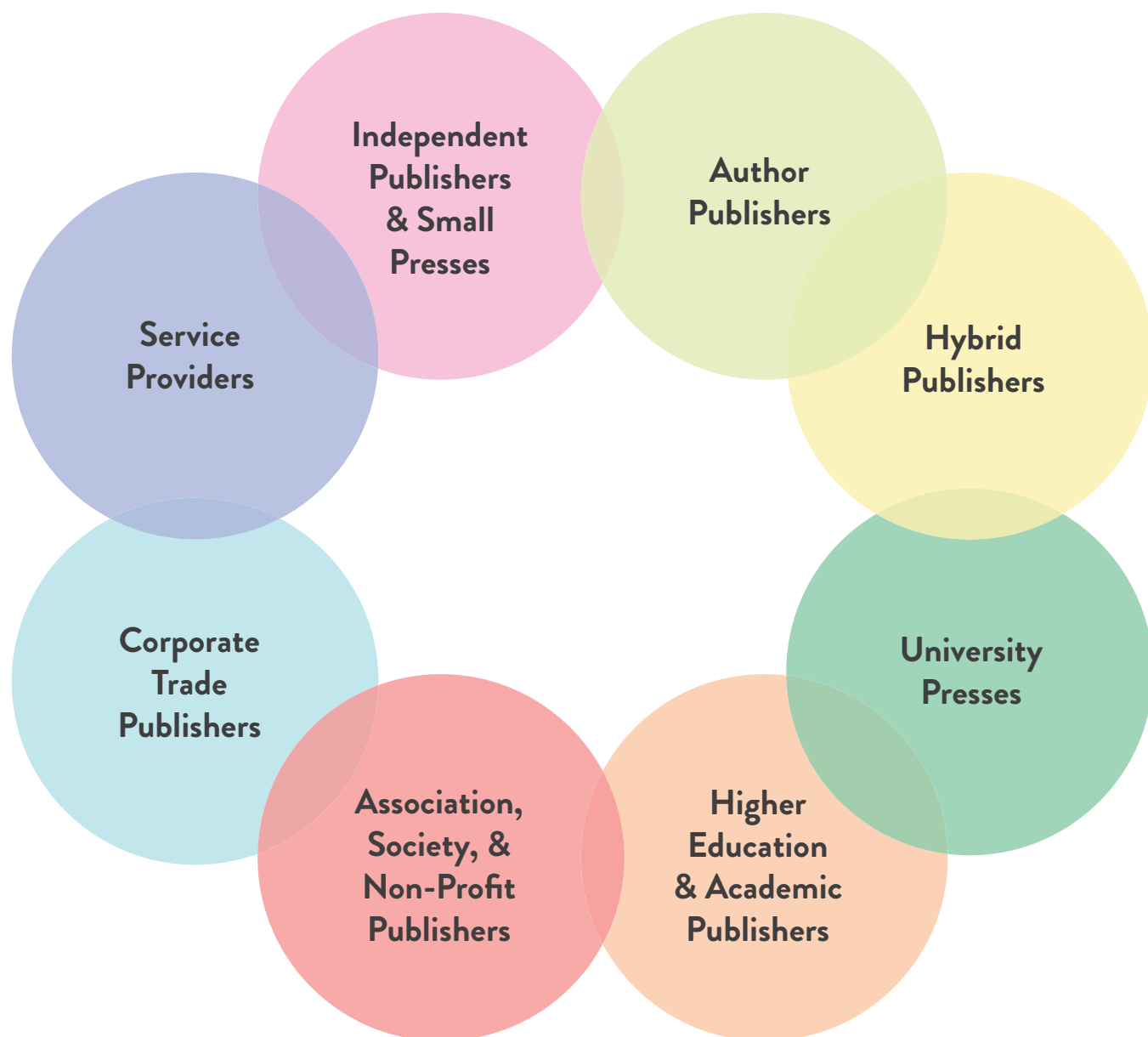


IBPA PUBLISHING MAP

IBPA Guide to Publishing Models and Author Pathways



An overview and resource for the book publishing industry and for authors looking at different pathways to getting their creative works published



FEBRUARY 28, 2024

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ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Association, Society, & Non-Profit Publishers

DEFINITION:

These entities act as the publishing divisions of larger associations or organizations that serve a specific field or industry. The titles they publish are directly related to the work of the umbrella organization and support its mission. Titles tend to be scholarly in nature but may also appeal to a broader audience.

