

Critically analyzes and ranks BookLocker and the Big Five print-on-demand (POD) companies.

Self Publishing POD Companies: BookLocker vs AuthorHouse, iUniverse, Xlibris, Lulu, and BookSurge

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Lulu, and BookSurge

Laurence E. Dalton



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BookSurge

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[\*\*How to Pick a Self Publishing POD Company\*\*](#)



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## Chapter 2 The BookLocker Publishing Package

In this chapter I will describe the BookLocker publishing package. In Chapter 3, I will compare the price of the BookLocker package with the prices of the equivalent packages of the Big Five: AuthorHouse, iUniverse, Xlibris, Lulu and BookSurge.

### *The BookLocker Publishing Package*

#### **BookLocker's advertisement**

The following is taken from an advertisement, apparently written by Angela Hoy, co-owner and CEO of BookLocker, which appeared in the March 12, 2008 issue of WritersWeekly.com. Also see the June 11, 2008 issue [POD PRICE COMPARISON](#)

The advertisement compares the publishing offer of BookLocker with that of the Big Four (AuthorHouse, iUniverse, Xlibris, and Lulu).

BookLocker.com: \$492

iUniverse: \$599 (recently acquired by AuthorHouse)

Lulu: \$641

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Xlibris: \$1383

AuthorHouse: \$1567

(As regard Lulu, the reader should note that in the July 9, 2008 issue of Angela's e-zine, WritersWeekly.com, \$838 is listed as the price for a package equivalent to Book Locker's publishing program.)

"Prices are based on the least expensive package offered by each publisher on similar offers targeting U.S. Authors. Fees include setup, original cover design, print proof, e-book creation, up to 25 interior photos/graphics, an ISBN, barcode, a listing on the publisher's website and distribution by Ingram, all within 6 weeks".

The package prices of the Big Four listed above were estimated by Angela Hoy and confirmed as accurate by the Big Four POD companies.

Angela Hoy writes that when each company "contacted me I sent them the information from my spreadsheet and they confirmed the costs were accurate."

See [poddymouth.wordpress.com](http://poddymouth.wordpress.com) (now defunct)-- December 17, 2007:

Poddy Mouth argued on his (or her) blog that an equivalent package at Lulu would cost less than \$641. He asserts, without offering any evidence, that most authors at Lulu don't pay the company's vendors for publishing services, but rather do their own computer work such as formatting, etc.

Poddy Mouth shouldn't be comparing walnuts with bananas. Angela is showing what her \$492 BookLocker package would cost at the 4 big POD companies if an author, lacking in computer

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skills, hires someone to do the interior formatting and other tasks necessary to prepare a book for publication.

For Poddy Mouth to compare the price of the BookLocker publishing package to Lulu's free basic package or their \$99 packages is ridiculous. The author would have had to pay Lulu's vendors several hundred dollars to make his or her manuscript PDF ready (Lulu did not at that time offer a publishing package which included formatting, etc.). Poddy should not have compared the cost of a ton of metal with the price of a brand-new ready-to-drive Cadillac.

Several months ago Poddy promised on his/her blog that a detailed refutation of Angela's advertisement would appear, but it has not. It is perhaps a good thing, as I don't think calling Angela a liar again would accomplish anything. Perhaps an apology would.

Here is an update. Well, I see Angela put a \$500 bounty on Poddy. Actually, the money was offered to anyone who supplied the identity of "Poddy Mouth." Shortly thereafter he or she deleted the blog. Enough said.

### ***BookLocker and the Big Five***

I think that Angela Hoy's comparison of the BookLocker package with the equivalent package found at each of the Big Four is fair.

However, I have had to modify her advertisement:

BookLocker package still costs \$492.

The equivalent package at Lulu is now \$624.95.

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I think the equivalent package at iUniverse would be the Express package, which includes early publication, and costs \$1199.

The equivalent package at AuthorHouse is still \$1567.

The Xlibris equivalent package is still \$1383.

Also, in addition to the four POD companies that Angela deals with, I have added a fifth company -- BookSurge.

The price of the equivalent package at Amazon's BookSurge is \$799. This POD company is the printing arm of Amazon.com and will probably play a big role in the POD publishing world -- for more on this, see Amazon Controversy in Chapter 1.

### ***BookLocker package features:***

The BookLocker package has the following 15 features (note that "free" means without extra charge):

1. Reasonable package price: This price should be about \$500. I have chosen the least expensive publishing package at each of the Big Five POD companies, provided that these are similar to the package of BookLocker.

2. Trade paperback -- cover price of \$14.95 for the book described in this list

3. Perfect bound format

4. 6" x 9" black-and-white interior

5. 248 pages

6. Interior formatting -- done by the company

7. Custom color cover -- provided by the company

8. ISBN -- supplied by company or author

9. EAN barcode -- supplied by company

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10 Electronic manuscript submission -- MS Word, WordPerfect, etc.

11 Book production time -- 6 weeks, free

12 Royalties -- 35% through the company store, 15% through the trade

13 Distribution of book through company store, a major wholesaler like Ingram or Baker & Taylor, and a major retailer like Amazon.com or BarnesandNoble.com.

14 e-book creation -- free

15 Insertion of up to 25 images – free

All of the above features are provided free by BookLocker, that is without extra fees.

Fulfillment involves taking orders, delivering the books, processing payments, and handling customer complaints, etc. All POD companies mentioned in this book handle fulfillment unless otherwise indicated.

### ***Copyright registration, PCN and LCCN:***

Some comments from Angela Hoy regarding additional services other POD companies offer.

July 18, 2007

[\*POD Secrets Revealed: Upselling Authors On Inflated Copyright And LCCN Registration Fees\*](#) By Angela Hoy, WritersWeekly.com

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“If you want to register a copyright for your book, you can do so yourself for only \$45.”

Xlibris.com “...will be happy to register your copyright for you...for a whopping \$249! Whoa!!!”

“The government will be very happy to give you a Preassigned Control Number (PCN) before your book is published, or a Library of Congress Control Number (LCCN) after your book is published, at no charge! Isn't that nice of them?”

Xlibris.com “will charge you \$99 if you want them to do it.”

“AuthorHouse will charge you \$75.”

In deciding which package from each of the Big Five POD companies should be considered equivalent to the BookLocker package, I have taken the conservative route. Where there is any doubt, I have chosen the least expensive package, provided only that it is similar to that offered by BookLocker.

Where necessary, extras are added to the Big Five packages in order to make them equivalent to the BookLocker Package, and I have added the price of these extras to the Big Five package prices.

I have focused on several features that may affect the price of the equivalent publishing package at each of the Big Five:

1. The price of the publishing package may be too high for no apparent reason other than to increase profits.
  2. The custom cover is often expensive compared to the template cover.
  3. Early publication fees are outrageously high.
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4. E-book creation is a good way to test the market for your book without spending a lot of money, but some companies charge for this service.

5. Fees charged to insert the images supplied by the author are often outrageously high.

#### Additional extras

In addition to these features, I will comment on examples of expensive and unnecessary add-ons or extras which the author is often talked into adding to his or her publishing package.

These unnecessary and expensive extras are divided into two categories:

1. Marketing
2. Miscellaneous stuff -- book returns policy, etc.

Unless otherwise stated, the quotes in this book which are by Angela Hoy, co-owner and CEO of [booklocker.com](http://booklocker.com), are from her e-zine, [WritersWeekly.com](http://WritersWeekly.com) or from [booklocker.com](http://booklocker.com)

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