

# **Self-Publishing Quickie-Tips**

**Author: Christy Pinheiro, EA ABA**

**Pineapple Publications,  
Elk Grove, CA**







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## Other books by Christy Pinheiro:

- The Step-By-Step Guide to Self-Publishing for **Profit!**  
Start a Home-Based Publishing Company and Publish your Nonfiction Book with CreateSpace and Amazon
- How to Start a Successful Home-Based Freelance Bookkeeping and Tax Preparation Business
- The Chef's Commandments: Maximize Your Kitchen's Profitability; Building and Maintaining a Successful, Profit-Driven Restaurant
- The Chef's Commandments: Happy Cooks, Happy Customers; A Chef's Guide to Restaurant Employee Management: Kitchen Staffing, Hiring, Recruiting, and Training
- EA Exam Review Complete: Individuals, Businesses and Representation IRS Enrolled Agent Exam Study



## Self-Publishing with CreateSpace

I just finished publishing my book on Self-Publishing with CreateSpace, an Amazon Affiliate company. My new book, ***The Step-By-Step Guide to Self-Publishing for Profit*** was designed, formatted, and professionally edited for less than \$1,000. It was an exercise in frugality, and it worked! I'm so proud of the finished product.

I LOVE CreateSpace and I think it's the easiest way for someone to get onto Amazon. For someone with a niche, non-fiction book, it's the best route into the self-publishing game. It's also the best way to publish on a shoestring with NO inventory. I don't even keep my proofs! It's better for me and better for tax reasons to make sure your inventory is zeroed out at the end of the year, and I can always oblige. I have about 90 copies of my audiobook in my office and that's it. What a godsend! Compared to having stacks and stacks of books, sweltering in my garage, it's been great.

See the new website for my Self-Publishing Book at:

**[www.stepbystepselfpublishing.net](http://www.stepbystepselfpublishing.net)**

CreateSpace provides inventory-free, physical distribution of books, CDs, and DVDs. The company manufactures physical products when customers order, so you never have to deal with inventory and all the logistic problems it creates. The CreateSpace "book on demand" program is a self-service, do-it-yourself online tool that allows you to upload your ready-for-printing PDF book files and make your paperback book available for sale on Amazon.

Through the CreateSpace service, authors can sell DVDs, CDs, and books for a fraction of the cost of traditional manufacturing, while maintaining total control over their writing. With these services, you can make your books, music, and video available to millions of customers by selling on Amazon. You can even sell the books on your own website with a customized e-Store. You can also order finished books inexpensively through your CreateSpace account.

CreateSpace has prices as low as \$2 per book. At the time of this book's printing, CreateSpace did not offer hardcover binding. But I expect this to change. If you really must publish a hardcover book, you can publish with BookSurge or Lulu (but you'll pay more).

I am an accountant by trade, and I write study guides for an obscure IRS exam. There's no way any traditional publisher would publish my books, and I can't do a print run of 5,000, (or even 2,000) because I would just end up stripping half of the books when the new edition came out the following year (tax law updates).

My co-author, Nick Russell, writes non-fiction books for full-time RVers and uses Lightning Source. Really targeted markets, but it works for both of us.

The marketing issue is a different story. I love publishing, but you have to know how to market and sell yourself. Many authors find it distasteful, but **get over it**—quick!

Take a class; learn how to use Quickbooks, read some books on marketing, web promotion, and book marketing, specifically. You can make yourself a success--it takes a lot of hard work, but the pleasure of writing as a "full-time job" is WORTH it! Why suffer through years and years of rejection slips while you spend your days away from your kids working some dead-end job? UGH! I couldn't wait to get out of my 9-5! After much hand-wringing, I quit in 2008 and never looked back.

A lot of authors hate the marketing, accounting, and inventory management that goes along with self-publishing. They would rather suffer through years of rejection slips rather than try to learn how to self-publish and market their book themselves, even though there are so many wonderful books out there that teach you how to do it right. I just don't understand this mentality.

You CAN succeed! You CAN learn how to self-publish. Just get out there and do it!

