

**BUILDING YOUR DIGITAL
MARKETING PLATFORM**
PROFESSOR JIM MUSGRAVE



EMRE
publishing


“VIRTUAL PUBLISHING IS THE BOMB”

BUILDING YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM



JIM MUSGRAVE

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DEDICATION

To self-published authors everywhere.

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FIRST ASSESSMENT: CONTROL IS KEY



As an eBook marketing and distribution consultant, with self-publishing experience for over 20 years, I always recommend to new clients that they must control all electronic rights to their intellectual property. Think about the logic in this. Once you allow some other entity (even a friend of the family) access to your property, then complications can begin. Even if he or she is completely honest, you are still allowing that person to have some amount of control over your product's distribution and/or display to others.

Many authors are turning to independent publishing and distribution for many reasons, but the most pressing reason is economics. The sad fact is, Big Publishing is ignoring its authors, and [some of them are even best-selling authors.](#)

Therefore, you must first maintain strict ownership and control over your digital rights. Usually, this means getting an ISBN number for your book through [Bowker.](#) When my clients use my [international distribution to over 1,000 online eBook retailers and over 65,000 libraries in over 100 countries,](#) they provide three digital formats to distribute through Vearsa: .epub (Apple), .mobi (Amazon), and .pdf (others). Thus, they should (for sales tracking purposes) also provide a different ISBN for each format, for a total of three.

Control is also necessary when you begin to plan your marketing strategy. I will now discuss what a serious eBook marketing person can do to establish control and keep it closely held.

1. Keep control of your own website and Php-enabled server.
2. Keep control over all your digital marketing tools and run them off your personal server.
3. Keep control over your audience's email addresses and treat them like gold.

These three steps mean you don't use other services such as MailChimp or eBook middlemen distributors such as Smashwords or Amazon. Not only do these entities charge you, you also lose some of your control over access to the most important ingredient in your overall marketing effort:

your reading audience.

[Watch this video](#) to see how A2R (Author2Reader) direct mobile sales work.

SECOND: CONTROL OF YOUR AUDIENCE



I completely subscribe to the [Weaving Influence](#) marketing philosophy: Building, Working, Launching and Advancing. I work with my clients on all four stages to create the most control-centered and progressive digital marketing system.

Building requires four stages:

1. Establish your presence on the Internet with a Php-enabled website with direct access to your server through cPanel, WHM and FTP.
2. Create a user-friendly author's web page.
3. Establish your email subscription database and email address collection system combined with email and newsletter delivery facilities.
4. Create a tailored application to deliver your product directly to your reader's mobile device.

You definitely need to do stages 1-3, even if you're just beginning in the distribution and marketing of your book(s). Step 4 should be done once you've established an audience of readers to whom you wish to directly market.

To establish your presence, you should have a website server that is Php-enabled and has unlimited storage. I have found you can save a lot of money by purchasing a VPS (Virtual Private Server) such as provided at [Evolution Host](#). If you're not a real technical guru, like me, then you should also get your own [cPanel interface](#) installed.

Your website should be professionally designed by somebody familiar with book sales and distribution. This is your "calling card" to readers and must fit your proper personality and professionalism as well as your book's content and your expertise.

Establishing your reader email collection and subscription database can

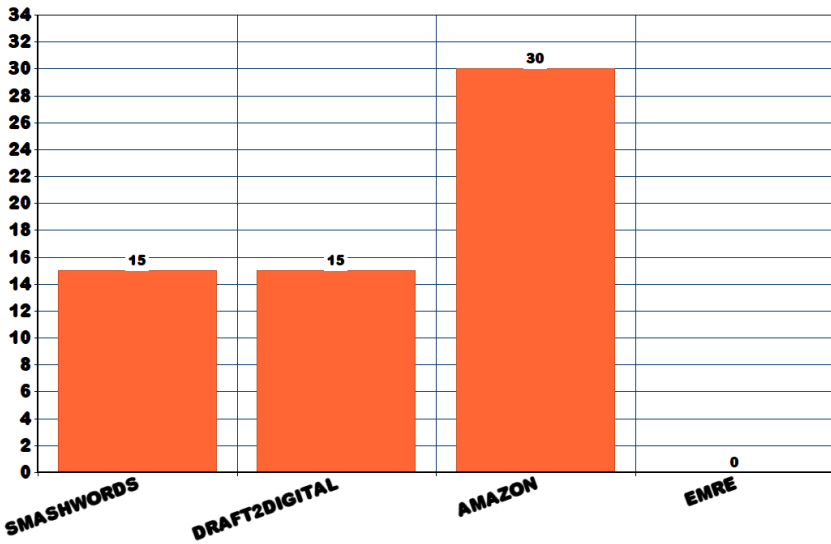
be expensive if you don't choose an open source option. You can download and install at [GitHub a PhPList program](#) that can be set-up on your server to run all your important duties in direct email marketing. Unlike MailChimp, you never get charged for the number of email addresses you collect in your campaign database because you'll run it off your own server. If you can't get your web server host to install it for you then one of my developers can do it for you for a fee.

