

INDIE AUTHOR'S E-BOOK LAUNCH CHECKLIST



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Congratulations on making the choice to publish your book on your own! As you move through the process, you'll find there are a lot of things you'll need in order to make your book a success.

Below is a checklist that will help you foresee what tasks you better complete prior to your launch. Don't let the length of this list overwhelm you. It's divided by stages in the publishing process. Of note, some of these stages happen concurrently.

You will need all below optimizations and tasks completed as one of the worst things that can happen to an author on Amazon is to get a lot of traffic with a very poor conversion. This will immediately flag the book to Amazon's algorithms as a "loser," and it'll never get recommended.

We would like a shorter list but all the tasks are so important we wanted to write them with associated explanations even for a newbie. So let's begin.

✓ **FINDING YOUR BOOK IDEA**

If you have just decided to publish a book and not sure which subject to choose among several ideas, we highly recommend you to use tools designed for this purpose. There are almost 7 million-plus Kindle books alone out there that compete for the reader's attention. Choosing the wrong idea, genre, and category may lead to failure. We would suggest [THIS TOOL](#) as it is widely used by 20,000+ authors and in the market for 6+ years. Simple to use yet give you very good direction on your journey and save tons of time while you are researching your idea.

✓ **CHOOSING YOUR BOOK TITLE**

You must use relevant keywords for discoverability. As you may know Amazon is a search engine itself. People (and you too probably) are using Amazon search bar to find whatever within their interest. By doing your [kindle keyword research](#), you can find out what terms people are actually searching for.

Once you know this, you'll know what words people are using when they are looking for your book. So using those keywords in your book title, description, subtitle, author page is a very good idea. Nothing beats a title that shows exactly what people are typing into Amazon.

The best non-fiction title is the one that uses the words of the customer. In order to figure out WHAT people are typing into Amazon, make sure to learn about [Kindle keywords](#), or use a [special tool](#) that will pull this information for you. Although we wouldn't suggest using title generators for book titles they may at least spark some new ideas, just check [APPENDIX-A](#) for a list of genre-specific title generators. It is also a good idea to check Amazon and Google if your book title is already taken.

✓ IDENTIFY THE HOOK FOR YOUR BOOK

The hook is intended to grab your reader's attention. It's a short, one or two-sentence "elevator pitch" that describes what your book is about. In business terms, it's your unique selling proposition (USP).

You want to identify your hook before writing and then craft the entire book around it. Though you don't have to use a tool to find your hook A [KEYWORD TOOL](#) can give you very good ideas very fast you may have never thought before.

Every writer believes their book is awesome, but the truth is most books are not awesome to readers. Give readers what they want by doing your research in advance.

✓ COVER DESIGN

Believe it or not, cover design may make or break your book's success (design includes fonts you use on the cover).

There are many free and paid tools out there but we would suggest [CANVA](#) as it also has a free plan and DFY templates. Covers, both as full-size and as thumbnail images, must stop readers in their tracks.

The best strategy is to study covers in your genre and note appropriate and typical color palettes, fonts, themes, images, etc. You may also want to go through [Joel Friedlander's website](#) which has tips on the art of cover design.

✓ **INTERNAL BOOK FORMATTING AND STRUCTURE DESIGN**

When it comes to book-internal-design [VELLUM](#) is number one. It is the software authors swear by creating a beautiful ebook structure (it does not support book cover design). But you have other [FREE alternatives](#).

✓ **REVISING / EDITING / PROOFREADING**

That's an in-depth subject of its own and as an author, you already know the steps that need to be taken on this, a step you must never skip. There are critiques groups on social media like Facebook groups and authors or readers help each other, just search for them and you will find many. You may also ask other's opinions on your book idea, title, and design.

✓ **ONLINE PRESENCE**

Once you decide on your book idea and title purchase a domain name for your book's website or landing page, create a Twitter account, create a Facebook Fan Page, create a LinkedIn account, and add "author" to your profile. Next, you want to start engaging with your audience way before your launch date.

✓ **PRICING YOUR BOOK**

Most full-length self-published Kindle books will fall somewhere in the \$2.99 to \$9.99 range. Prices can always be changed, and many authors opt to make their books cheaper in the beginning to generate interest and reviews.

Authors with multiple books, especially authors with series, will often heavily discount or even give away their first books. Guy Kawasaki recommends: “\$2.95 for first-time fiction. \$9.95 for the second, third fiction. \$9.95 for any business book, first time or not. You can do a lot of cogitation about pricing, but it comes down to this.”

