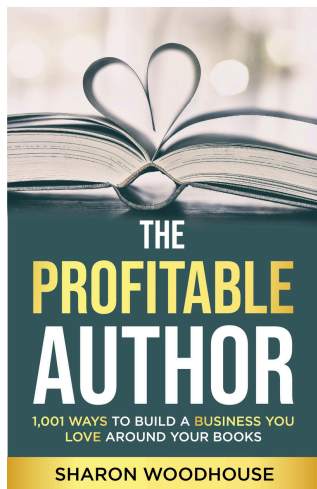


# THE PROFITABLE AUTHOR

By Sharon Woodhouse

Start Building a Sustainable Business You Love



## Introduction

*Dear Author,*

Thanks for picking up this book and welcome to a new adventure you may or may not be sure you want to be on! That is, book marketing, book selling, and otherwise monetizing your authorship. Taking the necessary steps to make sure your books are sold and readers read your work are overwhelming prospects, and for many, things they'd rather avoid entirely.

Why can't you just write, right?

Perhaps you've written one book on your area of expertise or passion and don't want to learn a whole new world of book publishing and marketing to get your book into people's hands.

Perhaps you're a traditionally published author, more than a little curious to know if you could make it as a self-published author—with your big fan base and email list, but without your agent and a contract.

This book is for all kinds of authors with all kinds of motivations and all kinds of disinclinations. What I share in the following pages will give you a roadmap and its justifications for your best opportunity to keep on writing and living the author life you want (with compensation and other rewards!). And, it will expand your ideas of what is possible for you and increase your chances of experiencing “the good life” through your author activities.

### **Emptying a warehouse and my mind**

In 2019, after twenty-five years in business, I closed my first book publishing company, Lake Claremont Press, after selling off what assets and titles I could to various entities. I spent hours shredding documents, saving memorabilia, recycling outmoded forms of technology storage, and organizing what was valuable for the Chicago Public Library archives. It turned out to be only an initial act of closure on that chapter of my life.

Because a year later, still wondering what I might do next, I started a brain dump during the Covid shutdown, writing 2–3 articles a week on Medium about what I learned and observed about publishing and business. It was a way of thinking about how I had spent my last twenty-five years, perhaps assuming it was another route to closure before I moved on to what was next. At some point, after about 200 or so articles, I had captured it all and began writing from new and current experiences and client concerns.

### **This is the way**

Those 200 articles became over 300 articles and the supposed closure became a new beginning. Along the way I discovered that I had an uncommon specialty and perspective in the world of books: It wasn't how authors could learn book marketing and book publishing and thrive within this industry, it was how authors could thrive by learning and practicing entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills.

For this book, I've selected the 100 articles that I think are most useful for getting you firmly on the way to your own income-generating, sustainable, profitable author business you love — one that represents your best shot at reaching all of your author goals, not just the financial ones.

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## Start Building a Sustainable Business You Love

Results and satisfaction are key to your longevity as an author, and an entrepreneurial approach to your books and authorship is the way to those things. I'm prepared here, on social, and in my newsletters to convince you of that and provide you the tools and inspiration you need to get on board.

### **1,001 ways?**

Why 1,001 ways? I selected 1,001 Ways for my book's subtitle as a tribute to a book that was so helpful to my long career in publishing, John Kremer's epic tome, *1,001 Ways to Market Your Books*. It was foundational to how I published, worked with authors, and marketed and sold books. Kremer hasn't released a new edition since 2017 and I wanted to build on his work with what I now understood was my domain: Applying entrepreneurship, an entrepreneurial attitude, and entrepreneurial skills to building profitable, sustainable author businesses.

There's also the metaphoric big-number value of 1,001 that resonates for me. It emphasizes the sheer quantity of paths available to authors when it comes to creating and driving your own success as well as the necessity of finding your own route through the labyrinth of options.

Finally, there are well over 1,001 ideas in the following pages to inspire your author entrepreneurship, everything from nuts-and-bolts business essentials, to mindset hacks, to specific marketing ideas and broad ways to think about marketing, to sales scripts, to productivity and energy management tips, to event knowhow, to guidelines for mixing and matching different streams of income to find a business model you can start with, and more. With the insights and tools in this book, you'll discover that building a thriving author business isn't just possible — it's achievable in a way that aligns with your life, goals, skills, and interests.

### **Learn, practice, test, repeat**

You can read this book in any order you like. The pieces are arranged thematically and in an order that makes sense to me. You can read them from start to finish and follow my train of thought or you can dip in where topics interest you or are relevant to what's currently on your mind.

What's more important is that you revisit the material in this book again and again as needed. There is repetition and lots of cross-referencing in these pages. That's a natural byproduct of writing columns devoted to one topic, and I left it all in intentionally. When it comes to business, as when it comes to learning anything new or with many moving parts, repetition doesn't hurt. Rather, it's beneficial and reinforcing to encounter the lessons in different contexts. In fact, as I promote and sell this book, I will be referring to the information within, reminding myself what I know, and re-testing the advice for myself.

This is not a guide to making it in the publishing industry and learning its ways and wherefores. It's a book about making it as an author — with your own standards, goals, and dreams — by making it as a businessperson.

Wishing you all the best,

*Sharon*