

SELF-PUBLISHING BOOT CAMP

METADATA CHEAT SHEET





HEY THERE, AUTHORS! IT'S TIME TO DO SOME RESEARCH

Use this document during your research to record the metadata for your book.

But first, what is metadata? Metadata is your book description, author bio, and keywords and phrases that describe your book. Other metadata includes ISBNs, title, subtitle, author name, your book cover image, your author photo, and your publishing house name and logo.

Whew! That's a lot of data! Good news: data is just words about your book and, since you're a wordsmith, this is going to be a snap!

Keep this cheat sheet handy to centralize your metadata so that you can simply copy and paste it into each system you use to publish.

LET'S START!

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

READ ABOUT METADATA

CLICK TO READ

Mastering Metadata: the Key to
Marketing Your Books

Mastering Metadata: the Key to Marketing Your Books

Metadata is your best friend and marketing partner, so craft it carefully! When you're ready to upload your book for publication you'll need to provide a few types of metadata in your Bowker ISBN record and for the various print and eBook distributors. Book Description (short and long) Author Bio (short and long) Keywords and...



Carla King
Tech Expert

April 5, 2016

KEY WORDS & PHRASES

You need a list of 10, in order of importance.

Imagine the words that people will enter in search engines to find your book. You need a final list of 10 keywords or key phrases, in order of importance.

You'll use these key words and phrases in your book descriptions and your author bio, too. Refine these key words and phrases over time as you learn what people are actually using to find your book.

Research what other authors like you are using by employing Amazon's Advanced Search. [Go to Amazon Advanced Search](#).

Now, write your keywords and phrases below. Remember, you need a final list of 10 key words and phrases, in order of importance. Some systems will take just a couple of keywords, others will take up to 10.

- 1.
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Your keyword-rich book description in different word counts.

Your book description is displayed on distributor and online retailer websites. You'll need description in the following sizes.

Create a book description document in your word-processing system and check the word and character counts.

Make sure to include your most important keywords and phrases in your description!

- ☐ 400 character book description (including spaces)
- ☐ 350-word book description
- ☐ 4000 character book description (including spaces)

AUTHOR BIO

You're the star of the show!

Your author bio should make it clear to readers why you were the best person to write this book. It should contain as many of your keywords and phrases as possible, but don't worry if you can't fit them in. It's more important to make you the star. Toot your own horn! Read your bios aloud. Imagine a radio announcer introducing you to their audience of millions.

Listen... You are interesting! So make an impact. If you're too shy, recruit other authors and friends to help you with this task.

Create an author bio document in your word processing program and go crazy!

- ☐ 350 words
- ☐ 2500 characters (about 475 words)
- ☐ 4000 characters (including spaces)

Also helpful are a one-sentence bio for quick introductions to be used for speaking engagements, interviews, and social media profiles. Plus a 30-second (verbal) "elevator pitch" about you and your book.

- ☐ Twitter: now 280 characters (up from 140)
- ☐ 30-second elevator pitch

BISAC SUBJECT HEADINGS

You're the star of the show!

BISAC subject headings are used by bookstores to put your book on the right shelves and by some online retailers as well to put it on the correct virtual shelf. It's super important to provide these so that busy booksellers don't shelve your book in the wrong place. You can also make sure that happens by printing them on the back cover near the bar code.

Amazon uses categories instead of BISAC subject headings, but they're loosely analogous. (See next section.)

Find BISAC subject headings here: <http://bisg.org/page/bisacedition>

You can use three different main subject headings to increase your reach across categories. Or if your book is very niche, just use one or two. You may even ask your designer to print these categories near the ISBN on the back of your book. That'll help bookstore staff to shelve your book in the right place.

If you can, use 3 different main categories to increase your reach across topics. Or if your book is very niche, use different subcategories in just one subject heading. You may even ask your designer to print these subject headings near the ISBN on the back of your book.

Find your BISAC code at <http://bisg.org/page/bisacedition>

BISAC CODE	DESCRIPTION

AMAZON CATEGORIES

Amazon just has to be different. Find your Amazon categories here.

Use Amazon's Advanced Search to find books like yours to see where they are "shelved" in the various Amazon categories.

Or go to Amazon.com, choose "Books" and press the search icon. (If you are researching categories for a Kindle eBook, then choose "Kindle Store" from the dropdown menu and then click on the Kindle eBooks link on the left hand side.) You will see a list of book categories in the left hand column.

Don't be afraid to experiment and change your categories over time.

You can get super-specific in some categories. Here are some examples.

