Turning Your Blog Into A Book For Fun & Profit

Presented by lulu blog
Turning Your Blog Into A Book For Fun & Profit

Paul Hobday
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Hey there!

You almost certainly don’t know who I am. So let me steal just a page or two here to make some introductions.

For starters, I’m Paul and I’m the Content Marketing Manager for Lulu. I’ve published about 300 posts on the Lulu Blog. I’m no author (though I love to write) and I’m no editor (though I like to think my diction is good) and I’m definitely no graphic designer (yeah no I’m not).

But I am curious and I’ve got a penchant for research. Over the years, I’ve learned a lot about the different aspects of publishing for independent authors and entrepreneurs. And I’ve been fortunate to have the opportunity to share that knowledge with you.

In this book, I’ve collected content from Lulu’s Blog written by myself and others at Lulu to help you turn your own blog into a book. Let’s get into it!
Chapter One

Why You Should Turn Your Blog Into A Book

If you’re a creator, author, small business owner, or solo entrepreneur, you have to consider how you’ll grow your business. For most of us, that’s not as much fun to think about—we’d rather be working on a creative project or interacting with fans or peers on social media.

You can write a book about anything—so long as it’s relevant to your fans and built on your knowledge, expertise, and creativity. But you’re busy, so you might not have time to dedicate to writing an entire book right now.

That’s why we’re talking about repurposing your blog content to create your book! Before we get into the nuts and bolts of turning your blog into a book, let’s quickly outline the benefits of self-publishing and why this is the right way to bring your content to your audience.

What Is Self-Publishing?

When you handle every part of the publishing process, from creating to editing to design, you’re self-publishing. Since you’ve already created the content on your blog,
going the self-publishing route means you’ll continue to own your words and you’ll have complete control over the distribution of your book (more on that later).

Normally, this means working with a publishing platform that provides print-on-demand services to create your books as you need them—the alternative being an offset printer that produces 10,000 copies at your expense. You’ll pay less per book, but they’ll spend a long time in boxes filling up your garage before you sell all of them.
The Advantages Of Self-Publishing For Entrepreneurs

Do you know what successful entrepreneurs sell? Okay, there’s no single answer, but according to research from The Tilt, books are the third-most popular way entrepreneurs earn an income (after coaching and online courses).

How much are those blog posts earning you? You might make some money from advertising on your blog and you’re definitely gaining traffic from readers who click from your blog to the other pages on your site. But a book is a distinct prod-
uct—repackaging blog posts into a book is an efficient way to let that blog content make you money in a novel way.

But money isn’t the only reason to publish a book. You don’t need to be a best-selling author for your book to be a successful part of your content business. Your books benefit your business in a number of ways:

- **Content Marketing** – Your book is long-form content marketing: you’re doing a lot of work to bring original ideas and insights to a topic you know intimately. Because you’ve been blogging about your topic for some time, you should have a really good sense of which posts your fans like. Use that information to decide which posts to include in your book.

- **Lead Magnet** – Your book is both a product you sell and the perfect advertising tool for you and your brand. Publishing a book is a surefire way to tell your fans you’re knowledgeable and credible, and that you’re willing to put in the hard work.

With a little marketing effort, your book can open doors to other opportunities (like teaching online courses or speaking events), and build your brand within your industry and your authority within your subject matter. Your blog is already doing these things; the benefit of the book is the opportunity to give that blog content more chances to earn your income coupled with your enhanced reputation from having written a book.
Building Your Brand With A Book

Earning revenue from your book sales is likely your primary reason for creating a book. Monetization is crucial for creators, so looking at your existing blog for content you can turn into cash is a great idea.

If making money is the number one reason for publishing, building your brand and your authority is number two.

Remember that image I shared above that listed books as the third best way for entrepreneurs to make money? The first and second are both ways to leverage your knowledge—through consulting, speaking at events, and online courses or workshops.

You don’t just get invited to speak at industry events. People won’t just sign up for your courses. You have to be a well-respected authority within that industry.

And what’s the best way to prove your knowledge of a subject or industry? To write the book on it!

And what’s that? You’ve been blogging about your subject or industry for a few years already? Sounds like that authority-inducing book is already there, just waiting for you to tease it out and put it together.

Seriously, writing a book that highlights your knowledge and insight will help establish you as an authority in your field. That, in turn, can lead to the attention of event coordinators who will want you to speak at their event. Reputation and expertise are their own sort of currency and are often the best way to grow within your professional community.

Proving yourself to be an authority also benefits your ability to sell an online course. A guy named Steve King isn’t going to convince me to drop $100 to hear him talk for 40 minutes about writing fiction. But prolific author Stephen King could charge many times that.

