

@joshevoknow Notes



<https://shownotes.app/show/nfwtf>

Publishing Notes

So I have a complete manuscript for the novel that I have been working on, and now it's time for me to publish. Here are my notes on various websites and companies that I have talked to in my hunt for a publisher. Please note, I am hunting for a **SELF PUBLISHING COMPANY**, which means that I am the one paying for the services in order to maintain the rights to my novel, rather than the publisher paying and taking a portion of my profits.

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AI REVIEW PASSED.

My own personal details

For those that are interested, my story prologue (and first chapter) can be found here:

<https://adarajin.nfshost.com/StoryPrologue.html>

Additionally, I have been putting together a page that I share with potential publishers what my needs are, and that can be found at the link below:

https://adarajin.nfshost.com/AAR_publishing_advert_blurb.html

just a warning, the links are cAsE sEnSiTiVe - don't ask me why, it just is.

Other information that I have picked up during my search:

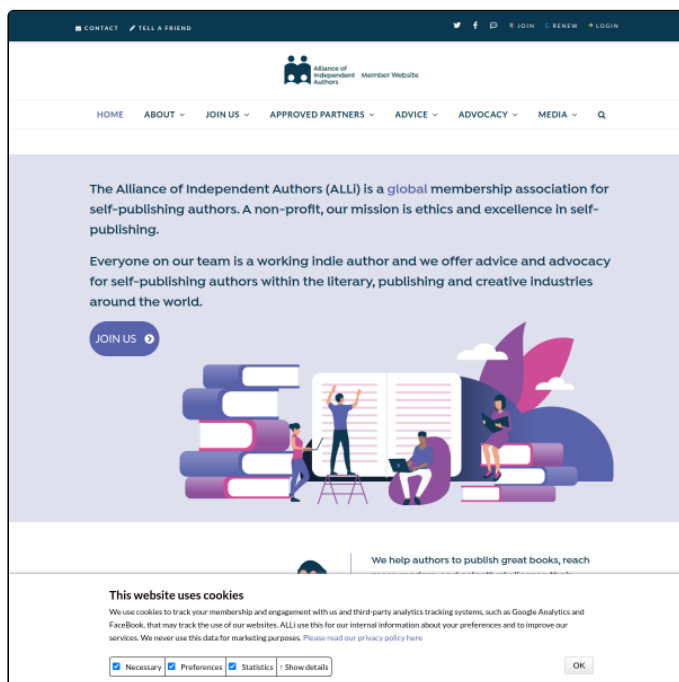
Print on Demand - this is useful for selling physical copies of your book without having huge up-front costs - you put together the file, and then the seller (Amazon, B&N, etc) will print the book one at a time as the orders come in for in.

Given that I am hunting for a publisher in early July, the best time to publish is by September/October, so that my book is firmly established in time for the November/December holiday sales rush.

Advertising - 3 months is likely too short to have much effect, as it takes 3-4 months to get your initial presence established, and then you start to reap the benefits in the following months. 6 months is the minimum recommended amount to profit off of this.

Do your research on the company you are thinking of working with - Are they their own company? Or are they an attempt to rip off the reputation of another, bigger company by naming themselves just slightly different? Check the domain and make certain it belongs to the correct, bigger company if there is any confusion. If they advertise published books on their site, look those books up on Amazon - make certain that they are real books (and not just similarly named/authored ones) and are actually published by the company in question, and not by someone else.

83 days 3 hrs ago



ALLi – Alliance Independent Authors

<https://www.allianceindependentauthors.org/>

Ok, so in addition to my own research (listed below) I reached out to another family friend who does a lot of work in the self-publishing industry, making her way as an author and a publishing coach, and she says that this is a legitimate site, so thumbs up from me and when I have more free time, I will finish reading up on the free material before investing in a 1yr membership most likely.

Previous Research:

Still doing my research on this one, however it seems like a reputable resource for self-publishing authors. I'm tempted to pay the \$89 associate fee (since I'm still prepping to publish, but have a ways to go) but I want to look into them a bit more first.

A few of my research notes on the background of this site:

Staff – there are a number of the listed staff that are published authors, and have books listed on Amazon. Either their personal website directly says that this is a good, reputable company, or reaching out to them gets the same information.

ChatGPT suggested the following site as the closest UK equivalent of the BBB to look them up on – below is the link to their direct listing. Information matches up with what has been stated previously (site and other members).

