
Author's Guide to Getting Published

So you want to break into print! Almost everyone, at one time or another, considers writing a book. Far fewer complete a manuscript. Even fewer become published authors. But don't let that discourage you. If you have something to say, the perseverance to get it on paper, and the good fortune to find an interested publisher, chances are good that you will find your name in *Books in Print* one day.

This brief guide is intended to show you one way first-book authors get into print, and to answer some of the questions you probably have about writing and publishing (and to make it easier for us at Craftsman Book Company to answer inquiries we get from authors). We limit our comments to one particular type of book publishing: technical, business, and professional books. We do this for two reasons. First, it's the type of publishing we know best. Second, it's probably the type of publishing you want to know about. Most authors today write about their work or hobby. Most books published this year will be practical, instructive, how-to-do-it titles. If you're not preparing a professional, technical, or how-to-do-it manuscript, this guide may not be of as much use to you. The publication procedure for many categories of books is different from what we describe here. If you are writing a novel, get a copy of *Writing the Novel: From Plot to Print*, by Lawrence Block, published by Writer's Digest, at 9933 Alliance Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242. Writer's Digest also publishes guides for short story writers, artists, poets, and magazine writers. Another company, *The Writer,*

Inc. at 120 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116, publishes several handbooks for writers.

But if you're writing a technical, professional, or business book, read on.

What Is a Publisher?

If you're going hunting for someone to take a gamble on your book, you should know something about how publishers operate.

A publisher is a promoter. He brings together the materials, the ideas, and the markets to sell books — hopefully at a profit. The publisher contracts with you as an author to develop your manuscript. The publisher then edits and revises the manuscript as he feels necessary (and as you will permit). The publisher sets type, prepares illustrations, tables, and charts from your manuscript, contracts for the printing of your book, publicizes and distributes the book, and pays you a royalty based on sales. Few book publishers are also printers. The actual printing and binding of books is nearly always done by book manufacturers (printers) who are not publishers at all. Most publishers now create their own page layouts using desktop publishing software, and have staff skilled in computer graphics to prepare illustrations and photos on disk for the printer. Computer technology has now made it possible for every publisher to produce quality printer-ready page layout in-house.

How Books Are Distributed

Some publishers warehouse their books, fill orders, and ship books to bookstores and consumers. Other publishers use distributors and wholesalers and never actually see the stacks of printed books they sell. To you as an author, it doesn't make much difference how your books are distributed as long as people who want your books can get them in a reasonably short time.

But note this about book distribution. For at least a hundred years books have been sold primarily through bookstores. Publishers would hire salesmen to promote their books to retail booksellers. Publishers would sell directly to consumers, but wouldn't push direct sales hard for fear of antagonizing their best customers, the owners of bookstores across the country. Publishers sold to booksellers at discounts of 33-40% of the retail price and were content with the remaining 67-60%. Many of the older "trade" publishers were, and still are, content to operate this way.

The system works fairly well for expensive novels, inexpensive mass market paperbacks, cookbooks, children's books, and many other books published for the general public. But it doesn't work very well for the majority of the books published today — books written to satisfy specialized interests rather than the general public. Even the largest bookstore can't begin to stock the thousands of technical, professional, and how-to-do-it titles published each year. There is enough demand to make these books profitable for both the author and publisher, but the demand is not sufficiently concentrated in any area to encourage stocking by most bookstores. Consequently, many of the more aggressive publishers are going directly to book buyers through business and professional magazines, direct mail campaigns, and book clubs, while selling to bookstores as a secondary line of business. Currently, over one-third of all books are sold through the mail directly to the consumer. Twenty years ago, direct sales were about half that.

Why explain this to you as an author? Because your royalty will almost surely be based on your publisher's net receipts after discounts, if any. If the publisher discounts your book 40% to the retailers, your royalty is also discounted 40% on each copy sold.

Your Manuscript from the Publisher's Viewpoint

The essence of publishing is risk — the risk that not enough books will ever be sold to recover the production, publication, and distribution costs. Most books cost the publisher more than \$100 per page to bring to the point of first sale. Advertising and distribution expenses add considerably to that.

You can see how important it is to be sure that your manuscript will become a "winner." Like all promoters, publishers try to reduce the risk by knowing their market well enough to predict the reaction to a particular offering. Most publishers will compare the subject matter and title of your book with books they know sell well. They recognize certain topics as "hot" and probably have a list of books they wish someone would write. Ask the publisher you're in contact with to suggest some manuscripts he would like to see submitted for publication. You'll be surprised at what you learn, and it may give you ideas for your own book.

Your editor may also make suggestions on material that should be included in your book, or a particular emphasis that would help sales. Consider these suggestions seriously; good editors are skilled at developing raw manuscripts into selling titles. And many publishing houses don't wait for manuscripts to arrive. They hire authors on a fee or salary basis to produce what they know is a sure money-maker.

From the first time you contact your publisher, editors are thinking about how to promote your book and how to get it into the hands of readers. They are trying to picture how your title fits into the marketing methods they have found successful. Your publisher probably has ongoing publicity campaigns that will include your title once it is published: regular trade magazine advertising, general catalogs sent to bookstores and past customers, order forms bound into books on related topics, and perhaps commissioned salesmen to promote your book (and the rest of your publisher's titles) to bookstores, libraries, and schools. In addition, most publishers try to get favorable reviews or news releases published in the key trade and professional magazines and newspapers. Mention on radio or T.V. is rarely as valuable as you might imagine (except for nationwide exposure) and is fairly unusual for other than "blockbuster" general interest books. Your publisher will consider sending complimentary copies to key persons in schools,

associations, and large corporations who might influence the purchasing of significant quantities of your book. You can help create a decision to publish by suggesting magazines, newspapers, trade journals, associations, and corporations that should receive complimentary copies and publication announcements.

