

# BESTSELLER SECRETS



# 10 SECRETS TO BECOMING A BESTSELLER

**How to Turn It into a Bestseller**

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## INTRODUCTION

You are reading this book because you want to become a bestselling author and see your book at the top of Amazon's bestseller list. Even more importantly, you want the prestige, authority, and credibility that come with having your name on the cover of a bestselling book.

It wasn't that long ago that hitting bestseller status required a literary agent and an "in" at one of the big publishing houses. But thanks to the Internet and especially Amazon, those days are long gone. Today anybody with the will and perseverance to write a book can become a bestselling author – and this report will give you ten of my best tips for doing that.

### **YOU'LL LEARN:**

- How to identify the unique qualities that make you stand out
- How to research your chosen niche
- How to set up (and stick to) a writing schedule
- How to proofread and edit your book
- How to choose a memorable title and design an eye-catching cover
- How to make the most of your author page
- How to write a great description of your book
- How to get traffic to your book
- How to gather honest reviews

## **LET'S GET STARTED.**

## IDENTIFY YOUR UNIQUE QUALITIES

What makes you special? This can be a hard question to answer but it's what separates the best selling authors from those who struggle to sell even a single copy of their book. Amazon is an ocean of books and you need to find your uniqueness in order to stand out. If you can imbue your book with that magical element that makes you special, you can start to separate yourself from the crowd.

### **Here are some questions to ask to help you identify your unique qualities:**

- In a room full of my peers, what makes me stand out from the crowd?
- What topic do my friends or colleagues ask me about?
- What life experiences do I have that people find interesting or exciting?
- What topic will make me stop and join in a conversation at a party if I overhear people talking about it?



Asking yourself questions like these can help you pinpoint what makes you special. There are a ton of internet marketing books out there, but if you're the one internet marketer who also used to be a personal assistant to a big movie star, that might provide you with an angle that will make your book stand out among the millions of others for sale on Amazon. Trust me, that's what you want.

## RESEARCH YOUR NICHE

Perhaps you already have a niche in mind, something that you know you can write about with authority. Maybe you're still casting around for ideas. Regardless of what niche you choose, you need to do some research to find out what other books are available, and what kinds of questions people want answered about it.

I recommend starting by going to Amazon and typing in a keyword for your niche. The list will default to books sorted by relevance. Scroll down and make note of the titles that pop out, then click on the titles and review their sales statistics. Look for books that are ranked in the top 30,000 in the Amazon Kindle store. Anything below this is selling too few copies to be worth following.

Make a few notes about the successful books based on the title and description. What angle is the author using to approach the topic?

I'm a big fan of keyword research and my favorite tool is **Publisher Rocket**. It cuts down my research time by over ninety percent. When I first started launching books on Amazon, there were no keyword tools for authors. I had to do everything by hand. Now, research that once took hours only takes me a few minutes.



With any keyword tool, the goal is to find out what people are interested in and what they are looking for. Remember that a keyword is really a question. When someone types a keyword into Google or Amazon, they are looking for an answer to a question, even if it's not worded that way. Popular keywords indicate that there is a lot of interest in a particular question – and you may be able to answer that question with your book.

Combine your research with your special qualities to come up with a book topic that is unique in your niche.

## KEEP TO A WRITING SCHEDULE

When the time comes to start writing, a lot of first-time authors freeze. They don't know where to start. My first and best tip for you is to give yourself permission to write an awful first draft. Very few people can write perfect prose on their first try. Remember that you can always edit and refine it later, and stop worrying about trying to be perfect. Just get the words on the page, and you'll have the raw material to work with later.

Another thing that can help is to set up a regular writing schedule. Many best selling books in the Kindle Store are only 10,000 words. People love short reads so much that Amazon created an entire category for books that people can read in a single session. If writing comes easily to you, you might be able to crank out that many words quickly. But if it's a challenge, set yourself a small but achievable goal every day. If you write 500 words per day for 20 days, you'll have a completed first draft. That's less than a month!



Keep in mind the time of day when your mind is most fresh, and write then. For many people, that time is first thing in the morning. Your brain is refreshed from sleep, and if you tell yourself to think about what you'll write the next day before you go to sleep, you may even wake up with a few ideas in your head.

The key is to be consistent and disciplined about writing. It's hard work, but you can do it.