<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/08102855>

ChatGPT also suggested searching for it as a charity, however the search engine it suggested found far too many results for me to check (I couldn't get it under 50k potential results)

A quick listing of various blogs I've noted that endorse this site:

<https://shownotes.app/@joshevoknow>

<https://www.mwinklerbooks.com/blog/allireview>

https://www.reddit.com/r/selfpublish/comments/18c3x1l/is_anyone_part_of_the_alliance_of_independent/

<https://selfpublishing.com/alliance-of-independent-authors/>

<https://selfpublishingadvice.org/review-2021/>

<https://www.valleyofwriters.com/links/listing/alliance-of-independent-authors-alli/>

And to show both sides of things - here are some reviews that don't endorse the site, although they say "its not worth it" rather than "it's a scam"

<https://www.kboards.com/threads/your-opinions-please-is-it-worth-joining-alliance-of-independent-authors.259126/>

https://www.kdpcommunity.com/s/question/OD5f400000FHtedCAD/alli-alliance-of-independent-authors?language=en_US

69 days 9 hrs ago

Website:

<https://www.allianceindependentauthors.org/>

kotobee BLOG Home Downloads & Pricing Advertising Contact

Books, Publishing, and Everything in Between

5 Signs to Spot Vanity Publishers (And Which Ones to Avoid)

By Kotobee on Jan 01, 2023 in [EBook Marketing and Sales](#)
Last update: March 7th, 2024 at 12:44 pm

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

For most aspiring authors, getting that first book out into the world is a dream come true. So it makes complete sense that many of them would jump at the chance to get published—after all, who wouldn't? But getting a book "out there" doesn't always equate to successful publishing. In fact, many aspiring authors **fall prey to vanity publishers**, and unfortunately, they often realize it too late.

In order to help you avoid the trap of vanity publishers, we'll break down in this article how to spot them from a mile away, and we'll offer alternative routes to publish your books.

In this article:

- Vanity publishing definition
- Telling signs of vanity publishers
- Sample list of vanity publishers
- Self-publishing businesses vs. vanity publishers
- Hybrid publishers vs. vanity publishers

What Is Vanity Publishing?

Coined in 1959, the term "vanity publishing" describes any publisher or press that **doesn't profit from book sales. They rather profit from charging authors extortionate rates** for the

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Kotobee is the complete end-to-end ebook solution for you and your business. Export multiple formats. Deliver securely.

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AUTHOR
Kotobee

We're a quirky group of writers dedicating our time to unweaving all the tricks of the trade in the land of ebooks and publishing.

Newsletter Signup
Receive weekly emails filled with publishing goodness!

Email:

Blog with Information on what to look for, and what to look out for

<https://blog.kotobee.com/vanity-publishers/>

While not a publishing company itself, I found this to be a very informative blog on what to be looking for, and what to be wary of, when looking for a self-publishing company.

Other useful links that can be found on this blog:

<https://www.sfwaw.org/other-resources/for-authors/writer-beware/about/>

<https://www.allianceindependentauthors.org/>

<https://selfpublishingadvice.org/best-self-publishing-services/>

<https://www.kotobee.com/en/services>

72 days 13 hrs ago

Website:

<https://blog.kotobee.com/vanity-publishers/>



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Reddit Writing Wiki

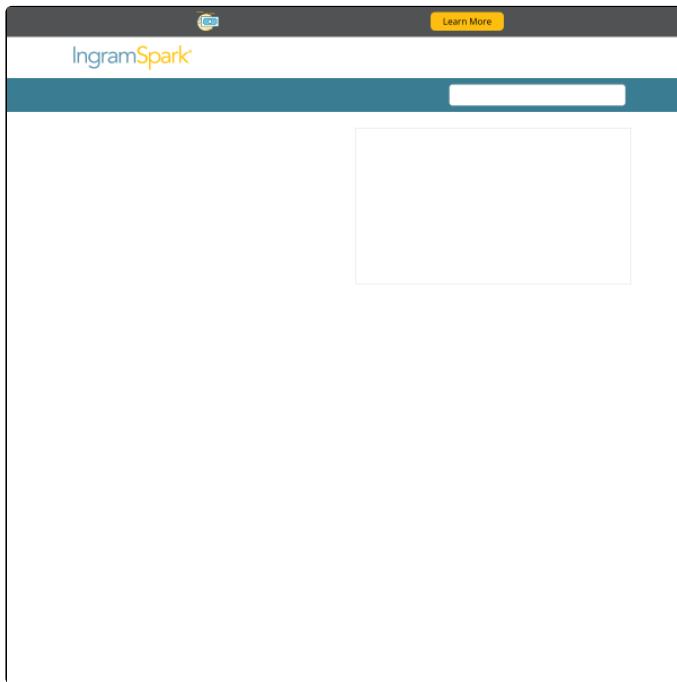
<https://www.reddit.com/r/selfpublish/wiki/index/>

Need to read through this later.