Your publisher will listen carefully when you point out where the buyers are and how they can be sold economically.

If some of these buyers are already being reached with other titles, the risk in publishing your book is reduced considerably.

But, you say, up to this point your publishing house hasn't really laid out much cash to promote your book and your book alone. Couldn't it at least send out one good mailing to every prospective buyer or place a big announcement in a couple of magazines so the potential customers learn about your book? Well, yes, but it very seldom happens. Advertising is the one place where publishers and authors do not have a parallel interest. From the publisher's standpoint, costly advertising increases the risk and raises the number of books that must be sold before a profit is earned. From your point of view, the more your publisher spends on advertising, the higher your royalty earnings are.

Some publishing contracts provide that the publisher will spend so many dollars promoting the book, or that the author will participate in the cost of advertising. These would be fairly unusual contracts for first-book authors. The simple truth is, a publishing house will spend money advertising your book if it can count on making money on the investment. As a rule of thumb, to break even, your publisher must get back at least three dollars in sales for every one dollar spent on advertising. Sounds easy, doesn't it? It isn't! It's very seldom that any single book advertised through any medium can bring in three dollars in sales for each dollar spent in promotion. Frequently, gross sales don't even cover the cost of promotion.

The major book promotions you see and hear are usually (1) cooperative advertising, paid for jointly by publishers and book retailers, (2) "blockbuster" type books where sales of a million copies are a reasonable expectation, or (3) high-priced mail order titles where the profit margin is extremely high and the royalty very low or nonexistent.

How to Choose a Publisher

You can see why finding the right publisher is important and why publishers tend to specialize in certain types of books. Publishers who emphasize direct sales develop lists of book buyers who are good prospects for books on certain topics (e.g., law, business, sports). By combining a number of books on that topic and related topics, a publisher can put together a mailing piece or magazine ad that can bring in three to one. The trick is to (1) identify the market and topic, (2) find a cost-effective way of reaching the market, and (3) develop an adequate and growing list of attractive books to service the market.

One good book will also help sell the publisher's books on related subjects. Publishers who sell direct to the reader live off this mutual promotion. Without it, many small publishers wouldn't survive. If your book won't sell to a publisher's existing market, that publisher wouldn't be doing you any favor by publishing it. Many publishers will try a new type of book in hopes of moving into a new area. But you're at a big disadvantage if your home gardening manual reaches the public under the imprint of a science fiction house.

It's in your interest to find the publisher with access to the market for your book. Some very large publishers service many specific subject areas, but no publisher serves more than a small fraction of the total book-buying market. Start from the potential buyer for your book and work back along the publishing process to you as the author. Who is going to buy your book? Describe for yourself the reader's requirements that you are going to satisfy. Be very specific.

This is the scope and focus of your book. Now look at the professional references your potential customer uses. The publishers of these references are prime prospects for your manuscript. Look up several other prospective publishers in *Writer's Market*. You can get a copy at many bookstores, most public libraries and from *Writer's Digest*, at 9933 Alliance Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242. Select one or two likely prospects from among the publishers you have found. If your book is far enough along to have a pretty firm table of contents, it's time to find a publishing house for your work.

Contacting Your Publisher

Most publishers prefer that you not send a full manuscript the first time you contact them. Instead, in a letter to the Chief Editor, explain that you're preparing a manuscript, outline the subject, and suggest who would buy your book. It doesn't hurt to lay it on a little about how your book is unique and why it's needed. Attach a two-page outline of the book contents, chapter titles and subtitles — to show that you've thought the book through to the end and know what your manuscript will cover. Estimate the number of pages, illustrations, tables and charts so the publisher can make a rough estimate of the production cost. Finally, ask whether he or she would consider publishing the proposed book.

A publisher who's even slightly interested will probably ask for information on your background, send you some material about the publishing house, and request a sample chapter or two from your book. Supply the requested materials. What you send will be the basis for the publisher's decision on whether to produce and market your book. If the decision is affirmative, you'll receive a call or a written proposal for the book, and a publishing contract.

A Word About Queries

You want your first contact with a publisher to elicit a positive response, and this takes forethought, careful preparation, and some consideration of the editor's needs,

Never send a query letter to just any publisher, and never mail query material that is not well prepared to meet the publisher's careful scrutiny. Remember, you're trying to show a particular publishing house that your manuscript would make a worthwhile book. This means knowing exactly what kinds of books and what recent titles it has in its line. *Writer's Market* comes in handy here, as it lists publishers' requirements for submitting manuscripts. But go one step further; write the publishing company for a book catalog and look for titles in the area of your own project. Most commercial publishers have Web sites you can visit for much the same information. Study these to see whether your book might fit in. Look for gaps in coverage of your area — books you think the publishing company needs to fill out its line of titles, or crucial material in your area that you see is lacking. Then point this out to the publisher in your introductory letter.

Note that this works best when you have first studied *Writer's Market* or the Internet for likely prospects, then narrowed the field using each publisher's catalog and books. It's a lot harder to alter the emphasis of your work to fit a publisher whose books are on the fringe of your area of expertise than to pinpoint more likely publishers in the first place. Sending query letters randomly wastes both your time and the publishers'.

Book catalogs can help you tailor your submissions to likely publishers. Catalogs tell you a lot in a few words: who buys the books, what style the books are written in, how technical they are, and other aspects of the publisher's preferences.

Use this knowledge to help improve your submission. The catalog is a free preview of what your manuscript is likely to be judged against.

