

The *Indomitable*
Writer's Guide to

THRIVING IN 2020

Strategies for turning fear and
uncertainty into fuel for your creative fire.

A NOTE FOR WRITERS

"Luck, often enough, will save a man...if his courage holds."

- *Buliwyf, The 13th Warrior*

Uncertainty.

That's what we're all feeling right now.

Uncertainty about the future...

Uncertainty about social norms...

Uncertainty about the health and wellbeing of the people we love...

Uncertainty is in the air, and it feels like it's impossible to know what's coming next, let alone the *right* move to make.

This is a scary thought. So scary it paralyzes some people...but what a great opportunity for writers.

I'll give you two reasons why:

Reason #1. Because in times of uncertainty, people look for comfort; they look for a relief valve.

Your book could be exactly what they need to relax and decompress. In this way, you have an imperative to keep writing.

Reason #2. Because every hero's journey begins amidst the uncertainty of chaos. For the hero to *become* a hero, he needs a catalyst. It can't happen any other way.

So use this time of uncertainty as a catalyst for your own hero's journey, to become better than you were yesterday so your fans, readers, and followers can get the best out of what you have to offer.

It's not easy. But then, nothing worthwhile ever is.

Stay strong. Stay certain. And keep writing.

Tom, Cary, and the entire Infostack.io Team

#WRITEPUBLISHPROFIT3

We brought together some of the world's most prolific, proven, and profitable indie writers, authors, and self-publishers, and asked them two questions:

QUESTION #1.

IN A WORLD THAT FEELS LIKE IT'S BEEN FLIPPED UPSIDE DOWN, WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR AUTHORS AND SELF-PUBLISHERS TO NOT JUST SURVIVE BUT THRIVE IN 2020?

QUESTION #2.

IF YOU WERE STARTING FROM SCRATCH DURING THIS PANDEMIC, WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO GET YOUR FIRST 100 READERS?

Here are their answers...

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Katie Davis

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Katie Davis is a traditionally published author/illustrator whose work includes ten picture books, a middle grade, and a young adult novel. (Her book, *Kindergarten Rocks!* was given to every preschool child in the state of Georgia.) Katie has published several reference books for writers, created the online courses *How to Create Your Author Platform* and *Launch Your Book Blueprint*, and is the host of the podcasts, *Brain Burps About Books* and *Writing for Children*. She is a co-founder of *Picture Book Summit* and currently runs the 51-year-old *Institute of Children's Literature*, as well as its sister school, the *Institute for Writers*, where, to date, almost half a million people have participated in college-level writing courses for both children and adults.

Start every day with even one small success. Set your alarm, don't hit the snooze button, and make your bed. Do that and you've already accomplished something. Whether you're locked down with people or alone, or going to work outside your home, **schedule your days.** That is, schedule your writing time (that includes anything to do with your writing, not just actual writing). Even if it's just 30 minutes a day, do it. You'll feel the accomplishment of sticking to that. Feeling good about your work is a way to survive and thrive. Bonus tip: End your writing session in a character's mid-thought or sentence so you need to finish that moment when you're back at it the next day. It's an easy way to get the wheels greased.

Katie Davis

I've always said "reciprocity rocks," and I truly believe that. **Help others before asking for something.** Reach out to those who are interested in what you're writing about. Join groups on social media, create videos, a blog...anything that will connect you to your focus audience. Then offer them something to help them. For example, if you're writing nonfiction, say, about homeschooling, give support, and great tips to parents in groups dedicated to that topic. Later, after you've helped people, you can let them know you have a (blog/podcast/newsletter/fill-in-the-blank) that provides more tips if they'd like to receive it. Then give them the link. (Obviously, this applies to any topic you're writing about.) If you're writing fiction, join creative writing groups and talk about your experience (not your manuscript/s...yet). What are you doing to continue writing during this difficult time? What are your tips? What's your process? Most writers love hearing others' processes and struggles.