All because we know through his books that he’s an authority in his field.
Growing A Community Around Your Brand

It’s important that you develop a thriving, loyal fanbase. This is your brand community, the group of people who follow all your social media platforms and are excited to hear about what you’re creating. You already know this, you’re a successful blogger.

Your book is just one more tool to help develop your brand and community.

Your book is doing one powerful thing for you that the same content as a blog can’t: a book leads to credibility.

The marketing genius Robert Rose made a comment on a podcast recently about how publishing a book allows you to add a 0 to your rates. That might be pushing it a bit, but the sentiment is true: writing a book proves you’re an authority, leading to the opportunity to earn more for access to that authority.

So that’s why you should turn your blog content into a book. You’ll have another product to sell, the authority that comes with being an author, and access to a bigger audience.

Now that I’ve thoroughly sold you on taking your blog and turning it into a book, let’s consider which posts to include.
Chapter Two

Gathering, Sorting, And Revising Your Content

You’re not going to write this book from the first word to the final ‘the end’ because you’ve got all those blog posts! So how do you go about planning and putting together your book?

Start by scouring your blog. Review your most popular posts and look for themes. Do you have a number of posts about the different aspects of bicycle repair? There’s a book! Maybe you’ve written a dozen posts breaking down social media marketing on a variety of platforms. That’s a book!

Get the theme pinned down and then make a list of EVERY post you think you might include. Even if the post only has one section that might apply, add it to the list. You want as many posts as you can find with the knowledge that you can (and probably will) be cutting a lot.
The Gathering

Alright, you’ve got a theme or topic and you’re ready to gather your posts together. This is the perfect time to make a spreadsheet. Collect the post title, URL, and description, and add a line or two about how you’ll use it in the post.

Or you could establish a column to note which chapter or section of the book each blog post will be used for.

With your annotated list of posts, it’s time to put all the content together.

Open your word processor and paste all your blog content into it. Be sure to make the formatting consistent. This should be easy, as the blog content should already be consistently built. Regardless, keep an eye out while you’re putting the content together for any stray fonts or the like.
The Sorting

Go into your document and add section or chapter titles. These are basically placeholders at this point—you might want to include a brief description or direction statement for the sections.

You could also make some subsections. Maybe one chapter will be about social media marketing and there will be subsections covering Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Label those sections too.

Now you can sort your blog content, putting each post or piece of a post in the appropriate section or chapter. At this point, you’ve got a document that is starting to look like a manuscript.
The Revising

This is, without a doubt, the hardest part. With all your blog content in your book document, you need to read, revise, and edit everything together. First and foremost, establish consistency in the tone and voice. Look at the perspective and who you’re speaking to in your blog posts and get that lined up too.

Realistically, piecing together your blogs shouldn’t be too hard. Your writing style and voice should be well-established in those posts already. But it does require a careful eye to catch little shifts in tone. For example, do you speak directly or indirectly to your audience? Most blogs are written directly to the reader, but if one of your posts isn’t written in that style, you’ll need to revise it to match the other posts.

Cohesion is critical. If your book is not clear and consistent, you’ll lose your readers. You’re going to have to write some new content too.

Partly, you’ll need to reframe any posts you include to speak to the main topic of your book. Back to my example of a bicycle repair blogger—you might want to include a post about adjusting the tension of your bike’s chain.

If the post includes some introductory info (maybe some basic care for your bike), you’ll need to remove or repurpose it elsewhere so the book’s contents flow together.

So let’s move on to working on rewriting your blog posts and editing the manuscript together into a book!
Chapter Three

Writing, Editing, And Designing Your Book

Compare your working manuscript to your outline to find gaps in your content. Some, like introductions and the first few lines of each chapter, might be obvious. Your posts weren’t written with a book in mind, so there’s a need for fresh content to bring your work together.

Thankfully, there isn’t a lot of writing you’ll need to do. Before you dig into editing your posts, it’s smart to do as much writing as you can. Here’s how I suggest going about it:

1. Create a Style Guide

2. Write the Intro and 2-5 paragraphs to open each chapter/section

3. Write your Title and Blurb

Creating A Writing Style Guide For Your Book

This one is not something all creators will do, but as a blogger, I bet you have something like a style guide. Even if it’s not literally a document, you’ve selected fonts,
weights, colors, and more for the Heading and Body text of your blog. Likewise, you’ve got image specifications and the like.