72 days 13 hrs ago

Website:

<https://www.reddit.com/r/selfpublish/wiki/index/>



IngramSpark - PoD Publisher

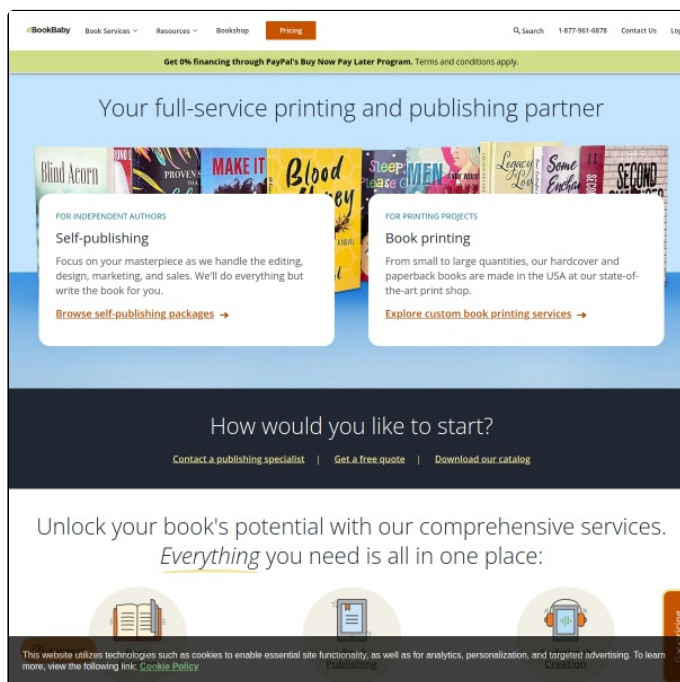
<https://www.ingramspark.com/>

Still need to research this, but I've seen this recommended in a few places (didn't bother to note where though yet) as a high-quality Print on Demand publisher.

72 days 13 hrs ago

Website:

<https://www.ingramspark.com/>



Book Baby – friendly and professional

<https://www.bookbaby.com/>

According to the reddit review page that I read, most/all of the featured offerings can be found for free (or at least cheaper) elsewhere, although you will often have to potentially do more work instead. Review can be found at

https://www.reddit.com/r/selfpublish/comments/nudcz6/is_selfpublishing_an_ebook_through_bookbaby

This site didn't have an in-website chat feature, so I went ahead and called the phone number on the contact us page to have a chat. Rebecca in sales was very friendly and helped to walk me through what the company offered, and getting a price quote for my book. Getting the book formatted and ordering 25 paperback copies for myself as an initial print run (they don't accept orders of less than 25 books at a time), this would cost a little less than \$2,000 – a fairly competitive price, and they seem to know what they are doing.

In the marketing department however, they are expensive. They charge \$199 to set up each marketing campaign (think Google/Facebook/Other ads) and \$100/week for each campaign, with a minimum duration of 4 weeks at a time.

While I will keep this company in mind, I'm thinking that I might go elsewhere.

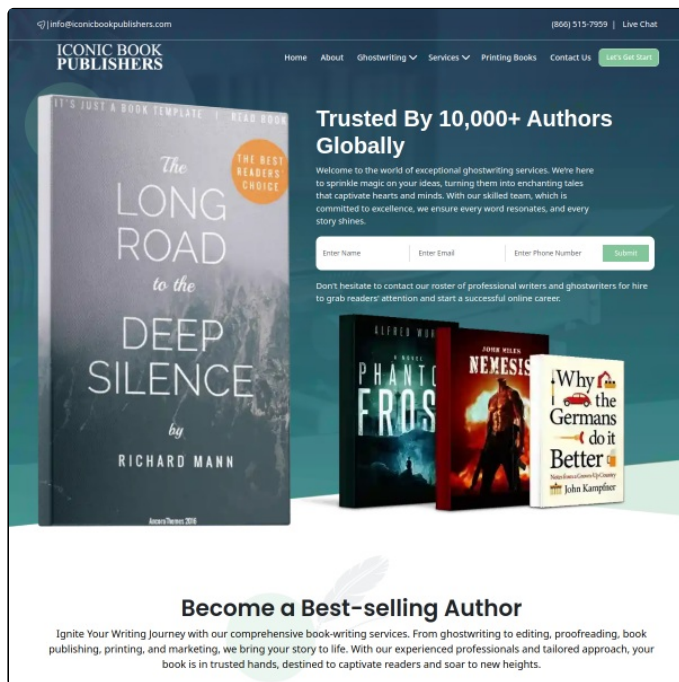
Additional Comments: So far, all of the other options I've looked at how turned out to be fraudulent, so perhaps this is the actual pricing range for marketing campaigns. I don't necessarily need physical copies of the book initially, just the EBook formatting, and PoD book formatting, so I don't want to pay the \$300 portion of the invoice (assuming I'm reading it correctly) that is being offered. Because of this, I'm going to keep looking.

67 days 23 hrs ago

Website:

<https://www.bookbaby.com/>

<https://shownotes.app/@joshevoknow>



Iconic Book Publishers – Fraudulent

<https://iconicbookpublishers.com/>

Being a bit more investigative, I see that some of the listed books on their website are actually published by other agencies. This company also isn't listed with the BBB. I'm calling fake on this one.

Word of warning – DON'T GIVE THEM YOUR PHONE NUMBER, they will harass you trying to find out why you are not going with them.