Katie Davis

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Marquina Iliev-Piselli

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Marquina Iliev-Piselli is a Digital Marketer and the Founder of *AuthorpreneurLaunch.com*, which aims to help authors feel empowered, not overwhelmed, by marketing. Originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan, she has a Masters from Columbia University in Instructional Technology & Media. After a breast cancer diagnosis in 2015, she created the *Glam Chemo Project* and the *Women's Empowerment Project* at Weill Cornell. She is also the editor of the bestselling book *TOUGH: Women Who Survived Cancer*, and the founder of the *Share Triumph Virtual Conference*, which brings survivors' stories to life and highlights the small steps that bring us back to joy.

Times are challenging but there are opportunities to reach new readers and sell books. Since we are staying indoors more, people have been turning to books as an escape. More people are online, and a recent Forbes article stated that eBook readership is up 30% during the pandemic. Make sure your book and eBooks stand out from the competition. Perhaps it's time for a **book cover refresh or to rewrite your description**. Try a new service such as listing your eBook in Kindle Unlimited or try discounting your book for a week and running a few promotions. Sometimes a small change can make a big impact.

If I were starting from scratch, I would make a list of my family, friends, colleagues, former coworkers, and ask them if they would like a free PDF of my book. If they enjoyed it, I'd ask if they know someone else who might also want to read it. My processes tend to be very grass-roots and word-of-mouth, especially at the beginning. **The feedback received from this initial group can help you make small changes to the book and will increase the chance that it appeals to a broader audience.** I like to start small, listen to feedback, edit along the way, and do a larger push or book launch after about 3 months of gaining momentum.

Marquina Iliev-Piselli

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Lisa Lepki

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Lisa Lepki is an indie author, the Editor of the *ProWritingAid* Blog, and Head of Marketing for *ProWritingAid*. She believes in the power of words and is constantly fascinated with the way words allow people to get their ideas from their own heads into the minds of others. It's like magic. Though she has over 15 years' experience in writing and marketing, she secretly loves the technical elements of writing even more than the writing itself.

The pandemic has changed the world in ways that would have been completely inconceivable just six months ago. Millions of people are embracing distance education and searching out new forms of entertainment and engagement. And while most of the economy is in decline, according to the NPD Group research, book sales in April were up. So, the silver lining to this very dark cloud, is that many people are turning to books, online courses, and streamed events to help them get through it. If you have books ready for them, they are looking for something to read!

The biggest challenge that I am hearing from the writers in the *ProWritingAid* community is that their concentration is down. They are feeling scattered and emotional, and that is taking a hit on their attention spans. The amount of time they are spending in creative mode is down and the amount of time spent in mindless scrolling mode is up. My advice is to be gentle with yourself. This is the first time for all of us, and it's a lot to take in. Recently, I've started using the Pomodoro Technique to organize my day into short bursts of productivity, interspersed with outside time and exercise. It's made a huge difference in reducing my overall sense of overwhelming.

When social isolation began, at *ProWritingAid*, we started a series of live webinars for the members of our community as a way to help them stay inspired and productive. We asked all our partners if they would be willing to offer some free training and almost everyone jumped at the chance to help. They have been hugely popular with hundreds (sometimes thousands) of people signing up! So, if I were trying to find my first 100 readers, I would think about what I have to offer that people would like. It's a great way to start building your email list, which is the best way to find your readers.

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Carla King

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Carla King is an author, editor, publishing coach, and workshop leader. She is the founder of the *Self-Pub Boot Camp* educational series of books, workshops, and online courses that teach authors how to finish their manuscripts, set up a business, market, promote, design, and distribute their books. She also runs *Destination Published*, a consulting service for authors and publishers, and Virtual Travel Writing Groups in the Americas, Australia, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

It's the perfect time to slow down and enjoy the writing process as a meditation and relaxation practice. This doesn't necessarily mean writing more.

For example, in my virtual travel writing group, we're enriching our writing by practicing a layering technique. It starts with a draft of your story, article, or book chapter. Choose one scene and try to make it cinematic.

First, set the stage with details that would help a movie director create the scene. Then add dialogue (external and internal) and emotions. Finally, layer in sensual detail: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Then, we try not to use the words saw, heard, tasted, felt, or smelled. Instead, finding more creative ways to convey the sense to the reader.

This practice of slowing down a scene, reflecting, and adding detail becomes a meditation, a removal of yourself from the present, and an immersion in another time and place.

It's challenging, thrilling, rejuvenating, relaxing, and it's also a lot of fun to share as a group activity.

I'm a big believer in creating community and sharing your writing with people you know.

Don't know anybody?

There are all kinds of writing groups in all genres at all levels.

Your first readers are your critique partners. Once you've workshopped your stories in a group, post them for free in forums and places like *Wattpad*, where readers can like and comment on your work.

I also believe—I know—that email marketing works. Using *MailChimp* or another tool, you can create a landing page to direct friends and followers to sign up to get free stories. When people sign up, give them stories every month or even every week. Ask for their feedback and thank them for it.

These people feel invested in your work and they are your first true fans. These readers will read everything you've got and spread the word when you post a new story or publish a book.

Community, collaboration, and communication are key to your success.

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Ramzi Hajj

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Ramzi is the CEO of *Storiad* and leads the company's operations and business development. Before *Storiad* he was with the Economics & International Taxation Practice at EY. He holds a BA and an MBA in Economics from the University of Chicago.

NEWS FLASH!!! The book market is super extra crazy competitive!!!!

Gee, thanks for the scoop, Mr. Pulitzer.

Let's recap, anyway. Every year, in the US alone, well over a million new titles are published. That's 1,000,000+ new products introduced into the market every year. No other industry can boast of the introduction of so many new utterly unique "products" - sorry for calling your lovely book a "product", but it is. When someone gives you money to physically own a copy of something you've created, you've entered into a transaction. As Investopedia reminds us:

"Transactions in terms of sales between buyers and sellers are relatively straightforward. Person A gives Person B a certain amount of money for a good."

That good, of course, is your book - in its print, eBook, and audio versions.

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Ramzi Hajj

[HTTPS://STORIAD.COM/BLOG/](https://storiad.com/blog/)

EVERY book has a market. As such, it is vital for you, the enterprising author, to find and talk with that market to gauge interest in reviewing, recommending, and buying your product, (your book).

Authors are responsible for marketing their books. Whether you have a contract with a publisher or taking the self-publishing route, this is your baby!

The key thing is in how to conceptualize that responsibility. Let's start with a powerful observation from The Economist:

“Standing out as a book writer today requires more than a bright idea and limpid prose. Authors need to become businesspeople as well, thinking strategically about their brand, and marketing themselves and their products. There is more competition for readers' and reviewers' attention, and fewer bookshops to provide a showcase for new titles.”

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So the author needs to:

- Become a businessperson by assuming the role of the owner of a valuable asset (your book) that fulfills a specific target market (your readers') need
- Think strategically about how to go about finding and communicating with that target market
- Market themselves and their book by using assets and tools to get the book discovered, reviewed, recommended, and bought.

The very first question every author needs to ask herself/himself when getting ready to market their book is this: "who's most likely to want to review, recommend, and buy my book?" As you may notice, this question is in the form of a statement of probability ... most likely to want to.

Your immediate network is the obvious starting point:

- Friends & family
- Professional colleagues
- People in your extended network

That is a good start as it can be accomplished relatively easily through emails, word-of-mouth, and social media postings.

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However, as an enterprising author, you need to expand beyond the so-called “one degree of separation” to reach beyond your immediate network. To accomplish this expansion, it’s necessary to think in business terms of offering something of value to those people and groups that are in the business of reading, reviewing, recommending, and buying books. This list may include (among others) the following:

- Bloggers
- Reviewers
- YouTube influencers
- Traditional media outlets
- Online media outlets
- Book clubs
- Physical Bookstores
- eBookstores
- Libraries
- Associations
- Interest & advocacy groups
- Fan & hobby groups

Now that list is in no way exhaustive. In theory, anyone and everyone is a potential reader of your book. The question to think deeply about is: Who is most likely to want or at least be interested in my book? You should dedicate LOTS of time to answering that question by finding and communicating with those people.

Now, HOW to do that is the fun part...the HOW to our first answer...

