



Information Sheet #6

## Author's Publishing Comparison Table

	<b>Commercial Publisher</b>	<b>Subsidy Publisher</b>	<b>Self-publisher</b>
<b>Publication depends on</b>	Fit with publishing plan, large market, contract terms	Author payment, contract terms	Personal motivation, financial or time constraints
<b>Book market perceived to be</b>	Large	n/a	Varies: may be niche or broad
<b>Cost to author</b>	None	Cost of books* + fee	Everything
<b>Author's role</b>	Editorial corrections, marketing	Editorial corrections, monitoring production, additional marketing if desired	Oversees all facets of production, fulfillment and marketing (or pays consultants to do it)
<b>Editorial/design control</b>	Little	Varies, usually more than for traditional	Complete
<b>ISBN</b>	Corporately owned	Usually corporately owned	Personally owned
<b>Copyright</b>	Assigned to publisher by author	Assigned to publisher by author, or retained	Held by author
<b>Sales</b>	Publisher, distributor (sales information provided to author at publisher's discretion)	Publisher, author (author retains sales information on self-sold books only)	Author or chosen distribution network (all sales information retained for marketing purposes)
<b>Marketing</b>	At publisher's discretion: active marketing often requires author's time; otherwise passive (catalogs, in-store displays IF book considered A-list)	Passive	Active or passive, as money, interest or time allow
<b>Print run</b>	3000+	Varies: 1 to a set number of books, dependent on company and amount of author payment	Varies depending on perceived market and budget
<b>Quality of finished product</b>	High	Varies: amateurish to high	Varies, but high if publishing undertaken as a business
<b>Profit accrues to author</b>	Royalties averaging 10% of gross or 4–8% of net	Percentage on books sold, varies by company	100%
<b>Provides</b>	Status based on publisher's reputation, possible long term revenue	Status based on being a "published author", items for author sale if desired, possible entrée to traditional publishing route	Self-employment or addition to an existing business or expertise, possible long term revenue, possible entrée to traditional publishing route

\* Per book costs tend to be higher for subsidy-published books than self-published books because subsidy authors do not have the option of choosing printers based on cost effectiveness.