## **The Danger of Vanity Publishers**

Are you artistic, gifted, and poetic? Do you want to share your artistic vision with the world, but not let your hands be "sullied" by the marketing and money aspects of publishing? Are you financially challenged? Then you are the perfect target for a vanity publisher.

Vanity publishers are the vultures of the publishing world. A vanity publisher's main customer isn't the book buyer—it's YOU. Their revenues come from authors who desperately want to self-publish, and believe that the vanity publisher is the fast track to a bestseller. The internet abounds with tales of fraud perpetrated by vanity publishers. They never seem to go away. Some stories are so egregious that the publishers eventually get taken to court. Some of the owners even get jail time for fraud, but it isn't long before another vanity publisher pops up to take their place.

Some vanity publishers will call themselves "subsidy publishers," "share publishers," or "cooperative publishers." Although there are some legitimate subsidy publishers, they cater to a highly specific market. There are very few true "subsidy publishers." The ones that do exist generally service academic books or poetry. A vanity publisher will edit, proofread, typeset, and publish your book at YOUR EXPENSE.

A great resource for authors is WRITER BEWARE ([www.writerbeware.com](http://www.writerbeware.com)), a free website that offers cautionary information about vanity publishers and other writers' scams. Don't publish your book without checking out this website and learning a little bit about the scams that get perpetrated on writers. The more educated you are about the pitfalls in this industry; the easier it will be for you to avoid them.

## **Use Amazon To Promote Yourself**

A lot of authors use Amazon Book Reviews to promote their own books and books of others. I am already in Amazon's top 5,000 reviewers and I am hoping to get into the top 1,000 before the end of the year. If that happens, I will be invited to be part of Amazon's Vine Voice program which makes me eligible for lots of freebies and new releases. My reviews also would be highlighted (sent to the top) of the

bunch. I will let you know when it happens so if any of you want to send me a book to review, you can.

Book reviews are some of the best ways to promote your writing. Post book and product reviews on Amazon. You can post reviews on books, beauty items, electronics—anything that Amazon sells. It takes a long time to build up a reputation, but reviews are the best way to promote your own books as well as the books of others. The key to this is making sure your Amazon Profile is set up correctly. Upload a nice picture, write about your interests, and post your favorite books. There's a space for your website or blog, too. It's a great way to promote yourself and your website to millions of potential buyers.

And if you can get into the "Top Reviewer" program, you can get tons of free books and other freebies—a huge plus!

## **Amazon's Author Central**

If you haven't already set up your author's page at Amazon's Author Central, please do it ASAP! And if you have a blog, make sure you include your blog feed. In order to do this, you have to have at least one book listed on Amazon. Sign up for your Author's page here:

To join Author Central go to:

**[www.authorcentral.amazon.com](http://www.authorcentral.amazon.com)**

## **Join Amazon Associates**

In order to start earning money from affiliate links, also join Amazon Associates. This is where you get your "widgets" to post on your website. When people click on the links, and go to Amazon to buy something, you get commissions, even when they don't buy YOUR book! Last month, I earned \$112 in Amazon Associates commissions, and my website only generates about 1,000 web hits. Many writers have popular blogs that are not earning ad revenue. Please take the time to sign up so you can start earning this extra income. You can also create widgets for books that you like (your author friends)!

You can see an example of what I'm talking about on my page (look at the little box that has a picture of my book with a little square that says "buy it now"—that is a "widget"):

[www.stepbystepselfpublishing.net](http://www.stepbystepselfpublishing.net)

## **Selling EBooks: Good or Bad?**

A lot of authors love selling e-books on their websites. My co-author on *The Step-By-Step Guide to Self-Publishing for Profit*, Nick Russell, is a big proponent of selling "e-reports" online. He sells special reports targeted towards the RV community and he earns quite a bit of money each month from this information.

Dan Poynter, the self-publishing guru, also sells reports on his website.

Selling e-books and special reports is a great way to generate passive revenue through your website. If you already have a successful book, it's also a way to compound your profits.

Dan Poynter sells a popular report that includes the addresses and contact information for book reviewers. Very useful to authors-- and a great way for Poynter to make money without ever having to lift a finger. Can you think of a great way to promote your books online? The possibilities are endless. Why not share some of your experiences?

