

Profiles of business book publishers; how to write, pitch, promote.

The Nitch Witch's Guide to Business Book Publishers, 2nd edition

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- ✓ *Discover the essential components to a successful book proposal*
 - ✓ *Get insider information on US business book publishers—how they deal and who to contact*
 - ✓ *Learn how to promote your book for maximum impact*

Acknowledgements

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Some motivational voices to get you on the road to writing...

"One hundred percent of the shots you don't take don't go in."

—Wayne Gretzky

"In any moment of decision the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing."

—Theodore Roosevelt

"Why not go out on a limb? That's where the fruit is."

—Will Rogers

"You cannot acquire experience by making experiments. You cannot create experience. You must undergo it."

—Albert Camus

"A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and a deadline."

—Harvey Mackay

"Most people never run far enough on their first wind to find out they've got a second. Give your dreams all you've got and you'll be amazed at the energy that comes out of you."

—William James

"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it." —Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do."

—Samuel Johnson

"What is written without effort is in general read without pleasure."

—Samuel Johnson

"The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas."

—Linus Pauling

"A life spent in making mistakes is not only more honourable but more useful than a life spent doing nothing."

—George Bernard Shaw

Introduction

This guide is a compilation of the business book publishers across the country. The companies are listed alphabetically, by name.

How the Guide Was Created

The initial list of whom to include in this guide was determined using the latest edition of *Literary Market Place*. Although they, too, attempt to be as accurate as possible, we found that between final revisions and publication, a number of publishers had changed hands or ceased business. All address and contact information was verified before we proceeded.

We have also added—where available—email contact information and web site URLs. Please note that many publishers have email available for inquiry or business communications only. Most do not accept submissions or job inquiries electronically. Each publisher has also listed titles/projects that are new, best-selling, or representative of their publishing house. We hope this information will better help you target your market.

Using the Guide

The intent of this guide is to provide you—the prospective author—advance intelligence about your market. Use this guide to target your skills and interests to a publisher's scope and needs.

Use this guide to research a publisher's releases. With active web links, if you open this ebook on your desktop while you have an open Internet connection, you can connect to the company's web site with one click of the mouse. The publishers' sites provide more in-depth profile of the companies, as well as information such as: job opportunities, writer's guidelines, current publishing lists, and additional contact information.

Corrections/Updates

As diligent as we might be, businesses change. If you find any information that is out-of-date or publishers that you think should be added or removed from the guide, please drop us an email at iwriteinc@aol.com to let us know. We appreciate your assistance.

Good luck in your publishing quests!

Preparing Your Manuscript

You probably already know what you want to say. The content of most business-related books comes out of decades of experience, research into new processes and procedures, or successful execution of a new solution to an old problem.

Collect Your Information

The first step in preparing a manuscript is to pull all of your information and resources into one place. Sort your raw information by type: notes, data, case studies, testimonials, etc. This will make it easier for you to organize it later.

The next step is the outline. This will become the table of contents for your book. Follow a logical flow from beginning to end. Each chapter should be a major topic or a separate step in a process. Try to make most chapters of equal length; it's easier on the reader. If you find that you will have many pages of numbers or graphs in any one chapter, consider making an appendix out of the data. It will help the flow, not having your text interrupted for so long.

The third step is to organize your raw materials into your chapters. Whether you file everything into separate manila folders with labels clearly identifying the contents or stack materials in some reasonable order across the dining room table is up to you. Make notes about what you want to include in each chapter (e.g., statistics, case studies, success stories, etc.). Check off what you have and highlight what you still need to collect before you can write that chapter.

Pitch or Write

Many books about getting published will suggest coming up with the idea for a book and pitching it to a publisher before completing the manuscript. The idea behind this is to get the contract—along with an advance—and use the advance money to cushion you during your writing time.

A word of caution about the pitch-first approach: Writing is a lot more difficult and time consuming than you anticipate. If you're a professional writer and all you do is write, and you have a good idea of how long it will take to come up with 200,000 words worth including in your book, then go ahead and pitch before you write. However, one thing you do not want to do, especially as a first-time author, is to miss a deadline.

If you are a first-time author, publishers will probably request several sample chapters from you before they make a decision on your book. Since you have to write something anyway, I suggest writing at least half of the book before you begin submitting it to publishers. That way, you will have a 50-50 chance of finishing the book and you will have a better idea of how long it will take you to write it.