EXAMPLES OF ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS:

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Meteorological Society, J. Paul Getty Trust, White House Historical Association, Wolfram Media

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Funded through their parent organizations.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Book and product sales and licensing.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Typically work with agents specializing in scholarly work and textbooks, although some accept unsolicited proposals and provide guidelines for authors on their websites. ▶



- Acquisitions typically go through a peer or scholarly review process.
- Typically work on an advance against royalties model. Advances tend to be modest, or in some cases a contract may be work for hire, especially if there are multiple contributors.
- Typically cover all upfront editorial and production costs.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions. Some have traditional distribution through distribution entities like Chicago Distribution Center.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Have expertise in a given scholarly or technical area.
- Are focused on building their academic reputation, not making money from book sales.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Are writing books for a general audience.
- Want more collaboration and control.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.

AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Author Publishers

DEFINITION:

Any individual author who is publishing their own work under their own ISBN and imprint. They are typically the sole investor, unless they have third-party funds or crowdfunding. They may and should still rely on freelancers, contractors, and other service providers to assist in the editorial, design, and/or production of the book, as well as marketing and publicity. While this model is often referred to as “self” publishing, IBPA believes that is a misnomer, as authors should not be doing any publishing tasks themselves for which they do not have expertise.

EXAMPLES OF AUTHOR PUBLISHERS:

Paul Aertker, Flying Solo Press
Bethany Gano, Bunny Books
Florenza Lee, Words to Ponder Publishing Co.
Darcy Pattison, Mims House Books
Rebecca Rosenberg, Lion Heart Publishing

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Personally funded; crowdfunded.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Book and product sales.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Keep 100% of their earnings.
- Own the copyright and ISBN for their books.
- Are fully responsible for inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Plan to handle all sales, fulfillment, and marketing responsibilities themselves either directly or through service providers.
- Want to retain full business, legal, and creative control over their work.
- Have a built-in audience and will therefore benefit from retaining full proceeds from earnings.
- Have the budget to pay for upfront services.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Want a partner to help them market and distribute their work.
- Do not want to manage the business aspects of their book publishing process.
- Do not have the budget to pay for upfront services.
- Want to reach a broad and diverse retail/gift market.

CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Corporate Trade Publishers

DEFINITION:

Commercial publishing companies that produce and distribute books intended for a popular audience. Genres are diverse and may include everything from fiction, children's books, and nonfiction, to gift books. In recent decades, corporate trade publishers have aggressively acquired independent publishers to consolidate into five corporate entities. Those independent publishers often still exist as imprints under their original name within the five corporate entities. Corporate trade publishers may have a higher education division that operates independently from their trade division.

EXAMPLES OF CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS:

"Big Five": Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster*

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Private equity. All are owned by larger corporate entities: HarperCollins is owned by NewsCorp; Macmillan is owned by Holtzbrinck Publishing Group; Penguin Random House is owned by Bertelsmann; Simon & Schuster is owned by KKR; Hachette Book Group is owned by Lagardère.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Book and product sales and licensing. Four of the Big 5 publishers also distribute independent clients.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Typically do not accept unsolicited submissions (in other words, must be agented).
- Typically have acquisitions editors who acquire books within specific genres. ▶



- Authors are paid an advance against royalties, typically in the five- to six-figure range.
- Offer a traditional royalty payout once the advance is earned back (typically 7-12.5% of the print list price, depending on the format; Ebook and audiobook royalties are typically 25% of net income or higher).
- Cover all upfront editorial and production costs. Retain creative control over design, cover, and packaging. Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.
- Responsible for the work's distribution into retail, gift, and specialty markets, and cover some portion of marketing and PR fees.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Have books geared toward more mainstream/general audiences.
- Are working with a literary agent.
- Have pre-established platforms.
- Want one source for managing all formats of the work.
- Do not want to share in the upfront costs of producing their work.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Are writing for a regional, highly specialized/technical, etc. audience.
- Who want more creative control over their work.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.
- Want more collaboration and control.