✓ **COPYWRITING**

Should authors copyright their books, any benefits? Jan F. Constantine, former general counsel for the Authors Guild, answers: “This gets a bit complicated, but I’ll be as clear as I can be. Technically, it’s a bit imprecise to talk about ‘copyrighting’ a work. The copyright comes into being when work is set down (‘fixed’ is the legal term) in a tangible medium.

So as soon as you write something—pen on paper or fingers on the keyboard—that’s when copyright protection attaches to the writing.

Registering the copyright is a different story—you get copyright protection whether or not you formally register your work with the Copyright Office, but if you do register, there are added benefits that have been put in place to incentivize copyright owners to register their works.

For example, you must register your copyright before you can sue someone for copyright infringement. Also, timely registration is evidence in court that a copyright is valid and that the facts in the certificate of registration are true.

This means, in a copyright infringement suit, it becomes the opposing party’s responsibility to show that your copyright is invalid or that you’re not the owner. Lastly, registration makes it clear that you own the copyright, making it harder for infringers to argue that they infringed without knowing who truly owned the work.”

✓ **SHOULD YOU INCLUDE BLURBS AND HOW**

Blurbs are quotes of endorsement from well-known writers or experts. They're typically included in press materials and printed on the book itself, usually on the back, but they can be on the cover, too.

Choose your blurbs wisely. "Few people agree with me, but most authors get too many blurbs," says Guy Kawasaki. "They think more is more. I have the opposite theory: more is less. When you see a book with ten to twenty blurbs from people you don't recognize, it means that the author is trying too hard. One blurb from the right person is enough, so use a rifle-shot approach."

✓ **EBOOK DISTRIBUTION**

For e-books, distribute everywhere, and avoid KDP Select exclusivity. Every major e-book retailer wants to carry every self-published e-book. There are millions of readers out there who don't shop on Amazon, so make sure your book is distributed to iBooks, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, and others, and make sure it's distributed to major library e-book providers such as OverDrive, Gardners, Baker & Taylor, and Odilo.

Only one major retailer tries to push authors to go exclusive, and it's Amazon. Exclusivity is dangerous because it starves other retailers of your book, and it alienates readers who prefer shopping at other retailers or who prefer reading on other e-reading devices. Exclusivity also makes the author excessively dependent upon a single retailer.

✓ **RELEASE YOUR BOOK AS A PREORDER**

Ebook preorders allow you to establish your book listing at major retailers up to twelve months in advance of publication. Customers are able to reserve copies, but their credit cards are not charged until the books are released to them on the publication dates.

The benefits are; first and foremost is that they enable more effective advance marketing. It has been found that on average, e-books born as

preorders sell significantly more copies than books simply uploaded the day they're ready for release.

It is also found in the 2016 Smashwords Survey only about 15 percent of self-published authors are doing preorders, yet this small minority of preorder books accounted for seven of our top 10 bestsellers, and 55 percent of our top 200 bestsellers. This means that authors who take advantage of this best practice will gain an incremental advantage over all other authors.

✓ **MARKETING YOUR BOOK**

Many self-publishers don't realize that marketing and promotion (making lists of bloggers, reviewers, contests, book signings; planning interviews, endorsements, podcasts, and giveaways, etc.) start long before the final book is in hand.

If you are anxious to get it out, Amazon will sell it before the release date, but three to four months before the official release, it needs to be sent out for review and for procuring blurbs. Rush things and you might miss opportunities from institutions or contests that can give it a lot of exposure.

Give away as many copies of your book as you can afford. Use Goodreads, BookLikes, and Amazon giveaways. And offer them to libraries, reviewers, literary journals. Such generosity always pays off in the long run with devoted readers and more sales

✓ **CHOOSE YOUR KEYWORD WISELY**

One of the biggest keys to Amazon's success is its ability to get the right products in front of the right customers. Have you ever wondered how Amazon chooses what to put in front of you? If you guessed an algorithm, you're right.

Like Google, Amazon uses its own algorithm to figure out what should rank where. Crawling its own pages, Amazon weighs certain values and chooses the product pages it thinks will generate the most money for a

particular search term. How does this help you? If your book's page is set up using the methods in this guide, it will naturally show up above other books or products and will show up more often for other search terms.