## EDIT AND PROOFREAD

After you have a first draft, the next step is to edit and proofread your book carefully. Don't make the mistake of just using spell-check and assuming that it will catch everything – it won't. I know a lot of writers who “hear” the words in their head before they type, and as a result they end up using homonyms. Spell-check won't catch those, so you have to proofread your work.

My favorite editing tool is **ProWritingAid** and if you haven't given it a try, I can't recommend it enough. It's helped to improve my writing for a few years now and my editor uses it daily.

If you don't have the budget for specialized editing software right now, one of my best tips for editing is to read your book out loud. There's something about

hearing the words instead of seeing them that makes a huge difference in terms of catching awkward wording and grammar mistakes. When you read aloud, you can edit as you go, rewording phrases and changing words as needed.

Another tip I would like to share has to do with proofreading. Sometimes when I'm proofreading, I find myself getting caught up in the narrative of the book. It's important not to let that happen because, when it does, you're more likely to miss typos than you would be otherwise. The way that I get past that is to read the text backwards. That might sound odd, but trust me, it really works. You don't have to go word by word, but go sentence by sentence. It will be slow going, but I think you'll be amazed by how many mistakes you can catch that way.



## CHOOSE THE BEST NAME

After you write your book, the next step is to choose a great title – one that will both describe what the book is about and stand out from all the other titles in your niche. Here are some tips for choosing a great title:

- Start by researching titles in your niche and writing down those that work for you – and those that don't. Try to analyze your reaction. What was it you liked or didn't like?
- Avoid titles that are too short or too long. A too-short title is probably so vague that readers won't know the subject of your book. A too-long title sounds amateurish and poses a challenge for the person who designs your cover. You can always include a subtitle if you want to add a bit more information.
- Come up with a list of potential titles, and try to incorporate some keywords if you are writing non-fiction. I like to brainstorm at least ten titles.
- Search to see if any of your potential titles have been used in books before. (You can't copyright a title but it's best to have a unique one.)

Once you have a short list, you might want to survey a few friends to see which title they prefer. Another technique I like is to cross out one title at a time. The one you can't cross out is your favorite – and provided it meets all the other criteria listed above, it could be the perfect title for your book.

## JUDGE YOUR BOOK BY ITS COVER



Your book's cover matters – in fact, it matters more than almost anything else you can do to market your book. When people search for a book on Amazon, they are rewarded with a list of titles as well as a thumbnail of the book cover. If you want to be a bestseller, your cover needs to stand out. It needs to be special and appealing. Here are the things I look for in a great cover:

1. Easy-to-read fonts. You can go with a fancy font, but it's important to make sure it's one you can read even if the cover is only a thumbnail.
2. Good contrast. You want a design that will look good in color or black and white, and that means making sure that your text stands out against the background image, and that the image is one that translates to black and white. Remember, many people may be reading on a Kindle, and not everybody has a Kindle Fire.
3. An evocative image. The image you choose should reflect your topic. (By the way, it's fine to have a text-only cover if you choose. In fact, it's better than choosing a generic image.)
4. A clean design. You don't want to have a cluttered cover with a ton of text. That will look sloppy, and it won't translate well to a thumbnail.
5. A traditional shape. When you upload your cover image to Amazon, make sure it's a rectangle like most book covers. A square (or any other shape) is just going to look odd and unprofessional.
6. Looks good small. Very few people will ever see the physical version of your book. Most of them will see it on a phone, tablet or ereader when it is the size of a stamp. Many covers look great large, but fall apart when you shrink them down.

If you have the budget, you can find a great designer on Fiverr.

## WRITE A GREAT DESCRIPTION

The next step after you come up with a title and cover design is to write a description for your book. If the cover is what will get people to click on your book, the description is what sells it.

A good book description is like a sales letter. It should not be a workaday description of what's in the book. You need to use persuasive language that makes the book sound fantastic. One good sales trick to keep in mind is that sales copy focuses on benefits, not features. That means that you need to stay away from telling people why they should buy the book, and instead, tell them what the book is going to do for them. For fiction, focus on writing a compelling description that teases the contents and makes readers want more.

### **Here are a few other things to keep in mind:**

- Make sure you have plenty of white space. Break long paragraphs up into short ones, and use bold fonts and bullet lists to make your description easy to read.
- Use your most important keywords in your description to help people find your book.
- Don't be coy about what's in your book. Give a thorough description so readers know what they're getting.