OK. Let's use this pandemic to re-imagine your book marketing approach, as if you're brand spanking new to the book marketing game, looking to find your very first 100 readers.

CTRL + ALT + DEL

Ahhh. That new author smell. Lovely!

Let's get started.

In the process of building an effective digital book marketing campaign, you'll be answering the following four questions:

1. Which individuals and groups are in my book's target market?
2. What are their needs?
3. How does my book meet those needs, i.e. what's my book's value proposition?
4. How do I convey my value proposition clearly, effectively, and professionally?

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To answer those four questions, you'll need to build a digital book marketing campaign so that you can accomplish the following four tasks:

1. Identify the individuals and groups that comprise your target market
2. Gather and organize relevant contact information (background information, contact name, URL, contact method)
3. Create "value proposition(s)" to address the following: "This is how/why my book is valuable to you, your group, and/or your customers/readers/followers/network".
4. Establishing multiple lines of communication

So what does this book marketing campaign look like? How much does it cost? How much work does it involve?

Let's take a look at the nine essential tools you'll need to use (and their estimated costs) to build and run an effective digital book marketing campaign:

1. Organization → Example: Dropbox @ \$0
2. Budgeting → Example: Google Sheets @ \$0
3. Business planning → Example: enloop @ \$20/month
4. Networking → Example: LinkedIn @ \$0

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5. Digital press kit(s) → Example: iPage @ \$8/month
6. Market research → Example: Prowly @ \$115/month
7. Automated email integration → MailChimp @ \$10/month
8. Live video author events → Zoom @ \$20/month
9. Market intelligence (continual learning) → Publisher's Weekly @ \$17/month

The estimated total for these nine tools is around \$173 per month. Not too bad, right?

Now let's take each of the tasks and tools we've identified and attach an estimated time commitment to each one (please note the time commitment estimates are divided between setting up your campaign ("upfront" hours) and running your campaign ("ongoing" hours).

Let's start with setting up your campaign:

1. Organization → Upfront @ 3 hours (total)
2. Budgeting → Upfront @ 2 hours (total)
3. Business plan → Upfront @ 8 hours (total)
4. Digital media kit(s) → Upfront @ 6 hours (total)

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Grabbing our trusty calculator, we see out “upfront” time investment to be ... 19 hours. Spaced over, say, two weeks, this can be accomplished pretty easily.

Let’s take a look at how you are spending your 19 hours:

- Organization → Gather all the marketing information related to you and your book
- Budgeting → How much time and money can you allocate to building and running your campaign?
- Business plan → Your business plan is the outline of how you will run your campaign
- Digital media kit(s) → Your digital media kit is the backbone of your campaign. Think of it as an advertisement for your book.

Great, now that your digital book marketing campaign infrastructure is in place, it’s time to start putting your campaign in motion. These are the weekly tasks you’ll need to undertake to effectively manage your campaign:

5. Networking → Ongoing @ 1 hours/week
6. Market research → Ongoing @ 2 hours/week
7. Automated email integration → Ongoing @ 2 hours/week

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8. Live video author events → Ongoing @ 1 hour/week
9. Market intelligence (continual learning) → Ongoing @ 1 hour/week

At a minimum, you should be spending approximately 7 hours per week running your campaign:

- Networking → Interact with others to exchange information and develop professional and social relationships.
- Market research → Find those people/groups you need to contact
- Automated email integration → Contact those people/groups you found
- Live video author events → Host live video events (like bookstore events, but better)
- Market intelligence (continual learning) → Keep learning

Rinse. Repeat. It's all very doable. Now you're out there. Now you're establishing good habits. Now your book is getting discovered, reviewed, recommended, and bought.

And you're a happy author!

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Cory W.

WWW.FORMATTEDBOOKS.COM

Welcome to *FormattedBooks*, where manuscripts are transformed into beautiful books! Our specialty is book formatting and interior layout, and we'd love to help you get your book into professional condition. Publishing has become so easy in recent years that the biggest challenge for self-published authors is putting the effort and expertise into publishing books at the same level as the big traditional publishers. Traditional publishers have massive budgets and industry experts on the payroll with decades of high-level publishing experience, so it's difficult to compete on a typical shoestring self-publisher's budget. But we are doing EVERYTHING in our power to help make that happen by providing highest-level book formatting for lowest-level prices. Come check us out at <https://formattedbooks.com/>.