When you submit your book for publishing, you will notice that Amazon has a field called "Keywords." The function of the Amazon Keyword is a little different than the definition above—and it's actually more powerful. When you choose your 7 Amazon keywords, you are telling Amazon that your book should rank for that particular term AND that it should be a part of certain secret categories. Use a [keyword tool](#) to make educated decisions for your keywords.

Keywords

Enter up to 7 search keywords that describe your book. [How do I choose keywords?](#) ▾

Your Keywords (Optional)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	

✓ CHOOSE YOUR CATEGORIES WISELY

Did you know there are over 16,000+ Amazon Categories?

The Amazon book categories you choose will have a direct effect on whether or not you become an Amazon bestselling author.

Choose the wrong one, and no matter how many books you sell, you won't become an Amazon bestseller. Choose the right one, and you could become a daily bestseller with minimal marketing or effort only if you know what you're looking for.

In truth, there is a lot more to choosing Amazon book categories. There are secret kindle categories that Amazon doesn't tell you about when publishing and the simple fact that you can actually be listed for 7 extra

categories legitimately. That's right, not just two or three categories like 99% of authors think. More importantly, Amazon has made some changes to the way they do Categories.

A browse category is the section of the Amazon site where users can find your book. Think of the browse category like the sections of a physical bookstore (fiction, history, and so on). You can select up to two browse categories for your book. Precise browse categorization helps readers find your book, so be sure to select the most appropriate categories for your book. Amazon doesn't offer every existing category for you to select when you publish your book. Amazon does this because they want new books to be included in well-known e-book lists. In some cases, a specific keyword must be used in order to unlock it.

If you can legitimately place that category name into your title, subtitle, and/or summary, it should also help to persuade the Amazon algorithm that your e-book is best served under that particular category.

If that doesn't work, and your book isn't automatically added to the particular category, there is one more step for getting Amazon to notice it.

[Contact Amazon](#) and ask them to include your book in that category. Amazon will then look at your book, its cover, and the information you placed on your product page and will make a determination as to whether or not your book will be suitable. Be sure that this category is a legitimate fit for your book or else Amazon will reject your claim.

Contact Us

1 What can we help you with?

Select an issue

> < Please make a selection > ↓

2 How would you like to contact us?

E-mail
Usually answered within 24 hours

Phone
Our phone line is currently closed. [See hours](#)

Once you've submitted your email request, give it a few days and check to see whether or not Amazon placed your book in that category. You can do this quite easily by heading over to this neat [Book Category Hunter Tool](#) and entering your ASIN or ISBN-10 (if you're doing this for the paperback version of your book). It will show you exactly which categories your book is in. In most cases, authors will see the results in a matter of 24 hours.

Some categories you do not see in the original menu may be unlocked based on the keyword you entered a step before, so I suggest you play with your keywords. Selecting a low competition category may boost your book rankings.

Simply put, these secret categories are not selectable in the KDP dashboard. And being able to select them may help you achieve a higher Amazon Bestseller Rank—that equals more visibility and more book sales. These categories usually have lower competition than the available ones on the KDP dashboard because they're not visible to everyone. A lot of authors don't know they exist or that they need to enter their books into these categories.

Choose up to two categories: ×

Choose categories (up to two):

- Fiction
- Nonfiction
- Juvenile Fiction
- Juvenile Nonfiction
- Comics & Graphic Novels
- Education & Reference
- Literary Collections
- Non-Classifiable

Selected categories:

✓ AMAZON BESTSELLER RANK (ABSR)

Amazon assigns the ABSR of a book based on how many sales or downloads it has had over a certain period of time as compared to all other books on the Amazon market.

With this, if you have an ABSR of 1000, then it means that at that point in time, there are 999 books on Amazon selling better than you. If you have an ABSR of 1,000,000, then it means there are 999,999 books selling better than you.

Product details

File Size: 7800 KB
Print Length: 240 pages
Simultaneous Device Usage: Up to 5 simultaneous devices, per publisher limits
Publisher: HarperCollins Leadership (October 10, 2017)
Publication Date: October 10, 2017
Sold by: Amazon.com Services LLC
Language: English
ASIN: B06XFJ2JGR
Text-to-Speech: Enabled
X-Ray:
 Enabled
Word Wise: Enabled
Lending: Not Enabled
Screen Reader: Supported
Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled
Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #4,042 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store)
 #1 in [Sales & Selling Management](#)
 #1 in [Sales & Selling Presentations](#)
 #1 in [Customer Relations \(Kindle Store\)](#)

So, if your book has the LOWEST ABSR of all books that are attached to an Amazon category, then you are the #1 best seller in that category. It is that simple.