To make writing your book description as easy as possible, I have created a tool that I use for all my books. You can find it right **HERE**.

A great book description should make the book irresistible to readers.

## MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR AUTHOR PAGE

One of the nicest things about self-publishing on Amazon is that you get a dedicated author page, which you can edit through **Amazon Author Central**. A lot of authors do nothing with their page, which baffles me. A well put-together author page can increase your authority and help to sell your book. Here are the things you can include on your page, with a few tips for each:



1. Your biography. Your short biography should focus on what makes you unique. What life experiences do you have that make you an authority on your topic? Who are you, and why should readers want to know more?
2. Your picture. This is not the place for the latest selfie you posted on Instagram. If you can't afford a professional photographer, have a friend take a photo of you. Have fun with it, as long as the picture represents who you are and matches your genre.
3. Your blog feed. You can connect your blog directly to Amazon and each new post will automatically be added to your page. This shows readers that you are active and is a great way to boost engagement.
4. Events. If you're doing a book tour or have regular speaking engagements, list them here.
5. Video. You can upload up to ten videos to your profile. This is the perfect place to share your book trailers.

The most important part of your author page is the call to action. In your author biography, include links to your website and most important social media channels. These should be above the fold. Visit your author page and make sure that these links appear above the "Read More" button.

## GET THE WORD OUT

Once you have written your book, designed a great cover, and listed it for sale on Amazon and other bookstores, the next step is to let people know that your book is available to purchase. There are lots of things you can do to get the word out, but here are some of my favorites:

1. Announce it on your blog. Write a short blog post about your book, include an excerpt and a thumbnail of the cover, and link to the book on Amazon.
2. Announce it on your social media pages. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn are all great places to announce your book and get the word out to your friends and acquaintances. If you have a Facebook business page, announce it there, too.
3. Make a book trailer. Short videos to promote books are getting more popular every day, and these days making a video is less expensive than ever before.
4. Send your book to influential bloggers in your niche and ask them to review it and link to the book.
5. Notify your email list about your new book.
6. Print paperbacks and bring them with you to speaking events and sell them there. You can also hand them out as calling cards.

You are the best person to promote your book, so don't be shy!



## GATHER HONEST REVIEWS



A lot of new authors aren't aware of this, but Amazon uses a complex algorithm to determine the order in which books are displayed. One of the key factors in book placement is the number of reviews you have.

Nearly eighty percent of new authors can't get a single review for their book. This is the first hurdle and it stops four out of every five authors who publish a book on Amazon. Debbie Drum and I have created a software tool specifically designed to help authors overcome this hurdle and it's called **BookConnect**.

Let's look at a few things you can do to get more reviews on your Amazon page:

1. Ask your friends and family to read your book and leave reviews. If your book is available only on Kindle, you might want to send free copies to people who don't have Kindles so they can leave a review.
2. Encourage people to leave detailed reviews of more than one paragraph. One or two-sentence reviews aren't as impressive or legitimate looking as longer ones are.
3. Make sure to tell people to be honest in their reviews. No book, no matter how good, has all five-star reviews. As long as most of your reviews are positive, it's fine to have a range of ratings.
4. Include a blurb at the end of your book asking readers to review it. Amazon lets you create a special superlink that will take people directly to the review page for your book. Just add your ASIN to the end of this code  
-> [http://amazon.com/review/create-review?ie=UTF\\*&asin=](http://amazon.com/review/create-review?ie=UTF*&asin=)
5. If someone tells you that they've read your book, ask if they have left a review – and if they haven't, tell them you would appreciate it if they would write one.

Reviews are almost as important as covers in terms of selling your book. The more reviews you have, the more likely it is that your book will be seen – and that customers will buy it.



## CONCLUSION

Those are my 10 secrets to becoming a best seller. If you follow these 10 steps, you can achieve the same bestseller status that I have achieved.

Remember, the key to becoming a bestseller is to be meticulous about the process. If you settle for a lame title or slap-dash cover, you're not going to get to where you want to be. You need put the time and effort into each step of the process if you want to get the best results.

If you want to learn more about becoming a best selling author, taking control of your destiny, and making a boatload of money, check out

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