
Book Writing Template

Dan Poynter

**Write "by-the-Numbers"
Just Fill-in the Blanks**



Para Publishing, Santa Barbara

Book Writing Template

Remove the staples from this Template and insert the pages into a 3-ring binder. Separate the chapters, front matter and back matter with dividers. For details, see pages 77-78 in *Writing Nonfiction: Turning Thoughts into Books*.

Build your book by filling in this template. You do not have to begin writing at the beginning. Start by filling in any information you have at this time. Once you have filled several pages, transfer the information to your computer. Then print out the pages, 3-hole punch them and replace the old pages in the binder.

This guide may be used for fiction but it is specifically designed for nonfiction books.

Also see

Writing Your Book. Thinking/planning, writing and deciding on publishing: Get an agent, find a publisher or publish yourself.

The New Book Model, Text.

The New Book Model, Audio.

<http://www.jackstreet.com/jackstreet/RR.Newbookmodel.cfm>

(Wait for the sound to load)

Does this system work? Thousands of published authors say YES!
See the *Success Stories* at

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For a list of cover artists and URLs for examples of their work, see

Title:

Subtitle:

Author:

Foreword by:

(Testimonials)

Testimonials, endorsements and excerpts from reviews are being seen more and more on the first pages of softcover books. This is important sales space. Put three testimonials on the back cover and the balance of them here.

What others are saying about this book:

(Title Page)

The title page is on the right-hand side and lists the full title and subtitle of the book. This page may also include the name of the author or editor, the publisher, whether this is an original or revised edition, location of the publisher and the date.

Title:

Subtitle:

Author:

City and State of Publication:

(Copyright Page)

The copyright page or *title page verso* is on the reverse of the title page and is the most critical page in the book. Proofread it a dozen times! Here you will print the copyright notice, show the printing history (number of printings and revisions), list the LCCN, the ISBN, the Cataloging-in-Publication Data (CIP), name and address of the publisher and *printed in the United States of America* or *Printed in Canada* (to avoid export complications). For details and resources, get Document 112, *Poynter's Secret List of Book Promotion Contacts* at

Those who know the book trade will often glance at the front and back cover and then turn to the copyright page. The copyright page is important in selling a book to the trade, so make it look professional. You want to appear to be a big-time publisher, not a kitchen-based word shop.

Each time you revise the book, it is worthwhile to change the copyright page in order to add, for example, *Second Printing, revised, 2005*, as this lets the potential purchaser know the book is up to date. Most big publishers do not make any changes to the copyright page and print a string of numbers on it instead. You will note: "10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1," which indicates to the trained eye that this is the first edition. Prior to reprinting it, the printer will opaque out the "1" on the photographic negative.

Title:

Subtitle:

Author:

Published by:

(Your company name and address):

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Copyright © 2005 by (Your name):

First Edition, 2005

Published in the United States of America

Or Canada, UK, Australia, etc.

(Dedication Page)

The dedication page. Some authors like to praise their family for supporting them during the book-writing journey. This right-hand page was used historically by writers to acknowledge their patrons: the persons or institutions that supported them financially while they wrote.

For

(Epigraph)

The epigraph page contains a pertinent quotation that sets the tone of the book. Using a separate page for an epigraph is a nice touch

(Table of Contents)

The table of contents should start on the right-hand side. This page will include the chapter numbers, chapter titles and beginning page numbers. You can leave the page numbers out for now. Fill them in later when the book is formatted. Remember, when buying technical, professional or how-to books, some people turn immediately to the table of contents to check the book's coverage. Use some imagination when drafting your chapter titles—make them descriptive and inviting. Your book may have any number of chapters. If you plan on more than 12, just add pages.

Table of Contents

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Chapter Two

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About the Author

Draft a page on yourself as it pertains to the subject matter in this book.

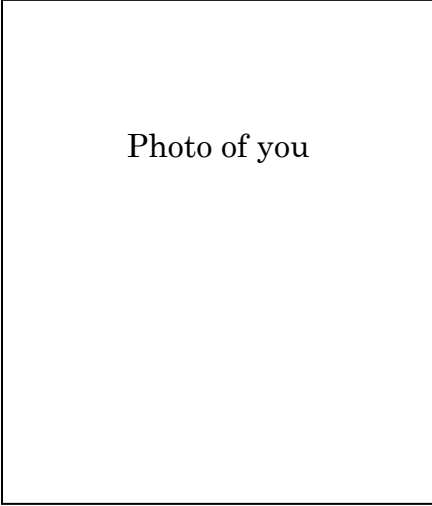


Photo of you

(Foreword)

Foreword

The foreword is positioned on the right-hand side and is a pitch for the book by someone other than the author. Try to get an expert in your field to contribute a foreword. It is very prestigious when a person with a recognizable name or a recognizable title is connected with your book. Contact one of your peer reviewers about writing your foreword. Help this person by writing it yourself to demonstrate what you are looking for. Experts are busy people, and it is always easier for them to edit than to create.

