

Maximizing Book Sales With SmashWords

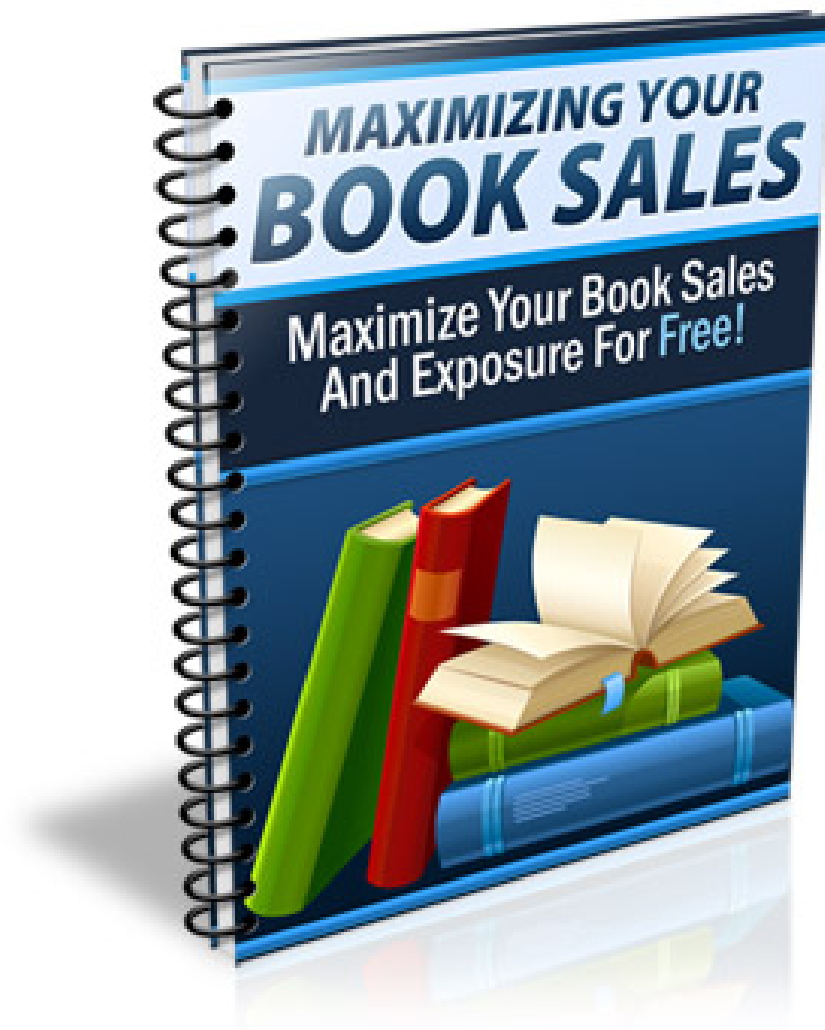


Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION TO SMASHWORDS	3
CREATING YOUR SMASHWORDS ACCOUNT.....	4
MANAGING YOUR SMASHWORDS ACCOUNT	7
GETTING PAID	10
QUICK & EASY DISTRIBUTION	14
UNDERSTANDING INCOME GRAPHS & STATS.....	21
OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW.....	25

Introduction To Smashwords

In order to maximize your income as an ebook publisher, you need to leverage the power of multi-channel information networks to further distribution and enhance exposure.

While the majority of your income will come from Amazon Kindle and Barnes & Noble, you can boost your overall profits by showcasing your information products on external networks, including SmashWords.

This quick start guide will take you step-by-step through the entire process of setting up your SmashWords account, optimizing your profile and finally publishing your book!

Let's begin!

Creating Your SmashWords Account

SmashWords is absolutely free to use, so it will never cost you any upfront fees, management fees or distribution fees. SmashWords makes their money by taking a small percentage of your overall sales, so each time you sell a product via the SmashWords marketplace, they will keep 15%.

The majority of your profits will derive from other marketplaces, but it's still worth your time uploading your products to SmashWords for 2 main reasons:

1: SmashWords will provide you with **free ISBN's** for all of your books. You will need these ISBN's when distributing via other channels (including BookStrand.com or AllRomanceEbooks.com if you are in those markets).

