

# What Makes a Successful and Effective Ebook



# WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL AND EFFECTIVE EBOOK

Writing and publishing an ebook can give your business the boost you're looking for. In fact an ebook can help you accomplish several important business building goals in one swoop. If you're not sure what an ebook is, it's simply a downloadable version of a book that you read on a computer, an ebook reader like Kindle or other mobile device.

Here are a few benefits of creating a successful ebook...

## Credibility

Publication is one of the main avenues you can take to improve or establish your credibility. It doesn't matter what industry or business you're in, when you write a book people tend to automatically assume you're an expert. Even if they don't read your book, often the simple fact that you're published will help you establish yourself as an expert on your topic.

This is important as a business building tactic because we buy from people we perceive as experts or authority figures in their industry. We turn to them to solve our problems, ask advice and to gain new skills and knowledge.

## Awareness and Exposure

Writing a book broadens your reach. It spreads awareness of you and your business virally as people talk to each other about your book. Additionally, as you begin marketing and promoting your book you will subsequently also be marketing and promoting your business.

They say it takes three exposures to a business, product or service to create awareness. Your book and relevant marketing messages help your exposures quickly add up. This means you'll have more prospects who think of you when they have a need.

Your book can also help increase your search engine optimization which increases your website traffic, and the awareness and exposure we just mentioned. You'll receive incoming links to your website from book reviews, blog posts, and affiliate marketers if you're selling your book and of course through content and other book marketing tactics.

You can also use your book as an opt-in offer so you can build your email list. And of course we're only talking about how your book can help market your business. You can also use your book as a product or bonus product to generate more sales.



## **You're Convinced, but Now What?**

Over the next several pages we have outlined 15 tips and strategies to make sure your ebook is the best and most effective ebook it can be. Whether you're selling it for a profit, giving it away to build a list, or using it as a strategic marketing tool, the better your book the more effective and successful it will be.

It should also be noted that ebooks are growing by leaps and bounds. Digital publishing has become mainstream and most people don't think twice about downloading a book online. Bookstores now offer digital books and there are specific reading devices that cater to ebook readers.

You don't need to worry about paying for print publishing and you don't have to worry about shipping. Distribution is as simple as a download page and maybe an autoresponder. It's an incredibly cost effective means to communicate, provide value, and to market your business.

Let's get started...

## **15 Strategies to Creating A Successful An Effective Ebook**

### **#1 Choose a Tight Topic**

The reason is twofold. It's much easier to write thoroughly on a very narrow topic. For example, it's easier to write a book on how to meditate with your dog than meditation. OR How to create a household budget rather than home finances.

The second reason for choosing a narrow topic is that it's easier to offer value to your readers. Thus it's easier to market your ebook.

### **#2 Solve a Problem**

In addition to choosing a tight topic, it's important that your book offers value. If the reader doesn't benefit in some way from reading your book then they're not going to buy it. Think about your customers and what their problems are. What topics might make good book topics?

For example, if your customers are pet owners, common pet problems can include but are certainly not limited to:

- Grooming
  - Grooming behavior problems
  - Grooming tools



- Health
  - Obesity – How to help your dog/cat lose weight
  - Common skin problems and how to cure them
- Training
  - Dog housebreaking
  - Not using the litter box

You see there are many potentially tight topics that can be found within any given problem. Make a list of the problems your customers commonly face and brainstorm book ideas that can solve these problems.

### **#3 Give It A Compelling and Attention-Grabbing Title**

Prospects will make a decision about your book in just around twenty seconds. In that amount of time they have the opportunity to read your book title. If it intrigues them enough they'll move onto a description of your book or look for more information. If it doesn't attract their attention, they'll move on.

What does an attention grabbing title include? It promises a benefit, for example, "Learn How To Housebreak Your Dog In Three Days Flat."

Think about these bestselling book titles:

- How to Win Friends and Influence People
- The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care
- You Can Heal Your Life
- The Purpose Driven Life
- Think and Grow Rich
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

The list could go on and on but you're probably getting the point. The books make a promise or offer a benefit right in the title.

### **#4 Create a Format for Your Book**

This may sound strange but once you've chosen your topic and have maybe chosen a few potential titles for your book, it's time to sit down and start writing it. This means you need to come up with a structure for your book. We're not using the word outline because this evokes memories of primary school and tedious, extremely structured, outlines. If this structure works for you by all means use it. If not, no worries. There are many other ways to go about it.

The easiest and often most effective is to use a question and answer style. We'll use the example of a book on how to train for your first marathon. Your chapters might include the following (note they're formatted as questions):

1. What equipment do you need to run a marathon?
2. How long does it take to train for a marathon?
3. What is a good first marathon or how do you choose your first marathon?
4. How do you fuel your body?
5. What health problems should you expect when training and how do you treat them?
6. Are you too old, fat or unhealthy to run a marathon?
7. What can you expect from your first marathon?
8. What should you know about running form?

Each of these topics can be chapters and each chapter can be further broken down into useful and easy to answer questions. For example for chapter one you could ask:

- How do you choose running shoes?
- What kind of socks work best?
- Should you wear a heart rate monitor?

This is an easy format to work with as answering the questions makes it pretty straight forward. Once you have your outline worked out, all you have to do is fill in the necessary information.

There are however, other formats you can use to create your book. These include the How to format which generally follows a step-by-step process. You can also present it as a class or tutorial type format. The type of format you choose should match your topic and your audience. If you're unsure, read a few ebooks or even print books and take a look at the format or style of them. You can use that as a guideline to create your ebook.

## **#5 Research Wisely**

You can probably spend the rest of your life researching information for your book. This is because information changes and most of us are prone to procrastination. It's easier to surf the web and read books than it is to write one.

However, research is likely going to be a part of your book writing process. You have one of two approaches here. Research the content in advance, after you've written your outline and know what you're going to be writing on.



Or, start writing and leave space for where it feels more research is needed or where you'd like to cite a fact, provide data or fill in with a quote. This approach is often more expedient than the first, but it's your choice.

\*\*\*\*Okay, now we're moving into more readability type tips because if your book isn't easy to read and understand, you're likely to lose a large portion of your audience.

It's said that most successful novels are written at a primary school reading level. We're talking third, fourth and fifth grade and that even the New York Times is written at around a sixth grade reading level.

Why is this?

Certainly not because we're slow. Nope! It's actually just because often the simplest words and sentence structure are the most easy and effective. This isn't about winning the Nobel prize, it's about writing an effective and successful ebook.

So on that note, let's continue with some writing tips to make your book easy to read.

## **#6 Use Short Sentences**

Each of your sentences will ideally be around ten words or less. Don't count your words as you type, just take a look at your readability score when you run your spell check and grammar check. And as you're editing, separate or clean up the long sentences. Short sentences are easier to read on a computer screen. They're easier to comprehend and they're often more effective and efficient than long ones.

An entry in The Guinness Book of World Records claims the longest sentence in English is from William Faulkner's novel Absalom, Absalom! It has 1,287 words.

## **#7 Use Short Paragraphs**

Short paragraphs, like short sentences, make your ebook easier to read. This is definitely the case for ebooks because it's often difficult to read a lot of text on a computer screen.

The general rule of thumb is no more than 3-5 sentences per paragraph.

## **#8 One Subject per Paragraph**

Too many ideas in one paragraph is confusing for your reader. In general, this shouldn't be a problem if you create a structure or format for your ebook before you start writing. This is particularly the case if you're using the question and answer format.

And it's fine if it takes more than one paragraph to explore a topic. An easy rule to remember when creating the structure and paragraphs for your book is this:

1. Tell them what you're going to tell them. (Your introductory paragraph or two for each new topic)



2. Tell them. (Your main information)
3. Tell them what you told them. (Your summary or conclusion for that information.)

This process can be repeated over and over again each time you introduce a new chapter and a new topic within that chapter.