It is doubtful that many people read the foreword, but they will notice who wrote it. The fact is most readers turn directly to the action. You may wish to note “Foreword by . . .” on the cover if that important name will help sell books.

If you include a foreword, note the correct spelling; it is not “forward.” It is the “word” that comes before the text.

(Acknowledgement)

Acknowledgement

Acknowledgments are a great sales tool. List everyone who helped you prepare your manuscript and book. People love to see their name in print, and each will become a disciple spreading the word about your great contribution to literature. On this blank sheet in your binder, add names of contributors as you encounter them so none are left out.

I have not attempted to cite in the text all the authorities and sources consulted in the preparation of this manual. To do so would require more space than is available. The list would include departments of various governments, libraries, industrial institutions, periodicals and many individuals.

Scores of people contributed to this book. Information and illustrations have been contributed by

(Disclaimer)

Disclaimers are showing up in more and more books today. Lawsuits are an unfortunate fact of life and while disclaimers are not absolute protection against them, the warning can't hurt.

Paraphrase this Disclaimer and do not leave the last sentence out. Judges have ruled you must provide buyers with an alternative if they refuse to be bound by your disclaimer.

Warning—Disclaimer

This book is designed to provide information on writing, publishing, marketing, promoting and distributing books. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher and author are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. If legal or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

It is not the purpose of this manual to reprint all the information that is otherwise available to authors and/or publishers, but instead to complement, amplify and supplement other texts. You are urged to read all the available material, learn as much as possible about self-publishing, and tailor the information to your individual needs. For more information, see the many resources in appendix 2.

Self-publishing is not a get-rich-quick scheme. Anyone who decides to write and publish a book must expect to invest a lot of time and effort into it. For many people, self-publishing is more lucrative than selling manuscripts to another publisher, and many have built solid, growing, rewarding businesses.

Every effort has been made to make this manual as complete and as accurate as possible. However, there *may be mistakes*, both typographical and in content. Therefore, this text should be used only as a general guide and not as the ultimate source of writing and publishing information. Furthermore, this manual contains information on writing and publishing that is current only up to the printing date.

The purpose of this manual is to educate and entertain. The author and Para Publishing shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information contained in this book.

If you do not wish to be bound by the above, you may return this book to the publisher for a full refund.

Chapter One

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(Appendix)

The appendix contains important lists and other resources; it may be composed of several sections. As you collect information on your subject, add resources to this section. Add other books, reports, associations, conferences, tapes, suppliers and so on. A book with a large appendix often becomes a valuable reference that people *have* to own.

To save space, print just the company name and their URL. Area Codes and other address info change too often. It is permissible to set this reference material in smaller type.

Appendix

Resources

(Glossary)

Glossary

The glossary is an alphabetically arranged dictionary of terms peculiar to the subject of the book. Some authors like to save space and simplify use by combining the glossary and the index.

(Bibliography)

Bibliography

The bibliography lists the reference materials or sources used in writing the book.

(Index)

Index

The index aids the reader in locating specific information in the pages and is particularly important in reference works. Many librarians will not purchase books without indexes, so plan on including an index. The index is at the very end of the book to make it easy to locate.

Assembling the index is not hard if you build it with your word processing program. Simply read through your typeset manuscript and list the key words and the page numbers. List all the main headings, subheadings and words readers might look for. Double post two-word listings (“ripcord housing” and “housing, ripcord”), and cross-reference different terms. Format the page in two columns, and set the type in ragged-right alignment. Then use your computer to *AutoSort* the list.

The index must be revised every time the book is updated if the page numbers change.

(Order Blank)

Order blank. The last page of the book should contain an order blank; place it on a left-hand page—facing out.

Some readers will want to purchase a copy of your book for a friend, while others may want a copy for themselves after seeing your book at a friend's home or in the library. Offer your other books and audios too. Make ordering easy for them by listing the full price including sales tax (if applicable) and shipping cost. Order blanks are easy and inexpensive—and they work.

QUICK ORDER FORM

Satisfaction guaranteed

✉ **email orders:** @

☐ **Fax orders:** () . Send this form.

☎ **Telephone orders:** Call 1()
Have your credit card ready.

✉ **Postal orders:**

Please send the following Books, Discs or Courses. I understand that I may return any of them for a full refund—for any reason, no questions asked.

See our web site for FREE information on:

Other books, Speaking/Seminars, Mailing lists, Consulting.