All of that is the basis of a style guide. Without it, you’ll be making these decisions on the fly, risking an inconsistent presentation of your book. In fact, if you don’t have one already, you should consider creating a style guide for ALL your content. With a style guide, you can make it easy to keep your books, website, emails, and social media profiles consistent and cohesive.

I don’t think you’ll find any marketing expert who argues against brand consistency. Most see it as an important aspect of building a successful business.

Style guides are primarily about writing design and rules, but you can include some standard information about yourself too. Including the exact spelling you’ll use for your own name (which might seem too simple to be worth noting), the contact info you’ll offer (email, social, phone, maybe others?), and anything else specific to you.

You’ll also need to include rules like capitalization, fonts, text styles, and more. Does your book reference several other books? How will you include those book titles? Italics or bold or maybe even with a unique font just for book titles.

A good place to start is with a standard writing style guide. The Purdue Online Library summarizes the standard guides and links to their individual rules. There are a few types of writing style guides; AP guides focus on journalism, the Chicago Manual of Style is great for fiction and humanities writing, and the AMA guide is for medical professionals.

If you adhere to a standard guide, you’ll cut down on having to repeat a bunch of rules in your own style guide and know that you’ve got some tried-and-true rules to follow when you write your next book or web copy for your author site.

Finally, you should include design elements like colors, text layout, how you position text and graphics, and any other design elements you want to keep consistent. That includes cover elements, styling for your title, and how your back cover is laid out.
Write The First Page Of Each Chapter

This is like an extended outline. A chance to better define what you’ll cover in each chapter and help you further sort out which pieces of blog content go where.

Don’t overthink these few pages. You can note in this book that I’ve used two or three paragraphs to frame each chapter and lay out what you’ll be covering. Of course, you can edit these later. The point is to create a very brief overview of each section in your book.

Pro tip! Once you’ve got your book done and you’ve revised those first pages for each chapter, you might be able to extract them to form a blog post about the book you wrote from your blog posts. More content!

Write A Book Title & Description

Your book title might not seem like much. Just a few words on the cover. No big deal, right?

Of course, that’s nonsense. You know your book title is important. For some, it’s a touchstone for the subject and becomes personal. For others, it’s a marketing tool, designed to grab the attention of your readers.

However you look at your book title, you need one that compels people to learn more about your book.

Your book title is the very first thing your readers will see. As many skilled writers have said before, the opening line of your book has to hook the reader. Well, it’s arguable that the title is even more important. That opening line might be the difference between someone loving your book and not finishing it, but the title can decide whether they even buy it!

With that in mind, there are four primary goals to aim for with your title.

1. Grab Attention

2. Be Memorable
3. Explain Your Book

4. Be Simple and Inviting

First and most importantly, your title has to make a potential reader stop and look closely at your book. One benefit of online shopping is that the title stands out even more than it does on a bookstore shelf. There is no premium on getting your book ‘facing out’ because literally, every book on the web faces out.

An attention-grabbing title aims to secure a reader’s interest (and ideally a purchase) quickly. You want them to stop browsing and look at YOUR BOOK.

But if your title is both evocative and memorable, you can catch hesitant readers too. I might not buy your book while I’m shopping this time, but if the title (and the cover) stick in my mind, I may well get your book on my next browse.

That’s the power of a memorable title.

If you can pair that memorable, attention-grabbing title with a hint about the contents, you’ve got the makings of a great title. Your title is going to help promote your book too, of course. So having a title that gives just a taste of what they can expect will go a long way toward those promotional goals.

And finally, keep it simple. Avoid long or complex words and always do your best to avoid controversial language. There is one major caveat to this: if your audience or subject demands it.

Once you’ve got your title pinned down, you’ve got the slightly easier task of writing a description. Your book description is about enticing potential readers with key points, an author bio, and anything else that may resonate. You need to capture interest, connect any features or benefits of your book to your reader’s needs, and prove that your book is worth reading.

You need to think about search engines too. Your book blurb will be a big part of your product pages, so look for opportunities to work in relevant keywords. For nonfiction book descriptions, this is particularly important. Your book title and description will likely include some SEO keywords you can rank for.

With that in mind, a well-written book description can be broken down into four parts:
1. Hook - The opening line grabs the reader and nearly forces them to keep reading.

2. Connection - For nonfiction, the connection should address a pain point the book aims to solve. For fiction, you’ll develop the main character’s problem or hint at the main plot.

3. Escalation - Ramp up the importance, risk, or drama the problem represents.

4. Bait - Hint at how much more there is between the covers.

These points are just a guide. If you’re marketing to an audience already interested in your book, you might not push the hook (first line) so much and focus on the connection. The escalation is often irrelevant for nonfiction and can be replaced with credentials, social proof, or some other selling point.