*Imprints at the Big 5 Publishers:

<https://bookscoouter.com/blog/big-five-publishing-houses/>

HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Higher Education & Academic Publishers

DEFINITION:

Primarily publish textbooks, journals, and other types of scholarly and academic work. Increasingly, higher education publishers have turned to online, digital, and subscription services to offset the decline in print textbook usage. Academic publishers publish a mix of scholarly work that tends to cross over into trade publishing and may compete with university presses. Some large university presses cross over into the higher education space with competing products.

EXAMPLES OF HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS:

Higher Education Publishers: Cengage, Elsevier, McGraw Hill, Pearson, Taylor & Francis, Sage;
Academic Publishers: Bloomsbury, Guilford Press, Routledge, Sage, Wiley

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Private or public equity. Many are owned by a larger corporate entity.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Print and digital product sales and licensing. Some distribute smaller publishing clients.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Typically work with agents specializing in scholarly work and textbooks, although some accept unsolicited proposals and provide guidelines for authors on their website.
- Acquisitions typically go through a peer or scholarly review process.
- Typically work on an advance against royalties model. Advances tend to be modest, or in some cases a contract may be work for hire, especially if there are multiple contributors.
- Typically cover all upfront editorial and production costs.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risks for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Have deep experience in a given academic area.
- Are focused on building their academic reputation, not making money from book sales.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Are writing books for a general audience.
- Want more collaboration and control.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.

HYBRID PUBLISHERS

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Hybrid Publishers

DEFINITION:

Hybrid publishers operate similarly to independent publishers in their mission to publish high-quality work within certain genres, but the author always shares in some portion of the upfront costs in exchange for higher-than-industry standard royalties. Hybrid publishers with full-service distribution use a third-party distributor or corporate publisher to handle inventory management and sales representation for the titles in their catalog. Hybrid publishers without traditional distribution must still have some mechanism for making their authors' books available through wholesale and retail channels. Typically, they use services like IngramSpark and/or Amazon's KDP program to make books available for sale.

All hybrid publishers must meet IBPA's 11 criteria for hybrid publishing.**

EXAMPLES OF HYBRID PUBLISHERS:

Amplify Publishing, Emerald Lake Books, Forefront Books, She Writes Press, Torchflame Books, W. Brand Publishing

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Author-subsidized; crowdfunded.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Book and product sales, author services.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Have a clear vetting process for acquiring titles and are selective. ▶



- Accept unsolicited and unagented book proposals.
- Authors pay all or some of the upfront editorial, design, and production fees.
- Some have traditional distribution through a third-party distributor such as Publishers Group West, Simon & Schuster, Ingram Publisher Services, or Independent Publishers Group.
- Authors typically have more creative control over packaging, art, and cover design.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, but may share some of the financial risk with author.
- Publisher controls the copyright and owns ISBN.
- Publisher pays a higher-than-industry royalty.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Have a small, established platform with an eye toward growth.
- Are willing to assume primary responsibility for marketing, publicity, and advertising costs.
- Want more creative control.
- Are authoring a book to complement their existing brand but not necessarily as a primary income driver.
- Are interested in generating direct sales through their website and speaking engagements.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Do not have the budget to share in upfront costs.
- Have their heart set on more traditional publishing models.
- Are not interested in sharing in marketing and advertising costs.

** IBPA's 11 criteria for hybrid publishing

<https://www.ibpa-online.org/page/hybridpublisher>

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Independent Publishers & Small Presses

DEFINITION:

Independent publishers vary widely in size, mission, and publishing model. Large independent publishers operate similarly to a corporate publisher in that they publish books for a general trade audience and tend to operate on a traditional advance against royalties model. Smaller independent presses tend to be more genre-driven and publish works for a specific audience. Some independent publishers may also publish books on a partial hybrid model in which the author may cover limited costs, especially when they share creative control. This is especially true for high-concept books that include illustration and/or photography. However, an independent publisher never charges an author to publish their book. Typically, independent publishers assume most of the upfront production and editorial costs and are responsible for printing, inventory management, and distribution of their authors' books into retail, wholesale, and specialty channels.