There has never been a better time to be an author. At a time where social distancing and staying home is encouraged, what better way to put that time to good use?

Getting a mentor that has already succeeded in what you want to do will greatly speed things up.

Cory W.

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Dana Wilde

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Dana Wilde is the number one bestselling author of *Train Your Brain* and the creator of *The Celebrity Formula*. After growing her own business from zero to a million dollars a year in under 19 months, Dana shows you how to make money by being happy and get paid for being YOU! With over 100,000 followers in 110 countries, she is featured in the movies *The Abundance Factor*, *The Truth About Prosperity*, and *Dream Big*. As the host of *The Mind Aware Show*, she reveals how to intentionally and systematically change your mindset so you get better outcomes.

BELIEVE you can survive and thrive. You must be your own best motivational coach if you are to be successful. No one can think in your head except you and the more you can focus on the things that are going right in your life, the more successful you will be.

Create compelling free content and share it on social media. Share the type of content that allows people to implement and see the results. If people get results from your teachings for free, then they will be excited to invest with you. I would go "all in" with one social media channel and learn everything I can about it to maximize my results.

Dana Wilde

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Jon Bard

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Jon and his wife Laura are celebrating 30 years as publishers of *Children's Book Insider*, the Children's Writing Monthly. Together, they've helped generations of aspiring writers become children's authors. Jon is also the co-founder of *WritingBlueprints.com*, which uses a unique new method to teach writing, and co-founder of *Picture Book Summit*, the world's largest online writing conference devoted to picture books.

Focus on your craft. Use this time to dig deep and become a better writer. While others are thrashing around looking for answers, you're setting yourself up for future success by improving your vital skills.

Focus on what makes you and your writing unique. Businesses have a USP - Unique Selling Proposition. It's the "why" that explains what sets them apart and why they give customers greater value. The authors need to think along those lines. What do YOU have to offer readers that other writers don't? How will their lives be improved by becoming acquainted with you? Find that and incorporate it into your social media, your blog posts, and all your outreach,

Jon Bard

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David Wogahn

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David Wogahn has been a technologist for the Los Angeles Times, a co-founder of the first online sports network, and a presenter for IBPA and ALLI. He has published five books on self-publishing and is president of *AuthorImprints.com*.

The pandemic has been good for self-publishers and is challenging traditional publishers. I once heard the late Dan Poynter, considered by many to be the father of modern self-publishing say that “Amazon is the best thing that’s ever happened to self-publishing.” Why? Because instead of spending thousands of dollars on inventory and wasting thousands of hours chasing down thousands of stores, we can focus on one store. I would start by reviewing all my metadata and re-optimize it where needed, especially categories, keywords, and descriptions. If you haven’t published, research this heavily. I’d also double down on my effort to secure reviews and use the ones I have more effectively. You can manage editorial reviews yourself so update those. Hone your online selling skills. Study copyrighting so you can write better Facebook, Amazon, and BookBub ads. Make sure your online profiles are all up to date and consistent in how they brand you as an author. Bottom line: the grass always seems greener in those other stores’ pastures and it might be for some authors. But for many of us, it comes down to doing more and better work with what we already have. I’m no Amazon fanboy, but as a technologist, I love the fact that I can focus on mastering one platform—a platform that has already aggregated most of the shoppers.

David Wogahn

Pricing a book to make a profit, but not selling many books, proves nothing. I'd give my book away just so I could be read and to get feedback. Everyone has at least some kind of network. Personally reach out to each person—not via social media but email—and ask them to read the book. Ask them for the names of 5 other people who might like a copy. All the better if they will do the introduction. I would price my book at 99 cents and then gift them the eBook or better yet, send them a gift certificate so they can buy it. Don't be cheap; think of this as an investment in marketing. Spending money to buy your book for qualified readers is a better investment than buying ads to reach strangers that have never heard of you. The recipient often feels an obligation in this situation so ask each one if they will consider leaving a review. When you are done, add their name to your mailing list.