## **EBooks—The End of Traditional Publishing?**

Bookstores are worried. Authors are worried. The economy is in the dumps, and authors are worried everywhere. Are e-books going to destroy the publishing industry? Is the Kindle going to destroy brick-and-mortar bookstores?

It's true that the industry is changing. Maybe that's a good thing. We're all just figuring new ways to get paid for the same work, and it's working out well for some of us and not as well for others. Aaron Shepard, the best-selling author of *"Aiming at Amazon"*, has already said "Forget Bookstores".

It's a worthy idea and it's worked for me. Amazon, blogging, and writing niche non-fiction has made 2009 my most profitable year yet—

even with the current economic climate. Look at the authors that are succeeding, and follow their lead. Promote, promote, promote! It the key to your book's success.

Learn about CreateSpace, Lightning Source, or Booksurge. They are the easiest paths to success. You can have your manuscript listed on Amazon in less than a month. At first, shoot for selling 50-100 copies of your non-fiction book **per month**. This is a good target to reach for.

I've done this quite successfully for the last few years. Forget bookstores and small publishers. If you have a "useful" book, you can self-publish and keep all the income yourself.

## Advertise **INSIDE** your Book

My SPAWN newsgroup has some fabulous members. For those of you who don't know about SPAWN, it's the *Small Publishers, Artists, and Writers Network*. Author Sherrie Giddens wrote such a fantastic piece about advertising within a book that I decided to reprint it (with permission). Here it is:

My family and extended family have been in the advertising business for years, and I get a kick out of this every time some one brings it up. The fact is that this kind of writing has been around forever, but it looked down on by most writers as not being as valid.

We call it ad supported writing and works like this. Mr. Jones writes a book on health, but he cannot get a publisher to pick it up. So he comes to us and says that he wants to use his book and get it out there for people to read. We talk about who will read his book and where he wants it placed.

The book has 6 chapters, Eating Right, Exercise, Blood Pressure, etc.

Mr. Jones breaks his book down into 6 separate booklets, now they are small but still just as valid to the reader. At this point he can sell the booklets directly to health professionals, by putting the name of their office on the cover of the book, advertising their office. He sells the booklets by quantity, to as many offices as will buy it.

Method number two, will make advertising available within the pages of the booklet. The booklet is then given for free to health professionals for the office waiting room.

Our author is happy, his book is out there, his bills are paid and he has made a profit. He has handled his own product, self published, and has a list of customers for his next project.

This is the only way I have ever published anything, and will probably remain that way. Every one wins. This works for any genre, you just have to get creative. Children's books can carry ads for that age group, which Mom and Dad would love. They can then be given for free to the local preschool, and you can make a big deal in the media about supporting literacy.

I can remember the first time I had this discussion with another self publisher. She told me that I was not a real author if I had to sell advertising for people to read my books. I had to laugh. My material is being read, and I am never in the hole, how is that NOT real?

I guess, having advertising in my life, just gave me a very different way to see writing. I do the same things with my photos. I just sold 4 photos, using the advertising route. I love taking my photos and making posters out of them. I then go through the Bible and select a scripture, or I make up a saying myself. When I have finished with it, I can then take it to any business I want to. I have the name of their business placed on it. We can replace my saying with their company motto if they wish. I have it printed and deliver it to their office. My photos can be looked at every day, and everyone is happy.

Sometimes what we are, authors, writers, publishers, or artists, is more about how we think, than how we act. Take care and have a great weekend.

Sherrie Giddens, (re-printed with permission).

## **Monetize your Blog!**

I am always surprised when I see great writer's blogs that aren't monetized. What's "monetize", you ask? Well, when you monetize

your blog, you place ads on the blog to promote your books, or you place AdWords ads on your blog in order to earn click-ad commissions. If you use Blogger, you can monetize your blog simply by adding a widget with appropriate HTML code, or you can just add the advertisements automatically by going to where you would normally customize your blog and click "monetize". This will allow you to choose where on your blog you would like to place the ads.

I've actually seen writer's blogs that say "DON'T monetize your blog!" Of course, these are always literary agents or traditional publishers that don't want writers to make any of their own money.

