



No Platform = No Publisher

After working with and speaking to top Literary Agents and Publishers in Canada, the general consensus when selling a book to a publisher is No platform= No publication. Since most of the key publishers are in Toronto and the U.S they need to know who you are, it's not just about the writing anymore.

Here are a few tips:

1. If you are going to work with an agent, then make sure you connect with a publicist at the same time. A publisher will be much more likely to accept manuscripts if they know you are going to put effort and money into self-promotion. If you have a publicist on call who has agreed to represent you, they will take you and your manuscript seriously.
2. Budget for your book. Whether self-published or traditional, you need to budget for marketing, advertising, and publicity for your book. If you have an agent he/she will take 15% of everything you make, and won't help you market it. Even the biggest publisher only chooses 10 of the top authors to promote. It's up to you to get them to notice you and your book, and that takes time and money.
3. Determine your goal for the book. Do you want to sell a lot of copies, or some to friends and family? It's highly unlikely you are going to sell a million copies so be careful of your expectations. If you only want to sell a few, and you have a budget then consider self-publishing. It's quick and might give you what you want. But it will be difficult to distribute. E-books are fine, but again you will need publicity and a way to get the message out about your product. If you have a strong pitch letter, or an agent you can sell your book. I did it. So can you.
4. Hire an Editor.
5. Hire an Editor. Do not hire a friend or family member. Hire a professional editor from the Editors Association of Canada or from a firm that has great editors. It will save you time and money in the long run and your publisher will thank you for it!
6. Don't be in a rush to publish. Take your time, relish each word and sentence you choose, and focus on the quality of your product, not how fast you can get it published.

7. In this day and age, credibility is a key component to publishing success, especially in non-fiction. Having and building a publicity platform helps the sales teams in publishing gauge how your book is going to do against the competition, where it will sell regionally, and give them a better idea of how available you are to promote your book. If you go to a publisher with newspaper articles, television interviews, and an ongoing publicity plan, they will look at you and your book as a much viable option as opposed to someone they have never heard of. Publicity isn't guaranteed, but if you have a publicist that can connect with the media about your book and put you in their top of mind, it's certainly going to help your chances for success, before and after publication.