2: SmashWords gives you the opportunity to create a public profile that can help you garner more exposure from your viewing audience.

To begin, visit <http://www.SmashWords.com> to set up your free account. You will need a valid email address in order to complete this simple process.

The first step is to click on the "Join" link to create your account.



You will now need to enter in a valid email address. Keep in mind that your email address will be used to send you purchase notifications and updates from within the Smashwords marketplace.

Your next step is to choose a screen name. Your screen name forms the URL for your public profile, so you'll want to choose either your author name (if available), or your publisher name if you plan to publish a variety of books under an umbrella network or company.

For example, when I created my SmashWords account I chose the username alexmajor so my profile URL is now:

<http://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/alexmajor>

Note: You cannot change your username once you have created your account, so choose carefully!

Next, choose a password, and enter in your first and last name. You'll be able to modify your name, address and password later on in the event you wish to change

your contact details. The name you enter now will be used in your payment and account history.

You will also be asked to indicate whether you are under or over the age of 18. This is used for demographic marketing and to help customize the type of content that is available to you within promotional ads as well as the categories of books that appear on the front page and after logging into your account.

Finally, enter in your location and click “Sign Up” to complete the process.

You now have a SmashWords account!

Managing Your SmashWords Account

When you first log into your SmashWords account, your welcome screen will look something like this:

Comments/questions/customer support? Click here!

**Smashwords™**
your ebook, your way.

Welcome kate@contentgirl.com
Adult filter is **ON** (what's this?)
[Invite Friends!](#)

[Home](#) [Site Updates](#) [My Smashwords](#) [Publish](#) [Library](#) [Dashboard](#) [Account](#) [FAQ](#)

3,668,274,952 words published

Sort by: [New Releases](#) [Best Sellers](#) [Most Downloads](#) [Highest Rated](#)

Filter by: [Free ebooks](#) [Shorts \(<25,000 words\)](#) [Longs \(25,000+ words\)](#)

NaNoWriMo

Learn about NaNoWriMo

All Works «

Fiction

Adventure

African American

Anthologies

Children's Books

Christian

Drama

Fantasy

Gay & Lesbian

Graphic Novels/Comics

Historical

Holiday

Horror

Humor & Comedy

Literary

Mystery & Detective

Poetry

Romance

Science Fiction

Thriller & Suspense

Women's Fiction

Young Adult/Teen

Non-Fiction

Biography

Business & Economics

Children's books

Cooking

Entertainment

Health & Wellbeing

Inspiration

Parenting

Reference

Religion

Self Improvement

Sports

Travel

View by Authors

View by Agents

View by Publishers



How to Come Out Guide for Women Questioning their Sexual Orientation
Ebook Price: \$6.99 USD. 16750 words. Non-Fiction by Esmeralda Carvalho on December 12, 2011
The How to Come Out Guide for Women Questioning their Sexual Orientation offers step by step advice and true case scenarios on how to accept oneself as a lesbian or bisexual woman as well as how to come out to parents, children, boyfriends or husbands, healthcare providers and more. Included are excerpts of Celebrity Lesbian Coming Out Stories and the author's Top 10 Lists of Lesbian Resources.



Don't Go Breaking My Heart
Ebook Price: Free! 3800 words. Fiction by Ron Shillingford on December 12, 2011
Dennis is a wealthy accountant dating two women; one his mother approves of, the other, is his true love but respectable in every way except that she is from a totally different culture. Dennis makes his choice and has to live with several dilemmas as a result.



After Burn
Ebook Price: \$0.99 USD. 48170 words. Fiction by Sherry D. Picklin on December 12, 2011
Reece Barnett and her father have just relocated to sunny North Carolina, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. Just as Reece is starting to fit in, a rash of bomb threats rock's her father's experimental aircraft squadron. When the authorities track the threats to Reece's school, she decides to do some investigating of her own. Can she uncover the shocking truth of the person behind it all?



Steroid Stranger
Ebook Price: \$2.99 USD. 56040 words. Fiction by BJ Santiago on December 12, 2011
Fueled by jealousy and quiet rage, scrawny Jordan Destrio takes steroids to win back his ex. But after some violent episodes, love is the last thing on his mind.



