

Daniel Hall Presents



Episode 104

How To Publish And Profit Publishing Low-Content Guest Books Fast

with Melanie Johnson

Welcome to this episode of the Real Fast Results podcast! Today's episode is filled with very interesting content, especially if you are a publisher or aspire to be one. Melanie Johnson is today's special guest. She is a principal at [Elite Online Publishing](#), a former television personality, and an author as well. Please welcome Melanie to the show...

Promise: How to Publish Guestbooks

We're going to reveal a little, hidden gem that we found through our publishing business. We found this little gem, this little niche, doing guest books on Amazon. It's really an underused niche, which is great. That's what you want to look for, a niche where there's not tons of people in it already. It's not super-saturated.

So, we found this little gem, and we started publishing guestbooks. We have a bunch of other journals out there, and recipe books, and daily planners. **They do alright, but this gem of finding guestbooks seems like it has done better than some of those other niches.** So that's what I want to tell people about today, and just kind of walk them through how they can get involved in this niche of doing guestbooks.

There seems to be a demand for these books, but there's a relatively low supply. There aren't that many people publishing these types of books, and therefore, there's an opportunity in this. That's why you should care, and there's something else that's really cool about this. We've

talked about the niche of guestbooks, or overall, having them for vacation homes and things like that, but there are also micro-niches within the guestbook niche, so to speak.

There are bridal guestbooks for bridal showers. There are wedding showers, baby showers, and funeral guestbooks. There are guestbooks for people who have Airbnb or VRBO homes that want a guestbook. **So, there are all of these little micro-niches within there, some of which are underserved as well.** We've picked a couple of niches, and we're just trying to dominate a particular micro-niche and have the majority of the books in there, so that if they are picking something, we hope that they will want to pick one of ours.

Revenues of Melanie's Better-Selling Books

I've been a real estate developer as well, and I've bought little rental properties and things like that, and I was just running numbers on a rental property recently. I thought, "The thing about this, and the return on investment, is that I still have to upkeep the house and I have to deal with the renters." **What's so cool about publishing is that when you put these books up on Amazon then they don't require any maintenance anymore.** You don't even have to deal with the customers or anything because Amazon takes care of all that for you. So, that's really cool.

You do the work upfront, you put the book up, and then it just keeps giving you income afterwards. You could do some promotion on Facebook, or something like that if you wanted, at a low cost. I love that about publishing in these types of niches, Number 1, and Number 2, we're seeing anywhere from 50-100 books, depending on the niche, selling per month. Your revenue depends on how many pages you have in there, and you could make anywhere from \$3 to \$6 or \$7 per book.

Of course, there are no guarantees, but generally making \$500 or \$600 a month off of these books is within the realm of possibility, and if that's your car payment, how nice is that? How nice would it be if you could have that covered every month? **We are really talking about financial assets, and this can be an asset that just keeps going.** Like I said, you don't have the headaches and the maintenance. You don't have to worry about the economic downturn, so to speak, because people are always buying books, especially if you are in a great niche. So, it keeps that residual income coming in. I just love it! It's like a faucet. You know, you have to build the faucet, but then once you build it, you turn it on and it just stays running!

Step #1 - Pick a Niche

The first step is to pick a niche. **So, for example, choose whether you are going to make guestbooks for guest houses, or funeral books, or baby showers, or whatever it may be.** You could even target certain locations. For instance, I live in Texas, so I might target the different areas in Texas. I mean, those could be niches as well, like if you were dealing with Airbnb types of properties you could have guestbooks made just for Colorado, or Florida, or Nevada.

How Should I Go About Choosing a Niche?

When you go into Amazon, and you type in a title for what you're looking for, up in the left corner of the screen, the page will tell you how many books are in that category. So, let's say that you go to "bridal guestbooks," or "wedding guest books". There will be a number up at the top, and if that number is less than 10,000, then that's a pretty lucrative niche.

Step #2 - The Interior

What we love to do is start with the interior first. And, this is another beautiful thing. You create the interior of your guestbook. We usually use Google Docs because it's easy, and if we need people to collaborate on something or give their opinion, they can work right in there. So, we create the interior of the guestbook right there, and to get inspiration, just look at other people's guestbooks. Buy a guestbook. Go to Hallmark. Look online. A lot of the time, you can see the interiors of what they have and create what you think is the best. **So, you create the interior file, and once you get the first couple of pages done, you just copy and paste those to get as many pages as you want.** How easy is that?