Name:

Address:

City, State/Province, Postal Code

Tel:

Email:

Sales tax:

Shipping by air:

Payment: . Cheque, Credit card:

. Visa, . MasterCard, . Optima, . AMEX, . Discover

Card number:

Name on card: Exp. date: /

Everyone Judges a Book by its Cover

And what you can do about it

Like it or not, no one reads the book before he or she makes a buying decision. Consumers do not read it in the store. Sales reps only carry book covers and jackets to show store buyers while wholesalers and distributors say “just send us the cover copy.” All buying decisions are made on the illustration/design and the sales copy on the outside of the book. Yes, packaging is everything.

Each year, U.S. industry spends more than \$50 billion on package design. Now, that is not \$50 billion for the packages and certainly not for the contents. That money is for the *design* of the packages. Packages prompt buyers to reach for the product whether it is pantyhose, corn flakes or hair spray.

Stores have tens-of-thousands of books being displayed spine-out. With all this congestion, it is hard to get attention. Initially, all a potential buyer sees is the book’s spine. If the browser takes it down, he or she will gaze at the cover about four seconds and the flip it over to read the back cover. On average, he or she will spend just seven seconds here so the trick is to keep them reading longer. Your copy has to be punchy and benefit-laden; it has to speak to the potential buyer.

Your book cover designer will lay out the package and incorporate the illustration, put it all on disk and send it to your printer but you must draft the sales copy. This book cover worksheet will take you step-by-step through the sales-copy draft process. Use your computer so you will be able to move the copy around once entered.

Here are explanations for each area of the outline.

A. **Front cover.** Select a working title and subtitle. Keep the title short and make the subtitle descriptive.

List the most important person in your field (association or industry) for the foreword (and please note the spelling of *Foreword*.) You will try to get them to pen the foreword later.

B. **Spine.** Stack the **title** on the spine so it will read more easily on the shelf. Use a bold, san-serif, vertically-legged typeface such as Arial Black, bolded.

C. **Back cover.**

1. **Category.** Visit a bookstore and check the shelf where your book will be displayed. Note the categories on the books and the shelves. Listing the category on the back cover of your book will insure your book will be easy to find—because the bookshop personnel will place it on the right shelf.

2. Now you need an arresting **headline** addressed to potential buyers. You want them to relate to the book and find themselves in it. Do not repeat the title here; do not bore the potential buyer. You have already “said it” on the front. Use an alternate approach. For example, *The Self-Publishing Manual’s* back-cover headline is *Why Not Publish Yourself?*

3. **Sales copy.** Concisely (two to four sentences) state what the book is about. What will the reader gain by reading this book?

4. **Bulleted promises or benefits.** Promise to make readers better at what they do. Pledge health, wealth, entertainment or a better life. Focus on who your audience is and what they want. Think: about who are you talking to and what are they going to get from the book.

You will discover:

- (benefit)
- (benefit)
- (benefit)
- (benefit)

5. **Testimonials and endorsements.** Dream up three different endorsements from people you would *like* to quote. If *This book changed my diplomatic strategy.*—Colin Powell, would look good, *try* it. Use *names* or *titles* recognizable in your field—sources that might impress potential buyers. This is just a draft; dress it up. You will secure some of these quotations later.

6. Show the **author** is the ultimate authority on the subject. Just two or three sentences will do.

7. End with a **sales closer** in bold type. Ask the book-browser to buy the book. Use something like *This book has enabled thousands to . . . and it will show you the way too.*

8. **Price.** Bookstores like a price on the book. The price is a turn-off to potential buyers so place it at the end of the sales copy. Never locate the price at the top of the back cover. If this is a hardcover book, place the price at the top of the front flap.

9. **Bar code** with International Standard Book Number (ISBN). The bar code on a book identifies the ISBN, which in turn identifies the publisher, title, author and edition (hardcover, etc.). Make room for, but do not worry about, the bar code and ISBN just now.

Your **title, subtitle, back-cover headline** and **benefits** may be swapped. Once you have them written down, you may wish to move some of them around. Perhaps one of your benefits would be a better subtitle.

Most back cover copy is weak and uninspiring. The title is repeated and then is followed by several quotations and a bar code and that’s it! Haphazard copy is the sign of lazy (and maybe inexperienced) copywriter. This lack of effective competition on the shelf gives us the upper hand.

Book cover illustrations and design have improved tremendously over the past 15 years. Author/publishers used to spend all their efforts on the text and the cover became an afterthought. Some publishers remember it was Robert Howard who brought bright, insightful, relevant, remarkable covers to the industry. There are many great cover designers today and it was Robert Howard who started it all.

A good cover artist will read through your book and create a cover that will reflect the message of the text. The cover and text should match.