The Spooky Adventures of Boo Bangles the Ghost - Book 4 - The Other Side of Scary
Ebook Price: \$0.99 USD. 13330 words. Fiction by Laurence Knighton on December 12, 2011
The Other Side of Scary - Book 4 Ghosts exist in another dimension, but why we see them is a mystery. They're really over there, but here, too. What happens when a ghost of the scariest kind takes a vacation from what he does best and explores that other dimension? Might Boo Bangles never return to Far Hollow and his favorite haunt in the old abandoned house?

7 | Page

Pay attention to the tabs at the top of the screen as this is how you will navigate throughout your account. To start, let's click on "My Smashwords".

This is your profile area and is where you can change your real name, pen name and location. You can also click on "Edit Profile" to change your profile details, or since you are just setting up your account, you can click this link to enter in important information about your books.

Once you have filled out your profile, you can return to "My SmashWords" to preview how your profile page will look to the public. Click "Edit Profile" to begin.

The most important component on this page is your website address. In the event you don't have a place to promote your book, you can return to this area of your SmashWords account later on and add in your blog or website URL. You'll discover that your SmashWords profile will quickly rank within the major search engines and will help new readers explore your books.

You can also add in a direct link to any blog, and SmashWords will pull content from your site and create clickable links, guiding people to your pages.

In addition, you can add links to your social media profile accounts including Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter and even MySpace.

You should also upload a photo that represents either yourself or your target audience. For example, since some of my books are within the thriller genre, I have a SmashWords account with a “mystery man” icon. For my personal books, I have my own photo featured on my profile page, and for books that I publish within the Childrens’ Book market, I have a cartoon illustration.

You can create as many different SmashWords accounts as you wish, having a separate account for every genre and audience you cater to.

You can also establish a “Publisher Account” with Smashwords that will give you the opportunity to publish many different books all from within one account however keep in mind that when publishing books as different authors via one SmashWords profile, you can only have one publisher name appear.

To create a publisher account, click on “Manage Publisher or Agent Status” from the “Account” page.

Publisher or Agent Status

You are configured as a PUBLISHER

- [Manage Publisher or Agent Status](#)
- [Create a new 'ghost' author profile](#)

As a Publisher or Agent at Smashwords, you can create separate profiles for each of your authors.

For example, if I published books as both Kate Anderson and a pen name such as

“Jane Doe”, while my books will appear under different names, the “publisher name” will be the same, linking my books together.

So, if you don’t mind people being able to link your different books to one account, consider setting up a publisher Smashwords account so you can manage all of your publications easily – from one account, otherwise set up a different account for every genre or author name that you use.

Once you have created your profile page, click “Save” and then return to the main page. From there, click on “Account” from the main menu.

Your account area is one of the important (and widely used) places in your Smashwords account because it’s where you can keep tabs on your book sales, distribution channels and payment information.

Getting Paid

Take some time to explore the different areas of this page, paying close attention to “Payee Information”.

You will need to make a decision when it comes to how you are paid for sales generated within SmashWords.

If you are within the United States, you will want to submit your Paypal address into your Smashwords payee page so that you can receive payment directly via Paypal, or you can opt to receive check payments.

US residents are required to enter in their SSN or TIN prior to receiving payment. If you are from outside of the United States and you have a valid ITIN number, you should enter it into your account page immediately, so that SmashWords does not retain 30% of your income.

Smashwords pays out via quarterly payments, meaning that you will be paid 4 times each year, starting with:

Quarterly Payment Periods - Expected Payment Date

Q1: Jan, Feb, March - Payment last week of April

Q2: April, May, June - Payment last week of July

Q3: July, Aug, Sept - Payment last week of October

Q4: October, Nov, Dec. - Payment last week of January

For example, if you start selling within the month of January, you can expect your first payment to be processed 30-40 days following the end of the first quarter (March), which will land at about the last week of April.

If your sales took place from April on, your first payment would be processed by

the end of July. It's important to stay on top of your earnings and to keep a spreadsheet of your book sales making sure that it's accurately reflected from within your Smashwords account.