Avoid claiming that you can write "anything" the publisher needs; let the editor suggest changes. Make the query letter accurately represent your efforts. Don't overstate what you can realistically accomplish in the finished manuscript. The publisher decides to offer you a contract based on (1) how well you present your case in the query letter, (2) how much potential the manuscript has, based on the outline and chapters you submit, and (3) whether what you are offering is in line with the publisher's current needs. Getting through the query letter/sample chapter stage requires care in pointing out what your work offers, putting yourself in the publisher's place to evaluate the market for your book, and responding promptly with well-written representative chapters when the editor asks for them.

What's Expected of You as an Author?

The prime requirement is that you know your subject. In some fields, multiple degrees, financial success, peer recognition, association membership, or other measurable achievements are valuable. But nothing helps more than knowing your subject thoroughly. This includes being aware of everything reasonably relevant that has been published in your area of competence. Subscribe to the magazines or journals that are devoted to your interest. Scour the libraries and the Internet for anything others have written on your subject. Make yourself as well informed as possible. Most authors are natural col-

lectors and have files and files (or piles and piles) of articles, clippings, brochures, books, samples, and photographs on their subject. You'll be surprised at how much material is needed to make a 200-page book. Unless you have a very unusual memory, you'll have to refer regularly to what others have done when you get down to writing and revising.

Even if you write almost entirely out of your own experience, know what others have written so you don't duplicate some other book already on the market. Most authors (and nearly all publishers) feel that there is no reason to produce a book that is almost as good as some other volume, even if that book is enormously successful and your book can be sold at a lower price. If you can't make your book more useful in every respect, at least be sure it's as good as the competition in most areas, and has some outstanding feature that makes a good selling point.

No publisher expects authors to prepare perfect manuscripts that require little or no editing. Still, your choice of words and grammar should leave little doubt about what you mean. Your editor can brush up your manuscript, but he can't create clarity where there's only ambiguity. The clearer the meaning, the less trouble the editor will have, the faster the editing will go, and the more attractive your manuscript is to your publisher. If you want to polish and perfect your manuscript, the best reference is *Words into Type*, by Marjorie E. Skillin and Robert Gay (Prentice-Hall, Box 500, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632). Another excellent reference is *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White (The Macmillan Publishing Company, Front and Brown Streets, Riverside, New Jersey 08075).

What to Avoid

Most publishers get too many manuscripts that fall into the clearly unpublishable category: subjects that have been done, redone, and done again, books that have little or no sales appeal, personal narratives, or anything that is obviously pure "ego trip." The best advice is to avoid anything that is not businesslike, direct, and professional. A small personal story, what you find an amusing anecdote, or a dedication to family or associates may be tempting. But most often, any reference to your personal experiences, friends, family, or your community will put off your readers more than educate them. Instead, use "in some cases," or "in some parts of the coun-

try," or "the preferred method" and omit anything that is more amusing or self-serving than informative.

Avoid revealing any strong personal bias or point of view, especially if it's not essential to your subject. There's a place for crusading, but it's not among readers who are laying out hard-earned dollars to improve their skills. The only bias every author should show is toward promoting highly-professional standards in his or her field.

Avoid poor organization. Begin at the beginning. Define your terms, give a little background, then proceed to the heart of your subject. Many topics follow a natural organization that allows each chapter to build on the previous chapter. If you see an obvious order to your topic, stick to it.

Your reader will appreciate the clarity of your approach to the subject. If you follow some logical order, you'll probably find that it leads you to some topic you really aren't up on, or will have to research carefully. That may be the time to begin digging deeper. If it's essential to the organizational logic you follow, it should be in your book even if it means more work for you.

Avoid using abbreviations in text unless the abbreviation is better understood than the full term (e.g., F.O.B., C.O.D.) or unless spelling out the full term would make the text look highly redundant. Charts and tabular data are appropriate places to use abbreviations, but not ditto marks.

What to Include

Authors of professional books must have something to say. That something should be so useful that the value of the content overshadows any inadequacy in the manuscript. Be direct and positive. Use short, clear sentences, but fill each sentence with meaning. Include facts that your reader can put to immediate use. Cover the whole subject within the scope of your book. Include data, forms, appendixes, charts, bibliography and tables that make your book a valuable reference. A book that needs to be read only once and never referred to again may sell well enough, but might be returned after reading if your publisher's offer includes a money-back guarantee.

Put yourself in the position of your readers and write to solve their practical problems. If your book doesn't answer their questions or help them to ask the right questions, it isn't ready for publication. Include enough in your manuscript so that it can be turned into a legitimate-length book. About 400 typed pages make a slim 200-page book, and many technical books are much longer than this. To the reader, bulk means value. You and your publisher can create bulk artificially, but the discriminating reader won't be deceived.

How to Prepare Your Manuscript

Once you've signed a publication contract, you can concentrate on writing the final draft. Your publisher probably has outlined the form the manuscript should follow. The requirements listed here are not too different from what most publishers specify. Larger publishers and scholarly-book publishers may be less flexible in their requirements than smaller houses. In any event, submit the first several chapters when they are completed so your editor can find any manuscript problems before you repeat them throughout the book.

Write your book on a computer. Just about all publishers today will edit, lay out, and even send to press your book on electronic media. Some may even distribute your book in electronic "paperless" form. Send your work to the publisher on a computer disk, or by e-mail as an attachment. Some publishers will also require a printed copy. If so, print it double-spaced, in 12-point type, on one side of white paper. Leave at least a one-inch margin all around the page.

Keep illustrations, tables, photographs and charts separate from the text. Remember that 98 percent of all books are currently formatted and laid out on the computer. That means that any artwork you create will need to be digitized for the computer. When submitting any kind of electronic media, it's a good idea to check with your publisher in advance to find out which kind of software his equipment can best use. While text is fairly universal, artwork, at the time of this writing, still comes on many software platforms, and converting from one to another can be quite cumbersome, and sometimes impossible if the publisher doesn't have the same software you do.