Still, when writing your product description for your book, you’ll want to start from the same basic format.

**Don’t Edit Your Book**

Okay, do edit your book. But don’t be the only person editing it. Even though you’re working with some blog posts you’ve already polished and published, you need to get fresh eyes on your new book to look for typos and the like.

A good first step in the editing process is to create a printed copy of your new book to edit.

Editing a printed copy lets you (and your other readers/editors) get a ‘fresh’ look at the copy. Yes, it’s still the same words, but getting them off your computer screen can bring a new perspective. It’s the same principle behind the advice to read your work aloud to find complex or convoluted sentences.

Changing up the medium brings new insights.

There are (at least) two distinct frames of mind for editing. There’s the technical mind; when you’re looking at spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. And there’s
the story mind; when you’re reading to hone the story and characters. Or, for nonfiction, you can think of this as reading to streamline the ‘story’ that drives your reader to keep reading.

To simplify this idea, you edit for both content (the technical problems) and context (how each word/sentence/paragraph) contributes to the whole book.

A printed edition specifically for editing can help with both—from finding typos to getting a feeling for the way words look on the page.

There’s another benefit to making an editing edition; it’s a dry-run for self-publishing.

You’ll need to create an account and build the project to get your printed editing copy, all of which will help get you familiar with Lulu’s self-publishing process. To make it even easier, there is a simple formula you can follow for creating an editing edition.

**How To Make A Book For Editing**

Duplicate your manuscript and rename the new file. Open your new file and apply the following settings:

- Page Size = 8.5 x 11 in (US Letter - Portrait)
- Margins = All sides, 1.5 in | No Gutter or Mirroring

Next, you’ll clear any formatting you applied to your manuscript. Once that’s done, go back and apply Heading 1 / Heading 2 to section and chapter titles and add page breaks before Heading styles.

Now you can export a PDF and print your editing edition! I suggest using Coil Bound—the pages will lay flat, making it easier to leave notes in the margins.

The cover is basically irrelevant. You can use a default template or create your own if you’re feeling like having fun.
Hiring An Editor

A lot goes into editing; from proper spelling and usage to the structure of sentences/paragraphs/chapters to the choice of one word over another. And let’s not forget to delete all those adverbs and tighten your prose to fit your genre. Editing is a process.

In general, these are the four kinds of editing you might hire a professional to help you with:

- Developmental Editing - Develops and improves the story
- Line Editing - Line-by-line review of sentences for consistency and concision
- Copy Editing - Corrects spelling, grammar, and usage mistakes
- Proofreading - Thorough reading looking for stray errors and typos

You might not need all these editors, but you need to plan for a proofreader; that final dispassionate review is vital to getting the best book you can. But for the other kinds of editing, you may be able to pick and choose.

There are two things you should think about when budgeting your book: the cover and the editing. Getting someone you don’t know to provide their honest, unbiased perspective is invaluable. Plan to hire at least one editor for your book.

But please, get your book edited. Even if you just hire a freelance editor for one review; it will improve the quality of your work and the potential to earn fans. You’ll struggle to get readers to come back for your next book if the one they have is riddled with spelling errors and inconsistencies!
Designing Your Book

To design your book, you first need to understand the anatomy of a book. To begin, let’s separate the cover and the interior. The first part to tackle is the interior.

Your interior, or **book block**, is made up of three unique sections:

1. Front Matter

2. Contents

3. Back Matter

In the front, you’ll include your copyright page, table of contents, acknowledgments, and similar content. The back matter can include an author bio, appendix, glossary, citations, and information about finding your other books.

Your book’s contents will be all the blog posts you’ve edited together. Here’s how a typical page will look:
If you held the book open, that’s what you’d see. Now here’s that same spread with notes about some of the page layout elements:
And she went on planning to herself how she would manage it. 'They must go by the carriage,' she thought; 'and how funny it'll seem, sending presents to one's own feet! And how odd the directions will look!

ALICE'S RIGHT FOOT, ESQ. HEARTTHUG.
NEAR THE FENDER.
(WITH ALICE'S LOVE).

Oh dear, what nonsense I'm talking!

Just then her head struck against the roof of the hall; in fact she was now more than nine feet high, and was beginning to think that very few indeed were the privileges of growing up to such an enormous size.

Poor Alice! It was as much as she could do, lying down on one side, to look through into the garden with one eye, but to get through was more hopeless than ever; she quite gave up all idea of doing so, and began to cry again.

