

# Should I e-Publish?

By Neil Tarvin

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Absolutely!

It's fun, challenging, and nothing beats the feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment when you click on that little icon and your ebook comes up on the screen. Writing a book is a monumental effort, and you deserve a lot of credit for that. Just getting to this point puts you head and shoulders above most of the would-be writers out there, and you're halfway through the publishing process.

Publishing a book is no more than a dream for most people. How many writers have good manuscripts tucked away at the bottom of a drawer because they can't (or won't) market them? How many others have dutifully sent off their manuscripts to 10 or 20 or 50 publishers with nothing more to show for it than a stack of rejection slips? There are many, many manuscripts out there that deserve to be published, that have a market waiting for what they have written, and yet, because of the way traditional publishing works, these books will never make it to print.

But, the Internet has given us a unique alternative to traditional publishing - the ebook and electronic publishing!

It doesn't matter if you're 6 or 60.

It doesn't matter if you work at a full-time job, part-time job or not at all.

It doesn't matter if you stay home and take care of the kids and the house, or if you're retired.

You can write and publish an ebook!

Some books are better candidates for e-publishing than others are, but it really depends on the end result you want to achieve.

If you just want an ebook of your poetry to give to friends and relatives, you will approach the process a little differently than those who want to make some money out of their writing.

The ebooks will look the same, but the level of involvement in the process will vary.

Let's take a look at the various forms of writing and how the Internet impacts them.

Non-fiction (either adult or for children) is far and away the best candidate for moneymaking e-publishing. (For those who don't know what non-fiction is, non-fiction is anything that is REAL - not made-up. For example, cars, boats, cookbooks, math, history, penguins, dogs, houses, decorating, building, hobbies, sports - the list is endless.)

There are several reasons why non-fiction sells best:

\* We live in an information-age and people are hungry for information that will help them live better, fuller lives.

\* There are many diverse groups of people out there with very varied interests. The big publishers in the real world have, for the most part, ignored these people's needs in favor of mass-market books.

\* These diverse groups can make your marketing much easier since each group is a target market and is hungry for the information you can give them. The tighter the market, the easier to target, and, the easier to sell. If you write an ebook on training Golden Retrievers to be Assistance Dogs, you have a specific target market that's reachable through the Web.

\* Your risk factor is virtually zero. Tight targeting reduces risk factors.

There is a never-ending list of possible topics to write about. Even within a tightly targeted market there are vast numbers of topics. Using our Golden Retriever example, what other topics are possibilities within this target market?

-----Sidebar-----

You could spin off an ebook on "Behavioral Problems of Assistance Dogs", or you could write a series of e-reports on specific behaviors such as "Teaching Assistance Dogs to Turn on Lights"

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\* The market can be tested easily. The Internet allows testing very easily and inexpensively (or for free). We have to take advantage of that.

Genre fiction, such as horror, science fiction, mysteries, romance, etc. are also well defined reachable markets. Most people have a favorite genre. Personally, I'm a horror fan - I'll read any horror book that comes down the pike. My wife, on the other hand, loves mysteries. We both frequent sites that specialize in these types of ebooks. Are we good targets? You bet!

-----Sidebar-----

These are niche markets - people who enjoy bonsai, jet skiing, golden retrievers (and about a million more subjects!) Target a good niche and you're practically guaranteed sales!

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General fiction presents a little more risk, because the quality of the writing itself can make or break a book, but, nonetheless, it has the potential of making some money for the author. For general fiction, I'd suggest getting your ebook reviewed and placed on sites such as Booklocker.

-----Sidebar-----

An ISBN number will also get your ebook on Borders bookstore website and Amazon.com - some

electronic publishers will supply an ISBN number, or you can get one yourself

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Last, but certainly not least, in the area of fiction is erotica. Women call it "erotica"; men call it "porn." You may not like it, and may never want to write it, but people are making money writing it. That makes it a viable target market!

-----Sidebar-----

The Internet's best sellers? Anything having to do with sex!  
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In the real world, poetry is absolutely the toughest to sell. People don't buy poetry, they write it themselves. Still, there are lots of poetry sites on the Web. Again, the Web gives you a market, or, at the very least, an audience.

Children's storybooks in the real world are a very tough market - especially for self-publishers. There are already a tremendous number of children's books on the market, so you are immediately fighting an uphill battle.

Also, because of the color and size requirements for children's books, they can be very costly to produce. But all that changes on the Web - color is a snap, distribution is simplified, multimedia makes children's ebooks even more appealing, and the kids of the world are even hungrier for information than the adults!

While we're on the subject of kids, let me throw something else in here. The child's age is not a factor. Kids are getting computer-literate at younger and younger ages all the time, and in many instances are more sophisticated than their parents at using a computer. Kids are a prime market for good ebooks! You could create a series of story ebooks, or send the kids on a multimedia treasure hunt all over the world!

Have you noticed a common thread here? You should have.

The common thread is that on the Web there are no limits!

Exciting, isn't it? Have you always wanted your fiction book to be illustrated? Do it! Write what you want - the way you want - someone is going to want to read it!

So, are you ready now? I'll be looking for your ebook on the Web!

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