Previous Review

So this company seems to have some serious potential in my mind as a good publishing agency. The opening sales pitch by Max was the (relatively low) rate of \$100 per platform being distributed on, starting at 3 platforms minimum and going up from there. That's just for getting the book listed however, and a significant chunk of the money that I would be spending would be going towards advertising.

When I said that my target budget was \$4k-\$5k, he said that that was a rather low budget for marketing, and I was likely to only get as much as as 30%-50% return on investment (ROI) from my marketing in the first 3 months, which is how long the sales campaign would last. He recommended instead a \$15k budget for a year-long, high-end marketing campaign that would likely result in as much as a 200% ROI.

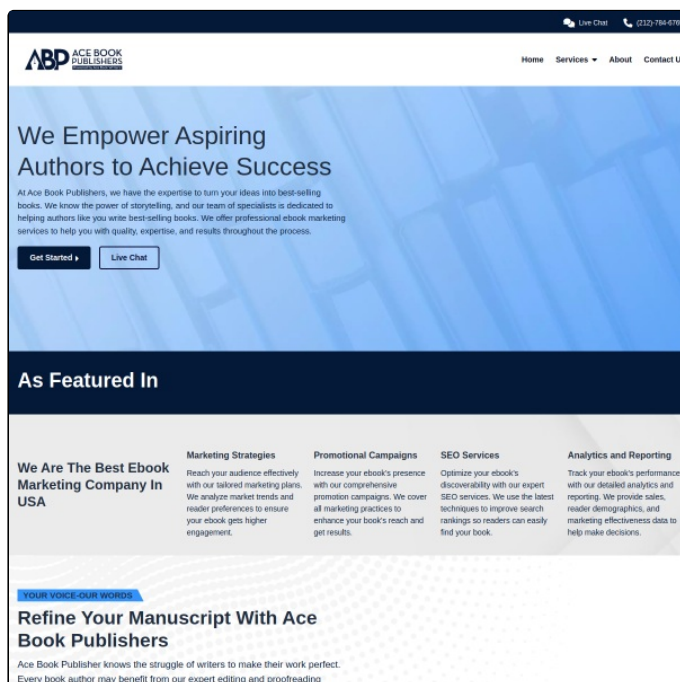
Going back to the distribution platforms numbers, he said that if I were to sell on 35 markets (\$3500 cost) they would include an animated video trailer for the novel (valued at \$800 on its own), and had a deal going on (without a specified end date, so no "buy now or miss out" sales pitch) where I would get 3 months of marketing as well, included in the \$3500 package.

Overall, Max strikes me as a very "here's what reality is, you get what you pay for, and here is our experience on how far your money goes" sort of person and I get the impression that the rest of the company is the same. All in all, Iconic Book Publishers is a very solid contender so far for me in my search for a publishing agency.

79 days 11 hrs ago

Website:

<https://iconicbookpublishers.com/>



Ace Book Publishers – Name Stealer

<https://acebookpublishers.com/>

Upon doing additional research, I believe that this is a fraudulent company. The REAL Ace appears to be a subsidiary of Penguin, and this is not. Marking this off as a "no go".

Previous Review:

So far, this has been the cheapest of the proposals that I have seen that I have seriously considered. The plan that was offered to me via the phone discussion was \$1k for publishing the book (with all associated setup), on 70+ platforms and 3k+ bookstores, and 3 months of social media marketing.

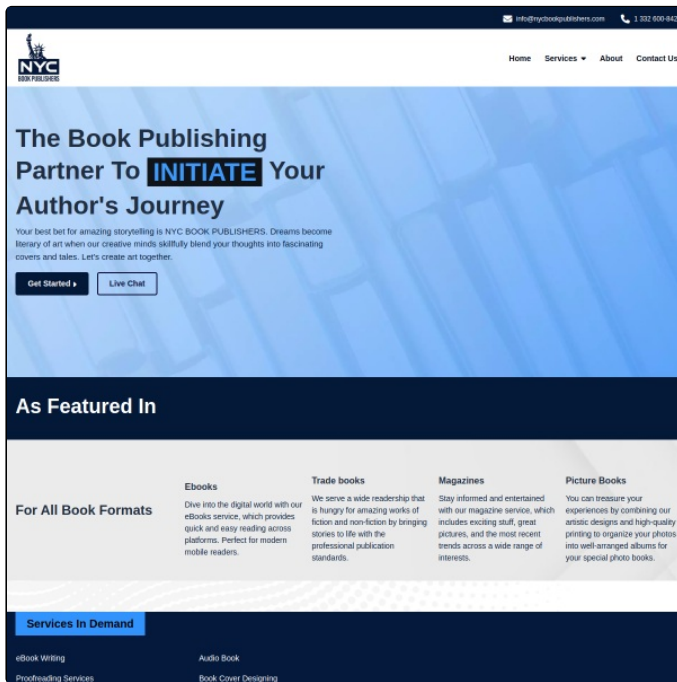
In the email, which more firmly outlined what that \$1k covered, it only said "Key markets such as B&N, Amazon, and other platforms" - not the 70+ platforms and 3k+ bookstores that was initially mentioned, but this is a lot more realistic for that price. The 3 months of marketing was still included.

