

Daniel Hall Presents



Episode 54

6 Reasons Why You Should be Using Public Domain to Profit More in Your Writing and Publishing Efforts

With Daniel Hall

Let me start with a big bold statement... ready?

Properly using quality public domain content can transform your writing and publishing endeavors and be way more profitable than you can imagine.

In this short episode I intend to show you my top six reasons for using public domain content. Hold on tight, here we go...

Top 6 Reasons for Using Public Domain Content

Reason #1 - Flexibility

First, let me give you a brief definition of what public domain is. According to the University of California...

The [public domain](#) is generally defined as consisting of works that are either ineligible for copyright protection or with expired copyrights. No permission whatsoever is needed to copy or use public domain works.

The definition gives rise to the first reason you should use public domain content in your writing/ publishing endeavors; namely, flexibility.

That is, if a work is in the public domain then it can be used in any way, by any citizen of the country where it is in the public domain, without asking for permission and without paying royalties (using public domain is FREE).

Effectively you can use the content: sell it, change it, add to it or subtract from it without limitation. The sky is the limit with public domain.

The long and the short of it is if you find a suitable public domain work you can use it in any way you wish. That is ultimate flexibility.

Reason #2 – Wealth of Content

The library of available public domain content is so vast and rich that you would never run out of it. Some public domain content is older, some is new. But there is a surprisingly large body of public domain work available to draw from.

How large?

85 million books and millions more of magazine articles.

Additionally, much of what is in the public domain is well written, quality content. **Further, while some of it is quite old much of it is also evergreen.** For example, how many ways are there to grow tasty tomatoes or develop a good golf swing?

More than this, the breadth of the subject matter available is enormous and useful. For example, you can find book and articles on subjects ranging from swimming to crotchet. The key point here is that much of this evergreen content is searched for and purchased today. This is to say that there is a market willing to pay for the content available in the public domain. Groovy!

Reason #3 – Derivative Works

The next big reason to [use public domain](#) work is you can make derivative works from them.

There is also very good precedent for authors, publishers and media companies using public domain in their works. Disney is a great example. In fact, many of the Disney

movies and characters we have come to love were derived from public domain works such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*; *Sleeping Beauty*; *Alice in Wonderland*; *The Little Mermaid*; *Beauty and the Beast*; *Pinocchio*; *Robin Hood*; *Peter Pan*; *Winnie the Pooh*; *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*; *Tarzan*; *The Prince and the Pauper*; *Cinderella*; *Mulan*; *The Jungle Book*; and *Aladdin*.

I mention these works specifically because Disney models what I recommend you do with your writing. They took the original and added a new twist or developed the characters in a different light. That is, Disney created “derivative” works.

What I want you to understand about derivative works is they are eligible for copyright protection. Whereas Lewis Carroll’s **Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland** is in the public domain and not protected by or eligible for copyright; **Disney’s Alice in Wonderland** is protected by copyright as a derivative work.

That is all well and good you may be saying but public domain works seem out of date and not all that useful. It is true that some public domain is old but on the other hand much of it is recent. **For example, most everything published by the U.S. Federal Government is in the public domain and they crank out new high-quality content every day.** Also, many magazines published in 1964 and earlier are in the public domain. In addition, there are books and articles that simply are released into the public domain on purpose.

Beyond this, you should not be concerned if a public domain work is “old”. That is one of the great advantages of public domain... as the writer/ publisher you can and should look for ways to update and revise public domain work. Make it current. Make it relevant.

Reason #4 – Easy to Find

While it is true that the vast majority of available public domain have not been digitized more and more of it is making its way on to the Internet. For example, Google is busy digitizing public domain books and magazines (<http://books.google.com/>). The Hathi Trust (<http://www.hathitrust.org/>) is a collection of educational institutions worldwide that are making their libraries available online. Many of the titles available through the Hathi Trust are in the public domain. In fact, as of the day of this episode there were exactly 2,711,662 public domain volumes. That’s a bunch of material.

But wait Bob, there’s more... in fact, here are some additional public domain repositories to sink your teeth into:

Project Gutenberg (text) - <http://www.gutenberg.org/>

Internet Archive (text, music, film) - <http://www.archive.org/index.php>

Musopen (Music) - <http://www.musopen.org/music>

Reason #5 – No Flashing Cursors

Perhaps my favorite reason for using public domain is it can give you a starting place. That is, one of the biggest hurdles I personally face in starting new writing projects is seeing that flashing cursor in the sea of white that is a blank page.

Public domain content can give you a base on which to work. This can be exceedingly comforting especially if you are the type that gets anxious when faced with a blank page. And, if I may be so bold, you are more likely to let your creative juices flow when you are comfortable. If you are more creative, more relaxed you end up with a better quality finished product in my humble opinion.

Reason #6 – Increased Productivity

Closely tied to Reason #5, [public domain content](#) can increase your productivity enormously. **Because you are starting with a completed public domain work your job is to simply add value to what is already there.** That is, put your own twists, update it or relate the information to your own niche.

The point I want you to get is with public domain content some of your work is already done and because of that you can get more product to market, faster without sacrificing quality.

There you have it. I hope I have persuaded you to start using public domain or at least explore the opportunity further.

Links

[Real Fast Public Domain Course](#)

[Real Fast Derivative Products](#)

[Public Domain Super Pack](#)

<http://books.google.com/>

The Hathi Trust <http://www.hathitrust.org/>

Project Gutenberg (text) - <http://www.gutenberg.org/>

Internet Archive (text, music, film) - <http://www.archive.org/index.php>

Musopen (Music) - <http://www.musopen.org/music>

Real Fast Results Community

If you are diggin' on this stuff and really love what we're doing here at Real Fast Results, would you please do me a favor? Head on over to [iTunes](#), and make sure that you subscribe to this show, download it, and rate & review it. That would be an awesome thing.

Of course, we also want to know your results. Please share those results with us at <http://www.realfastresults.com/results>.

As always, go make results happen!