

## Self Publishing Workshop May 6, 2017

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### **Publishing Platforms and Setup:**

There are a number of options available. Start on Amazon, get comfortable, and then decide if you want to stay with KDP Select (Kindle Unlimited – 90 days exclusive e-book rights) or if you want to add other platforms to your publishing arsenal.

- Set up a U.S. Bank Account with your bank and get transit, branch, and account information needed for direct deposits.
- Create KDP Account: <https://kdp.amazon.com/>
- Create Createspace Account: <https://www.createspace.com/>
- Fill out W-8BEN form, so taxes are not withheld from your royalties.

### **Questions to Ask Yourself:**

- Fiction or non-fiction?
- Can I serialize my genre?
- Can I clearly define my target readers?

### **Create Your Author's Brand Based on Your Genre:**

1. Get professional headshot and use it EVERYWHERE
  2. Create a **public** Facebook page
  3. Create a Twitter account
  4. Create a Goodreads account (once you have a book, it can be converted to an author's account, but you can already start networking with potential readers of your genre.
  5. Create a Web Page <http://www.wix.com/>
    - Bio
    - Books with links to Amazon ( consider affiliate marketing)
    - Blog
    - Email Optin
    - Contact
    - Free book once you have one
- 1) Consider creating a Youtube channel where you can share helpful information and add link to your book

## **Marketing**

Marketing is not selling. Marketing is helping people find useful information. Connect with your potential readers early on by:

- Providing expert information
- Creating excitement for your book
- Collecting Beta-Readers
- Getting votes for Cover designs
- Getting votes for Title

## **BUILD YOUR EMAIL LIST EARLY!!!!**

This strategy has a number of benefits:

- If your publishing platform ever disappears, your readers can still find you
- You've made a promise to deliver a book – now you have to stick to it
- You have a loyal following that will boost sales and reviews during launch month

## **How and Where to Find Email Subscribers:**

- Facebook Campaign with giveaway of books from your genre
- Amazon Reviewers of books from your genre (Software: Review Targeter or Review Grabber)
- Goodreads readers with books in your genre

## **Research Amazon Categories, Sub-Categories, and Keywords**

Find and monitor categories and keywords that are in high-demand and have low competition

- Go to Kindle Store Bestsellers:
  - <https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Kindle-Store/zgbs/digital-text>
  - Drill down into lowest category (You want to be a big fish in a small pond)
  - Research Category according to 'RIGHT MARKET – WRITE BOOK'
  - Consider KindleSpy Software (US \$47)
- Research Titles and Covers in your sub category [www.yasiv.com/](http://www.yasiv.com/)

## **Title:**

Proven Attention Grabbers - Derek Doepker – Kindle Bestseller Secrets

Curiosity (such as insider secrets)

Surprise and Humor

Controversy or Contrarian

Specific or Powerful Benefit

Novelty or Unique Mechanism

### **ISBN:**

Library and Archives Canada

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/isbn-canada/Pages/create-account-isbn-canada.aspx>

Let Amazon assign ISBN

### **Cover Design:**

As soon as you have your title, get your cover done early, so you can use it to promote your book and build excitement!

- 99 Designs
- Fiverr
- Other professional book cover designer

### **Writing and Editing:**

Consider using productivity enhancing tools, such as

- Dragon Naturally Speaking  
This software can read back to you, helping you to find missing or misspelled words
- Write Now  
This software helps fiction writers with outline, character development, and more
- An editor is best, but can be expensive.  
ProWritingAid  
This software analyzes your writing for grammar, spelling, sentence structure, overused words, etc.

### **Formatting:**

I worked with <http://www.polgarusstudio.com/> It cost me about US \$25. Fiverr can also be helpful.

- Kindle  
Remove all formatting from your word document  
Add table of contents with hyperlinks to your chapters  
Upload to Kindle  
Check Kindle Previewer
- Createspace  
Remove all formatting from your word document  
Add table of contents with chapters and page numbers  
Create even and odd page headers with your name and book title  
Create sections, so you can control headers on new chapters and blank pages  
Upload to Createspace and order proof copy

### **Descriptions and Blurbs:**

Copy-writing is an art. Here are some tips from Bryan Cohen:

The four parts to a bestselling blurb:

- 1) A short, punchy, above-the-fold tagline
- 2) A present tense synopsis that uses as few words as possible to demonstrate the plot's best selling points
- 3) A selling paragraph that uses emotional adjectives and genre cues to get readers in the right mood
- 4) A call-to-action at the end that asks readers to buy

### **Reviews:**

Getting reviews strategy from Derek Doepker – Kindle Bestseller Secrets

1. Offer incentive to your readers for filling out a quick questionnaire about your book by deadline (Amazon gift card and free copy of book)
2. Respond to replies with questionnaire.
3. Thank you, enter into raffle, ask for review on Amazon with direct link to book
4. Follow up with non-responders shortly before deadline
5. Announce raffle winner and extend free incentive offer to book by a few days

### **Launch:**

Advice from Adam Houge – The Fanbase Formula

- Launch over 5 days to get a trickle of sales and reviews
- Launch under 30 days to get into Hot New Releases and Movers and Shakers
- Set price at 99 cents

### **Amazon Marketing Tools:**

- Enroll in KDP Select for the first little while to get exposure
- Use KDP free giveaways and countdown deals
- Use AMS Sponsored Products ads and target keywords of bestsellers in your genre