While I'm pretty certain that the "70+ markets and 3k+ bookstores" was meant as a "choose from" and/or "higher packages include" sort of thing, I'm still hesitant to take this offer as other companies tend to start at \$2,500+ as their lowest package, so if they are able to offer a package for only \$1,000 I have to wonder "what is the quality of this / what is going to be missing from what I need?" Still, I wasn't immediately turned off of Ace Book Publishers like I was some of the other 'options'.

85 days 10 hrs ago

Website:

<https://acebookpublishers.com/>



NYC Book Publishers – another Fraudster?

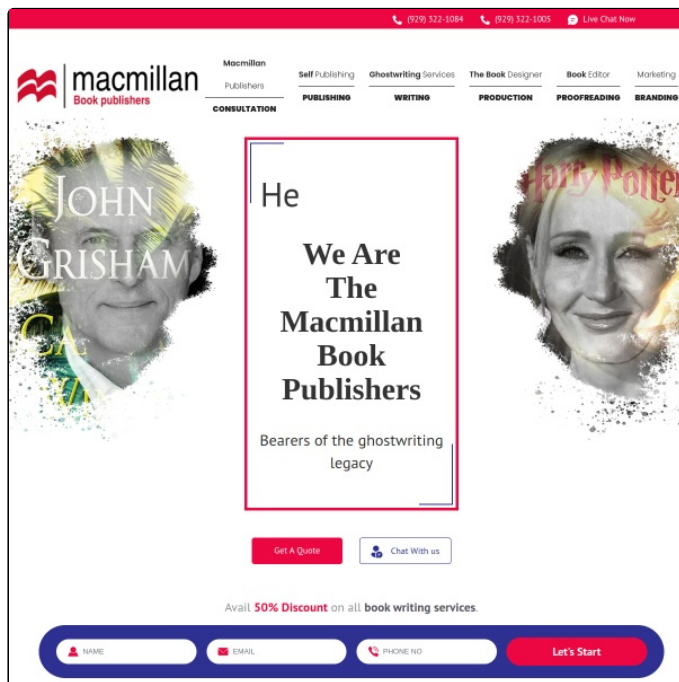
<https://nycbookpublishers.com/>

Having just been likely hit by a different fraudster company, I am now delving a bit deeper into some of the potential companies that I am looking at. NYC Book Publishers is actually a fairly generic name now that I am truly analyzing it, and when I looked up some of the book covers posted on their website, I found that they were published by other companies and/or were slightly inaccurate on the name/author of the book. This is now a red flag to me, and I am marking this company down as fraudulent.

86 days 1 hr ago

Website:

<https://nycbookpublishers.com/>



Macmillan Book Publishers – Reputation Stealing Fraudsters?

<https://www.macmillanbookpublishers.co/>

So when the bill came in on my credit card, it was in two parts to cover the \$3,500.

THE CREATIVE LABZ \$3,000.00
Technoboxer LLC \$500.00

As you can see, neither of these are MacMillan. When I contacted the bank, they were able to give me the phone numbers registered to these payment processors, but could not verify that they actually were used by MacMillan. Calling those phone numbers was my next step and... both of them were out of service. Fortunately, my payment was on a credit card, however now I have to wait until the payment posts in order to dispute it.

I am not going to be taking any services from this company beyond the discussion I have already have, unless my separate attempts to contact the *real* MacMillan company has them telling me that they are a legitimate off-shoot, at which point I will continue – but I don't believe that that is likely to happen, so I will be reporting them to various resources and letting my credit card company have at them to get their money back for misrepresentation and services not received.

Lesson learned: Double check the website domains, make certain that it is EXACTLY the name of the company you want, that all links match (they had the proper logo, and the logo actually linked to the correct site – it just wasn't their site), and everything matches up. This company had a very detailed scam going, with multiple people in multiple "departments" and everything felt "good" up until that odd payment processor name appeared. Fortunately I had not yet sent off my manuscript, so they cannot rip off all my hard work in writing the story.