EXAMPLES OF INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES:

Agate Publishing, BenBella Books, Chronicle Books, Gibbs Smith, Graywolf Press, Just Us Books, Levine Querido, New York Review of Books, W. W. Norton, The Collective Book Studio, The Experiment, Riddle Brook Publishing, Sourcebooks, Tin House

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Personally funded by the owner, venture capital, private equity, crowdfunding.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Book and product sales and licensing.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Typically have acquisitions editors who acquire books within a specific genre.
- May work with agents but may also accept unsolicited submissions.
- Typically pay the author a modest advance against royalties.
- Offer a traditional royalty payout once the advance is earned back (typically 7-12.5% of the print list price, depending on the format; Ebook and audiobook royalties may be higher). Can also pay as a % of net after costs; this is particularly relevant if the model includes POD.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.
- Responsible for the work's distribution into retail, gift, and specialty markets and cover some portion of marketing and PR fees.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Have a small, established platform with an eye toward growth.
- Are writing a book for a popular audience within a niche genre that aligns with the press's mission.
- Are willing to assume primary responsibility for marketing.
- Are willing to potentially negotiate directly with the publisher.
- Are looking for a more collaborative and intimate partnership with their publisher.
- Have a strong understanding of their intended audience and how to reach them.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Are looking for a high advance and have a platform to support that advance.
- Want to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.
- Want to sell directly to their consumers.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Service Providers

DEFINITION:

Entities that offer a variety of services in exchange for upfront payment but are not attempting to be the publisher of record for their author clients. Service providers offer editorial, design, coaching and/or packaging services, and may provide additional marketing services or consulting on how to find an agent, publisher, or how to self-publish, but they do not distribute their clients' books, nor do they take on the costs associated with printing, inventory management, and fulfillment. Service providers do not share in the income generated by book sales.

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE PROVIDERS:

Bookbaby, Gatekeeper Press, IngramSpark, Kevin Anderson & Associates, Lulu, and many freelancers

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Private equity, venture capital, self-funded.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Author and publisher services.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Unlikely to have an editorial process for selecting submissions, although some do have a process for vetting projects. ►



- Charge author for upfront costs related to the development of a book project.
- Do not file copyright on behalf of authors or own their ISBNs.
- Do not pay out royalties because they are not collecting any revenue.
- May upload files on behalf of an author client, but they do not act as a distributor.
- May provide marketing services for a fee.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Plan to handle all sales, fulfillment, and marketing responsibilities themselves.
- Want to retain full business, legal, and creative control over their work.
- Are authoring a book to complement their existing brand but not necessarily as a primary income driver.
- Are authoring a book for personal reasons but wish to have a professionally produced product.
- Have the budget for all services fees/costs, as well as some additional costs (ISBNs, legal, etc.).

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Want a partner to help them market and distribute their work.
- Do not want to manage the business aspects of their book publishing process.
- Do not have the budget to pay for upfront services.
- Want to reach a broad and diverse retail/gift market.

UNIVERSITY PRESSES

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

University Presses

DEFINITION:

An extension of their parent institutions that typically publish scholarly books intended for a small audience of specialists or academicians. Because university presses are not driven by corporate financial interest but by the quality of scholarship and research, they have expanded their publishing programs and audiences, sometimes crossing into trade publishing. University presses differ from higher education publishers in that they publish books and journals, not textbooks. They range in size. Many university presses of various sizes belong to the Association of University Presses.***

EXAMPLES OF UNIVERSITY PRESSES:

Bucknell University Press, Columbia University Press, Farleigh Dickinson University Press, University of Delaware Press, Harvard University Press, NYU Press, Oxford University Press, Princeton University Press

HOW THEY ARE FUNDED:

Funded by the private or public academic institutions of which they are a part; grants.

HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME:

Book and product sales and licensing. Some larger university presses, such as Chicago University Press and UNC Press, distribute books from smaller university presses.

MODEL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Typically work with agents specializing in scholarly work, although it is not required that the author be affiliated with the institution that publishes the work.
- Acquisitions typically go through a peer or scholarly review process.
- Typically work on an advance against royalties model, although an advance is not always offered. Advances tend to be very modest.
- Typically cover all upfront editorial and production costs.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.

APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Have deep experience in a given academic area.
- Are focused on building their academic reputation, not making money from book sales.
- Have written a book on a scholarly topic with limited general audience interest.

NOT RIGHT FOR AUTHORS WHO:

- Are typically writing books for a general audience, although there is some crossover into the trade market.
- Want to publish for commercial success.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.
- Want more collaboration and control.

***List of Association of University Presses members
<https://aupresses.org/membership/membership-list/>

ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

These entities act as the publishing divisions of larger associations or organizations that serve a specific field or industry. The titles they publish are directly related to the work of the umbrella organization and support its mission. Titles tend to be scholarly in nature but may also appeal to a broader audience.

AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

Any individual author who is publishing their own work under their own ISBN and imprint. They are typically the sole investor, unless they have third-party funds or crowdfunding. They may and should still rely on freelancers, contractors, and other service providers to assist in the editorial, design, and/or production of the book, as well as marketing and publicity. While this model is often referred to as “self” publishing, IBPA believes that is a misnomer, as authors should not be doing any publishing tasks themselves for which they do not have expertise.

CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

Commercial publishing companies that produce and distribute books intended for a popular audience. Genres are diverse and may include everything from fiction, children’s books, and nonfiction, to gift books. In recent decades, corporate trade publishers have aggressively acquired independent publishers to consolidate into five corporate entities. Those independent publishers often still exist as imprints under their original name within the five corporate entities. Corporate trade publishers may have a higher education division that operates independently from their trade division.

HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

Primarily publish textbooks, journals, and other types of scholarly and academic work. Increasingly, higher education publishers have turned to online, digital, and subscription services to offset the decline in print textbook usage. Academic publishers publish a mix of scholarly work that tends to cross over into trade publishing and may complete with university presses. Some large university presses cross over into the higher education space with competing products.

HYBRID PUBLISHERS

Hybrid publishers operate similarly to independent publishers in their mission to publish high-quality work within certain genres, but the author always shares in some portion of the upfront costs in exchange for higher-than-industry standard royalties. Hybrid publishers with full-service distribution use a third-party distributor or corporate publisher to handle inventory management and sales representation for

▶ the titles in their catalog. Hybrid publishers without traditional distribution must still have some mechanism for making their authors’ books available through wholesale and retail channels. Typically, they use services like IngramSpark and/or Amazon’s KDP program to make books available for sale.

All hybrid publishers must meet IBPA’s 11 criteria for hybrid publishing.

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

Independent publishers vary widely in size, mission, and publishing model. Large independent publishers operate similarly to a corporate publisher in that they publish books for a general trade audience and tend to operate on a traditional advance against royalties model. Smaller independent presses tend to be more genre-driven and publish works for a specific audience. Some independent publishers may also publish books on a partial hybrid model in which the author may cover limited costs, especially when they share creative control. This is especially true for high-concept books that include illustration and/or photography. However, an independent publisher never charges an author to publish their book. Typically, independent publishers assume most of the upfront production and editorial costs and are responsible for printing, inventory management, and distribution of their authors’ books into retail, wholesale, and specialty channels.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Entities that offer a variety of services in exchange for upfront payment but are not attempting to be the publisher of record for their author clients. Service providers offer editorial, design, coaching and/or packaging services, and may provide additional marketing services or consulting on how to find an agent, publisher, or how to self-publish, but they do not distribute their clients’ books, nor do they take on the costs associated with printing, inventory management, and fulfillment. Service providers do not share in the income generated by book sales.

