

21 Ways to Promote your Book on Amazon

Step by Step Template

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Become a Best-Selling Author on Amazon This Year

Step-by-Step Template: Become a Best- Selling Author on Amazon This Year

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Become a Best-Selling Author on Amazon This Year

No one can predict which book is going to become a best-seller, and which is not. But there are definite steps you can take to increase your chances and move far ahead of the field to turn out a top-notch, readable book that hooks into today's culture and tastes.

This guide will walk you through seven simplified steps.

We'll start by figuring out a **strong topic and angle** for your unique book. Then we'll research **hot markets**. After that, once you have a topic and you're on fire to get started, we'll decide whether or not to produce your best-seller on Amazon as:

- **A physical, printed book**
- **A digital Kindle book**
- **Both**

Once we've made that decision, we'll go through **the essentials of correct formatting**. Next, we'll talk about **testing your book**. Then we'll get into **pricing your book perfectly**. Finally, we'll finish off with **promotion essentials**.

And by the time you've completed these seven steps, your book will be perfectly positioned to become an Amazon best seller.

Step One: Find Your Topic and Angle

Which one of these sounds like you?

- I have a burning idea for a book that I'm passionately driven to write
- I have no idea what I want to write. I just want to be a published author/make some money on Amazon
- I want to write a book to promote and support some other part of my business
- Now here's something that may surprise you...
- **You have the potential to produce a best seller** from each of these three positions/motivations
- **You need to follow the same niche-vetting process before writing** from any of these three positions/motivations – if you don't want to waste your time.

Think about it: Why would you want to put effort, time and possibly even money into creating a book only to have it fizzle and fail? No matter what your motivation, following these steps will set you up for success in your niche.

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If you know what you want to write about, that's *actually just the start*.

For example, say your passion is leadership. You're a college teacher who has taught this principle and practice to many students; you're passionate about the need for it, and you'd like to put your experiences and ideas in an eBook. You're all set. Right?

Not so. What you have is not a book premise.

It's a broad niche. It's a general subject.

Successful writers take one specific element of the topic or niche they are passionate about. They ask a "story question"; then provide or prove the answer.

And that's what makes a gripping, readable, authoritative book.

Look at it this way: If you're a mathematician, you're not going to go out intending to buy a book on "mathematics". You've probably got:

- A question you want answered
- A theorem you're interested in
- An equation that fascinates you
- A specific area of mathematics (e.g. geometry) that has set you on fire
- One sub-area of that you are absorbed in studying (e.g. commutative geometry)

First you have to define your main goal.

1. "What do I want my book to do?"

If your answer was "get people interested in geometry" you would have to "hook" them in with something that isn't too dry or theoretical – but something that would catch their emotions or imagination.

(It doesn't necessary have to be the commutative geometry you're so passionate about – and which the average person would think dry and boring, if they had no idea what that term referenced.)

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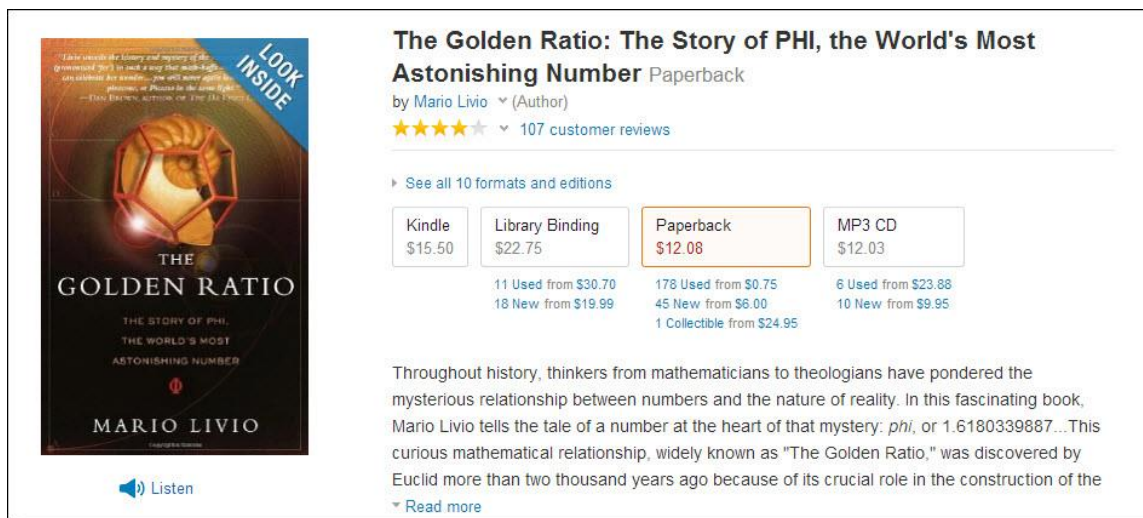
You would quickly realize you need to know...

