sheet on Editors for more information.

Many commercial and subsidy e-publishers offer readers the option of purchasing a hard copy of the text. This is done by request, which ensures printing costs stay low while still allowing the author to see their book in print.

### **International Standard Book Number**

When self-publishing, it's important to make sure your book gets an International Standard Book Number (ISBN), as many bookshops won't stock your book without one. An ISBN is a unique, 10 digit number that ensures that your book can be identified throughout the world. It also enables libraries and booksellers to control stock, process orders, etc. It also forms part of your EAN number (formally Australian Product Number), which is used on barcodes for books. To apply for an ISBN, contact the Thorpe-Bowker [ISBN Agency Australia](#).

### **NSWWC Books**

[Self-Publishing Made Simple](#) by Euan Mitchell

[The Self-Publisher's Marketing Guide](#) by Debbie Higgs

### **Further Resources**

Australian Society of Authors <[www.asauthors.org](http://www.asauthors.org)>

Thorpe-Bowker <[www.thorpe.com.au](http://www.thorpe.com.au)>