Finally, once you begin to collect reader addresses and get them into your PhpList database, you can think about widening your eBook and digital marketing [distribution to international proportions](#). You can deliver directly to your readers' mobile device by using a tailored application that I've developed, the Embellisher eReader and Marketing application ([register for a free tour of the sample online](#)).

Using this mobile device method of selling your digital title is one of the most secure ways of ensuring your eBook doesn't get pirated because a. The complete eBook never gets loaded into the app. b. The hacker must go through many time-wasting steps to be able to crack the eReader itself, so it is thus very "high hanging" fruit compared to those eBooks sold through Amazon, which have the cracking code included right inside the eBooks they sell!

Here's what you get taken out of your profits for each eBook sold if you distribute as a self-published author at the major online distributors compared to EMRE Publishing:

EBOOK DISTRIBUTION PERCENT OF NET PRICE TAKEN FOR SINGLE EBOOK FOREVER



THIRD: WORKING TOWARD LAUNCH



Once you've established your website presence, created your reader subscription and delivery system, and possibly installed your tailored mobile app, you are ready to work toward the launch of your new book. Again, you can see that you have maintained the necessary control over all aspects of your marketing plan.

However, in order to be certain you can get the most “bang for your marketing buck” you should consider how you want to distribute and sell your product after it's been created (professionally edited, designed and ready for sale) but before you launch your book.

I work with authors who have their book ready for distribution but have not decided on the method of sale to the reader. This is very important because of the factors I will now discuss.

Factors to consider before distributing your eBook for sale to your reader:

1. Amazon and other online distributors don't give self-published authors the same sales perks as they do publishers. For example, self-published authors are limited to the number of categories that you can list your book under. With EMRE, you can use as many categories from which your book can benefit (unlimited).
2. Amazon and other online distributors always take a percentage from the net price of your eBook that's sold through their auspices (the least amount is currently 15% of the retail price).
3. Self-published authors also lose royalties when they sell through Amazon in other countries. On Amazon the minimum you can ask is \$0.99, but if you do try to offer the reader a real bargain you are penalized with lower royalties. Just 35%. To get the much-vaunted 70% royalty you must set the list price at \$2.99

or above. If you want the 70% royalty in Kindle countries like India, Brazil, Mexico and Japan you have to sign up to Select as well, otherwise you'll get the 35% payout *regardless* of what price you sell at. With EMRE, you'll always get the royalty payout you deserve as an author being distributed by a publisher. You are no longer considered "self-published."

4. Many online distributors charge authors for uploading revised copies of the eBooks for sale through their auspices.
5. Amazon and other online distributors often require self-published authors to use them as their "sole distribution outlet," meaning you cannot sell through any other distributor (and, believe me, they check if you have!). This is true, for example, if you want to take advantage of Kindle Direct Publishing Select and Amazon Audible (for audio books).

I suggest that self-published authors become virtual "publishers" by distributing their eBooks through me for a one-time price of \$200. This allows you to get all the advantages of being a publisher without having to actually be one. I act as your virtual publisher because I own an account with Vearsa.com, which is the largest distributor of eBooks in the world. This means you get all the following advantages of being published without being controlled by the publisher.

In addition, when you distribute through me, I provide the following services:

1. Consultation on how to get the best online presence at the over 1,000 eBook retailers by helping you fill-out the required [metadata form](#) for your book.
2. Showing you how to use the tools to help you [analyze and market properly](#).
3. Helping you use the special [price sales and coupon discount codes available through the Vearsa platform](#).
4. Helping you to [price best](#) for sales to the over 65,000 libraries available through Vearsa distribution channels.

Since Vearsa distribution can rifle into stores of different countries, you may want to consider getting professional translations done for your book(s). You can then sell each one and aim it to specific eBook retailers in the country of your choice. This can greatly expand your revenue streams and widen your international reach. You also never have to get foxed into giving any one distributor (like Amazon) exclusive rights to the sale of your title! With Vearsa distribution, you sell through Amazon and hundreds of other online retailers at the same time, with no exclusions.

Special! If you distribute three or more eBooks with us, you'll get a *free installation* of the [Embellisher™ eBook Marketing and Sales application](#) on

your server (\$200 value).

[Watch this video](#) to see how A2R (Author2Reader) direct mobile sales work.

Now you're ready for launch. You have all your publishing and distribution "ducks in a row" ready to send out your marketing emails to the networks you've collected in your email database.