So, choosing your kindle categories or book categories will have a direct effect on whether or not you become a bestseller.

So, the category you choose has a DIRECT effect on whether you'll become an Amazon Best Seller and get that attractive bestseller tag. Now, let's look at how to find the best Amazon categories for your book or ebook.

Thanks for making this so far 🍀



BONUS SECTION: BEST WAY TO BE BESTSELLER ([APPENDIX-B](#))



APPENDIX-A: BOOK TITLE GENERATORS

Fantasy Name Generators

- [Random Story Title Generator 2.0](#)
- [Fantasy Name Generator](#)
- [Reedsy Fantasy Title Generator](#)
- [Random Fantasy Novel Title Generator](#)
- [Serendipity Fantasy Novel Generator](#)
- [Writing Exercises Story Title Ideas](#)
- [Fantasy Name Generator by RinkWorks \(Character names\)](#)
- [Fantasy Name Gen \(Character names\)](#)
- [Seventh Sanctum Name Gen \(Character names\)](#)

Sci-Fi Title Generators

- [Random Story Title Generator](#)
- [Pulp Sci-fi Title-O-Tron \(<-This one is just plain fun\)](#)
- [Reedsy Sci-Fi Book Title Generator](#)
- [Random Sci-fi Title Generator](#)
- [Space Adventure Title Generator](#)
- [Obscure Hub Sci-Fi Title Gen](#)
- [Story Toolz Half Title Generator](#)
- [Book Title Creator](#)
- [Fantasy Name Gen \(Character names\)](#)

Horror Name Generators

- [Random Story Title Generator](#)
- [Fantasy Name Generator](#)
- [Generator Land's Horror Titles](#)
- [Writing Exercises Story Title Ideas](#)
- [Seventh Sanctum's Evil Names \(Character names\)](#)

- [Plot-Generator for Horror Stories \(Plot/Blurb generator\)](#)

Romance Title Generators

- [Random Romance Novel Title Generator](#)
- [Reedsy Romance Title Generator](#)
- [Kitt Net's Book Title Romance](#)
- [Randomly Generated Titles](#)
- [Amaze Story Titles](#)
- [Fantasy Name Generator](#)
- [Writing Exercises Story Title Ideas](#)
- [Book Title Creator](#)

Mystery Novel Title Generators

- [Reedsy Mystery Title Generator](#)
- [Starman Series Mystery Title Generator](#)
- [Story Toolz Half Title Generator](#)
- [Randomly Generated Titles](#)
- [Fantasy Name Generator](#)

Crime Book Title Generators

- [Reedsy Crime Title Generator](#)
- [Mad Lib Thriller Title Generator](#)
- [Amaze Story Titles](#)
- [Tara Sparling's Crime Thriller Book Title Generator](#)

Non-Fiction Title Generators

- [Portent's Content Idea Generator \(My FAVORITE!\)](#)
- [Adazing's Book Title Creator](#)
- [Kopy Writing Course Book Name Generator](#)
- [Awesome Titles Title Generator \(700 Headlines with 1 click\)](#)
- [Fantasy Name Generator](#)

Children's Book Title Generators

- [Fantasy Name Generator](#)
- [Story Title Ideas for Kids Books](#)

- [Kids Book Title Pinterest Page](#)

Comic Book Name Generators

- [Rum and Monkey's Comic Book Name Generator](#)
- [Ruggen Berg's Title Generator](#)
- [Super Hero Name Gens](#)
- [Fantasy Generators List of Names](#)

Other Types Of Book Title Generators

- [Autobiography Title Generator](#)
- [Book Character Name Generator](#)

APPENDIX-B: BEST WAY TO BE BESTSELLER

STEP-1: RESEARCH POTENTIAL BOOK CATEGORIES

So, to start this, we'll begin by typing into the Amazon search box any words to describe our book. Our goal is to get a list of books that are similar to our book.

