

Preliminary Considerations for Prospective Authors - Peter Lundell, D.Miss.

You have a dramatic story or message to tell, and people need to hear it. To start, here are some pragmatic questions for you to consider:

Why do people need to read your story or message? How will it make a difference in their lives?

Your story or message will invariably have similarities to the dramatic stories or messages of other people. How is your story or message unique? What makes it stand out from all the others—not better but different?

If your story centers around a single major event, it may be better kept as an article. A book would need to include a broader story or develop a major theme or message related to your life, work, ministry, or purpose.

Would you have enough compelling content to fill 140 or more pages? Roughly 45,000 words is a royalty publisher's minimum threshold standard. Self-publishing is flexible, and you can do what you want—short or long.

What is your hope or intent in publishing? Is it to find a royalty publisher or to self publish? Or you might consider hybrid publishing, which combines the two.

Royalty Publishing

If you seek a royalty publisher, they'll need a fair amount of convincing that you'll be able to sell at least a few thousand books. A large *platform*—your public reach, how many people you regularly influence or communicate to—is extremely important to royalty publishers.

For royalty publishing, you would pay a writer to write two or three chapters and a book proposal, which includes book description, outline, and marketing plans. This will run in the thousands of dollars. If a publisher contracts the book, you will split royalties with the writer, less the agent's royalty percentage.

If I write the project for a royalty publisher, I will first need to secure the agreement of my agent, who would be responsible to find a publisher and negotiate a contract.

Self-Publishing

If you self publish, you can do just about anything you wish, but you won't have the prestige, marketing, and distribution help of a publisher. But these days, that seems to matter less and less.

Are you able to provide the financial outlay necessary to hire someone to write your story? It will run in the thousands of dollars.

Are you able to pay for production costs (technically called subsidy publishing)? This will run in the thousands of dollars if you hire a company to do the whole thing.

Or you can pay a freelancer for a professional cover design, plus interior design if you like, or use a template and do interior design yourself if you're good at computers. Then publish it for free with Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing.