

Authors Community



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Beware These Red Flags That Wave Over Some Publishers

by Gina Burgess

I have seen dozens of small publishers come and go since 2010, not to mention those vanity presses that have closed their doors. I'm sure, if you've been an author trying to get your book published, you have probably noticed the new publishers in *Writer's Digest* and watched them disappear. Maybe you have even been burned by your publisher closing its doors with your book behind the doors.

Below are red flags mentioned on numerous sites as the more obvious ones:

DBA publishers – (Doing business as) – Single owner that supposedly has co-owners, but there's no legal paperwork. This kind of business can rack up credit card debt, mortgage debt, go bankrupt, and what happens then is the bankruptcy trustee seizes all contracts and royalties because they are personal assets used to pay debts. Authors are out of luck.

Inexperienced publisher – The owner and/or co-owners may have lots of books published (either traditionally or self-pubbed), but don't have any experience as a publisher. Because of this lack of experience, no one really knows the process or who is supposed to do what and books never seem to get to book shelves so the publisher folds. High turnover of employees is another red flag.

Contract editors and cover artists – This is a huge problem because there could be conflicting deadlines and an editor that has too many projects with the same deadline. Author/editor personality conflicts, cover artist that retains control and/or copyright of book covers (usually in a contract of this type). Contract workers are usually responsible parties in a contract breach court case. Likelihood of recovering lost sales

or income because a deadline is missed from a contract editor or cover artist is very low.

Website that begs for submissions – This is a common practice for vanity presses, and even hybrid presses, but when a publisher says they pay the author – red flag. This goes without saying. A website that brags on how many books published and do not have a section for **best sellers, booksellers, how to order, media kits for authors, and a page dedicated to the owners** and their **book publishing/selling philosophy** is a huge red flag. These pages on a website are important for authors because it tells a lot about the desire the publisher has for selling the books of their authors, marketing those books, and has a transparency that a manuscript assembly line that requires you to pay an exorbitant amount up front to publish your book does not.

Sure, there are hundreds of small presses that are legitimate publishers. However, don't be afraid to question a publisher that will be taking care of your baby.

- Is there a fee, or do you have to buy something?
- Have you researched for reviews of this publisher? (Just Google the name of the publisher plus the word reviews. If there is a site dedicated to reviews, mostly bad, that is a another red flag.
- What are the staff credentials?
- How long in business?
- What's the website like?

Remember to do due diligence. Yes, it is exciting to get your book published! It is also wonderful to hold that book in your hand, and sell it at speaking engagements. But don't do what I did years ago and be so enamoured with the end result that you are blind to the pitfalls along the way.

All the members of Authors Community are praying for all of our friends and online family who were impacted by the devastating tragedies that have rocked our nation and world these past several weeks and months. May our Lord protect you, your family, your neighbors, your possessions, and your emotions and health as you deal with these situations. In Jesus mighty name. Amen.



Are You a Hobby Writer or an Author?

by Tom Blubaugh

Wednesday, October 18 3 pm EST/2 pm CST

How strange would it be to suddenly see a building sprout in a community and remain vacant-no advertising, no stock, no staff, just a name. Maybe not even the a sign with the name of the owner-just a business name that no one can identify. Crazy, right? Yet many authors write a book or books without branding their name, building social media relationships, developing their target market, growing an email list, becoming transparent through blog articles, making their website sticky, and placing their books on Amazon without doing any serious promotion.

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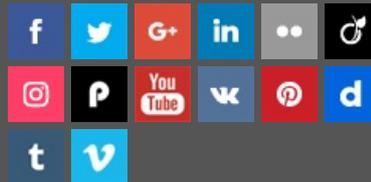
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