

From: **Rachelle Gardner** <rachelle@booksandsuch.com>

Date: Thu, Nov 7, 2019 at 7:43 AM

Subject: **Questions to Ask a Small Publisher**

To: <joanne.tailele@gmail.com>

If you're reading this, then there's a good chance you're a writer and you're going to be published someday if you're not already. In today's publishing environment, there are plenty of options (as you know) and if you don't have an agent, you may find yourself talking to a smaller, independent publisher. It's hard to know if these publishers will be a good fit for you, but you can get a good start by knowing what questions to ask.

Here are some things to consider when you're deciding whether to work with an independent publisher:

- If there's an upfront cost involved (i.e. if the publisher requires you to contribute financially to the editing, publishing or marketing process), you want to find out exactly how much it will cost you; then figure out how much money you're going to make per copy sold. Then calculate how many copies you'll need to sell to recoup that upfront cost. Do you think you can sell that many? Does the investment make sense?
- Regardless of upfront cost, how will you get paid? How will they calculate what they pay you? What's the payment schedule?
- Approximately how many copies are they projecting to sell in the first year?
- Distribution: Where will your book be available?
- Buyback costs: How much will you have to pay to purchase copies of your book? How many complimentary copies will you receive?
- What's their editing process like?
- Who has final say on title and cover design? Do they plan to change your title?
- What rights are they buying?
- Do they expect to produce an audio version? If they don't produce an audio version, can you retain those rights and do it yourself?
- When does this contract terminate? What's the process for getting your rights back?
- Is there a marketing and PR budget? Exactly how do they spend it?
- What are the primary marketing and PR strategies the publisher uses?
- When do they want you to deliver your manuscript?
- What's the anticipated release date?

There are more things to think about, but this is a good start. You can find quite a few in-depth articles online, and there are also books on Amazon that help authors tease through these issues. The single best article I can suggest is [Jane Friedman's Key Book Publishing Paths](#).

Have you considered working with an independent publisher?