

# Forget Amazon: Sell Your Books Yourself

Small and midsize publishers are giving their profits away to Amazon.

Because Amazon takes such a large piece of ‘the pie,’ **publishers need to sell from their own sites** and do their own "pick, pack, and ship" as much as they can.

Even if they make only \$5 per book more than selling on Amazon, and even if they sell only 100 books a month or 1200 a year that is \$6,000 in added revenue which to some is two or three mortgage payments or maybe two yearly car payments. And multiply that by three or four years and you are talking serious money.

There are lots of strategies to get buyers to the publisher or author site.

We say to publishers, "A great way to get eyeballs is to **hire a good marketing consultant or publicist**—and make it the prime directive to **get people to YOUR site and buy from YOU and not Amazon.**" It is not as expensive as it sounds.

It is obvious that if publishers are going to survive, they need to find a way to keep more of what they earn and they are not going to get it from the middle channel or the retail channel.

The bottom line is that authors and publishers can continue to make Amazon richer, or they can sell their books themselves and make a good side income or an income that is totally sustainable. Both are difficult to do when you **give away 40%-60%** of the revenue to the distribution and retail channels.

Fiction and non-fiction tomes can be sold off of one’s own site if they have a defined “reading” audience that can be reached via good marketing, publicity, and social media interaction.

**It is time publishers cut out the retail and middle channels and go direct to their consumers—just as so many other vendors have.**

And it is not an either/or decision. A author or publisher can sell on both their own site and Amazon. However they should offer an incentive for the sale to made direct—a discount, an autograph, a small gift, etc.

A publisher can usually sell half as many books direct as they do on Amazon and make the same profit.

**To sell direct, publishers will have to stock some inventory.** They can buy author’s copies from Amazon, but there are digital printers in major cities that can compete with Amazon on printing and there is no shipping on an in-person pick-up. Shipping is based on distance and regional printers can be cost-effective as well.

Everyone is selling direct—razor blades (Harrys), sheets (Boll and Branch), tonight's dinner (Blue Apron), business cards (Vista Print), and on and on. So why aren't publishers and authors doing it?

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Next is **e-books**. Why aren’t more publishers selling e-books? And for those who are, why aren’t they selling e-books off of their own site?

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Part of the answer is that most authors and publishers don't know how to set up a site for digital distribution.

Most book designers can create e-book files for both the Kindle and iPhone format. It is not expensive.

Both WordPress/WooCommerce and Shopify have the tools to sell digital content so that this income flows to the author or publisher. Again, why give all the money to Amazon and Apple?

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Finally, authors and publishers leave money on the table by not selling **items related to their books**. People love buying 'branded' items like hats, drinking glasses, t-shirts, coffee mugs, costume jewelry, and anything else that can be imprinted with the title or a book, a picture of a character, the book cover, or an interesting message.

If the author has an interesting fiction character or non-fiction message and if people like the book they **WILL** buy associated merchandise. (It is sort of incredible what people will buy online that they would not buy in person!)

Often items can be sourced overseas (even in small quantities) and sold online for high markups. In larger metro areas items can be sourced locally at wholesale prices for retail sales.

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We create shopping-cart sites with WordPress/WooCommerce or Shopify; the choice depends on the needs, budget, and scale of the client.

To see examples, go to:

<https://newmediaecom.com>

**Our price-point is affordable**—especially for simple but clean book sites that go online in two weeks (or less,) not in two months.

We are committed to setting up e-commerce websites so that those who write the books and those who publish the books—those whose livelihood depends on the income from those books—do not give it all away to Amazon.

The paradigm shift in the publishing industry has started—and the small/indie press is leading the way.

They really have no other choice.

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