

Write, Publish and Profit From Small Regional Special-Interest Magazines

**Maybe You Should Write and Publish A Magazine!  
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## INTRODUCTION

This book is **not** about publishing a big or national magazine like *Time*, *People*, *Fortune*, *Sports Illustrated* or *Modern Bride*.

**It's about creating and publishing, on a small but profitable scale, your own regionally distributed magazines that will succeed on every level, financial and otherwise.** As I did as a part-time freelance writer, any writer who can do research can create and publish

one or more of these small but profitable special-interest publications. They not only pay for themselves, with little monetary investment required to start up (beyond standard computer equipment); they also reach the street having left a decent profit in the publisher's pocket. And the profit starts with the first edition.

That's rare, I know—but that's what this book is about.

In 1990, in my garage, with no money invested beyond a computer I already owned (a little Macintosh Plus, all 8 megahertz and 1Mb RAM of it), and the knowledge I had gained in my own wedding photography business, I wrote and laid out my first edition. (See page 11.) It was a watershed year—much more so than I realized at the time. This publishing empire of small magazines has become my family's main source of income—a good one that leaves me time to do other writing and business development, and to enjoy recreation and family time. It has *almost* satisfied my "need to create," something to which all writers can relate.

Back in 1977, a man named Ralph Daigh, published a book named *Maybe You Should Write A Book*. Hence my title. But, you don't "write" a magazine, do you? Well, you *do*, if you will forgive me a bit of hocus-pocus with the vernacular. A "normal" magazine, according to the accepted definition, is a collection of articles, some illustrated, bound in soft cover and published at regular intervals—usually quarterly or more often.

In this case, the definition still fits, with one slight difference: In these magazines, the "collection of articles" is written by one person, like the chapters of a book would be. In fact, its text could be released as a book. But as a book, it would not be economically feasible. As a *soft-cover magazine-binding, with advertising*, it's not

only feasible—it's actually profitable for the publisher, effective for the advertisers, and helpful to its readers! Could you ask more from a publication?

Back in 1994, I wrote this present book for the first time. (See the cover illustrated above) I have a copy of the Docutech print version sitting beside me, *completely* different from this eBook. It was so different because the entire publishing process described in it has changed. Compared to this eBook, it was longer, bigger, and couldn't be published in any economical way. Now, as an eBook, it can be. (This is not a revision; it is an entirely different book.)

Back in 1994, I was still doing mechanical paste-up to produce my magazines. The process was more complicated, difficult and time consuming. Oh, sure, I used a page layout program, but that was where the computer's involvement ended.

I didn't use a scanner, didn't use Photoshop or Illustrator to create or enhance art, and didn't have email (so I couldn't receive a digital file over the Internet—which was barely known outside the scientific community at that time).

The levels of knowledge and experience needed then to put together a decent magazine were much higher than they are now. The preparation of one edition for the printer took me six weeks of pasteup, spec'ing photos, etc.

I had had training in some of it, but just exposure to most of it, as a staff writer at the Automobile Club of Southern California in the mid-1970's. Back then, we still had publications set in hot type from our typed copy. Desktop computers and scanners didn't exist. This eBook couldn't have been published.

Back then, I would have never dreamed that I could, "all by myself," turn out one quality magazine, much less the seven editions per year we've done in recent years. (I'm in the habit of saying "we," when actually it's just "me" doing the basic creation of it. But, I always include the sales reps and the printer, without whom the magazines would not happen, and the graphic artists hired by individual advertisers, who add creativity.)

But now, it's actually not difficult. A writer, in particular, can put together a nice publication: This is so partly because the text, which should be the writer's specialty, is the most difficult part of the whole project. It is also not difficult because of the multiple levels of support we offer.

## **If You Don't Feel Able ... Help Is At Hand**

I believe you can publish one of these magazines. I sincerely believe that the information in this book, coupled with your own intelligence, experience, and diligence, will make it possible for you, if you want to do it.

However, there are those folks who will like the idea, but are not as confident of their own abilities as I am.

If you're one of them, read the information in Appendix 4, starting on page 150.

We offer you several **Assisted Publishing Programs**. One of them might be exactly what you need in order to launch one or more publications. Here's a brief rundown:

First, of course, there is this book, which describes and instructs in the entire process of publishing.