**Additional Resources:**

- Derek Doepker – Kindle Bestseller Secrets
- Adam Houge – The Fanbase Formula
- Bryon Cohen – Email Funnels and Copy-writing
- Wesley Atkins – KindleSpy and Kindle Roi
- Debbie Drum –Book Review Targeter
- Alinka Rutkowska – Book Marketing for Authors  
<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00WWUR1O4>
- Geoff Shaw – Udemy (promo code KINDLING-SPECIAL)  
Right Market – Write Book  
Reverse engineer riveting fiction  
Dead Easy Dialogue  
Productivity

## **Does CASL also apply to my business practices outside of Canada?**

A word on building email lists by contacting Amazon reviewers and our Canadian Anti Spam Legislation: Amazon redirects Canadian customers to Amazon.ca, so unless the book whose reviewers you are targeting is exclusively available on Amazon.com, you shouldn't run into problems. It is always safer to get people to Opt In. Make sure you have the option to 'Unsubscribe' at the bottom of your email.

If you are marketing in other countries, you need to comply with their laws. CASL includes a list of countries that have their own spam laws and, as long as you are compliant with their spam laws, you are exempt from CASL. Since CASL sets a new standard for spam laws around the world, being compliant with CASL will help you be compliant with other laws.

While the U.S. has enacted an anti-spam law promoting an opt-out model, Canada has adopted an opt-in model. The main difference between these systems is the fact that under an opt-out model, businesses can send promotional email messages unless the recipient informs the sender that it no longer wishes to receive such emails, or "opts out" of receiving them.

## Step 1 - Right Market

## Step 2 - Write Book

- Check ranking of #100, should be > 25,000
- If yes, check ranking of top Indie book in sub-category < 2,500 (the lower the better)
- If yes, track
  - #20 (~6,000)
  - #40 (~12,000)
  - #80 (~ 18,000)
  - #100 (~ > 25,000) the lower the rank, the harder the market
- If yes, track the top 5 to 10 books and follow authors (yasiv.com)
- Check to see if top books are from the same authors (this could mean more demand than supply)
- Check books' other subcategories
- Make second list of hot new releases and check successful authors
- Add 'best guess' of who will be successful
- Pick category that supports Short Reads (10,000 words and up)
- If consistent sales, check reviews for 1 star, 3 star, 5 star
- Notice # of pages, publication date, cover, title, subtitle, series name, pen name, font, blurb, look inside, style
- Copy cover thumbnails of top sellers into separate Word document to help with a cover design that will both blend in with others of the genre yet stand out
- Read books with highest ratings
- Analyze themes, story devices, characters, common features
- Write Short Read if fitting for category and go for it!

# The Ultimate Cheat Sheet for Better Book Descriptions

Bryan Cohen

## Cheat Sheet

The end goal of every book description should be to sell more books. Most authors stop after writing a synopsis, but that leaves them three key elements short of a proper book description.

### Here are the four parts to a bestselling blurb:

- A short, punchy, above-the-fold tagline
- A present tense synopsis that uses as few words as possible to demonstrate the plot's best selling points
- A selling paragraph that uses emotional adjectives and genre cues to get readers in the right mood
- A call-to-action at the end that asks readers to buy

### Part 1: Tagline

Authors often don't use taglines, which is a mistake in the mobile age, where only a few lines of description text are displayed. Grammar isn't important in a tag line. What's important is enticing readers to click the "Add to Cart" or "Read More" buttons.

Examples of strong tag lines:

"Start and Finish the Book You Were Born to Write"

"Without sleep, her life became a living nightmare."

"Bram Stoker wanted fame. What he got was pure evil."

"A missing girl. An international underworld. A PI who won't quit."

### Part 2: Synopsis

Most authors write half-decent synopses, but there are a few problems that tend to crop up. They often do a fair job of summarizing the plot, but they may fail to entice readers of a certain genre. For instance, if it's dark urban fantasy, readers don't care about the history of the main character. They care about his or her emotional stakes in the plot.

Examples of a strong synopsis:



"The world is driven by wizards, gods, and an imperial space marine 20,000 years into our future. Fame-hungry female mercenary Zicca is willing to skirt the edges of her warrior's code if it brings her the fame she desires. Her hopes of making a name for herself by spying on assassins are dashed when she's forced to kill the assassin she was hired to watch.

### **Part 3: Selling Paragraph**

Few authors use this, and as a result they fail to evoke an emotional reaction from their readers. It's also an opportunity to let folks know if the book is part of a series, what genre it's in, and if the author has anything of note worth mentioning. Additionally, it taps into the power of the word "you," which is a proven selling term.

Example of a strong selling paragraph:

"What Must Come is the second book in David Carson's Planet Wars, a military sci-fi space opera. If you like Tom Clancy, Stephen King, and James Michener, then you'll love a series that combines all of their best traits in a fast-paced, captivating, intergalactic adventure."

### **Part 4: Call to Action (CTA)**

Most authors end their description with a synopsis and hope the reader will scroll up and buy. The CTA asks the reader to do it, which much improves the chances of it happening.

Examples of strong CTAs:

"Buy this classic romance filled with sensuous heat today!"

"Buy this book if you want to change your life today!"

"Buy the book to start reading Marion Alexander's tale of tragedy and love today!"

"Buy this book to continue the epic series today!"