

The Busy Writer's Book of Checklists

Checklist 21 – Researching Publishers

Researching Publishers Action List	
Done	<i>These days the field is wide open for authors. Once, writers used to make a list of possible publishers for their manuscript, and work through them, hoping someone would say 'yes'. These days you have far more choice: query traditional publishers, use a POD (Print on Demand) publisher, or become your own publisher on sites like Amazon Kindle, CreateSpace, Lulu and Smashwords. Here are some tips on how to find the right publisher for you.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to a library or an online bookstore and start making a list of publishers of your preferred genre (or genres).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subscribe to well-known publishing newsletters that tell you what publishers are buying.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider signing up for a Writer's Marketplace. (There are various options in different countries.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time on writing and publishing forums to find out what people are saying about various publishers. Also try social networking sites like LinkedIn and GoodReads.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check out both traditional publishers and e-publishers online. Note submission requirements. Note the names of editors who take submissions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check to see if the publisher has a downloadable publishing guide.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Note which publishers will take submissions only from agents.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check out the options for independent publishing online. (Some well-known platforms are Amazon Kindle, CreateSpace, SmashWords, Lulu and a few others. There are many smaller ones. Do a search for 'independent publishers' and similar terms.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ascertain your rights as an author. (Can you publish somewhere else if it doesn't work out? Do you retain digital rights? Will you have input into the cover design?)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check out options for marketing, distributing and selling your book. (Will the publisher do all the work? Are you expected to help with promotion - or to do ALL the promotion?)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide whether you want to submit your manuscript to a traditional publisher or an e-publisher that handles formatting and distribution, or whether you want to go it alone as an indie (independent) author.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research costs carefully. A traditional publisher pays and advance plus royalties but doesn't ask for money upfront. A co-publishing venture may ask you to share upfront costs. As an independent publisher you pay any NECESSARY costs yourself. If you are e-publishing with (for example) Amazon, you may have to pay nothing at all if you do the formatting and cover design yourself.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check the publisher's reputation. Ask in forums or do an online search [PUBLISHER'S NAME + SCAM]. If the publisher has been accused of running a scam it will probably show up somewhere.
<input type="checkbox"/>	When you are satisfied that you have found the right publisher for you, set up a plan for either submitting to that publisher or publishing your book yourself.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Other Aspects of Researching a Publisher You want to Check:</i>