Here is an important notice for American publishers:

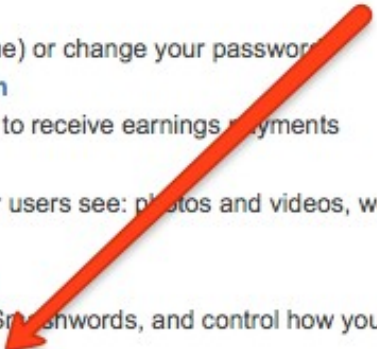
US Residents: You must provide your SSN or EIN in the form below, along with proper postal mailing address, in order to avoid the IRS-required 28% withholding rate. If you don't provide this information, we cannot pay you. Your SSN/EIN is stored encrypted, and the web connection when you transmit your SSN/EIN is also encrypted. In other words, your personal tax ID information is very safe. For your further security, after you send us your SSN/EIN we will not display it on this page.

One thing to keep in mind is that Smashwords is incredibly important if you are from outside of the United States and wish to distribute your books via Barnes & Noble, because it's one of the ONLY ways for non-Americans to be included in that bookstore.

Smashwords will also distribute your books to other marketplaces as well, including the Apple bookstore, Sony, Diesel, Kobo and Barnes & Noble.

Once you have published at least one book, you'll be able to choose what other distribution channels you want Smashwords to submit your book to, and can monitor your sales and overall progress by clicking on "Account" and then "Distribution Channels" as shown below:

Account Management

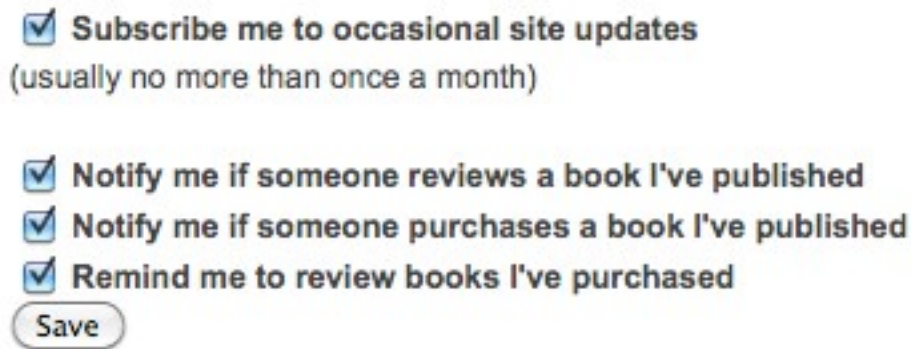
- **Communication Preferences**
Control what communications we send you.
 - **Edit Account Information**
Set your real name (or pen name) or change your password.
 - **Edit/update payee information**
Provide your payee information to receive earnings payments.
 - **Edit Profile**
Edit the profile details that other users see: photos and videos, website and blog addresses, and your bio.
 - **Affiliate System Management**
Earn referral fees by linking to Smashwords, and control how your own books participate in our affiliate system.
 - **Distribution Channel Manager**
Manage which channels, outside Smashwords, your books are distributed to.
- 

It's time to set up your communication preferences! Click on "Account" and then "Communication Preferences" to get started:

Account Management

- **Communication Preferences**
Control what communications we send you.
 - **Edit Account Information**
Set your real name (or pen name) or change your password.
 - **Edit/update payee information**
Provide your payee information to receive earnings payments.
 - **Edit Profile**
Edit the profile details that other users see: photos and videos, website and blog addresses, and your bio.
 - **Affiliate System Management**
Earn referral fees by linking to Smashwords, and control how your own books participate in our affiliate system.
 - **Distribution Channel Manager**
Manage which channels, outside Smashwords, your books are distributed to.
- 

You can customize how and when you receive notifications from Smashwords, including whether you receive instant alerts each time you sell a book, or if someone submits a review for one of your products.



The screenshot shows a settings interface with three checked checkboxes and a 'Save' button. The first checkbox is labeled 'Subscribe me to occasional site updates' with a subtext '(usually no more than once a month)'. The second checkbox is 'Notify me if someone reviews a book I've published'. The third checkbox is 'Notify me if someone purchases a book I've published'. Below these is a fourth checkbox labeled 'Remind me to review books I've purchased'. At the bottom of the list is a rounded 'Save' button.

- ☒ **Subscribe me to occasional site updates**
(usually no more than once a month)
- ☒ **Notify me if someone reviews a book I've published**
- ☒ **Notify me if someone purchases a book I've published**
- ☒ **Remind me to review books I've purchased**

Save

Configure your settings and click “Save”.