If your manuscript includes photographs, ask your publisher how they would like them submitted.

Typically, they'll either want you to submit the negatives along with a print for reference, or they'll ask you to send the photos on disk. Keep a list of which negatives and frames are used in the book. It's not uncommon that the production department needs to make another copy of a print, and it will save time for everybody if the negative can be quickly and easily located. Never cut a negative out of a strip in an effort to be helpful. And be very careful if you need to write on the back of any photographs. Ballpoints can make an impression on the front of a photograph, and felt-tip pen inks tend to smear on photographic paper. This makes it especially hazardous if you're putting together a stack of pictures — the ink from the back of one picture transfers to the face of the picture underneath. Finally, never draw or write directly on the original photograph. If you need to have a particular feature called out, make a photocopy of the picture and make your marks on the copy.

If you're planning on taking your own pictures for the manuscript, remember this one rule — a bad print will look even worse when it's reproduced in a book. There is very little a production department can do (without incurring major costs) to fix a picture that is out-of-focus, under or overexposed, or poorly arranged. Note that when reproduced by printing, dark areas in photographs tend to become black and lose detail. A picture that has good contrast but is a little on the light side will reproduce best in the finished book.

If you're not confident of your skills, consider hiring a professional photographer. If costs are a consideration, try contacting the photography department of your local university or community college. You might find an eager photography student who would be willing to work within your budget, and who might appreciate being given credit as the photographer in a published book.

When preparing to work on your illustrations, talk to your publisher first. Find out how they prefer to receive the illustrations. If you're submitting your illustrations on disk, most publishers can use either a TIFF or EPS file saved at about 300dpi. Don't send GIF or JPG files — the resolution is too low and the graphic will not reproduce well in print. The same problem occurs with photos and illustrations pulled from the Internet. These graphics are specifically altered to look good on a computer screen, but they look terrible when reproduced in a book.

If you can only supply a hard copy version of your artwork, mount these on artboard or stiff paper and attach a tissue flap overlay on the art to prevent damage in transit and during production. Put captions and callouts (labels within the illustrations) on a photocopy of the illustration. Don't mark the original unless your publisher specifically tells you to do so.

You'll usually benefit from using illustration paper with a non-repro blue grid. This makes drawing straight lines and staying in scale much easier. Don't draw on erasable typing paper (it tends to repel ink) but do use an intense black pen (blue ink and pencil don't photograph well).

Whether you're supplying your artwork on disk or hard copy, work larger than the finished size. If you expect the drawing to be about seven inches wide in the book, prepare your original illustration fourteen inches wide.

Don't ask your publisher to work from pictures cut from magazines, newspapers or books. Usually these reproduce very poorly. And you're probably not going to find a publisher who will pay an artist to redraw them for you.

Number each figure and chart by chapter and refer to each by number in the text. Usually each table, chart, illustration, or figure is given a number to identify the chapter in which it appears, and a consecutive number to identify the illustration within that chapter. For example, Figure 3-5 would be the fifth figure in Chapter 3.

Illustrations, charts, tables, and photographs are the author's responsibility, and are produced at the author's expense under most publication agreements. However, your publisher will be anxious to help you make these drawings look professional. Do your level best to supply good-quality drawings, pictures, charts, and figures, and most publishers will bring them up to publication standard at no cost to you.

What You Should Know About Copyrights

It's your responsibility to avoid infringing on copyrights. If you copy or borrow nothing from any source, you can't possibly violate any copyrights. But few books are solely the product of any author's

mind. And it's not very likely that you'll become an innocent infringer by subconsciously reproducing something you read. To violate the copyright of a nonfiction work, you usually have to have the copyrighted book open and in front of you while you're writing. You can take a line or two from some source (even word for word) without infringing. But you can't paraphrase, even loosely, large portions of another work. Infringement is usually easy to demonstrate where even a single drawing, chart or table has been reproduced. But you can develop your own drawing, chart, or table based on your own work, and it doesn't infringe even if it's very similar or identical to something in another work.

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Assume that any work is protected by copyright if it bears a copyright symbol © or the word "Copyright," followed by a year date and the name of the copyright claimant:

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Some works may be protected by copyright even if they don't say so. U.S. government publications are not usually protected, but there are exceptions. It's best not to take any chances.

Beware of making derogatory statements. You don't want sales of your book delayed while attorneys argue over some supposed libel you committed. You can make defamatory statements about anyone so long as the statements are true. Unfortunately, truth sometimes changes with your viewpoint. In almost any technical or professional book you could write, there's little benefit in attempting to ridicule or injure someone or some group of people.

Avoid using anyone's name or face without his or her *written* permission. Some people value their privacy quite highly and would be very disturbed to see their name or face appear in your book. This caution may not apply to anyone in the news if you're writing about some newsworthy event.

Sending Your Manuscript

Send the printout of your manuscript, along with the illustrations, securely packed in a small box. You can use the box your typing paper came in. Your publisher may bind or staple the sheets together, depending on his custom. Let him make this choice. Send only numbered loose sheets. You can send book manuscripts by special fourth-class mail at substantially reduced rates, but the savings aren't worth the risk. Use first class. For a little extra you can get a return receipt, which will bear the signature of the party who received your manuscript. But still, be sure you always keep a copy of anything you mail out.

Don't be afraid to suggest to your publisher that you send the book in installments over a two to four week period. Many publishers don't mind beginning work before you've actually finished rewriting and revising. Some authors (and some publishers) work best where there is a feeling of team participation and urgency to the work.