It's so easy to earn ad commissions. You're going to write the blog anyway, right? Why not generate passive revenues while you're at it? I'm always surprised when authors (or any blogger, for that matter) fail to do this. It's like throwing away money.

So, here are some tips for all you writers out there:

**1. Blog, blog, blog!** It's the easiest free promotion that you can do. Even if you don't have a natural affinity for self-promotion, do it anyway. Promote your book and your writing as much as you can, while still making your blog fun to read and informative.

**2. Monetize your blog immediately.** Add AdWords and Amazon Affiliate links to your own books on Amazon. It's so easy to do.

**3. Post on other writer's blogs.** Exchange links. Add links and trackbacks to your own blogs. This makes it easier for Google to find your links and blog posts.

Marketing is easy work, but you have to be dedicated to it. The more you do, the better your success rate. Get blogging!

## Writer's Realities

I read on *Blogged* about the new book by author Justine Larbalestier. Apparently, the book is about a black girl, but the publisher decided to

put a white girl on the cover for "financial reasons". The writer was understandably pissed off. Here's the quote from the blogosphere:

*YA author Justine Larbalestier has gone public with her disappointment over her US publisher Bloomsbury's cover art for her forthcoming novel Liar. Specifically, Justine is upset that the cover shows a white girl, and the book is about a black girl. She took this up strenuously with her publisher but was overruled*<sup>1</sup>

In the end, the resulting furor caused the publisher to change the cover. It might even help sales. The new cover of *Liar* depicts a light-skinned, very attractive black girl. Not exactly the character in the book, (who supposedly gets mistaken for a boy) but an improvement nonetheless.

Now, here are some realities that you need to think about when you self-publish.

**1. Check the long names at the door:** A very L-O-N-G (or ethnic) pen name can be the kiss of death. American audiences have lots of money, but they can be very prejudiced. If you want American money, you may have to learn how to work around American buyer's peccadilloes.

**2. Romance:** Male writers (generally) must use a female pseudonym if they write romance.

**3. Technical books:** Female writers sell better if they choose a gender-neutral name (like Pat or Terry) when they write technical or scholarly books. I found this one out myself, and struggled with whether to use my real name or not. In the end, I compromised, and used my middle name and first initial, effectively rendering my pen name "sexless". And I'll tell you— readers who contact me automatically assume I'm a man at least 75% of the time.

**4. Publishing can be a nasty business**—and buyers have lots and lots of prejudices, whether they admit them or not.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://justinelarbalestier.com/blog/2009/07/23/aint-that-a-shame>

It sucks, I know. But I want to make money, (and so should EVERY writer). If you can't stomach all of the buyer's issues, and you want to continue to do things "your way", go right ahead. This is a free country, after all. But realize that the decision you make may cost you sales. Publishing is a mine field where success is measured in cents, not dollars.

Now, if you're already making money, then keep doing what you're doing. But marketing is 90% of a book's success. Think about it, and tread accordingly.

## Copyrights and Trademarks

I'm not an attorney, but I do know about how important copyrights are! A great resource about US copyrights is the NOLO Press Book, *The Copyright Handbook: What Every Writer Needs to Know*.

It will show you how to register a copyright for your book and the book also goes over the "fair use" doctrine, which is a sticky part of the law that I am not qualified to discuss—BUT NOLO is! I don't know of a cheaper or better resource that will help you do this yourself.

Let's go over copyrights and trademarks briefly. Copyright protects original works of authorship, while a patent protects inventions or new discoveries. A trademark protects words, phrases, symbols, or designs identifying the source of the goods or services.

You can **copyright** a book or an essay.

You can **trademark** a book series or a logo.

You can **patent** a new type of book binding or an invention described in your book.

See the difference?

All My books are protected by copyright. My book series, the ***Passkey EA Review***, is protected by a trademark. This means that, although another author may write a book about the enrolled agent exam, no

one else may use the name; “Passkey EA Review.” You can register a trademark yourself online for \$275 at:

**[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)**

You are automatically granted copyright when you produce your book. Copyright exists from the moment the work is created. The copyright protection is automatic. However, you may prefer to register your copyright with the US copyright office.

Registration is voluntary. Authors may choose to register their works because they want their work to be registered in the public record and have a certificate of registration. You must register your work before you bring a lawsuit for copyright infringement.