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Alexa Bigwarfe

[HTTP://WRITEPUBLISHSELL.CO/5-DAY-TO-GROW-YOUR-AUTHOR-PLATFORM/](http://writepublishsell.co/5-day-to-grow-your-author-platform/)

Alexa Bigwarfe is a USA Today Best-Selling author, speaker, and publishing partner. Alexa turned to write books as a healing method after the death of her infant daughter and fell in love with all things publishing. She coaches others who also wanted to share their story through a book. Alexa is the founder of *Write|Publish|Sell*, *Kat Biggie Press*, *Purple Butterfly Press*, *Chrysalis Press*, and the *Women in Publishing Summit*. When she's not trying to survive a global pandemic, she loves traveling and laughing with friends. Learn more at alexabigwarfe.com.

We saw some really interesting things come out of the Covid19 crisis, one of those being a surge in eBook sales.

But also, IngramSpark went from a 3-5 day average processing time to 22 or more!

The lesson learned for me is diversification - not only in the format of books but also in distribution partners. Additionally, as people feared for their jobs and employment status, we see quickly where people will and will not spend their money. Buying a \$15 book when they can read it for \$6 or better yet, check it out from the library. The old adage "don't put your eggs in one basket" certainly came to mind.

To thrive in 2020 and beyond, it's time to do the following things:

1. Keep writing! While it may be difficult to concentrate when life is stressful, set realistic expectations for you and if nothing else, get in 15 minutes every day. The world will return to normal one day, and you'll be glad you kept pushing forward.
2. Clean up your sales pages. Spend some time researching the best sellers in your genre, and make sure your sales copy is going to get someone to click BUY.

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Alexa Bigwarfe

3. Diversify your book - make sure you have print and eBook copies of your book, and get it distributed through all sales channels. PublishDrive is a great resource for widely distributing eBooks, but there are many companies, so find the best one for you.
4. Collaborate with other authors in your genre. This is a great time for newsletter swaps and introducing your followers to other books they'll enjoy.
5. Don't rush to get your book out so that you don't "miss out" on the quarantine. Quality is always more important. Instead, start your marketing efforts and put your book on pre-order or build your advanced reader list.

It's a strange time but also a great time for writers! Write on!

Alexa Bigwarfe

[HTTP://WRITEPUBLISHSELL.CO/5-DAY-TO-GROW-YOUR-AUTHOR-PLATFORM/](http://writepublishsell.co/5-day-to-grow-your-author-platform/)

I would spend the time first making sure I knew who I was writing for and building relationships with readers and influencers in my target audience. So many authors do this backward. They write their book and THEN try to figure out who it is for and where those readers are. I would find the ways to get in front of that correct audience and provide value to them. I would give all 100 of them a copy of my book and ask them to read it and share it. Buzz is a book's best friend. And it's really hard to create buzz if you don't have an author platform.

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Caitlin Pyle

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Caitlin Pyle began her work-at-home journey in 2011 after getting brutally fired from her \$16-per-hour corporate job. Starting with a freelance proofreading side hustle, she quickly replaced her income by freelancing, then transitioned to helping others build their work-at-home income using the power of the internet. Caitlin's business has since evolved into a multimillion-dollar media company, and she's been featured in notable media outlets such as Forbes.com, the New York Post, Business Insider, Fast Company, and Foundr. Caitlin resides in Winter Park, Florida.

In times like these, you find out what you're really made of. Some people will wallow in fear and self-pity, thinking that there's no point in even trying to get ahead because it's a lost cause -- that 2020 is a write-off. Other people, however, will rise to the occasion and home in on their goals even further.

I don't know about you, but I plan to make this my best year yet! Yes, I have doubts and fears, but I squash them as soon as they come into my head.

I would urge budding authors and self-publishers NOT to let fear take over! DO NOT listen to anyone who tells you you can't do something -- even if the person telling you you can't do it is you! If you give in to those voices, then you really are done for!