UNIVERSITY PRESSES

An extension of their parent institutions that typically publish scholarly books intended for a small audience of specialists or academicians. Because university presses are not driven by corporate financial interest but by the quality of scholarship and research, they have expanded their publishing programs and audiences, sometimes crossing into trade publishing. University presses differ from higher education publishers in that they publish books and journals, not textbooks. They range in size. Many university presses of various sizes belong to the Association of University Presses.



ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Meteorological Society, J. Paul Getty Trust, White House Historical Association, Wolfram Media



AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

Paul Aertker, Flying Solo Press
Bethany Gano, Bunny Books
Florenza Lee, Words to Ponder Publishing Co.
Darcy Pattison, Mims House Books
Rebecca Rosenberg, Lion Heart Publishing



CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

“Big Five”: Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster



HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

Higher Education Publishers: Cengage, Elsevier, McGraw Hill, Pearson, Taylor & Francis, Sage;
Academic Publishers: Bloomsbury, Guilford Press, Routledge, Sage, Wiley



HYBRID PUBLISHERS

Amplify Publishing, Emerald Lake Books, Forefront Books, She Writes Press, Torchflame Books, W. Brand Publishing



INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

Agate Publishing, BenBella Books, Chronicle Books, Gibbs Smith, Graywolf Press, Just Us Books, Levine Querido, New York Review of Books, W. W. Norton, The Collective Book Studio, The Experiment, Riddle Brook Publishing, Sourcebooks, Tin House



SERVICE PROVIDERS

Bookbaby, Gatekeeper Press, IngramSpark, Kevin Anderson & Associates, Lulu, and many freelancers



UNIVERSITY PRESSES

Bucknell University Press, Columbia University Press, Farleigh Dickinson University Press, University of Delaware Press, Harvard University Press, NYU Press, Oxford University Press, Princeton University Press

PUBLISHING MODELS: HOW THEY ARE FUNDED



ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

Funded through their parent organizations.



AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

Personally funded; crowdfunded.



CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

Private equity. All are owned by larger corporate entities: HarperCollins is owned by NewsCorp; Macmillan is owned by Holtzbrinck Publishing Group; Penguin Random House is owned by Bertelsmann; Simon & Schuster is owned by KKR; Hachette Book Group is owned by Lagardère.



HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

Private equity. Most are owned by a larger corporate entity.



HYBRID PUBLISHERS

Author-subsidized; crowdfunded.



INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

Personally funded by the owner, venture capital, private equity, crowdfunding.



SERVICE PROVIDERS

Private equity, venture capital, self-funded.



UNIVERSITY PRESSES

Funded by the private or public academic institutions of which they are a part; grants.

PUBLISHING MODELS: HOW THEY GENERATE INCOME



ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

Book and product sales and licensing.



HYBRID PUBLISHERS

Book and product sales, author services.



AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

Book and product sales.



INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

Book and product sales and licensing.



CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

Book and product sales and licensing.



SERVICE PROVIDERS

Author and publisher services.



HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

Book and product sales and licensing.



UNIVERSITY PRESSES

Book and product sales and licensing.

ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

- Typically work with agents specializing in scholarly work and textbooks, although some accept unsolicited proposals and provide guidelines for authors on their websites.
- Acquisitions typically go through a peer or scholarly review process.
- Typically work on an advance against royalties model. Advances tend to be modest, or in some cases a contract may be work for hire, especially if there are multiple contributors.
- Typically cover all upfront editorial and production costs.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions. Some have traditional distribution through distribution entities like Chicago Distribution Center.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.

CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

- Typically do not accept unsolicited submissions (in other words, must be agented).
- Typically have acquisitions editors who acquire books within specific genres.
- Authors are paid an advance against royalties, typically in the five- to six-figure range.
- Offer a traditional royalty payout once the advance is earned back (typically 7-12.5% of the print list price, depending on the format; Ebook and audiobook royalties are typically 25% of net income or higher).
- Cover all upfront editorial and production costs. Retain creative control over design, cover, and packaging. Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.
- Responsible for the work's distribution into retail, gift, and specialty markets, and cover some portion of marketing and PR fees.

AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

- Keep 100% of their earnings.
- Own the copyright and ISBN for their books.
- Are fully responsible for inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.

HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

- Typically work with agents specializing in scholarly work and textbooks, although some accept unsolicited proposals and provide guidelines for authors on their website.
- Acquisitions typically go through a peer or scholarly review process.
- Typically work on an advance against royalties model. Advances tend to be modest, or in some cases a contract may be work for hire, especially if there are multiple contributors.
- Typically cover all upfront editorial and production costs.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risks for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.

HYBRID PUBLISHERS

- Have a clear vetting process for acquiring titles and are selective.
- Accept unsolicited and unagented book proposals.
- Authors pay all or some of the upfront editorial, design, and production fees.
- Have traditional distribution through a third-party distributor such as Publishers Group West, Simon & Schuster, Ingram Publisher Services, or Independent Publishers Group.
- Authors typically have more creative control over packaging, art, and cover design.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, but may share some of the financial risk with author.
- Publisher controls the copyright and owns ISBNs.
- Publisher pays a higher-than-industry royalty.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Unlikely to have an editorial process for selecting submissions.
- Charge author for upfront costs related to the development of a book project.
- Do not file copyright on behalf of authors or own their ISBNs.
- Do not pay out a royalty because they are not collecting any revenue.
- May upload files on behalf of an author client, but they do not act as a distributor.

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

- Typically have acquisitions editors who acquire books within a specific genre.
- May work with agents but may also accept unsolicited submissions.
- Typically pay the author a modest advance against royalties.
- Offer a traditional royalty payout once the advance is earned back (typically 7-12.5% of the print list price, depending on the format; Ebook and audiobook royalties may be higher). Can also pay as a % of net after costs; this is particularly relevant if the model includes POD.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.
- Responsible for the work's distribution into retail, gift, and specialty markets and cover some portion of marketing and PR fees.

UNIVERSITY PRESSES

- Typically work with agents specializing in scholarly work, although it is not required that the author be affiliated with the institution that publishes the work.
- Acquisitions typically go through a peer or scholarly review process.
- Typically work on an advance against royalties model, although an advance is not always offered. Advances tend to be very modest.
- Typically cover all upfront editorial and production costs.
- Manage inventory, sales, and returns, and assume the financial risk for these functions.
- Exclusively control some portion of the work's rights in a given territory (i.e. North America or World) for all formats of the work.

ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

- Have expertise in a given scholarly or technical area.
- Are focused on building their academic reputation, not making money from book sales.

AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

- Plan to handle all sales, fulfillment, and marketing responsibilities themselves either directly or through service providers.
- Want to retain full business, legal, and creative control over their work.
- Have a built-in audience and will therefore benefit from retaining full proceeds from earnings.
- Have the budget to pay for upfront services.

CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

- Have books geared toward more mainstream/general audiences.
- Are working with a literary agent.
- Have pre-established platforms.
- Want one source for managing all formats of the work.
- Do not want to share in the upfront costs of producing their work.

HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

- Have deep experience in a given academic area.
- Are focused on building their academic reputation, not making money from book sales.

HYBRID PUBLISHERS

- Have a small, established platform with an eye toward growth.
- Are willing to assume primary responsibility for marketing, publicity, and advertising costs.
- Want more creative control.
- Are authoring a book to complement their existing brand but not necessarily as a primary income driver.
- Are interested in generating direct sales through their website and speaking engagements.

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

- Have a small, established platform with an eye toward growth.
- Are writing a book for a popular audience within a niche genre that aligns with the press's mission.
- Are willing to assume primary responsibility for marketing.
- Are willing to potentially negotiate directly with publisher.
- Are looking for a more collaborative and intimate partnership with their publisher.
- Have a strong understanding of their intended audience and how to reach them.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Plan to handle all sales, fulfillment, and marketing responsibilities themselves.
- Want to retain full business, legal, and creative control over their work.
- Are authoring a book to complement their existing brand but not necessarily as a primary income driver.
- Are authoring a book for personal reasons but wish to have a professionally produced product.
- Have the budget for all services fees/costs, as well as some additional costs (ISBNs, legal, etc.).