Why You Need an Editor

Your publisher will assign an editor to work with you in preparing your manuscript for print. Your editor is more than a careful reader who reviews the language you use. He or she will help you create a book that looks professional and will sell well. Of course, part of this is checking spelling, grammar, punctuation, and syntax. But a larger part is acting as a bridge between you and the audience that will receive your message. Your editor will probably suggest ways to better serve the market your book will enter. Of course, it's your book; you are the author. But unless you have no interest in your book's sales potential, you can usually benefit from the advice your editor offers. A wise editor will give you wide latitude within your area of professional competence. And you will usually profit from offering the editor the same discretion in his or her area of competence: what will help sell your book.

Most authors agree that their manuscripts, even when carefully reworked several times, can benefit from additional polishing. Some authors of fiction or poetry are incensed at the thought that anyone could improve on their masterpiece. But professional, technical, and business writing is no place for *prima donnas*. You would be wise to solicit your editor's suggestions for improvement.

The editor is your advocate within the publishing company. He or she acts as a sponsor for your book as decisions are made about priorities and promotions. Every publisher has limited assets and capabilities. Some books have a higher priority in receiving art department services, layout and promotion planning. Your editor will keep your book moving through the maze of production, checking and correction steps that every manuscript follows. If you can inspire your editor with the enthusiasm you feel for your "baby," he or she can encourage the graphics people, marketing department, and management to help your book succeed.

Editors tend to be generalists rather than specialists. They are seldom as well versed in your field as you are. Don't expect any editor to argue a technical point with you or correct a subtle error in some demonstration. You should have an associate or a coworker get these technical bugs out. But your editor will tell you when some point is likely to go over the head of the typical reader, or when something doesn't make sense. The editor in this situation is putting your book to the ultimate test: Can someone who is eager to learn but less knowledgeable about the subject than you learn from what you've written? Your editor will react about the same way your readers will react.

Whatever leaves questions in an editor's mind will probably leave questions in your reader's mind as well. Authors are often so close to their subjects that they leave out what to them are obvious steps or explanations. Your book will reach thousands who don't have your technical background, and many who don't speak English as their first language. A good editor will spot potential problems in your book before it reaches the market.

The Production Process

Depending on the publisher's backlog, production may begin on your book when the first few chapters arrive. Editing your book is the first step, and you'll probably hear from your editor several times as the editing progresses. In most cases, you'll receive a printout of the edited version of the manuscript. In the days of typesetting, these were called "galleys."

These printouts are simply the type without figures or tables. At this stage, changes in the text can

be made fairly easily. Words, lines or even paragraphs can be added or deleted without much trouble. If it's changed in style or tone from what you sent in your manuscript, resist the temptation to put it back the way it was. The publisher has invested significant costs in getting your book edited to meet their criteria, such as reading level, point of view, etc. They won't appreciate you undoing their work and ignoring their expertise. But if you find parts that are now inaccurate or misleading, or that are missing, *now is the time to make the corrections!* When you receive the proofs of the final page layouts, it's too late for discretionary changes.

But don't think the printout stage is the time to rewrite your manuscript. The time for rewriting is just before you first transmit it to the publisher. Rewrite it after the publisher has paid a large sum of money to get it edited and you could find yourself looking for another publisher and possibly paying for the work that was wasted. Your contract should spell this out more completely.

When the printouts are returned to the publisher and the corrections incorporated into the text, the layout begins. Text, illustrations, charts, table headings and page numbers are brought together as whole pages are laid out as they will appear in the finished product. At least a temporary page number is applied so that an index can be created. When you receive copies of these laid-out pages, go over everything on the page to make sure it's exactly what you want in your book. But try not to succumb to the temptation to add a paragraph that you just thought of, or delete a paragraph that you no longer want to say. This may cause serious delays, cost overruns, and will certainly lower your editor's confidence in you.

Watch especially for obvious errors. Is the type laid out in the same order as your manuscript? Is all the type there, or is a paragraph missing (perhaps accidentally deleted or lost when the production person converted the files to their desktop publishing software)? Are the headings where they should be and do they say what they should? In the complexity of computer layout, a line tagged as a heading can easily become untagged and appear as a line of ordinary text.

Check all the illustrations. Are they in the right order? Are they the right side up? Big, obvious errors can be overlooked, even in the most highly-professional publishing houses. Your time and attention

here will ensure that you don't get that sinking feeling from discovering a major error after 5,000 copies have been printed and bound.

Indexing

Your publication contract probably assigns you responsibility for making the index. Every professional and reference book should have a good index, and there is no one more knowledgeable about the contents of your book than you. If you want guidance on creating the index, your publisher will be happy to help. Your editor probably has some suggestions, or will send you a sample of a good index.

In general, put yourself in the position of the reader when making up an index. Ask yourself what your reader will most likely look under to find information on a certain topic. List subjects under several alphabetical headings if you have any doubt about what the most logical heading would be. An exhaustive, very complete index is almost always better than a very brief, basic index. Professional indexing assistance is available if you don't have the time or desire to do the work yourself. But if you're in a hurry, as nearly every author is at this point in production, you'll prepare the index yourself.

There are indexing features in many word processing programs, usually requiring that you embed indexing commands into the text as you write. These are convenient, but rarely can produce the detailed, thoroughly-thought-out index your book, and your readers, deserve.

How Long Does Production Take?

Typically, editing and correcting can be done in four to six months. You can shorten this time by returning proofs promptly and reducing the changes you recommend. Allow another month or two for production layout and checking, a month for indexing and making final corrections, and another month for printing and binding. If your book is over 300 pages, it may take longer.

