



Publishing Facts

A few very important facts about the publishing industry to help authors understand the reality of publishing and selling books

Selling Books Is Not Easy

More than 300,000 books are published in the USA alone each year. But only 30% of Americans read 1-5 books a year. We wish more people would rediscover the joy of reading, but selling your book is not super easy when you consider how few people actually read.

Your Book Likely Will Not Be On The Shelf

A store will only stock your book if there is a demand for it. With literally millions of book titles, the space on the bookstore shelf is limited. Most books are sold online.

Mistakes Will Be Made

Allow for human error. We try our best to be perfect, but all publishers (at least for now) use humans to create books. and almost all books published have at least one mistake. Even the first Harry Potter had a spelling error in the first edition.

Judging the Book By The Cover

Cover design is much more complicated than you might realize. You might want lots of color and imagery, but often, it's best to keep it simple with a bold title and an eye-catching image instead of a "loud" cover.

Famous People Sell The Most

Unless you are famous, do not expect your book to hit the New York Times bestseller list. It's rare that there will be a long line out the door at your first book signing – would you go to an unknown author's book signing? Locally, you're likely known, so invite your friends and family! If the signing goes well, other stores are likely to hear about it, and they might just offer you another event.

Market Your Own Book

Publishing is "venture capitalism" which means that the publisher puts up all the money, taking the financial risks. You are the investment. You need to come up with all the bright ideas and clever ways to get your idea or story to spread. Your publisher provides marketing and equips you with many tools and resources, but the only one who determines your book's success is you.

Publicity Doesn't Sell Books

Getting on *The Today Show* is fun and great for exposure, but it won't sell a million copies of your book. Neither will a ton of ads. What you need is people to be talking about your book, sharing links and posting reviews (think Amazon and Barnes & Noble). Social media influencers are a better resource than main stream media. Give away a book to an influencer and ask them to share a link to buy your book.