

Article AB-111

697 words

DanPoynter@ParaPublishing.com

1-800-PARAPUB

Writing Books @ The Speed of Thought

by Dan Poynter

Books are changing—for the better. There is a New Model for book writing, producing, selling and promoting. Now you can break into print faster, easier and cheaper. One part of this revolutionary change is in book writing.

Gone are the days of manuscript boxes holding boring sheets of paper with double-spaced lines in Courier typeface. Gone too are dull manuscripts without photos and drawings. Today's manuscripts look like books. In fact, they are books with four-color soft covers, single-spaced lines, words that may be bolded or italicized and headers with page numbers. New printing techniques let you produce books faster and cheaper—and this changes the way the books are written.

Today, authors “build” their books; writing is just part of the assembly. Building your book is like building a speech with PowerPoint. The computer simply provides you with more visual aids to help you get your point to your reader. Now, in addition to the printed word, you add digital photos and scanned drawings to your manuscript as you write, you pull information from the Web, add resource URLs to your text, search encyclopedias for background information, art sites for illustrations and quotation sites for quotations. You draw from all these visual-aid sources as you draft the manuscript.

First you set up your book in a binder with frontmatter pages, dividers for each chapter and a backmatter section. You fill in as much as you have for the title page, copyright page, acknowledgements, about the author, etc. Then you build the manuscript by filling in the pages. For a complete description and page layout instructions, see *Writing Nonfiction*. <http://ParaPub.com>.

You will save time if you submit your completed manuscript to your copy editor by attaching the file to email. Have the editor make changes to the file and return it to you. Then re-read the manuscript to make sure the

editor improved the copy without making material changes. If the corrections are made to a printout (the old way), you will have to enter the changes and then proof the changes. This is time consuming and there are more opportunities for error.

Following this New Model, your manuscript grows looking like a typeset book from the start. Next, pour the word-processing file into a page layout program such as Quark, InDesign or PageMaker. Then with a click of the mouse, you will convert the file to Adobe Acrobat PDF and you are ready to send the file to a printer. For information on PDF, see <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/main.html>.

You can wring maximum value out of your work by re-purposing your core content into other products. Those versions may be for Web-based downloadable books, eBook readers, compact discs, articles, special reports, compatible (non-info) products, seminars, consulting and digital audio.

The electronic edition of your book will have even more features than the print version: it may have color illustrations, sound, video and hyperlinks. Your eEdition will take up less space, be even less expensive to produce and will provide a richer experience to your reader.

With digital printing, authors may send their book to agents and publishers. A finished book is more portable and a nicer presentation than a bunch of loose manuscript sheets.

With short-run digital printing, publishers may send copies sooner to major reviewers, distributors, catalogs, specialty stores, associations, book clubs, premium prospects, foreign publishers suggesting translations and various opinion molders. In the future, books will not be printed on spec—in the hope they will be sold. Books will not be produced in great quantity until after they are sold.

New computer programs, new printing processes and the Web are transforming the writing, producing, disseminating and promoting of information. Books will never be the same. The winners are authors, publishers and readers.

For more details on The New Book Model, see <http://ParaPub.com>.

 **Writing periodicals:**

Dan Poynter does not want you to die with a book still inside you. You have the ingredients and he has your recipe. Dan has written more than 100 books since 1969 including *Writing Nonfiction* and *The Self-Publishing Manual*. For more help on book writing, see

<http://ParaPub.com>.

© 2003

or

Book Publishing periodicals:

Dan Poynter, the Voice of Self-Publishing, has written more than 100 books since 1969 including *Writing Nonfiction* and *The Self-Publishing Manual*. Dan is a past vice-president of the Publishers Marketing Association. For more help on book publishing and promoting, see

<http://ParaPub.com>.

© 2003

or

Professional Speaking periodicals:

Dan Poynter has written more than 100 books since 1969 including *Writing Nonfiction* and *The Self-Publishing Manual*. He is past-chair of NSA's Writer-Publisher PEG and the founder of the PEG newsletter. For more help on book writing, publishing and promoting, see

<http://ParaPublishing.com>.

© 2003

-30-