To separate yourself from the group who have already given up, you need to decide what your goal is and own it. Don't take your mind off it for a second. Let all the naysayers -- including yourself -- reinforce your commitment to your goal. Use any negativity you experience as fuel to keep you going -- to prove them wrong.

You've got this! 2020 can be your year!

Caitlin Pyle

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My philosophy has always been that if you help other people solve their problems, then your problems will, in turn, be solved.

It isn't about you. Flip the switch in your mind and focus on what you can do to help other people. If they see themselves reflected in your content, they'll want to read more. I also believe you don't have to have a large social media following to be successful. I would focus on creating an engaged email list - - and, of course, a top-quality product!

#WRITEPUBLISHPROFIT3

Sam Kerns

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Sam Kerns is a bestselling author who lives to teach others how to make it in the self-publishing business. He is known for writing no-fluff, action-oriented books that walk readers through the process step-by-step. His followers, the Rainmaker Tribe, understand that becoming the rainmaker in your own life is truly the only way to financial freedom.

The self-publishing landscape has changed dramatically over the past few years. Not too long ago, you could publish a short book, throw it up on Amazon, and reap thousands in sales. That's no longer true.

In 2020, especially during these crazy times, authors have to think differently to thrive. Self-publishing is no longer easy. Instead, it's a career path, and like all other people who have successful careers, authors need to put in the work and commit to the long haul to truly make it in this business.

Today's readers are more loyal, but they also expect more from authors. To thrive in today's environment, you've got to have a long-term strategy. That means to truly achieve success as a self-publisher, you need to build a catalog, have multiple streams of income, and invest some money in promoting your books. In other words, write as many high-quality books as you can—and then keep writing. Offer your books in all formats such as eBooks, audio, and paperback, and sell merchandise, workbooks, courses, and other things from your website...And then promote the heck out of everything.

But the most important factor is your catalog.

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Sam Kerns

[HTTPS://WWW.RAINMAKERPRESS.COM/MY-BOOKS](https://www.rainmakerpress.com/my-books)

Let's look at an example. Studies show that most indie authors earn about \$1,000 a year from their books. I would argue that it's not necessary to settle for that paltry amount, but for this example, we'll use that figure.

- An author who publishes only one book and does a little promotion can expect to earn about \$12,000 a year based on this figure.
- An author who has three books in their catalog can expect to earn \$36,000 a year.
- An author who has 10 books in their catalog can expect to earn \$120,000 a year.

Granted, not all books earn the same amount of money. For instance, an author may earn \$1,000 a year on one book and only \$500 on another. But this is meant to be a simple example that shows you the importance of having as many quality books in your catalog as possible.

The bottom line?

More books = more sales = more money in your pocket.

Continued on next page...

Sam Kerns

But here's the rub: writing all those books takes time—and that's where the commitment comes in. If you're out for a quick buck, you're probably better off looking elsewhere. But if you're committed to making a full-time living as an author, you've got some work to do.

And here's the good news: it's entirely possible to transition from whatever day job you currently hold to becoming a full-time author. You just need to take an honest look at your financial needs and then create a publishing plan that will get you there.

It's not easy, but trust me, the time and work are definitely worth it.

Sam Kerns

[HTTPS://WWW.RAINMAKERPRESS.COM/MY-BOOKS](https://www.rainmakerpress.com/my-books)

Writers are weird. We have this “thing” inside of us that longs to put our thoughts, knowledge, and creativeness into written form and share it with other people. If you’re a writer, you know what I’m talking about. It’s an irresistible urge that simply won’t be denied.

During this pandemic, we have a lot of time on our hands. So, most writers will use that time to do what they love: write a book. I did, and the result is the book I’m offering in *Write Publish Profit 3.0* . But just writing a book isn’t enough. You need a plan to get those first 100 readers, and I contend that now is the best time to do it.

Why? Because time works in two ways for you during these crazy circumstances.

- You have a lot of it. That means you can write your book and still have the time to plan a launch, which will likely get you those first 100 readers.
- People are reading. During the pandemic, I launched my new book and had the highest pre-orders and sales for any book I’ve ever launched. People are hungry for books right now, and if you offer them what they want, you’ll find your first 100 readers in no time.