2. Which specific audience segment do I want my book to attract?

This is the part where you start doing that research we spoke about. But let's jump forward – for now – and say we've already done that.

You might end up – in the space of a very few minutes – realizing that you want to sell your geometry book to *people who are right-brained and artistic*: Not the average person's idea of a mathematician.

Your research leads you to an Amazon best seller in your geometry niche such as this one:



The Golden Ratio: The Story of PHI, the World's Most Astonishing Number Paperback
by Mario Livio (Author)
★★★★☆ 107 customer reviews

See all 10 formats and editions

Kindle \$15.50	Library Binding \$22.75	Paperback \$12.08	MP3 CD \$12.03
	11 Used from \$30.70 18 New from \$19.99	178 Used from \$0.75 45 New from \$6.00 1 Collectible from \$24.95	6 Used from \$23.88 10 New from \$9.95

Throughout history, thinkers from mathematicians to theologians have pondered the mysterious relationship between numbers and the nature of reality. In this fascinating book, Mario Livio tells the tale of a number at the heart of that mystery: *phi*, or 1.6180339887... This curious mathematical relationship, widely known as "The Golden Ratio," was discovered by Euclid more than two thousand years ago because of its crucial role in the construction of the

[Read more](#)

No, it's not the latest vampire novel. No, it isn't blowing the lid off U.S. politics and the fight against terrorism.

It isn't even a steamy romance novel.

But it's a best seller.

Why?

Step Two: Knowing What Sells

Looking at "The Golden Ratio", you come up with a great idea (premise or angle) for a book: "How the Golden Ratio can make Life Easier for Graphic Designers". If this answers the question "it's a best seller – why?" you have your book. (You can pretty up the Title later.)

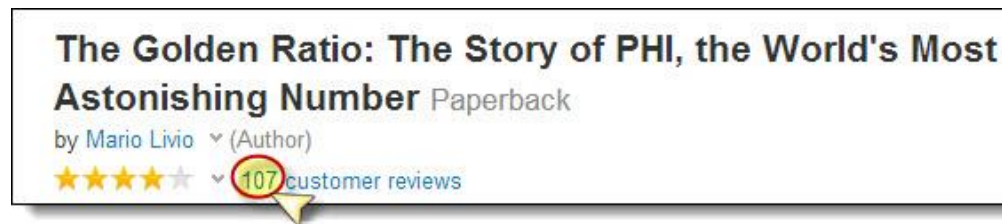
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Here's an easy, three-step process to show you how to tell if a sub-niche is best seller material by examining existing books such as "The Golden Ratio".

1. **Select 3-6 books** in any specific category
2. **Check the number of reviews** for each book in that niche you study
3. **Check the "Amazon Best Sellers Rank"** (under "Product Details" – you'll have to scroll down beyond the fold for this section)
4. Look at **the number of results** (i.e. books) for that specific category

What you want to see in Amazon's book listing is:

- More than 30 reviews



- A Best Seller's rank between 7,000—21,000

Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #7,565 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)

- Between 100—700 books for that specific category

Showing 1 - 12 of 531 Results

That's it. If none of the books you check out in Amazon's Best Seller picks or Categories meet all three of these criteria – scrap that category and start again. More than the formula parameters and your book risks being swallowed up in the sea of results; too little, and you won't sell enough copies to make it worthwhile. (Of course, you *could* become a best seller in a niche with only 29 books! You most likely wouldn't make enough to sneeze at – but you could legitimately say your book was "the #1 best seller in its category on Amazon": Which sounds impressive.)

TIP: If the number of books in a Category is over our limit, but everything else checks out, see if there is a suitable **sub-category** you could fit your book into.

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Using the formula outlined here, however, you don't even have to know much about a niche to become a success in it, if you interview the right experts or do diligent research.

But of course, it does help if you are already known in that sub-niche – i.e. a prominent part of an online community.

Don't despair if you're a total unknown; however: Just keep following our steps, and you soon will be a best-selling author and niche celebrity!

Step Three: Hard Copy, Digital only (or Both?)