'You ought to be ashamed of yourself,' said Alice, 'a great girl like you, she might well say this, to go on crying in this way! Stop this moment, I tell you!' But she went on all the same, shedding gallons of tears, until there was a large pool all round her, about four inches deep and reaching half down the hall.

After a time she heard a little padding of feet in the distance, and she hastily dried her eyes to see what was coming. It was the White Rabbit running, splendidly dressed, with a pair of white kid gloves in one hand and a large fan in the other: he came trotting along in a great hurry, muttering to himself as he came, 'Oh! the Duchess! Oh! the Duchess! Oh! won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!' Alice felt so desperate that she was ready to ask help of any one; so, when the Rabbit came near her, she began, in a low, timid voice, 'If you please, sir—' The Rabbit started violently, dropped the white kid gloves and the fan, and skidded away into the darkness as hard as he could go.

Alice took up the fan and gloves, and, as the hall was very hot, she kept fanning herself all the time she went on talking. 'Dear, dear! How queer everything is today! And yesterday things went on just as usual, I wonder if I've been changed in the night? Let me think—was it on May Day that they found the lily-white feet?'

'Tim soon! I'm not Ada,' she said, 'for her hair goes in such long ringlets, and mine doesn't; go in ringlets at all; and I'm sure I can't be Mabel, for I know all sorts of things, and she, oh! she knows such a very little! Besides, she's she, and I'm I, and—oh dear, how puzzling it all is! I'll try if I know all the things I used to know. Let me see: four times five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is—oh dear! I shall never get to twenty at that rate! However, the Multiplication Table doesn't signify; let's try Geography. London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome, and Rome—no, THAT'S all wrong; I mustn't think of Mabel! I must think of Alice! I'll try and say how dear the little —' and she crossed her hands on her lap as if she were saying lessons, and began to repeat, but her voice sounded hoarse and strange, and the words did not come the same as they used to do—

How droll the little crocodile! Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin, How neatly spread his claws,
And welcome little fishes in With gently smiling jaws!

'I'm sure those are not the right words,' said poor Alice, and her eyes filled with tears again as she went on, 'I must be Mabel after all, and I shall—'}

Understanding how to format a book has a few pieces of important vocabulary.

**Page Layout Vocabulary**

- **Header** - The Header is a space at the top of the page, between the main content and the upper edge of the page. You'll often see page numbering, the author's name, and the book or chapter title in the Header.

- **Footer** - Just like the Header, only at the bottom of the page. The Footer is most often where you'll put your page numbering.

- **Styles** - **Heading** - The Heading text is used for chapter or section titles. This text is often typeset with stylized or genre-specific fonts.

- **Styles** - **Body** - The Body style is the basic design for your book’s text.
• Margin - The gap between your book’s contents and the edge of the page is called a Margin. It’s important to stay within the Margins to create consistent printing with no cutoff text or images.

• Gutter - The Gutter is an extra margin added to the point where the left-side and right-side pages meet. Giving a little more space here ensures none of your text or images are lost in the fold when the book is held open.
Here’s what a template from Lulu looks like:

This is an interior page for a book. You can find templates for interior pages and covers at lulu.com/products.
The **bleed** is cut away after printing, the **margin** is an area you should leave empty, and the **body** is where you’ll put your content.

**Style-Based Formatting**

When you’re making your book file, you’ll want to create some text styles. The benefit of the style-based design is that your text will stay consistent. Whatever you define for Body style will stay the same across the entire document. When you’re creating a book, you want it to look good! Keeping the text styles consistent helps your book look professionally designed.

Here are some of the things you’ll set in your text styles:

- **Text Size** - The size of the text. Most books use between 10 and 14-point font.

- **Text Weight** - Weight refers to the width of the lines forming each word. Bold is a quick way to add weight to a word.

- **Color** - The text color. For most books, you’ll stick to standard black. But if you’re making a full-color book, you might want to apply some fun colors to your Heading styles.

- **Font** - The text font. Your Body style should use something easy to read.

- **Spacing** - The white space before, after, and between words or letters. Tinkering with spacing can impact how easy your book is to read.

- **Justification** - Most books use ‘Justified’ text that ensures the lines are the same across the page. If you use Justified text, be sure to look for lines with extra spacing and hyphenate a word to break the line.

There’s certainly more but these are the most important elements for getting your book made. I recommend creating your font styles before you format your text. It’s helpful to know what the styles will look like as you begin adding your book to your page template.

You’ll need to select a book design program to edit and create your files. There are two tiers of options: the basic, but limited and the advanced but complex.
Basic book-making software includes Microsoft Word and Google Docs, as well as any similar text editors. These are easy to use but will lack the option for complicated designs that more sophisticated tools like InDesign or Affinity Publisher offer.