Previous review:

I spoke with Colin Moses initially in the website chat, and later on the phone. It was through discussion with him that I got a real solid understanding of why I wanted to have 6+ months of marketing, rather

<https://shownotes.app/@joshevoknow>

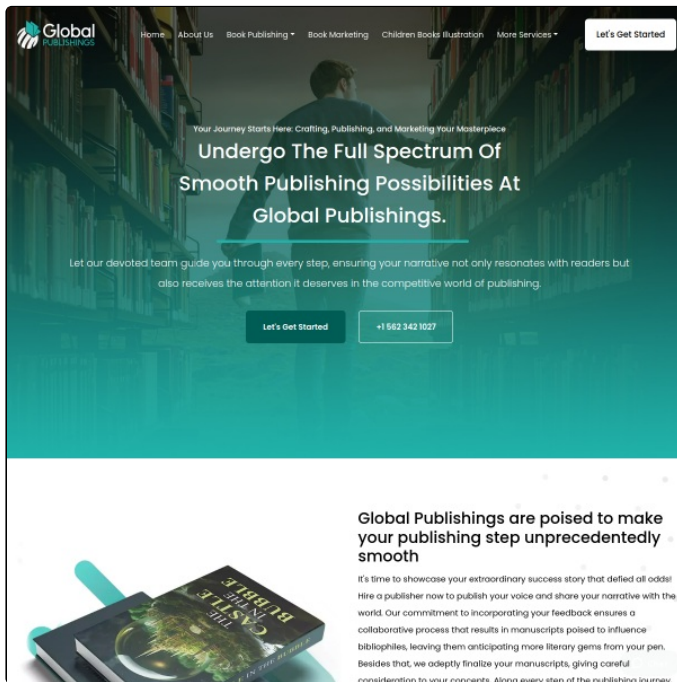
than just 3 months. Max (Iconic Book Publishers) told me that 3 months had only a 30%-50% ROI rate, but it was Colin that explained to me that the first 3-4 months are spent establishing your presence, and it isn't until after that that you would start to really reap the benefits of it.

Macmillan is a big name in the publishing industry, and I feel that they are likely to have top-tier talent available to work with/for me. Unfortunately, that also comes with a significant price tag - the recommended "Professional Package" is \$7k, but it includes basic editing (since I don't need more than that), formatting, legal content assistance (all that fun stuff), a brand new website & domain, hosted by them for a year, a 30-60 second video trailer for advertisement, and 6 months of advertising assistance. This would normally be beyond my planned maximum budget, however since it is so close to the 4th of July, I was offered a 50% off deal - that brings it back into my price range, and makes this company a serious contender for me.

86 days 1 hr ago

Website:

<https://www.macmillanbookpublishers.co/>



Global Publishings – Imply one thing, deliver another?

<https://globalpublishings.com/>

Another company that seems out to take my money, although this one seems likely to deliver on what they promise...sorta. Their biggest selling point that they offer is a "Guaranteed #1 seller on Amazon in up to 3 categories" which from the samples they showed me, they seem to have gotten - except that the categories they were #1 in were so specific that there likely wasn't that much competition.

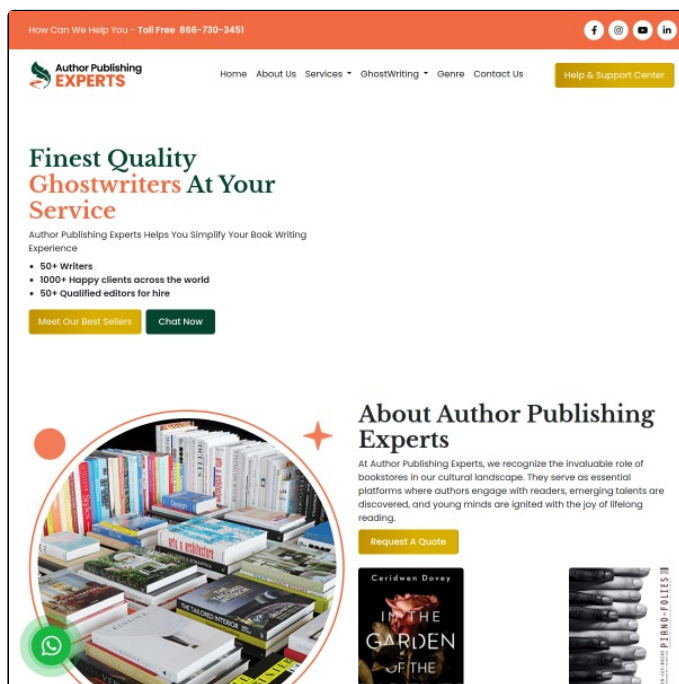
They also said that I don't need to file with the Library of Congress immediately. I don't know much about publishing, but I'm pretty certain that I want to copyright my content as quickly as possible, to prevent it being stolen.

Finally, they tried to pull the "buy now, this discount won't last" sales pitch, saying that there \$10k -> \$5k price for their recommended package was the 4th of July special (I talked to them on Monday the 8th and again on Tuesday the 9th) and it was ending at the end of the week, so I need respond by Friday if I'm to get the sale, rather than waiting until Monday when I planned to start sending out my accept and decline emails. Fine, I will send them an email Friday rather than Monday, but needless to say, I'm 99.99% certain that theirs is going to be a decline message.

89 days 4 hrs ago

Website:

<https://globalpublishings.com/>



Author Publishing Experts – SCAM LIKELY!!!!