It's now no secret that Amazon is selling more digital books than print books – yet both continue to be popular.

There is some advantage to having your book available in both digital (Kindle) and printed, hard copy format. For one thing, if you can turn up at workshops and conventions or display photographs of yourself holding a printed, “real live” book, it seems to carry more distinction than “just” being a Kindle Author.

Financially, it can mean more work and brain-breaking for not that great an increase in profit. (It can also make you a lot of money, if your hard-copy book is a hit.)

The Formula for Deciding:

You have to weigh **the extra formatting work** against the **potential profits** in creating a print version of your book, and compare both of these to the **social impact and promotional value** of being able to heft a printed copy around.

Now it's all very well to talk about “digital Kindle books” or “printed, physical books” – but how do you get Amazon to produce either?

Simple:

For Printed Hard-Copy Physical books: Register for and upload your book through Amazon's [CreateSpace](#) platform.

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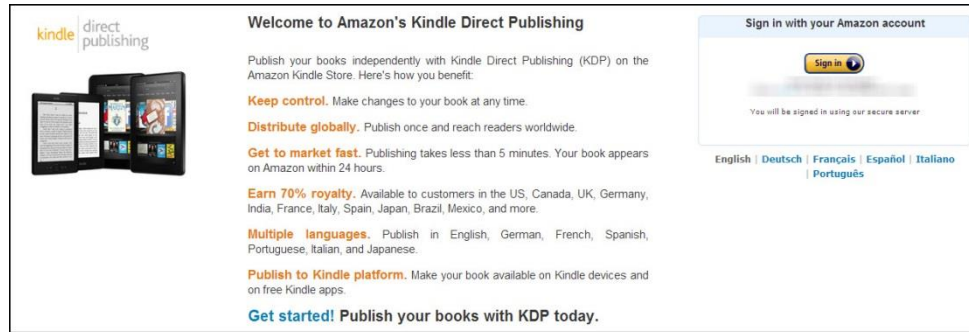
The screenshot shows the CreateSpace website homepage. At the top left is the CreateSpace logo with the tagline "an Amazon company". A navigation bar includes links for Books, Music, Film, Free Publishing Resources, Member Spotlight, and My Account. On the right, there are links for Community, Help, and Cart, along with a search bar labeled "Search Site".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Access your Account" and contains two input fields for "E-mail Address" and "Password", with a "Log In" button and a "Sign Up" button. Below this is a "What's new?" link.

The right column features a large blue banner with the text "Publish your words, your way." and an image of a laptop with papers flying out. Below the banner, there are two promotional sections: "Start your free online setup now." with a "Start a title for free" button, and "Get in touch with our publishing experts." with an "Explore paid services" button.

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For Digital Kindle Books: Register for and upload your book through [KDP](#), Kindle's direct publishing platform.



Step Four: Formatting Your Amazon eBook

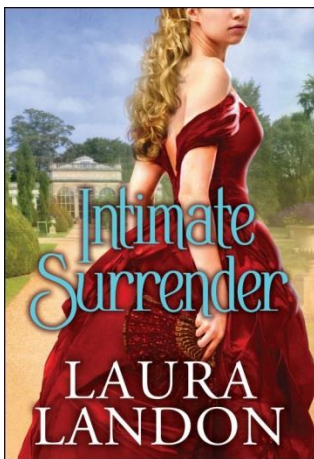
While all of your formatting must be done correctly if you want people to invest in your next book, there are three simple formatting elements that matter more than any other in determining whether or not your book has enough “curb appeal” to become a best seller.

These elements apply equally to both print books and digital.

1. Your book's **eCover**
2. Your book's **Title** (and **Sub-Title**, if you choose to have one)
3. Your **Description**

Your eCover...

...Should catch people's eyes and make them take a second look. Usually, this means contrasting or vivid colors, with a single subject. It should also give people a good idea, just from glancing at it, of what they're going to find inside.



For example, if you look at [Intimate Surrender](#) by Laura Landon, you'll instantly guess it is:

- a) A romance
- b) Historical
- c) Set in the South

Your big clues? The emphasis on the girl's figure, the dramatic pose, the ante-bellum mansion in the background and the style of dress she is wearing. The blood-red color of the dress also

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subliminally promises passion.

That's a good example of a strong cover. So don't skimp here: If you're not a professional-caliber artist or photographer yourself, pay to have your cover designed, since this is the first door your reader will choose to open – or pass by.