Most likely, something simple like Word will be all you need.

Unfortunately, explaining how to use Word in detail for your book’s design is a whole other book itself. Just take the time to familiarize yourself with Word before you dive into formatting.

The most important thing to remember is to avoid what I call ‘manual’ formatting. Basically, if you want space between some text, you could 1) mash the ‘return’ button or 2) adjust the spacing between lines. Avoid #1 at all costs.

You should aim to include page breaks, line breaks, and any other formatting in the way your design software suggests. Avoid ‘cheating’ or anything that just looks good on the screen. You’re not writing a book to be read on a screen, in a page layout program. What you are doing is creating a file to print—keep that in mind as you prepare your file.

For most software, that means exporting your file to PDF (save it in the software’s format too!) and ensuring the PDF settings are correct for printing. There are a few things to look for as you’re preparing to export:

- Is your PDF exporting at the right resolution? It would suck to carefully build your book file with high-resolution images, only to have them compressed when you make the PDF!

- Is your PDF flattened? When you create a book file, you’re adding content in layers. Text boxes, graphics, etc are all ‘stacked’ on the blank page. When you export, you need to be sure the entire file is flattened to a single layer.

- Are Your Fonts Embedded? If you used a fun font for your chapter titles, you need to be sure that font is embedded in the file. Otherwise, you’ll be relying on the printer also having that font available to print it!

- Is Your File A Reasonable Size? Is your file 37.9 gigabytes? If so, you need to compress it. (For reference, 37.9 gigs is HUGE). This usually only impacts
creators making an image-heavy book. Extremely large files take a long time to upload and download; potentially timing out the process and preventing your file from printing!

Metadata: The Parts Of A Book You Don’t See

Metadata is the information about your book—the title, publication date, copyright, your name (the author), and lots of other details. There isn’t one specific place within the actual book where all your metadata lives, but a lot of it is on the copyright page.

At this stage, it’s important to document all the metadata (title, description, copyright info, ISBN, and more). You must ensure your metadata is consistent while publishing, otherwise, you may not be able to list your book for sale with retail sites.

Your Book Cover

The last part of your book is the cover. That does not mean the cover isn’t important. In fact, your cover is a vital part of how you’ll market and sell your book.

That’s why I encourage you to consider hiring a professional designer (if you’re not one already) to create your book cover. You can also use tools like Canva or Adobe Express to create a cover for free (though their free tools are pretty limited).

When designing your cover, you’ll need to carefully prepare the file to include the back cover, spine, and front cover. You probably guessed it—you won’t be able to measure the spine until you’ve got the final page count for your book. That means you’ll need to wait until the interior is completely ready to create your cover.
Alright, now that you’re ready to publish your blog posts as a book, there are a few details you have to cover. The most important of these are your copyright, ISBN, proofing, and the unique indicators that make your book ‘look’ self-published. Luckily, I’ve got you. Let’s look at each of them.

How To Copyright A Book

Copyright is a form of legal protection provided by United States law to ensure your work cannot be stolen or reused without your permission. The full definition provided by the US Copyright Office is:

“A form of protection provided by the laws of the United States for "original works of authorship", including literary, dramatic, musical, architectural, cartographic, choreographic, pantomimic, pictorial, graphic, sculptural, and audiovisual creations. "Copyright" literally means the right to copy but has come to mean that body of exclusive rights granted by law to copyright owners for the protection of their work.

Copyright protection does not extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, title, principle, or discovery. Similarly, names, titles, short phrases, slogans, familiar symbols,
mere variations of typographic ornamentation, lettering, coloring, and listings of contents or ingredients are not subject to copyright.”

For the majority of authors, you’ll go through the motions to ensure your copyright is secure, but you’ll never have to do anything with that copyright notice.

That’s because your copyright is only something you reference if someone else is attempting to make money off your work. And, luckily for most of us, that’s not likely to happen. If you’re an indie author, you know how hard it is to sell your book in a market crowded with new stories.

Fortunately, it’s very easy to copyright your own work. There are two parts to copyrighting your book. First, you need to create a copyright page that lists you as the copyright holder, including the copyright symbol and the year in which you created this original work. This is a necessary part of your book’s front matter and should be included in anything you publish.

For the simplest copyright notice, you can do something like this:

- Copyright Year: 2023
- Copyright Notice: by John Doe. All rights reserved.
- The above information forms this copyright notice: © 2023 by John Doe. All rights reserved.

Include your own name, of course, and update the year to match the year your project is published. This notice alone is enough to claim the work as your own. But if you plan to publish and sell your work, it is worthwhile to register your book with the US Copyright Office.

