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## Self-publishing: The dream of your own book

**With the advent of self-publishing thanks to the internet, the structure of the book market that has been established over decades between authors, publishers and booksellers is beginning to change. Self-published books are on the rise around the world and have seen solid growth. The majority of self-publishing authors have their books printed to the delight of the printing industry.**

In the past, it was just wishful thinking for most of us to publish a book. The obstacles were relatively high. Finding a publisher often involved a never-ending process of cold-calling. And taking matters into one's own hands was beyond many a budget.

With self-publishing, however, this has suddenly changed. Initially ridiculed throughout, it is now an integral part of the publishing landscape. It creates a direct connection between authors and readers – at first glance, this means that publishers and booksellers are initially no longer needed.

In addition, it allows new business models to be established - and the time intervals at which content is brought to market are also significantly shorter. In terms of quality, self-publishing titles cannot always keep pace with professional publishing products. But the authors recognize that professionalism pays off and are increasingly investing in cover design, layout and editing.



### Amazon helps self-publishing make a breakthrough

Digital printing and the right finishing 4.0 solutions from [Muller Martini](#), the internet and tablets have paved the technological ground for self-publishing and create an environment in which everyone can make their dream of publishing their own book come true. As is so often the case, Amazon has helped self-publishing make a breakthrough by establishing two platforms on the market: Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) for electronic books and CreateSpace for printed books.

Amazon Vice-President Russell Grandinetti noted in an interview with German news magazine Der Spiegel: "In the book market, only authors and readers are absolutely essential. For everyone else, there are both opportunities and risks." Although the company does not like to discuss figures, it is now one of the largest producers of books on demand. However, the books are stuck in their own world and can only be purchased via Amazon.



### Trend toward printed books

This is precisely where so-called distributors like BoD, Bowker, Epubli, Lulu.com, tredition, etc. have attempted to position themselves and offer authors a different business model. They include both electronic and print books in their catalogs, offering them for sale through all online channels but also in brick-and-mortar stores. „Self-publishing has become a relevant player,“ said Markus Fertig of MVB GmbH, a subsidiary of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association, at the fringe of the 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair. The umbrella association of the book industry supports the commitment of distributors to counteract „monopolization tendencies“ in this area.

The individual platforms support the authors on their way to a successful book with a comprehensive range of services. The services range from cover design to copy-editing and proofreading through to sales and marketing. All the things that self-publishers have to take care of themselves when they work with Amazon.

Among distributors, the trend is leaning toward printed books. 95% of German-language self-publishers also publish their works as printed books – more than 20 percent even publish solely in print. At 5%, digital-only authors are the absolute minority. These figures were revealed by the 2016 European Self-Publishing Study.



And the indications have also been consistently positive in the US self-published book market. The number of such titles rose by 11% from 2015 to 2016. Looking at the five-year period from 2011 to 2016, the market grew by around 301%.

### **Publishers and booksellers find their role again**

At first glance, it appeared that publishers and booksellers no longer have a role to play in the self-publishing business. But publishers seek out talented authors via the bestseller list and include them in their publishing program. However, most authors no longer want to forgo the opportunities of self-publishing, as it allows them the leeway for trying and implementing new ideas. This has given rise to the term “hybrid author”, which signifies authors who are at home in both worlds.

The book trade has also discovered the area to differentiate its range and attract new customers to its stores. As a result, all stakeholders in the book industry are now on the self-publishing train and attempting to profit from this trend. There are, therefore, no longer any obstacles to the dream of your own book.

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