UNIVERSITY PRESSES

- Have deep experience in a given academic area.
- Are focused on building their academic reputation, not making money from book sales.
- Have written a book on a scholarly topic with limited general audience interest.

ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY, & NON-PROFIT PUBLISHERS

- Are writing books for a general audience.
- Want more collaboration and control.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.

AUTHOR PUBLISHERS

- Want a partner to help them market and distribute their work.
- Do not want to manage the business aspects of their book publishing process.
- Do not have the budget to pay for upfront services.
- Want to reach a broad and diverse retail/gift market.

CORPORATE TRADE PUBLISHERS

- Are writing for a regional, highly specialized/technical, etc. audience.
- Who want more creative control over their work.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.
- Want more collaboration and control.

HIGHER EDUCATION & ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

- Are writing books for a general audience.
- Want more collaboration and control.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.

HYBRID PUBLISHERS

- Do not have the budget to share in upfront costs.
- Have their heart set on more traditional publishing models.
- Are not interested in sharing in marketing and advertising costs.

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS & SMALL PRESSES

- Are looking for a high advance and have a platform to support that advance.
- Want to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.
- Want to sell directly to their consumers.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

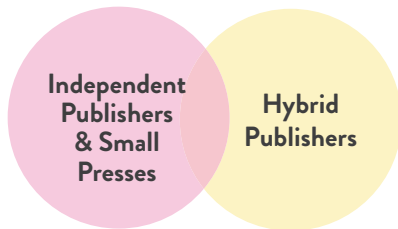
- Want a partner to help them market and distribute their work.
- Do not want to manage the business aspects of their book publishing process.
- Do not have the budget to pay for upfront services.
- Want to reach a broad and diverse retail/gift market.

UNIVERSITY PRESSES

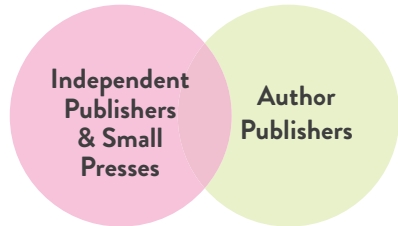
- Are typically writing books for a general audience, although there is some crossover into the trade market.
- Want to publish for commercial success.
- Wish to retain a greater portion of the income their book earns.
- Want more collaboration and control.

PUBLISHING MODELS: AREAS OF OVERLAP

As the publishing industry and technology evolve, book publishing models are no longer mutually exclusive, and a single author may follow multiple pathways for different books. There are also businesses that fall outside of these highlighted models. As the industry changes, these models will evolve and IBPA will be updating this Publishing MAP on a regular basis.



- ▶ For example, a publisher may follow a traditional model of publishing for part of their business portfolio, and a hybrid model for another line of books.



- ▶ Likewise, an author may publish some of their works with a traditional publishing house, but may self-publish (as an author publisher) other titles.



- ▶ We also see author publishers who publish their work under their own independent publishing company imprint, and publish the work of others under that same imprint.

DISCLAIMER

Beware of predatory business models. Not on this chart are self-professed publishers or author services companies that take advantage of authors. Authors need to do due diligence when it comes to any kind of business model that makes promises that guarantee success or employ aggressive sales tactics. For more information on avoiding publishing scams, please review this resource from The Authors Guild: <https://authorsguild.org/resource/avoiding-publishing-scams/>. The Alliance of Independent Authors also provides a list of vetted service providers to its members. You can learn more at: <https://www.allianceindependentauthors.org/>

As always, IBPA's goal is to educate and advocate for our members, and we also look to provide trusted resources that can help promote sound business practices, collaboration, and quality publishing across the industry. The IBPA Publishing MAP is one more way in which we can advance that goal.

Many advisors, volunteers, and staff members worked together to make this first iteration of the guide the best it could be on release. As with all documents, there are always ways to improve it, especially as publishing continues to evolve.

To that end, we welcome your feedback. Please contact us at info@ibpa-online.org.

For more helpful publishing resources, check out all the [benefits of IBPA membership](#). Then join IBPA [here](#).