Roland Denzel
IndestructibleAuthor.com
Roland@IndestructibleAuthor.com

Selling Direct for Authors

Questions to consider as you read through this document

What are the pros and cons?

Based on those, should I sell direct now or wait?

Is there something I could be doing instead of selling direct right now that would take me closer to my goals as an author?

Selling direct is best for…

Authors with a large audience

A large catalog

The ability to drive potential buyers to your site

Established authors who don't need as much of 'the algorithm' to work its magic.

Not in KU (unless selling before going live in KU, preorders, etc.)

Your book leads to other things (courses, coaching, other books)

Why would a reader buy direct vs buying the easy way?

They want the bonuses

Early access

Bundles

Use a free 1st book to get them into the system, making the next book an easier choice.

Superfans want to support you. But how many do you have? Is that enough to justify the time, money, and effort. Not to mention the potentially emotional journey.

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How to drive traffic to your site/store

Your email list

Links in the back of your books

Social media

Facebook and BookBub ads

Note – No matter how they arrive, try to get them on your list even if they don't buy directly from you. "Mail your receipt to _____ for your special bonus."

What should I sell?

Ebooks are easiest

Audiobooks are also easy, but require something like paid BookFunnel or Gumroad.

Selling Author Copies is easy, but can be a lot of work for a small return. Requires stocking books and shipping supplies, plus time to pack and mail. Can be stressful, too.

Selling signed Author Copies is similar to above, but you can charge more and/or make more superfans. Volume of sales tends to be lower, but superfans are also more forgiving.

Automated Print on Demand (POD) can be complicated. Is it really worth the time/money to set it up right now vs later?

Merch can be complicated and have low profit margins. Similar issues as Automated POD books vs Author Copies.

Bundles, bonuses, and signed copies add extra value over Amazon's lower prices, free, and fast shipping, which you can't compete with.

Start small and grow when needed

Start easy and free(ish) using Payhip, Gumroad, StoryOrigin, and/or BookFunnel

Upgrade to Shopify, WooCommerce, LuluDirect/LuluExpress when you have the sales to justify it.

If you're building a business around your book (coaching, courses, retreats, workshops, etc) then it might be worth selling direct to build the relationship through email and special bundles and offers they can't get in stores.