The copyright notice in your book forms the copyright protection for that work. When you then submit the book to the Copyright Office, you’ll ensure that you can make the irrefutable argument in court that this is your original work. Without registering the book, you’ll still have the copyright (based on the notice you include in the book) but making that argument in the event that you have to defend your copyright becomes more difficult.
Follow these five steps to register your published book with the US Copyright Office.

1. Go to the Library of Congress site (at copyright.gov/registration) and determine the right licensing for your work.

2. Create an account with the Copyright Office and provide them with some basic information about yourself.

3. Click ‘Start Registration’ and fill out the form.

4. Pay the copyright license fee of $45. This fee is a one-time cost, you won’t need to renew it.

5. Submit a copy of your work electronically by uploading your print-ready PDF.
You And Your ISBN

Public Service Announcement
ISBN is an abbreviation for International Standard Book Number. In recent years, a strange phenomenon has taken hold among authors and publishers online—calling it an ‘ISBN number’. Please help us all make the world a little more clear by using the correct abbreviation or, if you really like the word ‘number’, spelling out the entire abbreviation.

An International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is a string of numbers that identifies pertinent information (called metadata) about your book, such as the title, author, type of book, physical properties, and location of publisher. An ISBN is a unique identifier for every single published version of a book, meaning that if you choose to publish in multiple formats (paperback, hardcover, ebook, etc.) each version would need a separate ISBN. It’s kind of like your book’s fingerprint, unique and specific to that edition.

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If you find yourself in need of an ISBN, there are a few different places you can acquire one. If you are publishing your work on Lulu, we offer free ISBNs, as well as the option for you to supply your own. For many of our authors, using a free ISBN from Lulu is perfect for their needs and allows them to access retail channels and distributors worldwide using our Global Distribution service. If you decide to use a free ISBN from Lulu, be aware that Lulu.com will be listed as the publisher in your book’s metadata.

If you are interested in using Lulu as a white-label service or starting your own publishing imprint, purchasing a batch of ISBNs to assign to your projects might be a better option for you. In the US, ISBNs can only be purchased from Bowker. Some countries provide ISBNs for free, so if you are outside the US and unsure how to acquire ISBNs, ISBN International can help.

Purchasing your own ISBNs has a few distinct advantages. The first is you can create your own publishing imprint. Doing so will keep your brand front and center and help you maintain brand continuity if you plan to publish multiple titles. If someone comes across your book and Googles the ISBN, your publishing imprint will be listed as the publisher.

Secondly, if you own your ISBNs, you can move them with the book. For example, if you use a free ISBN from Lulu, you cannot take that ISBN to another platform if you choose to publish elsewhere. However, if you purchase your own ISBNs, you can assign them to your Lulu project and move them to a different platform if need be. Another benefit of purchasing your own ISBNs is that they will never expire, so any unused ISBNs you own can be assigned to future projects.

Don’t Skip The Proof Copy

Your book is done. You’ve stitched together those blog posts, spent hours revising, gone through the tedium of editing, and made your way through the publishing process. The last step before your book is ready for your audience is the final proof.
Your proof copy (sometimes called a page proof) is the final version of your book, the product you intend to sell, for you to review. That’s it.

This proof copy is your last chance to look for typos, check the typesetting and layout, and see how the cover will look in print.

It is absolutely crucial that you buy a proof copy before you sell your book. Mostly to be certain the book meets your expectations, but also to experience your book in the same way your readers will. This doesn’t get talked about enough, but you can’t hope to market your book (or any product) if you don’t know exactly what your buyers will receive.

Look for a few important things while reading your proof copy. Typos and grammar errors are a must but also pay attention to line spacing, margins, and orphaned lines/words. If you indent the first line of paragraphs, verify they are all properly indented.

Pay attention to the page layout. Printed books display the odd pages on the right and even pages on the left.

Save yourself the frustration of finding out on social media that you’ve got:

- Typos
- Layout errors
- Missing or incorrect page numbers
- Blank pages
- Text in the gutter
- Blurry images

If you find any errors, upload a corrected file and republish it.
Selling Your Book

Being a successful, independent content creator means you’ve found the right ways to monetize your content. And you’ve already got your blog rich with content you’ve been creating and curating for years.

Now that you’ve got a book to offer your fans, you need to make it easy for them to buy it. Lots of people who self-publish just put their book on Amazon and are excited enough simply to have their book on a storefront.

But you’re a savvy creator and you’ve already got a website. So you can go one better than selling on a retail site (though you should still sell your book on retail sites too).