<https://authorpublishingexperts.com/>

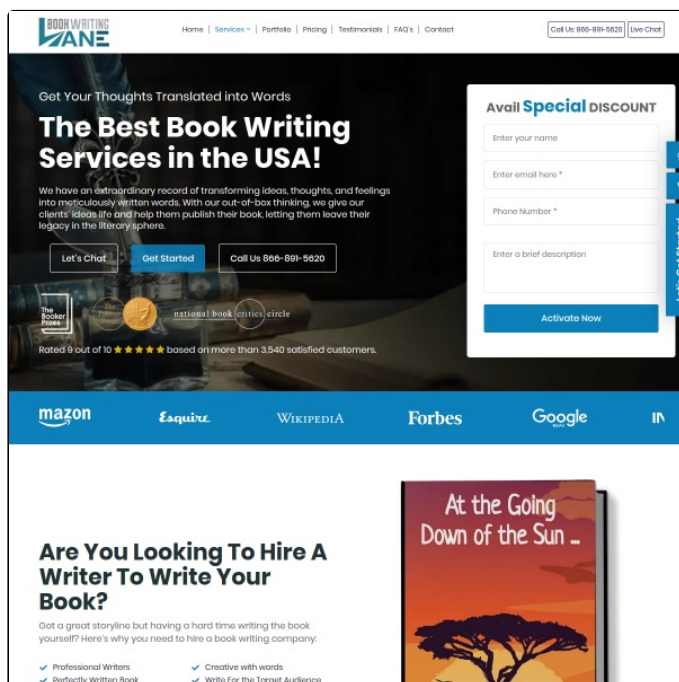
So for this company, I got on the phone with them and they seemed eager to help. They offered what I'm beginning to understand is all the usual features of publishing – planning, ghostwriting, editing, formatting, etc, and asked me what my timeline plan was for publishing, saying that the usual timeline for a book at my stage (manuscript ready for additional features such as credits, disclaimer, etc to be added) was about 3 months. They also had screenshots (provided in the text chat we had going on simultaneously through their website) of books that they supposedly had helped to publish.

They finished off the call by sending me an invoice to sign me up immediately. I told them that I was still shopping around for a good publisher, and would not be paying anything yet. Coming back later in order to prep my notes for follow up (and "thanks but no thanks" emails) I looked for contact info on the invoice... there was none, and the T&C link at the bottom led to a dead link. Needless to say, this screams SCAM to me!

89 days 4 hrs ago

Website:

<https://authorpublishingexperts.com/>



Book Writing Lane - questionable at best

<https://www.bookwritinglane.com/>

So Ethan called me (fortunately as I was about to start my lunch break, so I was able to take the call) and said that I had left my contact information with Book Writing Lane - I double-checked the website and didn't recognize it as one that I had worked on (yet?) but whatever, I went with it and listened to his sales pitch.

For the price of \$3500, they offer proofreading, editing, formatting into 3 formats (ebook, paperback, hardcover), publishing, and 3 months of marketing. They wanted to "start small" (less initial bang for my buck) in the advertising, and did not have the animated advert that some of the other companies were offering at similar price brackets, but I guess not all companies offer that.

The first red flag that I discovered is when Ethan talked about how the editing would go - I would send in the manuscript, they would review it and suggest edits, I would approve edits, then send them back and apply the edits - wait, what? THEY would be applying the edits? Meaning the final control of the manuscript rests with them? This is MY story, and I do not want to rely on others to do a proper final job of the content.

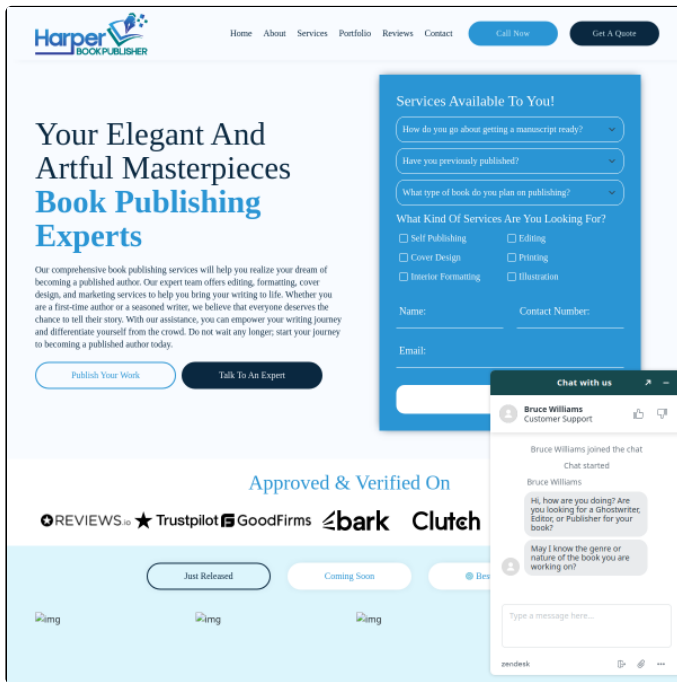
I found an even bigger red flag however when I started looking for outside reviews, to get a feel of how legitimate this company is. On <https://www.sitejabber.com/reviews/bookwritinglane.com> I see 31 perfect 5-star reviews, and 1 review that gave it a 1-star rating - and the description of that rating is scathing... according to the top critical review (this one negative one), this isn't even a full company - it's a shell for "360 Art Studio," they do shoddy work (at best) and give you the complete runaround when you try to fix things. Combine that with the fact that ALL of their other reviews are glowing 5-stars across the board, with no feedback that is even marginally negative, and you start to wonder just how legitimate those feedback ratings were...