Category: Romance

Subcategory 1: Action & Adventure

Heros: Firefighters

Themes: Medical

Category: Romance

Subcategory 2: Fantasy

Heros: Alpha Males

Themes: Love Triangle

Category: Literature & Fiction

Time Period: 19th Century

Locations: Europe

Historical: Thrillers

Category: Literature & Fiction

Time Period: 19th Century

Locations: United States

Historical: Thrillers

Category: Religion & Spirituality

Subcategory 1: New Age & Spirituality

Subcategory 2: Meditation

Category: Literature & Fiction

Subcategory 1: Worship & Devotion

Subcategory 2: Clergy

CIP DATA BLOCK

Metadata for Libraries

Marketing to libraries? Want your book to be indistinguishable from any released by traditional publishing houses? Get an [LCCN](#) first, and then a [CIP data block](#) for your copyright page. Because you're an indie author (with fewer than 5 titles published per year) you do not qualify to buy one directly from the library service, so you'll need to go through an intermediary for about \$135.

☐ LCCN

☐ CIP Block

INGRAMSPARK

What IngramSpark wants from you

IngramSpark can distribute your hardback, paperback, and ebook everywhere. You can use it, alone, or go with Amazon first. That is, use Amazon CreateSpace and Amazon KDP to sell your paperback and ebook direct to Amazon. You may also choose to use Smashwords to distribute to all the ebook and app stores. (There are some advantages, such as coupon codes.) That strategy would leave IngramSpark to distribute your hardback everywhere (including Amazon, since Amazon doesn't have hardback book creation capabilities), and your paperback everywhere (except Amazon). Here's the metadata IngramSpark needs. All word and character counts include spaces.

- ☐ ISBNs (Casebound, paperback, ebook)
- ☐ Short book description (350 words)
- ☐ Full book description (200-4000 characters, not including spaces)
- ☐ Keywords - no limit, but up to 7 is recommended
- ☐ About the author - 4000 characters (not including spaces)
- ☐ BISAC codes - up to 3
- ☐ Table of contents (optional) - 4000 characters max (not including spaces)
- ☐ Review quotes (optional) - 4000 characters max (not including spaces)
- ☐ Audience - most common is Trade/General Adult
- ☐ Publisher - your publishing house/imprint name

AMAZON CREATESPACE

Metadata requirements

Many authors use Amazon CreateSpace to publish their paperback directly to the Amazon store, and IngramSpark to distribute to all the other stores. Here's the metadata they require.

- ☐ ISBN (paperback only) _____
- ☐ Book description (4000 character max, including spaces) _____
- ☐ Category: Choose 1 main and 1 subcategory _____
- ☐ Author bio: 2500 characters (including spaces) _____
- ☐ Search keywords: 5 keywords or phrases, separated by commas _____
- ☐ Publisher: Your publishing house/imprint name (not Amazon) _____

AMAZON KINDLE DIRECT PUBLISHING

Metadata requirements

You can use Amazon KDP to publish your ebook directly to Amazon's Kindle store, and another ebook aggregator to publish in the other ebook retailers.

- ☐ ISBN (Kindle edition) _____
- ☐ Book description (4000 character max, including spaces) _____
- ☐ Kindle categories: Choose 2 main and 2 subcategories _____
- ☐ Author bio: 2500 characters (including spaces) _____
- ☐ Search keywords: up to 7 keywords or phrases, separated by commas _____
- ☐ Publisher: Your publishing house/imprint name (not Amazon) _____

AMAZON AUTHOR CENTRAL PAGE

Your home page on amazon.com

Once you have a book for sale or pre-order you are authorized to create an Amazon Author Central Page at <http://authorcentral.amazon.com>. For more information and step-by-step instructions please see my blog post here: [How to Optimize Your Amazon Author Central Page](#).

- ☐ Books: You'll claim each of your books and provide metadata for each
- ☐ Editorial reviews: Up to 5
- ☐ Product (book) description
- ☐ From the author: Message to your readers, from you
- ☐ From the Inside Flap: You can (and should) use this even if you don't have an inside flap
- ☐ From the Back Cover: Back cover copy or more book description
- ☐ About the Author: Your formal, keyword-rich author bio
- ☐ Book Details: Amazon populates this page automatically

EVERYWHERE ELSE

Similar, but different

You have a lot of choices when it comes to where to publish and distribute your book. Each retailer and aggregator have their own requirements for metadata, but they're similar. So the metadata you craft in your worksheets should be sufficient for use anywhere. Some of the other places you might consider publishing include the following.