Technical Specs:

You'll upload your cover image in .JPG or .TIFF format at 72 d.p.i resolution.

- Size minimum: 500 X 1,000 pixels
- Size maximum: 1,250 X 2,000 pixels

Interior Graphics – Kindle now allows for interior graphics or photographs, but be aware that if you are a first-time Kindle author, this does add to the complexity of formatting your book. Interior graphics or photographs cannot exceed 127 k.

Your Title...

...Should catch people's attention. **Strong, bold and short** usually does the trick. In **tone**, it should suit your book's subject matter.

Another alternative is **straightforward and descriptive** (e.g. "21 Ways to Cook with Oatmeal").

Again, Laura Landon's book "Intimate Surrender" is a perfect example of the first type of title (strong, bold and short). It matches its subject matter perfectly. The word "intimate" promises the romance will have some sexuality to it; and "surrender" hints that this will not be a cheery romance – there will be conflict.

The "straightforward and descriptive" title model is better suited to educational textbooks, recipe collections or "how to" manuals. The "strong, bold and short" is better suited to fiction or anything that is esoteric rather than concrete – you want to get across an idea or concept.

If your book involves marketing, you may want to add a sub-title, because in the marketing world, one is expected. Besides, sub-titles allow you to repeat your main keyword or add more strong keywords – something you really want to do, if you want your book to be found by searchers.

Your Description...

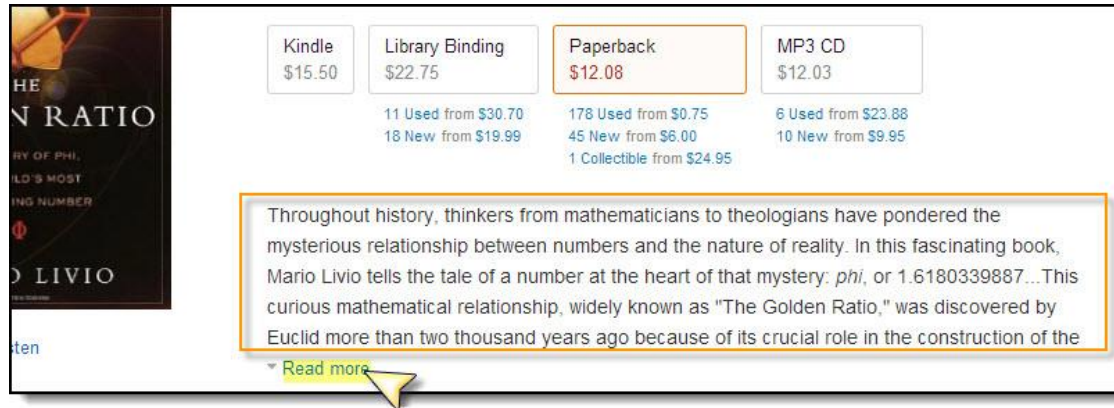
...Should never be dashed off in a hurry. It is capable of helping your book become a best seller – or hurting its chances, if you don't do a good job.

Your book description appears underneath your pricing and edition options, to the right of your cover photo.

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You are allowed between 30 and 4,000 characters for your description, but it is vital to remember that ***Amazon displays only the first five lines of description*** before truncating any remaining description with a “Read More” link.

Ideally, you want to say all the most important stuff – details that will hook your potential reader and stir her imagination, emotions or interest – in those first five lines.



Consider also that the longer your description, the more chance you risk of “losing” your reader.

Finally, do make sure you have created or set in place:

- An Amazon [Author's Page](#)



- A sample of the first ten per cent of your book available for people to read, so they can “look inside”.

The more perfectly you set up the “must-have” elements outlined in Step 4: Formatting Your Book, the more likely browsers will have a good experience and make a purchase, rather than putting your book back on the virtual shelf. So make the most of your eCover, Title and Sub-title, Description, Author's Page and book interior sample.



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That's the set up – and that's what makes people step inside your “door”. If they find that the inside doesn't live up to the outside – to what was promised on your restaurant menu or sign, if we use a metaphor – they won't buy. Or (much worse) will buy... and ask for a refund, which Amazon now gives!