Second, there is our **Layout & Design CD**, where layouts are already created for you in major page layout programs. Even if the exact procedures described here and on the CD aren't followed, these layout templates provide a head start that will advance and quicken production. (Read more about it on page **149**; more information and online secure ordering at [http://www.nichebooks.com/layout\\_CD.html](http://www.nichebooks.com/layout_CD.html).)

Third, there are our **Assisted Publishing Programs**, offering multiple levels of help to guide you to success, then let you fly as high as you wish. Take a look at them on page 150 (Appendix 4).

All of the Assisted Publishing Programs are more completely described at our website, <http://nichebooks.com/assist.html>. No obligation (of course) if you just want to go and look around! (While there, you can sign up for our Opt-in newsletter, emailed monthly, titled **The Pen & Press**.)

And, if you have miscellaneous questions, please feel free to email me: [billcory@nichebooks.com](mailto:billcory@nichebooks.com).

(I also welcome any feedback on this book!)

Remember ... life isn't long enough to keep saying "someday." Eventually, there comes a time when there is no more time.

Bill Cory

June 13, 2003

Colorado Springs, Colorado

"I'm a great believer in luck,  
and I find the harder I work,  
the more I have of it."

-- *Thomas Jefferson*

Best of luck with all of your endeavors!



Basically the same, these two editions are published within 100 miles of each other. They each serve a unique need that no book could serve—and double the income with little extra work!

## Chapter 7

# WHY A MAGAZINE, NOT A BOOK?

You can sell a commercially published book one time to each customer and receive a certain amount of money for each sale. If you printed and sold 10,000 books, and made \$2.40, or 20%, on each book that sold for \$12.00, you would make \$24,000. You could publish the book once—maybe more if it became a best seller.

Or, you can format the same information as a magazine, sell advertising in connection with it, in more than one edition, and update and republish it. You can earn \$20,000 per year, each year, on each edition, for as long as you can keep updating and republishing. And, you can do it in more than one location. You don't have to do book tours and signings, either.

You can publish each year with minimal rewriting, covering only the changes in your subject matter, while still giving the reader current, usable information. The writing you do for a book must be detailed, all-inclusive, and leave the reader well-educated on the subject. In this kind of magazine, on the other hand, you don't want to fully educate the reader: You want your advertisers to have an opportunity to do that. So, the writing, being less detailed, is easier.

You can publish in any city or location that offers a market for your subject matter. In my case, the subject of weddings exists everywhere people fall in love. That doesn't leave out many locations. The subjects of babies, new homeowners, dieters, sports enthusiasts, and many others offer the same widespread applicability.

You can publish your magazines at the same time in multiple locations in the same state, using almost identical text, but substituting different photos and dropping in different ads. The covers can be different, but the entire layout can be generally the same.

The nice thing is that you'll earn about the same amount of profit on each edition,

paying commission only for money collected, and providing the same useful product and advertising service in each location. (You'll get two or three times the income, with basically the same text and some additional production work.)

So, would you prefer to write a book (if you are a writer) and publish it one time, or would you rather publish similar magazines in multiple locations and earn multiple incomes on them, many years in a row?

If your goal is to provide your living from writing *books*, write books. But if your goal is to use your talents to provide yourself a good living, create these magazine-type publications. Unless you're one of the unusual book writers, you will earn more doing something like this.

"And, *why*," you might ask, "is this guy recommending we don't write a book, and the place he's saying that is in a book he's written? *Hm-m-m-m?*"

Easy question. This magazine business model relies on a geographically homogeneous market: Everyone who is an advertiser, along with most of their customers, have to be in the same market area. I doubt that the present subject would have enough interested people in a small market, as advertisers or as readers. And, who would advertise in it? Writers clubs? Stationery stores? Bookstores? In a way, this book should help you to understand the subject requirements of the small-market, small-magazine concept. (Besides, I'm not really suggesting that you *shouldn't* write a book; every writer should write at least one book and publish it. I'm just comparing them financially.)

"And, why is he telling us this? Mightn't we become competitors?"

Hey, go for it! It's a big country. There are so many markets, and so many subjects, that no matter what your subject or where you publish your magazines, there will still be plenty of places where I can publish mine, and we'll probably never be competitors for any market, even if we're on the same subject!

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