

How to Get Someone Else to Pay for Book Publishing

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Self-Publishing for Free

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Are you thinking of self-publishing your book and nearly fainting at the costs involved?

Well, here's a way that you can get someone else to pay to publish your book--while you keep all the rights and royalties (unlike what happens with "traditional" publishers, who hold most of the rights and pay you a pittance of a royalty).

Have you ever noticed brand names in a movie or television? Maybe it's a cereal box of Kellogg's Cornflakes on the kitchen counter. Or the mention of a "Bluetooth" in a crime show. Remember how E.T. was lured from his hiding place with Reece's Pieces?
Self-Publishing: Why Corporations Would Pay

Guess what--corporations pay big bucks for product placement. It's much more powerful than running a commercial, because the movie, TV show or star acts as a sort of subliminal endorser of the product. (It works, too. My kids get excited when they see "that's the same phone we have!" Underlying message: If it's on TV, it must be the best.)

You can do the same thing with your published book. How?

Let's say you write a book on sales strategies. You can mention several network type marketing companies as examples of people who have adopted this approach and are doing great. Before you publish the book, you go to one of the head marketing person of each of those organizations and let them know what you're doing, how you're featuring them as one of your "stars." It won't look like advertising because it's part of the editorial content, and because you mention other companies, too, the credibility is high all around. You ask if they would like to sponsor publication of the book. You can do this for more than one.

Or let's say you're working on a murder mystery. Pharmaceuticals are involved in the crime investigation. You go to the marketing director of the pharmaceutical company and see if they would sponsor the book.

Here's another idea. Let's say you publish a romance that takes place on a tiny island in the Caribbean--say, St. Croix, in the American Virgin Islands. You could contact the director of tourism there and ask if they'd like to sponsor publication of your novel.

Structuring the Deal

You could approach the deal in two ways. You can ask them to sponsor publication of the book, or you can ask them to buy X number of copies for whatever the cost of your self-publishing (which you would have to research ahead of time). Either way, they subsidize the book. In the latter case, you already have built-in sales, and you could even work in a profit margin.

Here's an important part of the deal: You must give the sponsor or buyer one condition: They can only either give your book away free, or sell it for the full cover price. This prevents them from undercutting you, the author, on price.

This can work for major companies, government agencies, or other large organizations such as professional groups. Why would they do this? Because advertising costs so much, and compared to that, underwriting the cost of a self-published book is cheap. A single-page ad in a magazine can cost \$20,000 or more. Publishing 3000 copies of your book might only run them \$10,000. Plus, sponsoring a book is more effective, because of the perceived endorsement value. A published book is seen as one of the most credible forms of endorsement there is. You're giving them a promotional tool that will cost them very little of their total annual budget.

Next Steps to Self-Publishing

So how do you go about this?

First, write the book. Do not publish it; keep it in manuscript form.

Brainstorm a list (at least 20) of companies that could benefit from either your topic, your setting, your direction, your examples, the entertainment value, or whatever else your book could offer them in terms of a mention.

Make one copy of your manuscript and include the specific product mention. Send that copy to the targeted company's marketing with your proposal that they sponsor the project. Start with the most likely company first. (By most likely I mean the one that is mentioned most powerfully and naturally.)

If that company sponsors it, you win. If they refuse, you move on. If this will take too much time, do simultaneous submissions, being careful to keep good records. If you get more than one offer, you can either do more than one publication, include several companies and work out separate deals, or whatever works for you, them, and your book .

About the Author

Diane Eble has 28 years experience in the publishing industry as an editor (magazines, fiction and nonfiction books), author (11 published books, more than 400 articles), and copywriter. She is now a book publishing coach as well, helping people to write, publish, and make money with books and other information products.