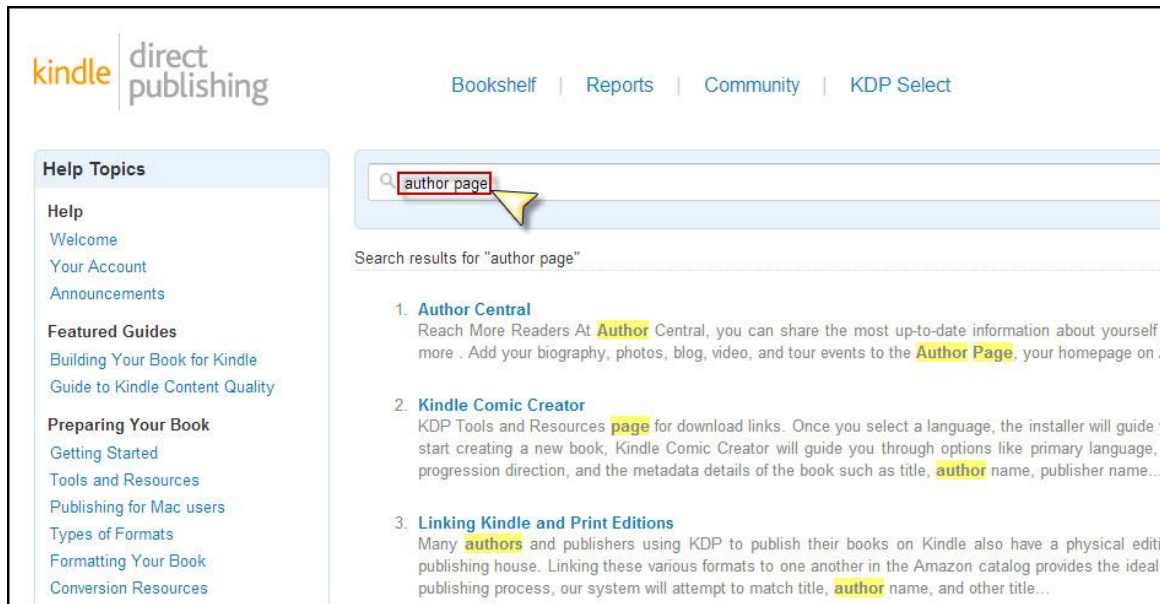
Once you've made sure your promises on the “outside décor” match the inside ambience and menu, you have one more challenge to meet: Whether or not to...

- Do your own formatting for Kindle or CreateSpace
- Outsource this to a professional of your choice or to the CreateSpace team

Option 1: Doing It Yourself

Formatting for Kindle is not hard, but you do have to pay careful attention to the rules. Download the [Building Your Book for Kindle](#) guide and go through it before deciding whether or not Kindle formatting is something you can do yourself. (For simple text books with only an eCover, this is a sensible choice.

There is also a forum you can search for answers or ask questions on: And a highly-responsive, effective [Help Section](#). No need for expensive paid guides – just enter a query or even just a keyword and you'll usually find what you wanted to know (highlighted in yellow to help you decide quickly) in the first page of your search results.



If, on the other hand, you don't feel confident to do your own formatting after reading the official guide, or you are producing a book with graphics or tables (which are officially not supported on Kindle, but which there are ways around) you do have another option...

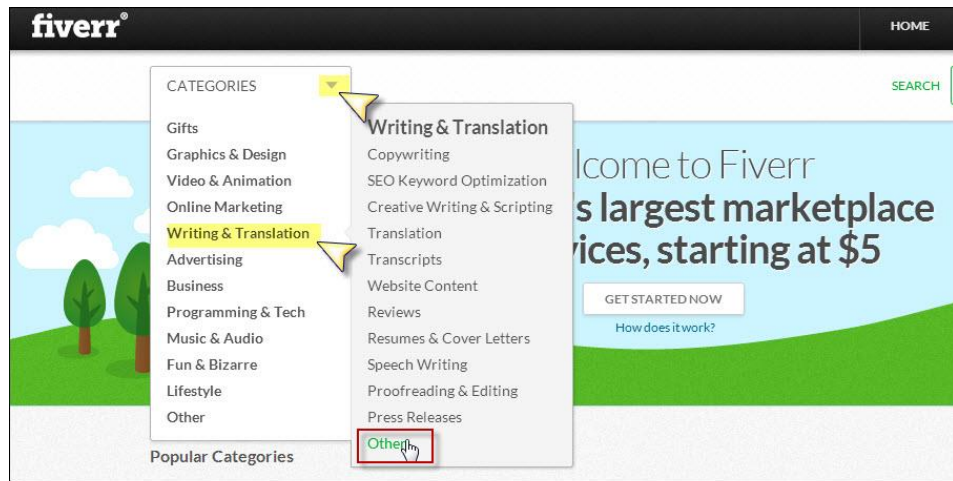
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Option 2: Outsourcing your Formatting

As mentioned previously, CreateSpace does have options for those who would like the CreateSpace team to build the book set up file for them.