Write Your Book

Once you have all of your information organized and are ready to begin writing, set aside a block of time each day to devote to the project. Make your writing a habit. At the end of each writing session, print out what you have written and put it in a binder or folder. This will make the material easier to review and edit and it will also give you a sense of accomplishment to watch the number of pages grow each day.

Every person develops his or her own writing technique over time, but here are a few techniques to try when you first start writing.

- Fight the urge to edit. Work to develop a first draft of your entire book before you go back and perfect the chapters. Honing and crafting each individual section will impede overall progress and may be wasted efforts if later it turns out that the content requires changes due to information written later in the book.
- Leave the introduction for last. It's nearly impossible to introduce a book that has yet to be written. Write the meat of your book and leave the first chapter for last.
- Use the active voice as much as possible. Overuse of the passive voice can make even the most interesting material sound boring.
- Unless you are writing for a very specific, highly skilled audience, watch your use of industry vernacular. A goal of good writing is that anyone in your target audience should be able to pick up your book and understand the material.
- Add important information in bulleted lists, numbered steps, or tables. The reader's eye is naturally attracted to material highlighted in this manner. On the other hand, it is much harder to read blocks of text that are italicized, underlined, or run in all uppercase.

Edit Your Manuscript

One of the downsides of the rise in self publishing is the noticeable lack of quality in the writing. Not the content itself, but the language used to communicate that content. Learn to edit your work or hire someone to edit it for you.

It is extremely difficult to proofread your own work. You know what you're trying to say and so that's what your brain reads—even if words and punctuation are missing! Here are a few tips to make proofreading easier:

- Print out your pages. Online editing is difficult even for experienced editors. Things always look different on paper.
- Don't trust your spell checking software exclusively. Just because a word is spelled correctly does not necessarily make it the correct word. For instance, "I herd that you were looking for a qualified accountant to write a book about financial principals." That went through me spell check just fine. Get it? Mistakes are going to get into print. They get into print more often when you don't proofread.

- Try reading each line backwards. You'll be more apt to notice incorrect wording if it's not in context.
- Set aside time for editing/proofreading separate from writing. For instance, if you write late at night, do your proofreading over coffee in the morning. Distance yourself from your creative flow.
- Get someone else to look at your manuscript. Even an untrained eye is going to notice mistakes when reading something fresh.

If you are planning to publish through an established publisher, you will have a professional editor looking at your material before it is printed. You still want your material to be as clean and accurate as you can get it before you submit it to the publisher.

Publishing Options

Established Publisher or Self Publish?

There are pros and cons for each type of publishing depending on your reason for producing a book. Here are some things to consider:

Standard Publishing

This route has less financial risk. Once you sell your book to the publisher, they are responsible for producing and printing the book. You receive royalties on the number of books sold. If your primary goal in publishing a book is a source of income, it is easier to get wider distribution with an established publisher, therefore greater sales.

The downside is you have less control over how your book is positioned, marketed, or promoted in the marketplace. Also you receive a smaller share of the profits of your book (typically 5–15% of the wholesale price of the book rather than the 75–80% of the retail price if you sold it yourself).

Self Publishing

This route is easier today than any time previously. Options include digital printing, on-demand printing, and electronic books. Short run printers will produce as few as fifty books, but the larger the number printed, the lower the per unit cost. Self publishing allows you more freedom in selling, promoting, and marketing your book. It also allows you to update the book when you see fit, not when the publisher deems it saleable.

There are many books, services, and websites that go into detail on self-publishing. The topic is too large to cover here. Do your research before you jump in. It's not difficult, but like anything else, it's easier when you understand the basics.

Ten Steps to an Effective Book Proposal

If you decide to go the standard publishing route, the first step in the process is to submit a book proposal to a publisher.

1. **Select your target publishers.**

Use this guide or research the organizations in your profession that publish related books. Go to that publisher's web site to verify current contact information and locate any submission guidelines they might have. Follow their guidelines. Believe them if they say they don't want self-help books. Believe them if they say no electronic queries. You have to work with the system here, not try to change it. Don't give the publisher a reason to reject your idea before you even submit it.

It is standard industry practice to submit proposals to one publisher at a time, give them a window for a response, then move to the next on your list. If you want to cut down the wait time, submit to two or three publishers at one time, but be sure to indicate on your cover letter that this is a simultaneous submission. You do not need to inform each publisher to whom you have also submitted, but you do need to let them know that other publishers are considering the proposal at the same time. Research the publisher and direct your proposal to the editor you think is most appropriate to receive your submission. No "To Whom It May Concern" submissions.