An online registration of an original work of authorship costs \$35 at the US copyright office website. Go to:

**[www.copyright.gov/register](http://www.copyright.gov/register)**

## **Writer’s Block is A Myth**

There’s always a lot of talk about writer’s block. I have to admit that I’m also one of those writers who firmly believes that writer’s block is just a fabrication.

Nick Russell, my co-author for our new book ***"The Step-By-Step Guide to Self-Publishing for Profit"*** also believes the same. It doesn't really exist.

I write really well when I'm not distracted, and I find it almost impossible to write when I have the TV on, the kids running around, and the cell phone inches away from my fingers.

I write tax material, which means I have a big crunch at the beginning of the year (Jan-March) and I have found that if I get away from the husband and kids and go somewhere that is quiet and doesn't have Wi-Fi (internet access), I can write for 8 hours straight as long as I have something to eat somewhere in between. That's my cure for writer's

block. I just need to get away from all the distractions and focus on the task at hand.

Judith Krantz revealed that she places a sign on her door that says:

“DO NOT COME IN. DO NOT KNOCK. DO NOT SAY HELLO. DO NOT SAY ‘I’M LEAVING.’ DO NOT SAY ANYTHING UNLESS THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE. . . . Also, telephone’s off!”

Isn't that great? Not realistic for some of us, especially working moms, but you really have to find quiet time to dedicate to your work.

Everything else is just an excuse.

## Hope for the Future

I'm a writer. I can say it. I'm a successful non-fiction writer and I make a lot of money on a very small number of high-priced technical books. If I can do it, anyone can. I know that you will find a niche that will work for you, too.

I think that self-publishing is the wave of the future. It's the American way—learn as much as you can, put it on paper, and make lots of money.

There are plenty of interesting, challenging topics that you can write about that will generate revenue and allow you to make a comfortable living doing something that you truly enjoy. I believe in you! Now get out there and WRITE!