Or you can look for online professionals who specialize in Amazon print book or Kindle formatting.

With Kindle especially, one budget option you may wish to explore is [Fiverr](#), a site that lets people offer their services for five dollars.



The first thing you'll notice on Fiverr is that quality seems to vary from amateur-dreadful to polished and professional, so make sure you read rankings and reviews – especially the feedback from those who have already sampled the contractor's services. Also keep in mind that more professional contractors really intend you to sample their services – don't expect to keep paying five dollars for a fifty-dollar project forever. (The ideal scenario for all concerned is: You sample their skills by getting your first short, simple eBook formatted for five dollars; you make money; you are then able to afford their regular rates.)

Fiverr does hold payment in escrow (meaning that it won't pay the contractor with your money until you've signed off on the job).

Step Five: Test Your Book

Don't rush to promote your book the instant you press the "Publish" button: It won't populate in the catalogue until "12 to 48 hours".

(TIP: ***Give it at least 72 hours*** – it can sometimes take this long for Amazon to check it and okay it.)

And DO test it in an actual Kindle reader to make sure your formatting stayed intact.

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Step Six: Perfect Pricing

Another important component in your book's success will be pricing. This boils down to only two selling positions:

- Sell your book at a higher price to a smaller, more focused audience
- Sell your book at a low price to a wider audience

Which should you do? That depends on some very specific factors. The more of the following you can answer "yes" too, the higher you can try pricing your book.

- My book is exclusive. Very few people have access to:
 - The experience I have
 - The person I am writing about or interviewing
 - Inside information this hot
- I am a celebrity who already commands a significant audience
- I am writing authoritatively about a celebrity
- I have both experience and socially-revered credentials
- No one else can show people how to do what my book is demonstrating
- I am revealing genuine secrets that people genuinely want to know
- My book is geared for a red-hot niche and market
- My book has a unique angle that will set it above every other competing book in the same genre

In other words, if you are one of several thousand authors publishing Gluten Free Cookie Recipes, you may want to start with a low price point. If, on the other hand, you are writing for a highly specific, small group ("Gluten Free, Sugar Free Cookie Recipes for Moms of Babies Born with Green Skins and Tails") charge a higher price – you have a "captive" audience... providing you've done your homework and you know this is something they're going to fall all over themselves to buy. The higher the demand and the more exclusive your content, the higher you can price your book. It really isn't all about how experienced you are in Kindle Publishing (though sometimes it helps to be famous!)

Just remember, you earn 30% (70% if your book is priced at under \$3.00). And if you enroll in KDP Select, your book will still be for sale – but KDP Select members can borrow it for the first

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ninety days after its release. In addition, Amazon does withhold a percentage for taxes, so you have to provide them with [tax information](#).

Step Seven: Perfect Promotion

There are countless ways to promote your book, but there are a few basics you shouldn't ignore.

In addition to creating an Author Page and making sure your book displays a "look inside" sample in the Amazon bookstore, consider enrolling in [KDP Select](#), the Amazon Kindle lending library. It means you can't publish or share your book elsewhere for ninety-days, plus during that period your book is free for KDP's premium members to borrow – but:

- a. Your book is still for sale in the Amazon store during that entire period
- b. You get higher royalties
- c. You get five days to offer your book for free – for every ninety days your book remains in the KDP Select program

And don't kid yourself: These five "free" days are the real "gold" here. It means you can design promotions around your "free" days (starting with right when you release the book, if you schedule your five days then).

You can share your book for free only with select people, lists or private forums and membership sites... **to get the reviews your book will need to become a best seller.**

And remember – **ASK for those reviews!**)

Finally, find out what other Kindle authors have done for promotion. Find out what worked – and what didn't. There are literally dozens of ways to promote a new book and you can't (unless you have a huge budget and a staff of assistants) give full attention to all of them.

But you can certainly find the right methods for *your* personality, *your* book and *your* target audience.

One last word: **Track your book and its performance.** (You can actually do this through your [Amazon Author's Page](#) – another good reason for creating one – as well as through Google Analytics.)

And the most important step of all?

Take action. Start creating your Amazon best seller today!