Quick & Easy Distribution

Finally, it’s time to publish your first information product! When you’re ready, click on “Publish” to begin the process.

The first thing that you should know is that there’s a very specific format in which Smashwords will accept your manuscript or publication.

When you upload your document to SmashWords, they will convert it into multiple formats including text, PDF, and mobile formats such as .mobi, .litt and

.epub. If there's a problem with formatting your book, you will see a red alert at the top of your account page indicating that your book needs modifying.

Tasks awaiting your completion:

- You have books **requiring modification** prior to inclusion in **Smashwords' premium catalog**.

Sometimes it's little things that will cause your book to fail publication, such as forgetting to add your publisher name or copyright year to the front of your book.

In case you do experience any errors, here are a few things to keep a look out for:

1: SmashWords Copyright

SmashWords requires that you add a short blurb at the beginning of your book that indicates that your book is published via Smashwords.

Here is the exact statement that we use for all of our publications.

Smashwords Edition

This ebook is licensed for your personal enjoyment only. This ebook may not be re-sold or given away to other people. If you would like to share this book with another person, please purchase an additional copy for each reader. If you're reading this book and did not purchase it, or it was not purchased for your use only, then please return to Smashwords.com and purchase your own copy. Thank you for respecting the hard work of this author.

Just include that underneath your name and copyright year.

2: Font Size

Make sure that all of your font sizes are the same as Smashwords may experience problems converting your book into mobile formats if the fonts vary.

3: Strip All Competing Links

If you publish your books via Amazon, you will want to make sure to strip out any competitors links from the front or back of your book as Smashwords does not allow them to appear within publications distributed via their network.

Tip: I always create 2 variations of my books. One that I call “Unbranded” which is free of any links and copyright (either Smashwords or Amazon) and a second version that includes the Smashwords copyright. Amazon does not require that you include any copyright, however you should at the very least include your full name and the year of publication.

4: No PLR!

All content published via Smashwords must be original and owned by you. Smashwords will not accept content that is not submitted by the original author or exclusive publisher. Sorry folks! PLR can be used with www.CreateSpace.com though! (see our auxillary component on CreateSpace Profits).

5: We recommend downloading a free copy of the Smashwords Style Guide which will help you better understand formatting and template creation. You can download a copy from: <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/52>

Smashwords will include your books in their premium catalog, giving you more exposure for free. You can preview the status of inclusion for any, or all of your books after publication by clicking on the “Dashboard” link in the top nav bar.

Author	Status	Operations	Price	Books Sold	Downloads* (Paid + Free Samples)	Linked in Member Libraries	Date Published	Premium Status
You	Published Click to unpublish	Settings Upload new version Coupon Stats SEO Reassign Author	\$7.99	22	142	3	09/15/11	Approved on 11/14/11
You	Published Click to unpublish	Settings Upload new version Coupon Stats SEO Reassign Author	\$2.99	20	107	2	09/26/11	Approved on 10/04/11



If you see “Approved”, it means that your book was included in their catalog. If you see “Requires Modification”, it means that you need to make changes before it can be included. Most of the time the changes are simple ones, such as including the Smashwords terms of service, or a small formatting issue.

If you click on the “Requires Modification” link by any book, you will see what changes are needed prior to inclusion.

You	Published	Settings	\$2.99	11	43	3	11/07/11	Requires
	Click to unpublish	Upload new version						modification
		 Coupon Stats						(checked
		SEO						on
		Reassign Author						12/12/11)

In my example, SmashWords has indicated that one of my books contains possible corrupt formatting. It further indicates that the problem may be font sizing, so by ensuring that all of my fonts are of the same size, I can bypass this issue and re-submit my book for publication.

- #2 Your book contains some possibly corrupt formatting. If you take a look at the EPUB, you'll notice there are slight font size differentiations. This is caused by your mix of inconsistent on-screen formatting. One option is to do a CTRL-A and change everything to Normal style, then modify the style to enforce the characteristics you want. When you're finished correcting your book, go to Dashboard: 'upload new version' to upload the new version. Thanks.

When publishing your book, the first step is to enter in your book title. This is a VERY important step because in order to increase exposure (and ranking), you should include keywords within your title.