Step #3 - The Cover

Then, once you have your interior completed, you can move on to create a cover. [We love using Canva](#). You can create a lot of free covers there, and they have templates already made that you can just alter and add different verbiage to. If you don't see anything you like, we use Pixabay for different pictures and images. You can grab images from Pixabay, throw them onto [Canva](#), and then put them on your book from there. So, we make our front and back cover right there, on Canva, and then once you have those things, you download the cover and the interior.

You also want to make sure that they meet [CreateSpace's](#) expectations. You can find that by creating an account on [CreateSpace](#), which is connected to Amazon. You'll see what they need, right there, when you go into CreateSpace. Then, you just load the files up, the cover file and the interior file. They'll give you an ISBN number right there on CreateSpace, for free, and then you just hit the "Send" button. Then they put it on Amazon for you, and you're in business.

Step #4 - CreateSpace

[CreateSpace](#) is a self-publishing platform that's owned by Amazon. When you put something on CreateSpace, it automatically goes to Amazon. The beauty of this is that they fulfill all of the orders for you. So, you never have to touch anything. They print it on demand, so when someone orders a book on Amazon, CreateSpace prints it, and they ship it through Amazon. You don't have to do anything. It's a beautiful thing.

You're going to open a [CreateSpace](#) account, name your ISBN, download the interior pages, which we'll say is 108, and from there you could choose your trim size, and you could create

your cover as well. So, you'll create your book's interior, and then the exterior, which would be the front and back cover. You could then upload it all to CreateSpace, have them review it, and then push "Publish", and basically, you're in business. Isn't that Amazing? Just by following those steps you've started your own business, and it costs you nothing.

Are There Templates That Help You to Publish on CreateSpace?

Yes, you can use cover templates on [CreateSpace](#), and I think there are templates for some interiors as well. I like to use [Canva](#), and only because I think that it's a little more upscale. I mean, I think CreateSpace's covers are great, and the templates are easy to use, but if you wanted a more highline design, I would use Canva. Both the tools/templates on CreateSpace and Canva are free to use.

Book Dimensions

You know, it just depends. We like smaller, horizontal books versus using a vertical shape for our guestbooks. This is how we choose to do it, but I see a lot of the vertical 6x9 style of book out there as well. So, I think it's just a personal preference.

Here's a little tip, and there are two schools of thought. You need 135 pages, minimum, to have something written on the spine. CreateSpace works in an interesting way. No matter what size your book is, up to 108 pages it's all the same price. If your book contains more than 108 pages, they charge you additionally. So, if you visit CreateSpace, you'll find that most journals are 108 pages long. That's because people are trying to keep their costs under a certain amount, but we recommend to our authors that they try to get to 135 pages so that they can have their book's title printed on the spine. So, that's our lesson.

Why Would I Pay More Just to Have Writing on the Spine?

Well, for the true author, you would want to have something on the spine. For the blank books, and journals, and those types of things, someone creating these could go with 108 pages. You wouldn't necessarily need something on the spine when you create these types of books, and you could keep your costs down this way. For guestbooks, and blank journals, and things like that, I would stick with 108. Authored books, like books by someone who is becoming a non-fiction author and all that, they would want to create a book in a way that they could have their title on the spine when they have it on their book shelves. However, the types of books I'm talking about, the guestbooks, you'd want to keep it at 108 pages or less.

Final Tips

I want to tell you a brief little story about something cool that happened with this. We had someone contact us that wanted us to create a custom guestbook for them, so we did, and they

ordered 600. So, not only is there more opportunity here than one might imagine, but this could essentially be a business in a box. For example, maybe you could go to a place that rents out trampolines for birthday parties and create one for them, and everyone that pays for a party gets a book, right?

That's just one example of many different things you could do. In addition to that, you might be able to charge businesses for putting the books together for them, and not just for the copies that are sold. You could charge them a setup fee, for instance. We usually charge \$500 for the setup fee, and in some cases we charge more, depending on the deal.

Connecting with Melanie

You can find me at EliteOnlinePublishing.com. That's our website. My email is Melanie@EliteOnlinePublishing.com. So, you can send me an email, or you can even reach out to me by phone at (713) 545-6268.

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