Publishers schedule production several months in advance. If your manuscript isn't ready or your corrections haven't been received when production time is available, or if your corrections are more extensive than expected, work may be delayed until

the next open period. If you have a completed manuscript of about 400 pages, artwork that is of acceptable quality and delivered in a format the publisher can use, if you require a minimum of changes, and are diligent in performing your responsibilities, you can expect books in your hands about a year after the completed manuscript was accepted for publication. Keep in mind, though, that your book is probably not the publisher's only project. They're probably working on several books by other, equally-eager authors, trying to juggle several at the same time. Some vanity presses (where you pay the publisher all their costs, plus a profit, and they don't much care if it's marketable or not) can get a book done in a month. You may not be pleased with the result, but it's fast.

Many authors are concerned that the publisher won't print enough copies of the book. Don't worry, your publisher will print and reprint as many books as can be sold. It's usually to your advantage to keep the first press run small. You're going to find some errors or something you would like to change when the printed copies come back to you. In most cases these changes can be worked into the next printing, but the first printing has to be sold out first! If the first printing is so large that it's also the last, you'll never get to make the changes you know are needed.

Royalties

There really is no way to say how much you can earn in royalties. Few authors make enough money writing to support themselves comfortably. That may sound discouraging, but understand that most authors do their writing in addition to other work. In fact, an author who writes about his profession or occupation is well advised to remain active in the work he writes about. Many authors use their books to enhance their reputation and earnings in their profession.

But don't think that there's no money in writing. Writing nonfiction — especially nonfiction that will help your reader make a living — can be very rewarding. Most professional books have a "half-life" of perhaps five years. That is, about half the sales will be made within five years of first publication. After five years sales tend to fall off gradually, though some sales will be made ten years or more after publication. The book you write this year will yield income over a long period. So don't expect that writ-

ing will allow you to retire promptly upon receipt of your first royalty check.

You can expect the following, however. Any publisher who accepts your book believes he'll sell at least 5,000 copies. Multiply this by the average sales price to get the gross sales. Your royalty share is usually 7 to 15 percent of gross. Clearly, almost anything you get published will earn \$20,000 in royalties. Using the five year half-life rule, you'll earn at least \$10,000 during the first five years after publication. You can do considerably better, of course. Sales can be increased significantly if your book is revised after five years. (A revision usually requires less work than the original edition.)

Periodic revision can maintain high sales for many books on professional subjects. The result can be a very significant income over your entire lifetime, and even after your death. (The copyright doesn't expire until 50 years after you die.)

Neither publishers nor authors are anxious to release royalty figures. However, many nonacademic professional and vocational publishers would agree that the majority of their authors receive annual royalties of something more than \$5,000, even authors who have not written anything for five to ten years. Note that this includes some authors who have written several books. The taxes on your royalties are minimized because the income is spread over many years.

Your tax advisor can show you how certain expenses can be used to reduce your tax liability on royalty income.

A Word About Craftsman Book Company & Your Book

Craftsman Book Company is not a new publisher; we have been publishing books since 1950. We are large enough to produce and market nationally, but are small enough to be on a personal basis with our authors. We publish practical references for professional builders. Craftsman books are loaded with step-by-step instructions, illustrations, charts, reference data, checklists, forms, samples, cost estimates, rules of thumb and examples that solve actual problems in the builder's office or in the field. Every book covers a limited subject fully, becomes the owner's primary reference on that subject, has a high utility-

to-cost ratio, and will help the owner make a better living in his profession.

About half of our sales are made directly to the reader. We publish books at no cost to our authors and pay a royalty of 12-1/2% of gross receipts. A sample publication contract is on the last pages of this guide. If you're producing a manuscript on a construction topic, we would be pleased to consider it for publication. Help us evaluate your book by sending us the following:

- (1) A one- or two-page summary of the contents. (The proposed table of contents will do.)
- (2) A sample chapter or excerpt of about 25 pages. (Send a copy, not your original.)
- (3) A sample of the illustrations or artwork that will appear in your book. (Again, send just a copy.)

Help us determine how your book should be marketed by responding to the following:

- (1) Describe the class or classes of people who are prospects for your book by occupation, trade, or profession.
- (2) Name the trade or business magazines that these prospects read.
- (3) Name several references or manuals that could be considered in direct competition with your book.
- (4) Describe how your book differs from each of these references.

