



Getting Your Book Distributed

First of all, when we talk about book distribution there are three different models that you need to know about:

- Full Service Distribution
- Wholesale Distribution
- Direct Distribution

Full service distributors are companies that provide a variety of services on behalf of traditional or well-established authors and publishers with a proven sales record. These services can range from sales representation directly into stores, libraries and wholesalers, warehousing, order fulfillment and back end office functions such as paying royalties and doing collections. Examples of these companies are Ingram Publisher Services (IPS), Publishers Group West (PGW), Independent Publishing Group (IPG) and Midpoint to name just a few. Some specialize in genre specific, academic or religious content. Typically a new indie author or publisher will not have sufficient sales to support full service distribution partnerships.

So let's focus on wholesale distribution since that's likely the model that fits most indie author/publishers. In this model, the author/publisher makes their book available to a wholesaler like Ingram who in turn makes that book available in their catalog to retailers and libraries to order. The wholesaler is not actively promoting or selling that book; the author/publisher is doing that. Since Ingram is the world's largest book wholesaler servicing 39,000 retail and library partners, it's a good thing to get your book listed with Ingram. It makes no difference whether the stores and libraries are built of brick or live entirely online, sell printed or eBooks—it is all called wholesale distribution. Baker & Taylor distributes print books primarily to libraries. Ingram also distributes to Baker & Taylor. On the eBook side, publisher/authors can distribute directly to the big four, (Kindle, Apple, B&N and Kobo) but it can be cumbersome when they start uploading and revising content, and that's why a distribution service like Ingram is handy as a one-stop.

The reason distribution is so important for indie author/publishers is that most booksellers and certainly libraries would rather not order a single title directly from the author/publisher because it's just not manageable. It's far more convenient and beneficial for retailers and libraries to order from a single supplier. This is exactly the role that Ingram plays in the industry—it is the central hub of the very complex publishing wheel between publishers and retailers.

When we setup your title for distribution with Ingram, we provide the completed digital files (PDF for print and EPUB for eBooks) along with the metadata (book information). In this metadata we will also include your list price and a discount to offer to the retailers and libraries that might want to purchase your book. The discount represents the profit that both the bookseller (retailer) and Ingram make transacting the sale. The standard trade discount is 55% of

the list price but you can set a range anywhere from 30-55%. Applying a discount of less than 55% can possibly limit the sale of title to booksellers; however this may be the right choice for some author/publishers depending on their sales strategies.

The same holds true for choosing to make your book “returnable” or “non-returnable”. Most booksellers, including chains like Barnes and Noble will not consider stocking your book without the returnable option. Remember you can always change your price, discount and returnable options so do what makes you feel the most comfortable. If your book isn’t selling and you are actively marketing, you might want to try adjusting your pricing, discounts or returnable option to see if that helps move the needle.

The third model consists of selling your book directly to the reader through web site orders or in-person settings such as a book signing or reading. There are pros and cons to this method which may make it unusable by some and invaluable to others. The biggest hurdles with direct marketing is the initial cost (you must have books on hand to deliver at point of sale or to fill online orders in a timely manner) and the time needed to market your book. On the plus side, the author can receive a much larger share of the proceeds from each sale because there are fewer people to pay in the distribution chain.

Luckily for you, this is where Pitbull Publishing comes in. We can tailor a distribution plan to fit within your budget and get your book into the hands of your readers. We offer the full service features you want (representation, marketing, and accounting), the wholesale distribution channels you need (Ingram and Amazon), and a full line of direct distribution services (web site sales and fulfillment, arranging in-person events, promotional packages).

Contact us today to schedule a free, no-obligation consultation to discuss your project needs, how our services can benefit you, costs, timetables, and any other questions you may have concerning the publishing and distribution of your work. We look forward to helping you get your book into the hands of your audience.