### **#9 Use Headings and Subheadings**

Headings and subheadings help provide structure to your book. They tell the reader what's coming up in the next paragraph or section and it helps readers who often scan for information, know where to stop.

### **#10 Use Small Words**

Before we started this section we talked about reading level. You want to make you're your prospects and readers easily understand what you are trying to say. There's no need to intentionally strive for a third, fourth, or fifth grade reading level. However, you can use the readability feature on your word-processing program to give you an average grade level when you're done. Try to keep your book around an eighth grade reading level or below.

### **#11 Formatting**

One easy way to improve your books readability and therefore its effectiveness and success is to use formatting that makes it easy to read. We're talking about bullets, text boxes, graphics, and numbered lists. This breaks up the content and makes it much easier on the eyes.

However, be careful to not get carried away. Too much formatting can make a book look a little silly.

### **#12 Go Easy on the Punctuation**

Have you ever read an email or an article that practically screamed too much enthusiasm? All those exclamation points! It looks silly! And yet people still do it! This goes back to keeping your sentences short and to the point. There's no need for indulging in too many punctuation marks.

### **#13 She Literally Floated Away**

How often do you hear that a person literally did something that is actually physically impossible? Newscasters, of all people who should know better, do it quite often.

Figurative language is language that uses metaphors, similes, personification and so on. Use them sparingly and make sure they're appropriate for the context of your topic. And also make sure you're not confusing people. She can't literally float away, right?

### **#14 Make It Active**

Nouns and verbs are your core components in a sentence and certainly in a book. Choose them wisely. The more active your verbs the more interesting it will be to read your book. And watch out for passive voice.

Passive voice is often confusing to readers; it mucks up your sentence structure. Rather than dive into an explanation of active and passive voice just make sure when you're writing, the subject of your sentence is doing the action.

### **#15 Write Like You're Writing a Letter To A Friend**

When you write a letter to a friend you do several key things that will actually make your book a better book. These things include:

Using the word "You." When you write your book you want it to feel as if you're speaking directly to the reader. You want them to feel a connection to you and become involved in the content. This is how you write a letter to a friend so pretend your book is a long letter to a good friend. In fact, share stories in your book to strengthen the connection, add interest and help demonstrate points you're trying to make.

Use Contractions. When we talk and when we write to our friends, we use contractions. Contractions are those nifty combinations of words like:

- You are – you're
- Can not – can't
- We will – we'll
- I am – I'm

And so on.

Use contractions in your writing and your book will feel less formal and more personal. It'll be easier to read and have more impact on your reader.

Another thing you may do when writing to a friend is to use examples. This is a great way to illustrate a point or further explain something without having to rephrase it ten different ways. And examples are interesting to read. Share a story!

### **#16 Give It a Professional Shine**

Many people spend way too much time fidgeting with the graphics for their ebook. Yes, it is important to give your book a professional shine. However, this is better accomplished with an easy to read and professional looking layout. Excellent editing including spelling, grammar, formatting consistency and an easy to read and understand book.

It's great to include a table of contents, a cover page, a disclaimer, an about the author and a section for resources or an appendix. Also remember to include page numbers, a header and a footer and your copyright statement along with your URL.

Always save your book as a secure PDF. This makes it easy for anyone to download with a free PDF reader and the contents cannot be copied or changed. If you're publishing to Kindle or other established ebook sellers, you will need to follow their appropriate formatting.



## **What to Do Next**

Ebooks are a valuable asset to any business owner. They range in length from ten pages to hundreds depending on your topic, your purpose and your audience. And they can be written on just about any topic under the sun.

The key to a successful and effective ebook is to make sure you write your book with your reader in mind. What do they have to gain from reading your book?

Give it a great title. Write it clearly so it's easy to read and understand and create a product you are proud of.

Once your ebook is complete, you can use it to build credibility in your industry, to build business awareness and to drive profits.

An ebook is a wonderful marketing and business building tool. Put in the thought and energy to do it right and you'll reap the rewards for years.