- ☐ Smashwords
- ☐ Draft2Digital
- ☐ Scribl
- ☐ StreetLib
- ☐ Kobo
- ☐ Apple iBooks
- ☐ B&N NOOK
- ☐ Google Play

That's it for the Metadata Cheat Sheet. Is this useful to you? Can I make it better? I'd love your feedback. Email me at hello@selfpubbootcamp.com and help me find your suggestions by filling in the subject line with: Metadata Cheat Sheet Feedback.

Thank you!



THE JOURNEY BEGINS WITH SELF-PUBLISHING BOOT CAMP

Create your book professionally
with step-by-step guidance from the experts.

www.selfpubbootcamp.com

The Self-Publishing Boot Camp bundle of six online courses guides through your journey as you create, publish, and sell your book as an independent author. The courses are four to ten modules each with up to a dozen lessons in each module. Go take a look at www.selfpubbootcamp.com/sfwc2018:

- Set a Foundation for Self-Publishing Success (available now)
- Create Your Publishing Business (available now)
- Make Your Book (February 28, 2018)
- Distribute Your Book (March 15, 2018)
- Sell Your Book Direct (April 1, 2018)
- Market Your Book (April 15, 2018)

The bundle includes lifetime access, a printed 344-page guide, ebooks, worksheets, cheatsheets, lists, live Q&A sessions, guest experts, and membership in a private Facebook group. Currently in beta, the courses are priced accordingly. The discount is good until the week after the conference and the base price will increase after beta.

You don't have to do this alone! I look forward to guiding you your publishing journey.

20% DISCOUNT for SF WRITERS CONFERENCE until February 28, 2018 with coupon code SPBC-SFWC18



Carla King

Carla King is publisher at Misadventures Media and founder of the Self-Publishing Boot Camp educational series of books and workshops. She has self-published her own books since 1995.

A leader in self-publishing education since 2010, King organizes the self-publishing and technology track for the San Francisco Writers Conference, teaches workshops, speaks at publishing conferences, and provides consumer reviews of self-publishing tools and services.

Her *Self-Publishing Boot Camp Guide for Authors* is in its 4th edition and remains the most comprehensive and trusted guide in the industry. Authors and publishers around the world also count on her *Consumer's Guide to Writing & Publishing Tools & Services*, free at www.selfpubbootcamp.com.



SELF-PUBLISHING BOOT CAMP ONLINE COURSES

WHAT AUTHORS ARE SAYING...



"Several years ago I attended one of Carla's workshops and I've been a raving fan ever since. I was thrilled when she offered this online course and I signed up for the bundle as soon as it was launched. I can't say enough about the material and the care she takes to help authors achieve success. Carla's long history as a writer, publisher, consultant, and workshop leader contributes to the richness of this course which is practical, comprehensive, engaging, inviting, inspiring, and empowering. I'm especially grateful for the lifetime access and continual updates as I continue on my publishing journey."

— **Lynn Fraley**, *Ageless Energy*



"If you're serious about creating an author business then this course is a must. Carla has broken the courses down into bite-size, manageable pieces that even the busiest person can find the time to work through and never lose focus. Her friendly nature and responsiveness to questions is a bonus you'll not find everywhere. She truly cares about our success."

— **A. M. Bochnak**, *Fortitude Rising*



"Carla King's courses and experiences have been the most critical step along my road to self-publishing. Her many years of experience in the field is continually updated, and thereby you receive current pertinent information, a critical element in a quickly changing world. After a mediocre experience with an established publisher for my first book, I considered another book project to be unlikely. Without her help and guidance on self-publishing, I doubt my most recent two books would have been written."

— **Norm DeWitt**, *Motorsports author, Making it Faster, Faster Publishing*



"It's actually fun to take this course. It is full of good advice, practical tips, and includes tons of resource material, all presented in a manner that is easy to follow and use. Carla's infectious, bright personality and generous willingness to help others work their way through the jungle of self-publishing is evident throughout the course. It was her first book and her enthusiasm that encouraged me to successfully publish four books."

— **Tamara Merrill**, *The Augustus Family Trilogy, Konstellation Press*



"Self publishing can be terrifying for any author—beginner or experienced. Carla's solid research and soothing narrative gives us authors a chance to breathe comfortably and feel the courage needed to plunge into current turmoil that used to be called the publishing business. While I haven't fully abandoned liquid courage, I need a lot less of it thanks to Carla's invaluable guidance."

— **Michael Shames**, *Splashstories.com*

JOIN US! WWW.SELFPUBBOOTCAMP.COM