For example, if I were hoping to get seen by romance fans, I might include my book title and then “Romantic Adventure”, or “Romance Book” in the title.

You can format your title using a hyphen to separate your title from your keywords, like this:

A Night To Remember – Fantasy Romance

Next is your short description. This is included on your product's sale page as well as the longer description which you can enter in the box below. When it comes to writing up a short description, again, make use of important keywords. This will help your book be found by both the search engines and by on-site searches made by readers who are looking for specific genres.

Your longer description might include an excerpt of your book, or a few paragraphs introducing your storyline. Make it sizzle as this is where you can capture attention and motivate potential readers into purchasing your story.

You will now select the language for your book and choose whether your book contains adult content or not. If your book is adult oriented (includes sex scenes whether graphic or otherwise), it will not appear on Smashwords on-site search for those who have activated the adult filter.

Next, it's time to choose pricing. The price that you set your stories at should be based on what is currently selling within the Amazon marketplace. You can gauge sales based on the books' overall ranking, paying close attention to the Top 100 books in your genre.

Are authors setting the majority of their books at only \$0.99 or are authors setting higher prices such as \$2.99, \$4.99 or \$8.99? You will want to do some quick

research to determine a fair and reasonable price point, keeping in mind that you can edit the price of your book later on should you choose.

One effective strategy is to price your first book low, and then all other books in the same series at a higher price. This way, your first book is considered a “loss leader”, used primarily to introduce your books to your audience and warm up readers who will likely purchase subsequent books from you.

If you aren’t writing a series you can still price your first book lower than all other published books just to gain footing in your market, develop a presence within your genre and begin to collect reviews and feedback from your audience.

You could also choose to make one book free, or let your readers determine the price by choosing this option on the publishing page.

You can also choose a sample size (default is 20%) and we don’t recommend increasing this unless you’re publishing a longer book. Just give potential readers a taste, but not a full size meal!

Next, choose the category for your book, as well as a sub-category. This is an important part of the process because your book will only appear within the categories you’ve selected, so make sure that you choose the appropriate category based on your genre and audience.

Finally, you can assign keywords/tags to your book listing. This is THE most

important part of maximizing exposure and sales because these keywords directly help people find your books. You can enter in as many as you like by typing them individually, or by separating them with comma's, such as:

romance genre, romantic fiction, romance, lovers, first love

If you struggle to come with relevant tags for your books, search out other authors in your genre via the SmashWords search bar and scroll down the page to see what other authors are using! You can use the same tags or a variation of keywords based on your target audience.

Helpful Tip: To save time later on, consider creating a “keyword swipe file” of the tags you use for each genre. That way, you can just copy and paste them into Smashwords each time you publish a new book! Keep adding new tags to your swipe file as you uncover what other authors are using successfully.

Understanding Income Graphs & Stats

You'll be able to see your current earnings at any time after logging into your Smashwords account just by looking to the left hand navigation menu, as shown below:

Publisher Account

Your Books Sold: 212

Author's Books Sold:
coming soon

Account Balance: \$529.35

Note that for all books sold via external channels, such as Barnes & Noble or Sony, there is a lengthy delay from the time a book sells until the sale appears within your SmashWords account. For books sold directly via Smashwords, your balance will reflect your sales instantly.

In order to keep on top of books sold through third party networks like Barnes & Noble, click on “Dashboard” and then “Sales and Payment History”.

Smashwords Sales and Payment Report

Choose a Year:

2011

Or, view your [Quarterly Earnings Mapping Report](#)

You will now see a page that outlines how reports are generated, and by clicking on the year or quarterly earnings mapping report at the top of the page, you'll be given a complete listing of your sales as shown below.

Please note: Sales reports and payments from third-party retail sales are not realtime.