Years ago, we said “Write your ad before you write your book.” This was to help you focus on who you were writing to and what you were going to give them. Then we realized the most important ad you will ever write is your back cover copy. Now we say: “Write your cover copy before you write your book.”

Packages sell products and covers sell books. Give your books the opportunity in the marketplace they deserve. Package your text to quickly tell the idle browser what is inside.

Editor’s note: Dan Poynter is the author of 29 books (and 85 revised editions). He is best known for *The Self-Publishing Manual* (14 revised editions in 25 years). In the back of that book, he asks readers to send their book once published; he receives 10 to 15 books each week! He says that cover art is improving but the sales copy still needs work on many of them.

(Back Cover)

Book Covers Work Sheet

(Front Cover)

Category:

Headline:

Sales copy/description. What is the book about?:

Promises & Benefits

You will discover:

-
-
-
-
-

Testimonials:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why the author is qualified to write this book:

Closing copy:

Price: \$

(ISBN and bar code)

(Spine)

**T
I
T
L
E
of
B
O
O
K**

Your last name

Title:

Subtitle:

Author's name:

Foreword by:



The New “Book” Model

© Dan Poynter

Creating the Content



Producing the “Work”



Promoting the Editions

A. Set up.

Idea for your book

Qualify project according to the Six Musts. WN-40

See *Writing Nonfiction: Turning Thoughts into Books*

Research the subject, title and competition.

Stores, Amazon, Ingram 615-213-6803

Get a Model Book.

Draft back cover sales copy. Doc 116, WN Ch 6.

Select a working title. *Writing Nonfiction*, Ch 5.

Set up the binder for the manuscript. WN Ch 7&8

Assemble research materials into chapter piles.

B. Build the content. WN, Ch 8.

1st draft. Assemble the elements

Write text in MS-*Word* in page-layout format.

Import digital photographs

Adobe *PhotoDeluxe* or *PhotoShop* or *PhotoSuite*

Import scanned drawings

Add art from Web

<http://www.ClipArt.com>

Find quotations on Web. See quotation sites.

Request stories from colleagues with email

Add URL hyperlinks to references

2nd draft. Content edit. Fill in the blanks.

3rd draft. Peer review for feedback. Use email.

Get testimonials for back cover, etc.

4th draft. Copy edit (punctuation, grammar).

Fact check

Proofread

C. Convert to: (Writing Nonfiction, pgs 29-30).

1. PDF file with Adobe *Acrobat*

2. LIT file, MS-Reader with RosettaMachine.com

D. Get cover art

Publish: print & electronic versions. SPM Ch 11.

A. pBooks (Photos & Dwgs: 300 dpi TIF)

1. Press (ink on paper)

2. PQN (toner - digital.)

Need 300-500 to test the market & for reviews.

3. POD (one at a time)

B. eBooks (72 dpi. Photos: JPG; dwgs: GIF). Interactive

Downloadable

From your site

From other sites

Portable eBook readers. PDF and LIT files.

Also in Palm & MobiPocket

CDs & DVDs

Media Asset Management

Multi-purpose your core content.

Wring maximum value out of your Work.

A. Versions (downloadable) from your Web site

Audio version (Digital)

Special reports (spin off from book)

Articles (spin off from book)

Pricing pBooks & eBooks

B. Sell from Web site (not downloadable)

Seminars/Speeches

Record and sell the audio

Consulting

Expert witness testimony

Compatible (non-information) products

Help:

Codes: WN: *Writing Nonfiction*; SPM: *The Self-Publishing Manual*

For more information, contact

Make your company “Website-centric”.

Set up pressroom.

A. Book industry. Send sample books to:

Agents (if you wish to sell out)

Publishers (if you wish to sell out)

Distributor/bookstores/online bookstores

“Galleys” to pre-pub reviewers-SPM pg 176

Industry and early review copies. SPM Pg 179

Book clubs. See LMP & SPM, pg 269

Foreign rights-translations. See ILMP & SPM

B. Nontraditional markets. ID and Locate buyers.

Make Dealers (wholesale)

Specialty stores (think products not books).

Associations

Magazines

Events

Catalogs. SPM pg 297.

Premiums. SPM pg 262.

Fundraisers. SPM pg 265.

Military and government. SPM pg 262.

C. Disintermediation: sell directly to individual reader/buyers (retail).

Promote your book with:

Review copies to magazines. SPM-185

Lists:

News releases to magazines. SPM pg 204.

Services

<http://www.book-publicity.com>

eMail announcements (broadcast email)

eZine: Newsletter/List.

Business cards (no brochures)

Postcards (invite to Web site)

Online : email lists, chat rooms & news groups

Autographings/mini-seminars. See Doc 639

Posters & buttons

Radio and TV interviews. See Doc. 602
