

# How to Write Your Own E-Book

By Dawn Gray

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Electronic books are a great way to increase your traffic or profits. You can use them as a "special report" to gather leads, a "freebie" to pull traffic into your website, or a product to improve the profits of your website.

Writing an electronic book is not like writing a novel. It can be any length, and you can charge any price (limited only by the value it offers to your buyers). If your information is valuable, your buyers will be more likely to excuse a spelling or grammatical error here or there than they would in a print publication, but there is one thing they will not excuse: poor formatting. Here is a step-by-step explanation of how to create an electronic book.

1. Get content. It must be content unavailable through traditional print media, and it should be substantially original. You can either write it yourself, have your staff write it, or collect it from others.

The best way to get content is to collect it from existing sources. If you have written articles (which are no longer available online), given taped lectures, or have catalogs or brochures, compile that material into a book.

The second best way is to get other people to write the content for you. Think about the success of the "Chicken Soup" series of books.

If you have to write new content yourself, get a copy of the special report, "How to Write A Book On Anything in 14 Days or Less... Guaranteed!-A Guide for Professionals" at <http://www.writeabooknow.com/welcome/write106now/>

I recommend compiling your content in your favorite word processing program, to make spell checking and grammar checking easier.

2. Decide on the format of your E-Book. There is a variety of E-Book software available on the Internet. Some of it is even free. If you have purchased an electronic book that had a particularly nice format, ask the author how they did it.

If you want to go cheap and easy, you can simply write your E-Book in HTML. It has no copy protection, but it's the universal language of the Internet and anyone will be able to read your book without a plug-in or special program. Since you already have a website, you either already know HTML or you have a program that can handle it for you. Either way, there's nothing new to learn or pay.

If you want to offer something classy, I suggest PDF. Adobe Acrobat Reader's format allows you to do everything you can with HTML (and more), and you get some copy protection. Nobody can enter your document and change it (unless they own the expensive Adobe Acrobat program).

Many programs can export documents as PDF files, including Adobe Pagemaker and Adobe Illustrator. I've also heard there is a free HTML to PDF translator on the internet, but I haven't tried it. I use Adobe Pagemaker.

3. Translate your content into your preferred format. I start with my book in Microsoft Word, then import it into Adobe Pagemaker. I add links and a Table of Contents in Pagemaker, then export it into PDF.

You will likely have to do something similar, either copy-pasting or importing your content into your E-Book software then tweaking your text and adding links so it looks right before you save it.

4. Test your E-Book. Check the links to be sure they work, and the formatting to make sure your text looks nice and is easy to follow.

5. Load the E-Book into a special directory of your website. Keeping your E-Books in a special directory will make it easier for you to password-protect them or keep search engines from adding your download page to their database.

To allow visitors to download your E-Book as a traffic generating "freebie", just link to it in a prominent location on your website. Ask freebie directories to link to it.

To use your E-Book to gather leads, create a form visitors must fill out with their contact information in order to receive your book. Either allow visitors to download the E-Book from your "thank you" page, or send it as an attachment to your "thank you" email message. (Sending it as an attachment is more difficult, but keeps visitors from receiving your E-Book with false contact information.)

To sell your E-Book, you will need a way to accept payment. You can link to your E-Book in online E-Book stores, such as FatBrain and Amazon, giving almost half your profits away (along with almost all your problems). You can contract with a company who will process credit cards for you for a smaller percentage of your profits, or you can set up your website for E-Commerce and receive the largest percentage of profits - if you sell enough volume to cover the extra expenses.

Good luck!

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Dawn Gray has been promoting websites on the internet for four years. For a free Search Engine Positioning Tips screensaver, subscribe to her newsletter, visit <http://www.busymarketing.com>

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