This is where ecommerce services come into play.

Ecommerce is essentially a digital cash register. The most important aspect of ecommerce is the shopping cart.

If you build a website, you’ve got a website. Cool. If you add a shopping cart to the website, you’ve got an online store. Ecommerce connects payment and fulfillment to existing websites.

This is perfect for you for a few reasons:

1. You’ve got a blog that already has an audience

2. You’ve got a website ready for ecommerce

3. You like making money

Selling your book on a retail site is a good idea; it lets people buy from their preferred retailer and can lead to visibility for your content. But you need to be conscious of how much you make when you sell on a retail site.

For example, if you published a 100-page 6x9 paperback with Amazon and listed it for $12.00, here’s what your price breakdown would look like:
See that $3.95? That’s how much you make for each sale. The other $8 goes to the printing cost and Amazon’s coffers.

Instead, you can sell from your own website to the audience you’ve nurtured and grown. Here’s what that same book would look like if you sold it using Lulu Direct:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketplace</th>
<th>List Price</th>
<th>Printing</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Royalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amazon.com</td>
<td>$12.00 USD</td>
<td>$3.25</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>$3.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Min. $5.42, Max. $250.00
All marketplaces are based on this price

You’ll earn nearly double the revenue. And you’ll be selling from your own ecommerce site, so all the customer data will stay with you. With your blog content already sending people to your site, it’s a natural choice to add your book for sale on your own website.
You did it! You’ve taken years of blog content and threaded pieces together to create a full book! After some editing, design, and review, you’ve got a product ready for publishing.

This is not anything new for you, but there’s more to selling a book than just publishing. You should start the marketing process before you even finish preparing your book.

**Book Marketing**

Since this book is about turning your blog into a book and not about marketing, we’re going to just cover this briefly. Here’s a really quick, six-point breakdown of a marketing plan.

1. **Market Research** - This should be pretty easy for you, as you’ve already built a following around your blog content.
2. **Audience Building** - Find guest blogging opportunities, get published online, and develop a personal brand; this is another aspect of the marketing puzzle you’re probably already doing.

3. **Budgeting** - Determine your publishing and marketing budget. You will want to consider professional editors and designers when you’re planning a budget for your book. You’ll also need to reserve funds for test orders and similar expenses.

4. **Pre-Launch** - Build hype with your audience, fundraise, and prepare your products and services. Again, you’re a content creator so you’ve got some experience launching content.

5. **Launch** - Sell your book!

6. **Post-Launch** - Use simple, repeatable tactics to keep selling the book long after the launch. This is important, as you’ll likely return to blogging and other content creation after the book launch. You should have a long-term plan to keep your book creating revenue and new fans!

Entire books have been written on book marketing, so this short section is just a taste of what it takes to market and sell a book.

**Creator Technology**

One final note on technology. You can’t be involved in marketing, content creation, or entrepreneurship without being inundated with articles about Artificial Intelligence. The content your audience wants has to be authentic. When you write a book or create an image, it has to come from you. Longform content from an AI is not going to replace human writers any time soon. So let’s just get that out of the way right now.

What is worth mentioning here, for your blog-to-book project, is the ways you can use AI tools to compile, sort, and organize your new book.
Feeding the blog content you intend to compile into an AI tool could help develop your outline, narrow down the right content for the book, and even give you insights about other similar books to the one you’re creating. AI is also wonderful for rephrasing or revising specific sentences.

Particularly when it comes to repurposing your existing content, look for ways you can use AI tools to simplify, plan, and organize. It’ll save you time and effort better spent creating something new for your fans.
If you’ve read this far, thank you. This project includes content from a variety of Lulu blog posts created by me and a few other writers here at Lulu.

I hope these pages help you realize how useful (and relatively simple) it is to turn the content you’ve already created into something new. Whether you’re new to the entrepreneurial and creative game or a seasoned pro, reusing what you’ve already created is a must.

Go out there, create and delight your fans. Then think about doing it again, this time for a different group of fans. Or maybe people who aren’t fans yet. Each new product you create is another means to reach and engage your audience. Grab those opportunities now and set yourself up for success in the future!

Happy publishing and creating!
This book is a compilation of blog content found here: blog.lulu.com

The posts included:

- https://blog.lulu.com/ai-writers-for-book-marketing/
- https://blog.lulu.com/publishing-tech-stack/
- https://blog.lulu.com/planning-your-novel-or-not/
- https://blog.lulu.com/editing-costs-and-budget/
- https://blog.lulu.com/create-an-editing-edition/
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To learn more about publishing and print-on-demand, visit lulu.com.