FOURTH: YOUR BOOK LAUNCH



Getting advance orders and reviews are major goals of a well-planned book launch. Now that you have the tools you need to do this, you can create your newsletter or enhanced eBook promotion (using the Embellisher app) to directly promote a marketing campaign to your email list.

There are expensive online services that will promote the Advance Reading Copies (ARCs) of your book, such as [NetGalley](#), but they are quite prohibitive, and they may also get you the wrong audience feedback! Every author knows that even one terrible review can be disastrous to a book launch.

Therefore, since you already have a curated email list of readers who have shown a direct interest in your book and its subject matter, then when you send them a notice to get a free, ARC of your book, they will be much more inclined to read it and give you a positive review. By the way, NetGalley doesn't give you any direct mail help to get an audience to read your book—you must do that on your own. So, why should you pay them when you have your audience already collected anyway?

You should do all the networking involved to get the widest possible interest in your launch. You can follow the suggestions given by [Weaving Influence](#) in order to prepare for the launch. At any rate, you should have a landing page created where the interested reader can visit in order to preorder your book and get on your mailing list (if they haven't done so already).

Another method of collecting interested readers and even possibly getting published by Amazon Press, is to do a 30-day campaign through Kindle Scout. Only 3 percent of participating authors are chosen, but the strategy behind your running a campaign is that all of the readers' email addresses of those who nominate you are collected at the end of your

campaign, and you have access to them! Thus, Amazon has basically run a free advance campaign for your fiction (no non-fiction allowed at this time) title.

I did this recently for my new historical mystery series starring Clara Shortridge Foltz, and you can [see the results here](#). Even if Amazon doesn't select me, I will have a ready-made list of readers when I self-publish! Sweet, huh? Also, I received over 624 total hours in the "hot and trending" list, and over seven thousand page views of my novel. You can [read how another author did in his Kindle Scout effort](#) and what his results were (he kept an [online diary at Kindle Boards](#)).

I did this by doing paid promotions through email services that cater to readers of fiction. For example, some of the best results I obtained were from Ms. Jessica Rose Vakilian at [Bestindiepress.com](#). I can totally recommend her with no reservations for the Kindle Scout promotion.

With that in mind, you can always consider doing paid promotions of your titles to get new reviews and interest circulating for your books. It can become costly, in the short run, but obtaining readers who are interested in your topic is invaluable in the long run.

FIFTH: SALES AND ADVANCING



This is the phase wherein you sell and distribute your book to the widest possible audience in order to create the synergy necessary for future orders and sales (and, in the case of business people, seminar enrollments). What makes having my Vearsa distribution and the Embellisher Mobile marketing tool on hand valuable, for your advanced promotions, is the fact that you can include multimedia and direct links to your new title coming out next. You do this by promoting the next book inside the first one, and the reader will click on the provided links to sign-up automatically through their mobile device to your author mailing list. Of course, you can also give a direct link for the reader to install the [Embellisher eReader app](#).

Having the Embellisher app also allows you to promote yourself directly to your readers through their cell phone or other mobile device. For example, you can automatically upload a revised or new title, and it will immediately appear on their eReader's desktop. As a technological futurist, of sorts, I can see the coming day when [ALL PUBLISHERS will market and sell publications directly to their readers by mobile device](#). Why? Four reasons:

1. Control of intellectual property and security from pirate hackers.
2. Most readers will be reading on their mobile devices in the very near future, so why not distribute and market to them there instead of through Amazon and the others who are currently being lax on eBook security and on pricing for self-published authors?
3. Control of direct marketing by mobile device and keeping sales of eBooks from dispersing so that others gain profit as middlemen.
4. Opening up a new area of online education to bypass the unwieldy and less direct system of profiteering Learning Management Systems that exist now. Why not work directly

LIFE IN 2050

from instructor to student? We have the technology now.

Those are the five phases of creating a well-run digital marketing plan. I hope you can [keep me apprised](#) of how well they work for you, and I trust you will make many new reader friends during your adventure!

[Watch this video](#) to see how A2R (Author2Reader) direct mobile sales work.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Musgrave was born in Fall River, Massachusetts (home to Lizzie Borden). He worked for Caltech in Pasadena (home of the "Big Bang Theory") and continues to use his fascination with technology in his "Detective Pat O'Malley Steampunk Mystery" series. Jim was also a professor of English for 24 years, and he runs a publishing business that he began with his late wife, Ellen, in San Diego. He has won many writing awards, including being a finalist in the Bram Stoker Awards and the Heekin Foundation Awards. His mystery, *Forevermore*, won First Place in the International Clue Historical Mystery Contest in 2014. This is the first novel in the best-selling Steampunk series starring Detective Patrick James O'Malley set in post-Civil War New York City. All mysteries in the series were selected as featured titles by the American Library Association's Self-E Distribution Program for Independent Authors.