Channel	Retailer Sales Reported Through	Your Smashwords Balance Adjusted For Retailer Sales Through	Accrued Sales (reported, not yet payable by retailer)
Smashwords.com	Today	Today	N/A
Sony	Dec 3, 2011	Oct 31, 2011	\$111.58
Barnes & Noble	Dec 8, 2011 For non-free titles. Nov 1, 2011 For free titles.	Aug 31, 2011	\$2096.50
Kobo	Oct 29, 2011 For non-free titles. Aug 31, 2011 For free titles.	Oct 20, 2011	None
Amazon	Jul 31, 2011	Jul 31, 2011	None
Apple	Nov 26, 2011	Oct 29, 2011	78.82 AUD 13.36 CHF 52.96 GBP \$152.84 7.32 EUR 6.62 CAD
Diesel	Nov 30, 2011	Nov 30, 2011	None
Affiliate Referrals (Get links!)	Today	Today	N/A

And if you want to opt out of distribution on specific networks, click on “Account” and look for the link titled “Distribution Channel Manager”.

I personally opt my books into all distribution agents via SmashWords except Amazon, since I sell directly on Amazon myself. If you are within the United States, you will want to opt in to Smashwords only, and then distribute your books through every other channel yourself, since that way you cut out the

middleman and avoid extra fees. If you are from outside of the United States, you are only able to distribute books to places like Apple, Sony and Barnes & Noble through Smashwords, so you'll lose a bit of money by being charged by Smashwords (acting as your publishing agent) and through each retailer as well.

You can now choose the formats in which you'd like to make your book available. We recommend leaving all default options on, giving potential readers more flexible choices as to how they read your book.

Next, choose a cover image for your book and upload to Smashwords. Your cover size should be roughly around 600x800 or so. Save it in .jpg format.

Finally, you will need to choose your document for publication. Smashwords accepts only .DOC files so if you have your story in another format, you will need to convert it to .doc prior to uploading.

Note: If you upload a new revision of your book, the older version(s) will remain available to users who bought them, so that they can still read them, if they desire. (As the author or publisher, you will see all revisions.)

And finally, click "Publish"!

You are now a published author on Smashwords!

Your book will go live immediately – with no approval process or monitoring. It can take up to 40 minutes for your book to be compiled, but you can check where you are in the queue at any time after submitting your book for publication.

Once it's published, it will appear under the “Dashboard” page and you can add it to your library as well.

Other Things You Should Know

Here are a few other things that make Smashwords a valuable tool for authors and publishers:

1: ISBN Management

Each time you publish a book with SmashWords, you can choose a free ISBN. You can use this when publishing books on other networks such as <http://www.BookStrand.com> - a publishing agent that requires ISBN's for all publications.

To view and manage your ISBN's with Smashwords, click on “Dashboard” and then choose “ISBN Manager” from the sidebar.

Here is a brief summary of why ISBN's are so important:

Smashwords retailers such as Apple and Sony will not accept your Smashwords book unless you have a unique e-ISBN. This is the #1 reason to attach an ISBN to your Smashwords book. In the case of Apple and Sony (and Borders US as well), the ISBN is the primary digital identification number these retailers use to track and catalog your books, and to report your sales back to Smashwords. The ISBN may provide limited additional marketing and discovery benefit as well. The ISBN gains your book free inclusion in Books in Print, the world's largest catalog of books, which is licensed to all major search engines and thousands of bookstores and libraries. Your ISBN record will also receive a free online listing at the online Books in Print bibliographic database that's available on the open Web at <http://seo.bowker.com>.

You can view and manage your ISBN's with Smashwords, click on "Dashboard" and then choose "ISBN Manager" to preview currently assigned ISBN's.

2: Coupon Management

As a Smashwords author, you can assign coupon codes and discounts to your books, giving new readers a chance to explore your publications at a discount price! To set up a coupon for any, or all of your books, click on "Dashboard" and choose "Generate and manage coupons".

If you wish to create a coupon for a specific book, you can generate a coupon for individual titles or for all of your books. You can also determine when each coupon expires, giving you the opportunity to launch "time limited special offers" for new readers to encourage sales!

3: Built In Affiliate Program

With Smashwords, you can earn money by promoting other people's books, or set up an affiliate program for your own books and maximize sales by giving people the chance to promote you!

To set up and manage your affiliate program, click on "Dashboard" and select "Affiliate Settings Overview" from the left navigation menu.

With Smashwords, you can assign a percentage shared with affiliates, so that everyone who promotes your book and generates sales is able to earn commissions for each transaction. Smashwords allows you to set any percentage between 11% and 81.5%, making it easy for you to encourage affiliates to promote your books!

To Your Success!

Alex Major
www.NicheEmpires.com