



The Well-Fed Self-Publisher: How to Turn One Book into a Full-Time Living

Peter Bowerman

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Landing a publisher has never been harder. So many want to get published, but few understand the enormous challenges, the fierce competition, and the merciless reality of bookstore shelf. But, what if you are one of the lucky ones to land a publisher? Well, here's what you can count on: anemic royalty rates, 18 to 24 months to publication, and giving up the rights to your book. And guess what? You'll still be expected to do most of the marketing yourself! There's a better way. Thanks to the Internet, self-publishing has become easier, more viable, and more potentially lucrative than ever before. In 2000, veteran commercial freelancer Peter Bowerman self-published *The Well-Fed Writer* (an award winning Book-of-the-Month Club selection) and in 2005, he did the same with its companion, *TWWF: Back For Seconds* (triple-award-finalist). The books became "standards" in the lucrative field of commercial freelancing: writing for businesses, large and small, and for hourly rates of \$60-125+ or more. As this is written, together, the two books – about 50,000 copies in print – had earned him a full-time living for over five years. The definition of a full-time living (straight from the horse's mouth): Okay, we're not talking "picking-out-chateaux-in-the-South-of-France" kind of money, but the book paid all my bills (including a couple of print runs each year), allowed me to stay the course in funding my retirement account, stay completely out of debt, and take a few nice vacations each year. Would that work for you? *The Well-Fed Self-Publisher* is a 300-page, detailed, step-by-step blueprint that explains exactly how the author did what he did. According to Bowerman, "This book is for those who really want to turn their passionate creative efforts into real 'pay-the-mortgage' money." Acknowledging that "self-publishing" carries an enormous amount of negative baggage (and deservedly so), the author says the focus of the book is to dramatically raise the bar on quality, for starters: I'll show you how to create a book indistinguishable in quality from one produced by a reputable publishing company; how to do a far better job of marketing and promoting that book than a publisher ever could; and how to make far more money than you ever would with that publisher. And by doing it all yourself, you control the timetable (potentially shaving 12 to 18 months off production). Plus, you retain all the rights, allowing you to leverage the brand you've created into a host of profitable "spinoff" businesses – each with its own income stream. Starting from perhaps not-so-obvious fundamentals ("Write a book people will want to read"), the book progresses through a discussion of the significant limitations of the conventional publishing model (despite the best intentions of most publishers). Then, in a nod to the outright panic and terror most "creatives" experience at the mere mention of the term "sales and marketing," the book provides an entire early chapter to help demystify these often daunting concepts. As Bowerman is quick to point out, "Success as a self-publisher is far more a function of a process than an aptitude. It's far less about some way you have to be than it is about a bunch of things you have to do." At that point, the book kicks into gear, offering up discussing in-depth discussions of book production, distribution, marketing, promotion, publicity (through one's own web site, the Internet, radio, article writing, bookstores and far beyond), Amazon, spinoff businesses, and an entire chapter on the controversial so-called "revolution" known as "POD publishing" (print-on-demand). The book finishes with five appendices offering up resources and a time line for the self-publisher, a primer on foreign rights, and more.

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