Sample Publication Contract

1. **Date:** January 1, 2001
2. **Parties:** Craftsman Book Company (a California corporation doing business at 6058 Corte del Cedro, Carlsbad, CA 92009, 760-438-7828) and James E. Smith ("Author") contract as follows:
3. **Rights Granted:** Author grants to Craftsman Book Company ("Craftsman") the worldwide exclusive license to an unpublished work ("the Work") tentatively titled *Building Estimator's Handbook*. Author's grant to Craftsman includes:
 - (a) All rights that Author has or may have in the future under copyright laws of the United States of America and all foreign countries.
 - (b) The exclusive rights to reproduce, prepare derivative works based on, distribute copies of, display, perform, print, publish and sell the Work in all media of expression and to authorize and sub-license others to exercise these exclusive rights.
 - (c) This right to prepare derivative works shall include, without limitation, the rights to create and exploit digests, abridgments, condensations, selections, quotations, computer disk and CD-ROM disk versions, translations and novelty and commercial items and materials derived from the Work.
 - (d) A worldwide non-exclusive right and license to use Author's name, likeness, voice, signature, photograph, and biographical sketch in connection with the sale of the Work or of any rights granted under this Agreement. Author shall cooperate with Craftsman in promptly providing Craftsman, upon request, with suitable biographical sketches and photographs for such promotional purposes.
4. **Copyright** Craftsman Book Company shall have the exclusive right to take out copyright of the Work in the name of Craftsman Book Company in the United States of America and in other countries, and to renew copyright of the Work to the extent permitted by law. Author will, upon the request of Craftsman, perform all acts necessary to effect and protect the copyright and renewals thereof.
5. **Delivery of the Work** No later than December 31, 2001, Author shall deliver to Craftsman:
 - (a) A complete copy of the Work on computer disk in a format to be specified by Craftsman.
 - (b) A complete printout copy of the Work on paper, consisting of approximately 450 double-spaced pages.
 - (c) All auxiliary materials such as photographs, drawings, illustrations, tables and charts in a form suitable for publication. If any auxiliary materials are not furnished by Author, Craftsman may create the materials required and assess a reasonable charge for this work against royalties due Author.
6. **Extension of Time** Any extension of the delivery date specified shall be binding on Craftsman only if made in writing and signed by an authorized representative of Craftsman.
7. **Delivery of Index and Contents** When Craftsman has prepared the Work for reproduction and identified final page numbers, Author will create and supply to Craftsman a complete key word index for the Work and a table of contents.
8. **Protection from Loss** Craftsman Book Company will use the same care in protecting the manuscript and other materials supplied by Author as is Craftsman's customary practice in protecting similar materials in its possession. Craftsman is not liable for damages resulting from the loss or destruction of any material supplied by Author. Author agrees to retain duplicate copies of all materials supplied as originals to Craftsman.
9. **Permissions Required** The work shall contain no material from other copyrighted works without Craftsman's consent and the written consent of the owner of the copyrighted material. Consent shall be obtained in writing by Author and filed with Craftsman Book Company. If any permissions are not furnished by Author, Craftsman may obtain the permissions required and assess, against royalties due Author, a reasonable charge for obtaining those permissions.
10. **Acceptance of Manuscript** Within 30 business days after delivery of the complete manuscript, auxiliary materials and permissions, Craftsman shall notify Author in writing of its acceptance or rejection of the Work. No acceptance shall be valid unless signed by Craftsman's Publisher or Editorial Manager. If Craftsman rejects the Work, Craftsman may either indicate that the rejection is final, in which case Craftsman's obligations under this Agreement shall immediately terminate, or Craftsman may give notice to Author of the reasons for rejection, allowing Author an additional 90 days to make corrections and revisions and resubmit the Work to Craftsman for acceptance or rejection. Approval of parts of the Work, auxiliary materials, or permissions shall not constitute acceptance of the Work as a whole.

11. **Editing the Work** The Work shall be subject to editing and alteration by Craftsman at the original printing and at any reprinting; provided however, that any editing or alteration shall not materially change the nature or otherwise materially alter the intent of the Work taken as a whole.
12. **Corrections and Alterations** Craftsman will send to Author for approval successive proofs of each section of the book before publication. Author will return the proofs to Craftsman within 20 days of receipt. Author is solely responsible for the completeness and accuracy of corrections. All costs of Author's corrections and alterations in proof sheets (other than typesetting errors) exceeding ten percent of the cost of typesetting will be borne by Author and may be deducted from the first royalty payment due to Author.
13. **Fair Competition** While the Work is in print and offered for sale by Craftsman, Author will not, without Craftsman's prior written permission, publish or authorize the publication or exploitation of any other work or intellectual property that is based on the Work or material in the Work, or that would adversely affect the sale of the Work or any rights granted Craftsman under this Agreement.
14. **New and Revised Editions** Author agrees to prepare and deliver the manuscript and auxiliary materials for new and revised editions of the Work if and when requested to do so by Craftsman. Each new and revised edition shall be deemed to be covered by this Agreement to the same extent as if it were the Work. In the event of Author's death or failure for any other reason to prepare and deliver such manuscript and auxiliary materials for a new or revised edition within a reasonable time after request, Craftsman may, at Craftsman's option, either:
 - (a) Make arrangements for the preparation of a new or newly revised edition as Craftsman shall consider appropriate and may charge the reasonable cost thereof to Author or,
 - (b) Terminate this Agreement, reserving, however, any rights that Craftsman may then have hereunder. In any such event, Craftsman shall have the right to use or license others to use, with or without Author's name, any or all of the Work in any new or revised editions thereof. If Craftsman elects to produce a new or revised edition or editions after termination of this Agreement, the royalty due Author on the new or revised editions will be one-half of the rate prescribed in this Agreement for five years from date of publication of the new or revised edition. Thereafter, no royalty will be due on new or revised editions. In the case of death or failure of one or more but less than all multiple authors to deliver such manuscript and auxiliary materials for a new or revised edition within a reasonable time after request from Craftsman, the Author or Authors deceased or failing to prepare the new or newly revised edition shall be subject to the provisions of this paragraph as if the sole Author of the Work.
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 - (a) To publish the Work in the style it deems most suitable.
 - (b) To fix or alter the title and prices at which the Work shall be sold.
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 - (d) To decide how long plates or negatives shall be preserved, when they shall be destroyed, and if and when reprints shall be made.
16. **Author Copies** Craftsman will furnish six copies of the published work to Author without charge. Should any more copies be desired by Author they shall be supplied at a 40% discount from the retail trade price.
17. **Royalties** Craftsman will pay Author, in full compensation for the rights granted hereunder, royalties based on the net proceeds from the sale of the Work. Royalties shall be computed on the net proceeds received by Craftsman. Net proceeds means all gross proceeds from sales, minus amounts received as sales and use taxes, freight, shipping and insurance, and minus rebates, discounts and returns. Royalties shall be computed and shown as follows:
 - (a) On copies of the regular trade edition (other than those falling under (b) though (g) below): 12-1/2%.
 - (b) On copies sold at a discount of 50% or higher from the list price of the regular trade edition and on sale of unbound sheets and on foreign sales: 7-1/2%.
 - (c) On copies sold in bulk as overstock: 7-1/2%, unless sold below the manufacturing cost plus royalty, in which case no royalty shall be paid.
 - (d) On copies of a cheap edition, digest or abridgment, condensation or selection published by Craftsman: 7-1/2% of the net proceeds multiplied by a ratio of what the quantity of material created by Author bears to the quantity of material in the cheap edition, digest or abridgment, condensation or collection of which the Work is a part.
 - (e) On licensing rights, including, without limitation, reprint, serial, translation, recording, radio and television broadcast, book club, and reproduction in any medium or by any means other than publication in book, tape or disk form distributed by Craftsman: 50%.