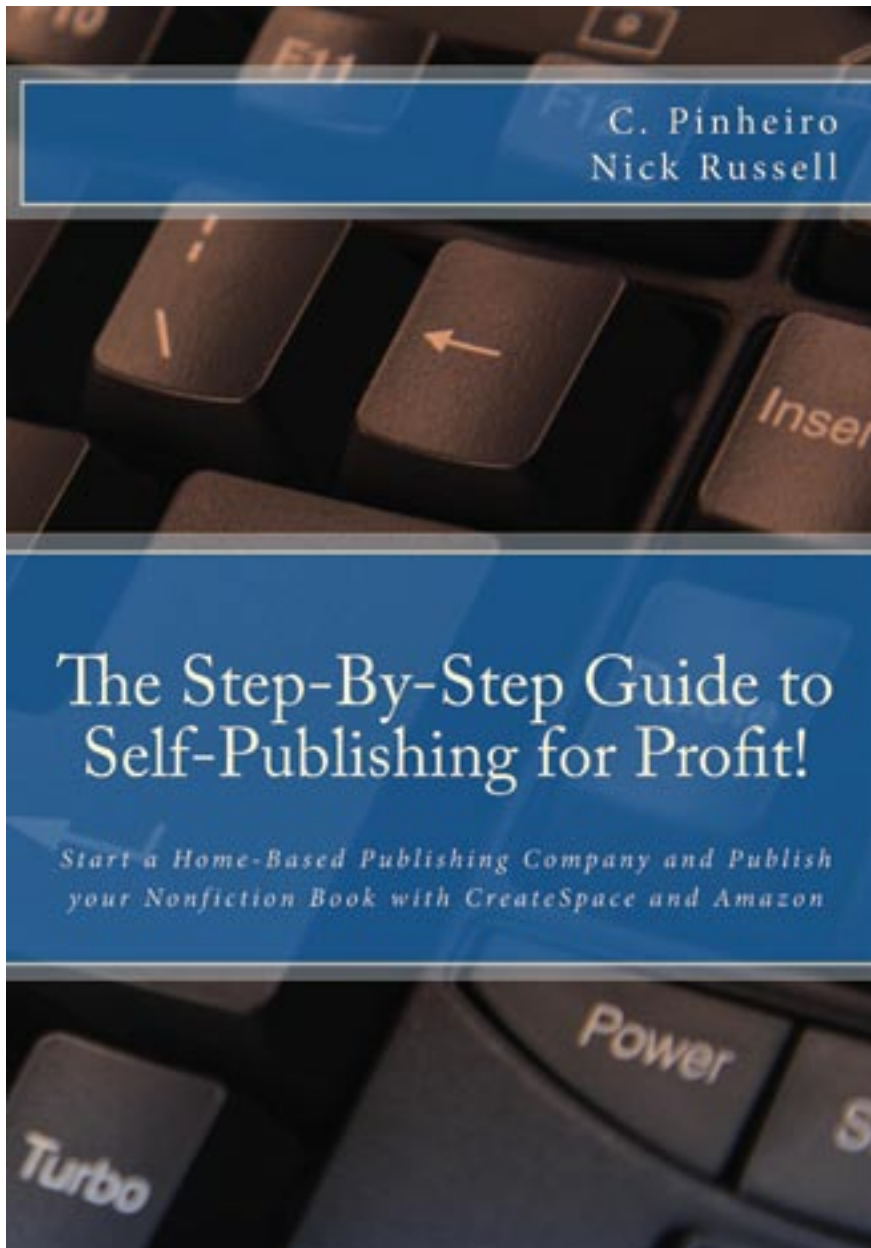
## **About Christy Pinheiro, EA ABA®**

Christy Pinheiro is an Enrolled Agent, Accredited Business Advisor®, and financial writer. She is the author of thirteen books. Her finance and tax articles have been nationally published online and in various periodicals. She is a member of the National Association of Tax Professionals.

Among Christy's books is a complete study guide series for the IRS Enrolled Agent Exam. Her personal website is [www.ChristyPinheiro.com](http://www.ChristyPinheiro.com).

Her publishing company is Pineapple Publications at [www.PineapplePublications.com](http://www.PineapplePublications.com).

See her blog, The Self-Publishing Review, at <http://selfpublishingreview.blogspot.com>



# THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SELF-PUBLISHING FOR PROFIT

START A HOME-BASED PUBLISHING COMPANY AND PUBLISH YOUR NONFICTION BOOK WITH CREATESPACE AND AMAZON

C. PINHEIRO AND NICK RUSSELL

Learn how to self-publish, market, and promote your book on a shoe-string budget!

Stop being a slave to traditional publishers!

Learn how to self-publish your book, list it on Amazon, and promote it completely on-line!

This book shows you, step-by-step, how to set up your own publishing company and self-publish your book WITHOUT the expense of inventory or pricey "writing services" that vanity publishers sell to authors. Using CreateSpace, an Amazon affiliate company, you can self-publish with very few costs up front.

Stop dreaming and start living; get your book published and distributed the easy way, and keep ALL the profits for yourself!

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### CHRISTY PINHEIRO

Christy Pinheiro is an Enrolled Agent, Accredited Business Advisor®, and financial writer. She is the author of six books. Among Christy's books is a complete study guide series for the IRS Enrolled Agent Exam. Her personal website is:

[WWW.CHRISTYPINHEIRO.COM](http://WWW.CHRISTYPINHEIRO.COM)

[INFO@PINEAPPLEGUIDES.COM](mailto:INFO@PINEAPPLEGUIDES.COM)  
916-712-7446

### NICK RUSSELL

Nick has twenty years of experience in the newspaper and publishing industry. He is the founder of the popular *Gypsy Journal* newspaper and the author of *Meandering Down the Highway* and a number of other popular books. You can reach Nick through his website:

[WWW.GYPSYJOURNAL.NET](http://WWW.GYPSYJOURNAL.NET)

[EDITOR@GYPSYJOURNAL.NET](mailto:EDITOR@GYPSYJOURNAL.NET)  
574-370-7533

[WWW.STEPBYSSTEPSELFPUBLISHING.NET](http://WWW.STEPBYSSTEPSELFPUBLISHING.NET)

AVAILABLE AT [WWW.AMAZON.COM](http://WWW.AMAZON.COM)

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