

 PRESENTS

eBook Publishing



THE HOW-TO GUIDE

FOR  **WRITERS**

by STEVEN SPATZ

Why eBooks?

NEWS FLASH:

IKEA introduces a new, deeper version of its ubiquitous "BILLY" bookcase. The Scandinavian furniture giant predicts its customers will increasingly use them for ornaments, trophies, tchotchkes, and knick-knacks.

Or, in other words, anything except printed books.

Stop the presses. Save the trees. The digital book — or eBook — is taking over. eBooks and eBook readers have moved quickly past the "early adopter" phase to become the preferred choice of millions of readers. Walk through any airport waiting area or Starbucks and you'll see a growing number of readers enjoying new levels of convenience, portability, access, and affordability with their Kindles, iPads, Nooks and more.

It's not time to clear off those bookshelves just yet, but the sales numbers for eBooks in the last few years show where the publishing industry is heading — and fast.

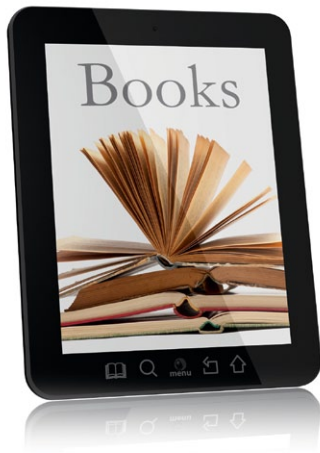
US eBook Sales by Quarter (2008 to 2012)



Sources: American Association of Publishers & International Digital Publishing Forum

You can point to two events that really triggered the explosive growth of eBook sales in mid 2010:

- 1** Apple introduced its revolutionary iPad in April 2010, selling over 3 million devices in the first 80 days. Consuming content has never been easier...or more fun!
- 2** Rival Amazon reduced the price of its best-selling Kindle 2 to \$189 — in response to Barnes & Noble's new low priced Nook offering. Suddenly reading devices were available to millions of eager readers and the gold rush was on!



The latest research shows that as of September, 2011, 13% of all Americans own an eReader. That's up from just 6% in November, 2010. By the time you're reading this, it's bound to be up another couple of points. And that doesn't even count readers — including me — who are using smart phone apps to read their favorite books.

The eBook wave is crashing against foreign shores as well. In China, there are numerous eReaders available, but most of the digital reading public reads on their 780,000,000 mobile phones. Also, Amazon is about to introduce their Kindle Reader to India.

And speaking of Amazon: One more way to look at the amazing growth of eBooks comes through these actual press releases issued by the company in the last 16 months:

- **September 16, 2009.** Opening day sales for Dan Brown's *The Lost Symbol*, the much anticipated sequel to the best-selling *Da Vinci Code*, sold more copies for Amazon's Kindle than in hardcover for the first time ever. The company credited the sales difference in the speed of downloading Kindle copies than print ones.
- **July 18, 2010.** Amazon announces that its overall eBook sales topped hardcovers. For the previous three months it sold 143 Kindle books for every 100 hardcover books.
- **January 2011.** Amazon sells more eBooks than paperbacks in the US during the final three months of 2010.
- **May 19, 2011.** Amazon announces that it has sold more eBooks than hardcover and paperback print books combined YTD.

Empowering the Independent Author

Beyond the exploding sales numbers, the electronic publishing age offers opportunities for new and prospective authors that have previously been open to a relative few.



- **Authors in control.** Society's creative types — artists, musicians, sculptors, and authors — have almost always been at the mercy of others controlling and profiting — from their art. It's been that way since Michelangelo was painting ceilings in Rome. With eBooks, authors can finally have as much control as they want because of their direct access to their reading audience. By retaining all electronic rights to their eBooks, authors can dictate when and where their books are available for sale.

- **Short timeline.** In the “publisher in control” model, when an author finally completes his or her manuscript, it's a classic case of hurry-up-and-wait. It can take anywhere from 12 to 15 months for the traditional author-agent-publisher-designer-printer-bookstore model to get the work into the marketplace. Compare that with the 3 to 4 weeks it takes to see your BookBaby eBook on Amazon, Apple and more.

- **Special interests** can be special. So you've spent years of your life writing your opus: *Thursday Morning Mating Habits of Left-Winged Emperor Penguins*. Try getting a traditional publisher to commit the resources to print it. With eBooks, even tiny niche titles are economical to produce, satisfying small yet potentially profitable reading audiences.

Last but certainly not least:

- **More bank.** The old payment formulas are completely upside down in the eBook world. Instead of accepting miniscule royalty percentages going through old school publishers, authors are seeing up to 70% of sales receipts through some of the online retailers. Even when eBook authors bring prices way down to 2.99....\$1.99....even \$.99...they're realizing much higher revenue totals because of increased unit sales. (Much more about that later in this guide.)

For all these reasons and more, authors are leading the charge into the digital age. And where does that charge lead? I'm glad you asked.

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What do you look for in an editor? Most editors concentrate on one or a few genres, and that's a good thing. I don't think I'd want a Young Adult book editor to help me with a text about marketing! So start your search for an editor that's experienced with your type of subject matter.

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- Writing and Editing Professionals
- Freelance Editing Network

Another good source is the [Editorial Freelancers Association](#), which has a directory of EFA members that you can search online. The EFA also has a great list of typical rates for various kinds of editorial services at <http://www.the-efa.org/res/rates.php>.

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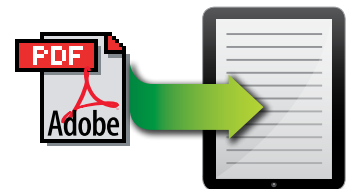
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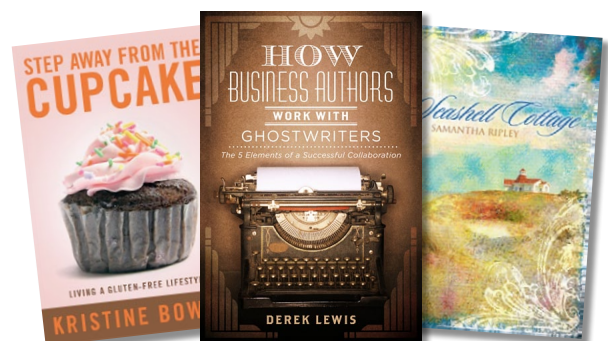
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Likewise publisher, agents and authors are currently scrambling to understand the new eBook world. By reading this guide, I hope to have shared a few insider's tips and advice to help you publish a truly great eBook.

Steven Spatz is the Vice President, Marketing for AVL Digital, whose brands include Disc Makers, CD Baby, Host Baby and BookBaby. Previously Spatz has worked for Fortune 500 companies such as Mattel and Hasbro, as well as his family business, Pinnacle Orchards. A resident of Bucks County, PA, Spatz represents BookBaby at many trade shows and digital publishing conferences around the US.



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