- (f) On royalties received by Craftsman from any other source not covered by (a) through (e) above: 50%.
 - (g) No royalty will be paid on damaged, obsolete or overstock copies destroyed or given away or on good copies given away for promotional purposes, or those distributed on open account which became uncollectible.
 - (h) Where Craftsman is required by contract or otherwise to accept new or used books in exchange, the exchange allowance shall be taken into account in calculating net proceeds from sales of the Work.
18. **Royalty Payments** Craftsman Book Company will render semi-annual reports of the sale of the Work no later than March and September of each year, covering the six months' period ending the prior December 31 and June 30 of each year. Craftsman Book Company will make settlement in March and September following the end of each reporting period for any balance shown to be due.
19. **Author Warranty** Author warrants that he is the sole author of the Work; that he is sole owner of all rights granted to Craftsman by this Agreement; that he has not previously assigned, pledged or otherwise encumbered those rights or the Work; that he has full power to enter into this Agreement, that except for brief excerpts or passages for which Author has obtained permissions the Work is, in its entirety, original, has not been published before and is not in the public domain; that the Work and the use thereof does not violate any right of privacy or publicity nor is the Work libelous or obscene; that the Work and use thereof does not infringe on any statutory or common-law copyright, trademark right or any other personal or proprietary rights of any person; and that any algorithms, formulas and instructions contained in the Work are not injurious to the user.
20. **Indemnity** In the event of any claim, action, or proceeding based on an alleged violation of any of the foregoing warranties:
- (a) Craftsman shall have the right to defend the same through counsel of its own choosing.
 - (b) No settlement shall be effected without the prior written consent of Author, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.
 - (c) Author shall hold Craftsman, sellers and licensees of the Work harmless against any losses, damages, judgments, settlements, awards and expenses (including, without limitation, attorney's fees and costs) sustained. However, if any such claim, action or proceeding is successfully defended, Author's indemnity hereunder shall be limited to 50 percent of the expense (including, without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees) attributable to such defense or settlement. However, such limitation of Author's liability shall not apply if the claim, action or proceeding is based on actual or alleged copyright infringement. Until any claim, action or proceeding is withdrawn, Craftsman may withhold any sums otherwise due Author.
21. **Further Documents** Author will promptly execute all additional documents to substantiate, confirm and carry out the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
22. **Assignment** Craftsman may assign this Agreement or any interest herein to any person. Author may assign the right to receive royalties that become due after giving notice to Craftsman of the assignment made.
23. **Out of Print** When in the judgment of Craftsman the public demand for the work is no longer sufficient to warrant its continued manufacture, Craftsman Book Company may discontinue further manufacture and destroy any and all plates, negatives, books and sheets without any liability in connection therewith to Author, after first, in writing, offering to transfer to Author the Work and the copyright at no cost to Author. When so transferred, all rights granted under this Agreement shall revert to Author.
24. **Option to Publish** Author grants to Craftsman the opportunity to publish his next two works, under the same terms as those contained in this Agreement. Whenever Author develops a new work (for his next two works), he shall promptly give written notice thereof to Craftsman and accompany this notice with a detailed outline, synopsis and the text of the Work's first two full chapters. Craftsman shall have 60 days from receipt of Author's notice to give notice of Craftsman's election to publish, in which case the Work will be published under the terms and conditions of this Agreement, except as to those terms and conditions which must by necessity be changed, such as the date of the Agreement, date of delivery, number of authors, etc. However, if any such Work is less than 50,000 words total length, Craftsman may reject such work without forfeiting one of its options to the next two works.
25. **California Law Applies** This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California, whose federal and state courts shall be the exclusive forum for any suits, claims or proceedings hereunder. This Agreement shall bind and benefit the heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives of the parties thereto. If any term or provision of the Agreement is illegal or unenforceable, then all other terms and conditions shall remain in full force and effect and such term or provision shall be deemed deleted, limited or curtailed to such extent as is necessary to make it legal or enforceable.
26. **Complete Agreement** This Agreement represents the complete understanding between the parties as to its subject matter and supersedes all prior understandings, if any, as to its subject matter. No modification or amendment, nor any promise, waiver or representation (past, present or future) shall be valid or binding unless made in writing and signed by the party to be bound thereby.

27. **Settlement of Disputes** Any disputes between the parties shall be settled by binding arbitration at San Diego County, California, to be conducted by the American Arbitration Association in accordance with its commercial rules. The arbitrator's award, which shall be final, may be entered as a judgment in any court of competent jurisdiction. In all court proceedings between the parties, such as a court proceeding to enforce a binding award, the prevailing party shall be entitled to its reasonable attorney's fees and costs in addition to any other relief to which it may be entitled. Notwithstanding the foregoing, all claims involving amounts within the monetary jurisdiction of the Small Claims Division of the Municipal court of Vista, San Diego County, California, will be resolved in that court without resort to arbitration.
28. **Arms-Length Transaction** This Agreement shall be deemed to have been authored and drafted by all parties after consultation with their respective counsel, in an arms-length transaction, so that any interpretation thereof shall not be against any particular party on the grounds that it was the sole author of this Agreement.
29. **Execution** Executed at Carlsbad, California on the date first appearing above.

Author (SS# _____)

Publisher, Craftsman Book Company