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Sam Kerns

So, if I were starting from scratch during this pandemic, here's what I would do to get my first 100 readers:

- Create a pre-order. Amazon's new rules allow you up to one year from the time you create the pre-order until its release.
- Study the book pages of top-selling books in your category and analyze the book descriptions. Then format yours in the same way.
- Work with a cover designer and get the best cover you can afford. Be sure to check out the top 100 bestsellers in your category and ask the designer to make your book look like theirs. I don't mean copy it, but buyers of categories expect their books to look a certain way, and yours needs to "fit in" to catch their attention.
- Do massive research to identify the best keywords and categories for your book.
- Price your pre-order at .99 cents and run Amazon Ads for it. While it's true that you may take a loss on the orders that come from Amazon Ads, those preorders will help you find readers and boost sales on launch day. And if enough people pre-order your book, Amazon will begin promoting it by doing things like adding it to the Hot New Releases list, which will bring you even more readers.

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Sam Kerns

- Write the best book possible. Some people rush to put out a book and are surprised when it doesn't sell. Today's buyers are smart and they demand a lot from authors. To get 100 readers, or any amount, you need to put your best book forward.
- Continue running Amazon Ads until the release date. Then, on release day, run as many book promotions as you can on three consecutive days with top-notch promo sites. After running as many promos as you can afford for three days, let Amazon's algorithm take the lead.

If you do all of this, you will find your first 100 readers—and more. Finding readers isn't difficult. All you need to do is write a great book, position it so that readers can find it, and then sell to them once they land on your book page.

It's not rocket science but does take a solid plan. And once you reach those precious first 100 readers, take a minute to pat yourself on the back. And then get back to work. 😊

Sam Kerns

#WRITEPUBLISHPROFIT3

Jamie Jensen

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Jamie Jensen is an award-winning screenwriter, business strategist, and the creator of *Story School*. To date, she's helped over 1000 entrepreneurs increase their sales by up to 900% with the power of effective storytelling. Prior to helping business leaders connect deeply with their audiences through copy, video, and talks, Jamie worked in story development in Hollywood, assisting writers in both film & television. Jamie is the co-director and executive producer of the feature film "*Hannah Has a Ho-Phase*," which won her the "Best Feature Writer" award at *La Femme Film Festival* in 2013, and she most recently completed her 11th feature-length screenplay.

Get into virtual communities that can help you feel supported, connected, and inspired. This "new normal" means a lot of people are online more and reading more, which is an opportunity for authors. However, if you're crippled by loneliness or lack of inspiration or energy to do the work --- you can't write and reach your audience! So I'd address the loneliness factor first.

I'd write! Kidding (but not) -- I'd start a blog and work aggressively on publishing consistently with solid SEO strategies, guest writes for other blogs and publications, and create a simple, stand-out website that showed readers who I was so they leaned in and wanted more.

#WRITEPUBLISHPROFIT3

David Ford

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David Ford is the owner and founder of *AffPlaybook.com* and the co-founder of *BlogEmpireBuilder.com*. Over the past two decades, he has given talks at industry events, held private workshops across the country, and helped thousands of people start or grow their business through online marketing. David's work has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, CBS News, and Affiliate Summit.

Being an entrepreneur means learning how to not only expect change but welcome it as a normal part of forging your path.

What works today might not work tomorrow. If you understand and welcome that, you'll be ready to adapt to whatever comes your way.

Don't focus on just getting your first 100 readers. Focus on getting 100 readers who will connect with your work. A smaller number of engaged readers will beat out a larger number of casual readers every time. Research who those potential readers are, where they hang out online and the best message to successfully reach them.

NEXT STEPS

Want to learn from these experts and get access to over \$4,000+ worth of premium writing software, tools, training, and resources for only \$49?

You'll want to check out "**Write Publish Profit 3.0**" the biggest Super Stack we've EVER released over at Infostack.io.

Inside, you'll find a hand curated collection of the tools, training, and resources you need to make a bigger impact (and a bigger profit) from your writing.

To learn more and get a notification when this deal goes on sale, head over to:

<https://infostack.io/wpp3>

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