

Self Publishing vs. Traditional

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/self-publishing-vs-traditional/>

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Self publishing vs. traditional: this is the big question many writers want to know. What should you choose? There is a third option: hybrid publishing.

Hybrid publishing, or choosing to be a hybrid author, is the current trend in publishing that is surprising everyone.

A hybrid author is one who is both traditionally and indie published. We have hybrid cars, so the linguistic transition to hybrid author – a writer who drives their career using whatever sources of fuel they can – is a term that well reflects the ways people are changing their ideas about what it means to be a published author.

Writers often ask me about whether it's better to self-publish or to pursue traditional publishing. Whenever they do, I say: BOTH. Do both. Here's why.

Good Reasons to be a Hybrid Author

The idea that a writer should choose one publishing track over another is about as dated an idea as the 8-track cassette. Why would you want to limit yourself – one way or the other? I really mean *limit yourself*, because if you choose to just traditionally publish, you are shutting yourself off to a market, a pool of knowledge and money.

According to Writer's Digest and Digital Book World, there is a general income you can expect to leverage if you're starting-out as a self-published author, a traditionally published author and a hybrid author. Here's the breakdown:

Writers who self-publish earn on average \$5,000 per year or less. There are those who become hugely wealthy and there are also those who make a handsome monthly income from doing it all on their own, and on their own terms.

Writers who traditionally publish earn \$5,000 - \$10,000 per year. Again, there are best-selling authors and NYT best-selling authors, but these do not reflect the larger percentage.

Hybrid Authors starting out are making \$15,000 - \$20,000 per year. There are exceptions, but these are the numbers provided in the 2014 survey as the mean.

To get an extensive 2014 survey on writer's sales (and more), purchase the Writer's Digest and Digital Book World survey, [What Authors Want: Understanding Authors in the Era of Self-Publishing](#). (No, I'm not an Affiliate. Bummer.)

If you're interested specifically in ebook sales and on a monthly basis, check out [Author Earnings](#). You can even join their online survey.

How can these numbers be right?

The numbers are too new to extrapolate or make too many theories about, but I do have my own personal theory about how they're possible. I would have thought that spending time on self-publishing would be too large a distraction from traditional routes, but the numbers are showing that this isn't the case. Hybrid authors make more money.

So here's what I think is happening: knowledge and experience are important tools. If you have the experience of both an indie author and a traditionally published author, this can only help you.

- Traditionally published authors have access to sources and tools that self-published ones just don't.
- Likewise, indie authors have tracked-down sources and tools that traditionally published authors don't even know exist.

Be both, and you will naturally go through two types of hard-knock courses. You will know more because you will have experienced more, sought after more and done more.

Self Publishing vs. Traditional... Marketing

A big misconception about traditionally published authors is that they don't have to market their own books. Not true. It doesn't matter how you get published. If you have something to sell, it's up to you to sell it.

A publisher will help you with certain aspects of marketing (like [getting into book shops](#) and getting reviewed by hot shot [book reviewers](#)), but it's the author who pays for other important things like ads in non-literary magazines, book trailers, T.V. spots and [a website](#). Thing is, with an advance, you can reinvest part of that money into marketing your work.

If you're looking into self-publishing but don't want to delve into it fully without someone having your back, you need to know about [The Independent Book Publishers Association \(IBPA\)](#). This is an organization that offers helpful resources and discounts to their members.

About Getting an Agent

When your self-published titles get traction, you'll be able to demonstrate to your [dream agents](#) that they should represent you.

You build your career, and as you do, your experience, your proven ability to write great stories and your gained sales will all build upon themselves. It's interlinked and doesn't stop reconfiguring until you decide to put your pen down.

So don't put your pen down!

If you are unhappy with your publisher, there's no reason to stay with them. Branch out and do more. [It's your right to do that](#). Seek another publisher; seek self-publishing options.

Decide what's not only best for you, *but what's best for a particular project*. There are just some story ideas that a traditional publisher won't be able to successfully carry. So you can do that. There's no good reason you shouldn't.

Keep creating, no matter what.

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