



BECOMING AN AUTHOR

Writing an ebook is one of the easiest ways to become an author. These days, you don't need a publishing house or literary agent to get published. The Internet and modern software packages have made it possible for anyone who wants to create his/her own ebook. Even if you decide you don't have a knack for writing, there are other ways to put together an informative piece of work that will sell and will help to get you labeled as an expert. All it takes to start is having a passion for or knowledge about some popular niche that you want to market in ebook format.

FINDING YOUR NICHE

People who want to become authors usually have a specialty that they want to pursue. However, it is a wise business owner who finds the hot niches first and then goes out to write about them. This way, you know there already is a market for the ebook before you even put a single word to paper. While you do want to go into something that sets you on fire, there is probably one angle above others that will help it to sell more. Remember that people will buy ebooks because they have a problem that they want solved or they need more information on a specific issue that will enhance their lives. If your passion is jewelry, you may find that an ebook on how to pick out an engagement ring might be a hot topic. You want your niche to be specific enough to attract the demographic you already have as an audience, but not so wide that it seems too broad-based to offer any useful information.

If you're not sure where to start, check out hot topics on popular blogs by going to techcrunch.com. See what excites people and what questions people have about a certain topic or dilemma in their lives. Look at the news, see what's on everyone's mind, and try to develop a topic niche that can help address those issues. Right now, economic topics are very much in demand from saving money to making money in a tight economy.

FLAUNT YOUR CREDENTIALS

The author is just as important as the topic, and you want to flaunt your credentials if you have them. Give the reader some idea of why you are especially qualified to write this ebook. Your credentials don't have to be a Ph.D., but they can be some inspiring story that shows why you are the one to help your customers resolve some issue in their lives. Credentials come in many forms, not all of them being academic. They come in life experience, business achievements, and the school of hard knocks. Whatever it is that makes you qualified, make sure your reader knows why you wrote your book.

Writing Is Easy, Right?

Many people who have never sat down to write an actual article think that writing as a craft is simple. You just start with one word, and you follow that with another. It's also usually all in your native language. How hard can that be, right? Well, once they start to write, they may find that they don't have a clue on where to start. If they've never written an ebook, they may not understand how to properly organize their thoughts so that enough information is conveyed in an easy and highly digestible form for the reader. In fact, once they sit down to look at a blank sheet of paper, they may actually freeze because they have no set plan in place. That's why it's important to sketch out an outline before you start. Let's first take a look at how long an average ebook might be and how to set up chapters to fill the pages.

WHAT'S A GOOD LENGTH?

In general, ebooks can range from 50 to 100 pages. Unlike published books that range in the 200- to 300-page range, ebooks are much shorter since they are electronic in nature and are meant for an audience that isn't reading them like a novel. They are informational mostly, although adding some humor and entertainment is permissible. People who buy ebooks are looking for solutions, not entertainment, and they want it to be informative, not pure fluff. They also want it to be a quick read, as they're used to reading short Web articles or even short reports. For this audience, 50 pages is enough, but never exceed 100 pages.

YOUR OUTLINE

Within those 50 pages, it's common to see about 10 chapter headings. That gives you about five pages for each major topic in your ebook. There's no right or wrong way to divide chapters up, and you can make some longer and others shorter, but on average, most will be five pages long of written text. You can add pictures, but those shouldn't count towards the text. That means that when you sit down to brainstorm your ebook, you will want 10 main headings.

Within those 10 chapter headings, you may end up with several subheadings. These break out your major topic into easily digestible packets of information that people can scan via the table of contents. We will discuss how to automate the creation of the table of contents so that each of those headings and subheadings with corresponding page numbers is inserted at the front of your book. For now, realize that you will need to brainstorm an outline with 10 major points and three or more subheadings each.