Going back to the shell company aspect - maybe that's why I didn't recall giving my information on this site? Maybe it was a different site that collected my information and they are now trying again. I collected Ethan's email and will be sending a polite "thanks but no thanks" message when I start sending out my emails at the end of my research (after all, it costs me nothing to be polite), but I'm going to be crossing this company off of my list of potential prospects.

88 days 10 hrs ago

Website:

<https://www.bookwritinglane.com/>



Harper Book Publisher – SCAM LIKELY!!!

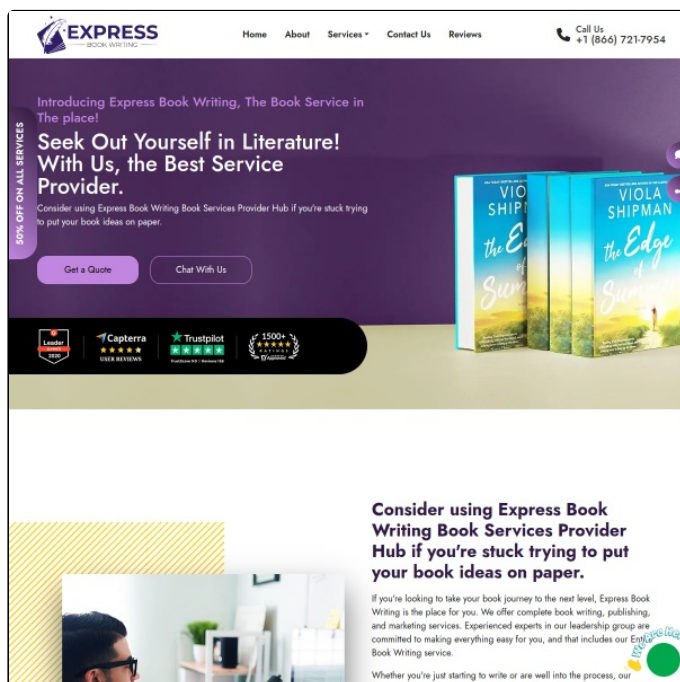
<https://harperbookpublisher.com/>

I will come back and edit this note later if I find out otherwise, but from what I currently understand this company is an attempt to rip off the reputation of the Harper Collins publishing agency. Additionally, a lot of the "links" on their website didn't actually go anywhere, and in the email they wanted me to contact "UltraPublishers.com"

If they are legitimate, their current offer of publishing my needs + 3 months advertising is ~\$4,900
87 days 12 hrs ago

Website:

<https://harperbookpublisher.com/>



Express book Writing – out to take your money

<https://expressbookwriting.com/>

This was a relatively short conversation that I had. My in-website chat contact was Tyler Hayes, and after accepting the fact that I had already done significant editing, he decided to just roll with things and offered me consideration for 3 different packages (listed below). As you can see, all of them are incredibly lacking in details, and obviously he did not even glance at my website page linked, because I clearly stated that I don't need cover images and that seems to be a big part of the package offer. As soon as he had finished posting the packages (which took a while to type out, it did not appear to be a smooth copy/paste from prepared notes), he offered to send me a contract to sign. Apparently they'll take your word for the quality of your work and don't care how it will reflect on them. Needless to say, I moved on to my next potential contact.

Basic Package: \$499

Formatting (ebook)

ISBN

Book Cover Design (Front, Back, Spine)

Barcode

100% copyrights

100% ownership

100% royalties

100% satisfaction

Publishing on Amazon

Golden Package: \$999

Formatting (ebook, paperback, hardcover)

ISBN

Book Cover Design (Front, Back, Spine)

Barcode

100% copyrights

100% ownership

100% royalties

100% satisfaction

Publishing on Amazon, B&N, Lulu, and Google Books

Platinum Package: \$1,299

Formatting (ebook, paperback, hardcover)

ISBN

3D Book Cover Design (Front, Back, Spine)

Barcode

100% copyrights

100% ownership

100% royalties

100% satisfaction

Publishing on Amazon, B&N, Lulu, Kobo, Good Reads, Baker & Taylor, BookBaby and Google Books

87 days 5 hrs ago

Website:

<https://expressbookwriting.com/>