I will then systematically go through each book and check their category string links like below:

Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #13,896 Paid in Kindle Store ([See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store](#))
 #6 in [Advertising \(Kindle Store\)](#)
 #7 in [Direct Marketing \(Kindle Store\)](#)
 #3 in [Search Engine Optimization](#)

Doing the above, I checked out other books and found the following categories:

- Language Experience Approach (Kindle Store)
- Education Reference Books
- Language Instruction – Miscellaneous (Kindle Store)
- Foreign Language Study & Reference (Kindle Store)
- Linguistics Books
- Test Preparation Books
- Pedagogy (I actually had to look up what this word meant..haha)

- Study & Teaching (Kindle Store)
- Words, Language & Grammar Books
- Memory Improvement (Kindle Store)

STEP-2: CHECK THE #1 BESTSELLER IN THAT CATEGORY

Now that we have a list of potential categories, it's time to see which one has the best chance of making me a consistent bestseller. To do this, just click the category link on a book's sales page. This will take you to the list of Bestsellers for that Category.

Next, click on the #1 best selling book in that Amazon book category. Now, go down to its ABSR and record that number next to the category name in your notes. This is the ABSR number you'd need to beat in order to be the #1 bestseller.

Once you have a list of all the categories and their #1 best seller ABSR, place them into the [Kindle Calculator](#) below or here and it will tell you how many books you'd need to sell today in order to be the #1 best selling author in that category.

BSR to Sales Calculator

BSR RANK:	<input type="text" value="3896"/>
BOOK TYPE:	<input type="text" value="eBook"/>
SALES PER MONTH:	<input type="text" value="940"/>
1 DAY SALES:	<input type="text" value="63"/>

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Note: Make sure not to include any commas or spaces when you type in the BSR (Amazon Best Seller Rank) in order to calculate how many sales are needed.

Once you've done that, look over your list and choose the ones that best represent your book and have the highest ABSR. Using my example above, I got the following results:

Category	ABSR	Book Sales To Be #1
Language Experience Approach	10,567	15
Education Reference	368	237
Language Instruction - Misc.	19,761	13
Foreign Language Study & Reference	268	386
Linguistics	11,612	15
Pedagogy	552	164
Study & Teaching	15,304	14
Words, Language & Grammar	1,810	94
Memory Improvement	368	237
Test Preparation	155	723

Looking at this list, my best kindle categories for becoming a #1 bestseller are:

Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Reference > Foreign Language Study & Reference > Language Instruction > Miscellaneous

Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Study & Teaching

Now, if my book was categorized for these two, all I'd need to do is sell about 13 books and I'd be #1 😊

*Don't forget there are different Category strings for 'books' and 'Kindle books' on Amazon. They look like this:

Books: Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Study & Teaching

Kindle: Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Study & Teaching

And sometimes they have a Kindle version of a category, but not a book version (or vice versa). So, if you have a soft or hardcover book, repeat Steps

1-3 for 'books' now that you've identified kindle categories. If you don't have a print book, then you're good to go.

STEP-3: HOW TO SEE ALL OF THE CATEGORIES A BOOK RANKS FOR (BECAUSE THEY'RE HIDDEN NOW)

In late 2017 Amazon made a big change. Although you can rank for 10 categories (combo between ebook and book), you'll still only see three categories on your sales page. This set many savvy book marketers into a tizzy.

They knew their books were listed for more than what they saw, but they couldn't figure out how to see them ALL—until now. In this video, you will see exactly how to see all the categories a book is listed for:

1. Find your book's ASIN or 10 Digit ISBN number
2. Place the ASIN or 10 Digit ISBN number into Amazon's search bar and click search
3. Now, all of the category strings your book is a part of will be listed on the left side and you'll need to click on them to open further down the category string until you the full Category string

There's another way you can check if Amazon has put your book in the 10 categories you've selected, though. [Nerdy Book Girl has created a tool](#) that tells you which categories your book is in. All you have to do is input your book's ASIN or ISBN-10


Find a Book's Listed Categories

Enter the ASIN or ISBN-10 of a book to see what categories that book is a part of so as to shop for your kind of book.
You can also select which market you want to search in.

US

B072J8WRND

Search



Title: Building a StoryBrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen
Author: nald Miller

Check it Out on Amazon

AFFILIATE DISCLAIMER

I may be an affiliate for products that I recommend and link to. If you purchase those items through my links I will earn a commission. You will not pay more when buying a product through my link. In fact I oftentimes am able to negotiate a lower rate (or bonuses) not available elsewhere. Plus when you order through my link it helps me to offer you lots of free stuff. Thank you, in advance for your support.