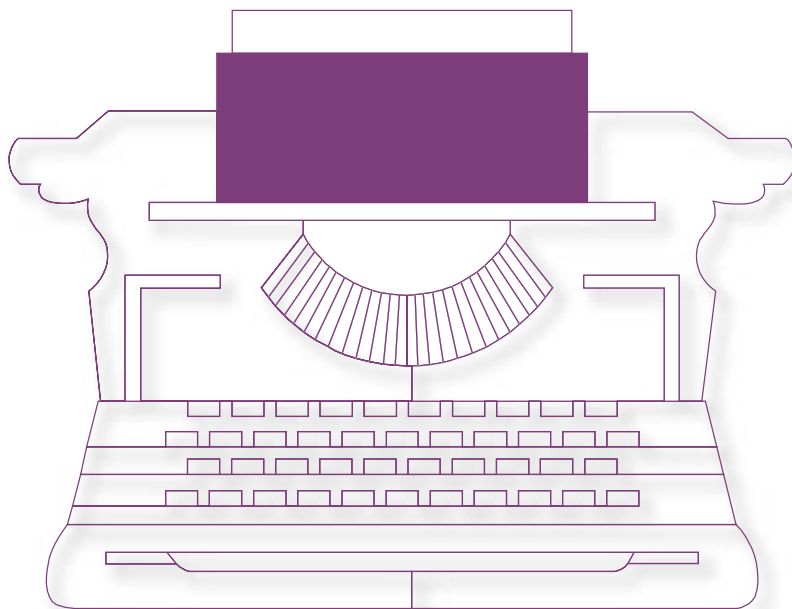


A Practical Guide To Self-Publishing



"I have received my first copies of 'No Regrets' and must say that I am extremely pleased with the finished product.

As a self-publisher, it was a bonus to find a printing company prepared to offer all the aspects of publishing from the copy editing through to the final printing stage. I have been impressed with the personal and friendly, yet professional approach of RPM Print & Design and will certainly be recommending your company to other aspiring writers.

Please give my thanks to all those who have been involved in this project."

Best wishes

Marilyn



Self-publishing

There are a number of reasons why writers take the decision to self-publish. Most commonly they have either tried approaching publishers without success, or alternatively they have decided that the subject matter is for a limited market (family/local history) and therefore self-publishing is the only option.

What is self-publishing?

As the title suggests quite literally **you** are the publisher and have all the controls over your book that a publisher would have. You control the content, style and marketing of your book and retain all future rights. As a self-publisher you will need to source suppliers to carry out the tasks in the production of the book that you may not be able to do yourself. These tasks could be anything from typesetting, design, illustration, printing, binding and distribution. From a practical point of view it is best to find one supplier who is able to offer all of the additional services you require, making it much easier for you to manage the project. This is where the services and experience of **rpm** may be of interest.

So where's the catch?

There really isn't one. Like any publisher, you have to fund the production of your book. You will also need to market and sell your books once they are printed. Because of this you will need to research your target audience and decide on the number of books that you think you can sell. Be realistic, the new printing technology makes shorter runs more affordable helping you reduce your risk. Buying a larger quantity may save you a pound a copy but if you're left with boxes of books gathering dust under the stairs then you really have not saved anything.



How do RPM fit in?

rpm are a family owned company who have been in business for over 30 years. We have years of experience in book production and offer a complete range of services for the self-publisher. You can decide which of our services you require from **typesetting, scanning in photos, illustration and design** through the **production** and **binding** process to **distribution**. We will also give you as much practical and technical advice as you need, and are happy to offer as much “hand holding” as required, dependent on your level of experience.

So how does it work?

Once you have decided that self-publishing is a route you might consider, the first thing to do is get an idea of costs to see if it is a viable option for you. In the first instance phone **rpm** on **01243 787077** and ask for the book production department or send an e-mail to **sales@rpm-repro.co.uk**. The kind of information we will need from you in order to prepare a price will be:

- Finished size of book (we can advise if you are not sure)
- Number of pages (if not known the number of words will help)
- Is the text in Black only or do you want colour (for very short runs colour pages can be expensive)?
- How will you be supplying the text (hard copy, Word disk, PDF)?
- Is the text ready to print (will we need to typeset it for you)?
- The cover, have you a design, is it colour, if so what software?
- Do you want your book bound as a paperback or hardback?
- How many do you want?

Don't worry if you have not got exact answers, just tell us what you know and we will try to fill in the gaps with your help.



Once you have this provisional price you can then do your sums and decide if you want to carry on, and if so, how many books you will want. If you have decided to choose **rpm** to print your book, once it is ready the next stage is to make contact so we can discuss the final details prior to the production process.

How long will it take?

The overall schedule depends on how much we need to do prior to printing your book. One of the key stages of book production is the proofing process. Whether we are typesetting the text for you or printing directly from your file we will send you a proof for you to check and approve. At this stage it is important that you check this thoroughly, even if we are printing direct from your file, as formatting and page breaks can change. Once you have signed off a proof to print, it is **our** responsibility to print exactly what was signed off, but **your** responsibility to ensure that the proof is correct.

Typically for a short-run perfect bound (paperback) book you should expect delivery within 2 weeks of **signing off the final proof**. For a hardback book you will need to add an additional 10 working days.

ISBN numbers?

An ISBN number is specific to your book and is the identifying code for bookshops, wholesalers and libraries. You do not have to have an ISBN number for your book but if you want one, you as the publisher will need to obtain the number. This will be printed on the book so will need to be sourced prior to production.

ISBN numbers can be obtained from the UK International Standard Book Numbering Agency on **01483 712200**, and all the information you need can be found on their website at **www.nielsenbookdata.com**

What about Word files?

Word is a popular piece of word processing software and is used by many of our self-publishers. However, it does present some problems to printers as the formatting of the text can be unstable between machines. If you would like us to DTP from your file this is not a problem, but if you want us to print direct from your Word file we will need to discuss the best way to save it to avoid any problems.



When do I pay?

As mentioned earlier, as the publisher you will have to pay for the production of your book. We will keep you updated if the costs are likely to change from our estimate. This will only happen if what we have to do deviates from our original estimate specification.

For self-publishers we expect payment in three parts, a third of the estimated cost is required with the initial order, a second third once we have a signed off proof and move into production with the final third to be paid on delivery. This arrangement works well and is designed to safeguard both ours and the publisher's interests.

I hope the information in this leaflet has helped make some sense of the self-publishing process. If there is anything you wished we had covered but have not, please let us know so we can include it in the next edition.

Quick summary

- **You are the publisher and have control of your book**
- **As the publisher you have to pay for the production of your book**
- **You need to consider how you will market/sell your book - research your market**
- **You decide on the print quantity – be realistic**
- **Contact rpm for some initial quotes to sort out your budget**



- If you want an ISBN number, source it prior to printing
- Check proofs thoroughly, what you sign off we print
- Enjoy your books





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