2. **Write a brief introduction including the title of your book and a short description.**

Briefly introduce yourself, the title/subtitle of your book, and a short description of the contents. This should be about fifty or fewer words. Think of what the blurb on the back cover of your book would contain. You want to hook the editor by describing the unique position or angle your book is taking.

3. **Indicate your target audience.**

You need to tell the editor who would be interested in buying your book and why. Keep in mind that even if your objective is to have your book published in order to gain a competitive advantage in your business, the publisher's objective is to sell books. If you don't know who will buy your book, the publisher is not going to figure it out for you.

4. **What else in on the market that is similar to your book? What is on the market that your book will complement?**

Ditto for market research. Consider this. You are competing for the editor's attention against hundreds of manuscript submissions each year. If you can position your book in the marketplace and explain to the editor how your book is different, superior, more complete, has a broader reach, or deeper focus, you've done much of the work the editor needs to prepare to sell the book to the publisher. This puts you head and shoulders above the crowd.

5. **What will you do to sell or market your book?**

Eighty percent of all books published are nonfiction. However, publishers' marketing budgets don't correspond. Most of their marketing efforts are on popular fiction and books that already show signs of interest in the marketplace. An essential component to your book proposal is what you are personally willing to do to market your book.

Are you willing to speak to your professional associations? Do you run training or informational workshops? Are you willing to travel? Give radio interviews? Don't oversell what you will reasonably do, but take some time to brainstorm a number of feasible ideas given your work and home schedules.

6. **Indicate why you selected this publisher for your submission.**

Let the editor know that you researched the publisher by listing related titles or indicating how your book would enhance their publication range.

7. **Briefly describe your credentials for writing this book.**

When submitting a proposal for a business/professional book, you're selling yourself as much as the manuscript. Since you will be including a résumé with the package, just highlight briefly how you are singularly qualified to write this book.

8. **Add a brief closing.**

Thank the editor for his time and close. Again, briefly include preferred contact information for yourself and you may also include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a response. (This is only necessary if the manuscript was sent unsolicited. If the editor asked to see a submission based on a previous conversation, no need for a SASE.)

9. **Include the table of contents and a sample chapter or two (not the first chapter).**

Text pages should always be printed out in a simple font (Times Roman or Courier) double-spaced with one-inch margins all around. This is the easiest format to read—and editors read a lot of manuscripts. Also put a header on each page with the working title, your last name, and a page number.

Unless an electronic submission is requested by the editor, do not send the material on disk. If the editor has requested electronic submission, follow her specifications or if not provided, format the material into PDFs (portable document format). There is more chance of compatibility and less chance of transmitting a virus.

10. **Include your résumé or c.v. and a list of your other publications (articles or books you've written or co-written), if applicable.**

Put all of the materials in a large envelope so that the pages do not need to be folded. If you want any of your material returned to you, include a large self-addressed, stamped envelope in the package as well. Address to the specific editor and send first class mail. As they say on detergent bottles, repeat as necessary. Good luck!

A Note on Follow-up Calls

It is perfectly acceptable to phone the editor after a week or so to make sure they have received your materials. This is also a good time to ask about their response timeframes and to reiterate that your submission is a simultaneous submission, if applicable. Be friendly, don't push. Editors are typically low paid, overworked individuals who in some cases are barely qualified for the jobs they hold. Your time may indeed be more valuable than the editors', but they are the persons firmly placed between you and your goal of a published book.

One contact call and a second follow-up call if the editor has not responded in the allotted time are acceptable, and that's it. Further calls most probably will not help your case. If an editor has not or can not make a decision on your book, it's fair to move on to the next publisher on your list and submit your proposal to them.

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Rates vary. Send cover letter with current résumé.

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Accepts unsolicited/unagented manuscripts.

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Email to: info@addicusbooks.com.

Submission Guidelines: Send cover letter with a one-page overview of the book; two or three sample chapters; a chapter-by-chapter outline; number of photos or illustrations; author's background/credentials; target completion date; market/audience information; word count/number of pages.

Submit to: Acquisitions Editor.

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Do not send any hard-copy materials until requested.

Query Guidelines: Send overview of project and author's credentials to [seibold\(at\)agatepublishing.com](mailto:seibold(at)agatepublishing.com).

Profiles of business book publishers; how to write, pitch, promote.

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