

The Insiders' Guide to Independent Publishing

The Insiders' Guide to Independent Publishing



Independent Publishers Guild

IMPRINT TO COME

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INTRODUCTION

The Independent Publishers Guild is proud to present **The Insiders' Guide to Independent Publishing**. Written *by* publishers *for* publishers, we hope the book will help all companies to become even better at what they do.

One of the great advantages of belonging to the IPG is the chance to share in the vast experience and knowledge of our members. This book, compiled by some of our most long-serving and respected members and patrons, is the ultimate manifestation of that free and generous distribution of advice. We hope it will inspire new companies to start publishing professionally and profitably, and lead longstanding businesses to continued success.

The book is divided into 14 chapters, spanning everything from setting up a new publishing company to selling it. In between, it covers all the key disciplines of publishing—from editorial to printing to selling to marketing to distribution and much more besides. We are especially pleased to include chapters dedicated to the fast-moving world of e-publishing and environmental issues around the books business.

The book can be read from cover to cover to provide a comprehensive grounding in publishing, or dipped into for help with specific subjects. Each chapter is crammed with practical tips for success in that field. Contact details for all the organizations mentioned in the main text can be found in the Resources section at the end of each chapter. Here you will also find places to get more help and suggestions for further reading on the subject. At the back of the book is a Directory of all the important publishing organizations you may need, as well as a handy Glossary that illuminates some of the industry's many baffling terms.

With all the challenges in the market, independent publishing is by no means easy. But as the burgeoning membership of the IPG proves, it is perfectly possible to survive and thrive, and have a lot of fun as you do so. We hope **The Insiders' Guide to Independent Publishing** will prove a valuable handbook to keep with you on your publishing journey.

Will Atkinson
IPG Chair

Bridget Shine
IPG Executive Director

*** If you are not already a member, we warmly invite all new and existing independent publishers to join the Independent Publishers Guild. For more information about the IPG or to join, visit the website at www.ipg.uk.com, call 01437 563335, fax 01437 562071 or email info@ipg.uk.com ***

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I GETTING STARTED

CONTENTS

Research / Planning / Funding / Practicalities / Offices and facilities / Support and advice / Partners / Qualities / Self-publishing / Resources

Starting an independent publishing company is not for the faint-hearted. Competition is intense. There are several thousand active publishers up and down the UK, between them publishing more than 100,000 books a year in every conceivable niche, each battling desperately for the attention of the public. The power of a handful of big publishing companies is increasing by the year, and overall the market for books is steady at best, increasing by only a fraction each year. Discounting is rife, cutting margins to the bone. In schools and higher education, the money available for buying books is squeezed ever more tightly. Here and in many other parts of publishing, the internet and digital technologies are eating into publishers' markets. Some respected commentators think the printed book is on its last legs.

That's the bad news. The good news is that despite all the challenges, independent publishing in the UK is flourishing. The IPG welcomes many new members into its fold every year, of all shapes and sizes and publishing in a dazzlingly rich and diverse array of sectors. With hard work and clever publishing, new publishers can still reach readers through all the traditional channels, while grasping the web as an opportunity to make more money rather than as a threat. They are also invariably surprised and delighted by the levels of support that fellow publishers—even their rivals—are willing to offer them. Independent publishers enjoy one another's success, and this is where the IPG comes into its own. Linking the UK's network of independent publishing, we strive to help all small companies become the best they can be. Plus, of course, many new publishers grow out of professional societies, institutes or other bodies, and can draw on the support of their parent organizations.

So, if you are a new publisher starting out, don't underestimate the amount of work that lies ahead of you, but don't be daunted either. Strap yourself in for a rollercoaster of a journey, but enjoy the ride. Publishing is a wonderfully

rewarding, stimulating and pleasurable industry, and, probably without exception, all IPG members who have set up their own companies enjoy their lives much more than they did when they were a cog in someone else's machine.

RESEARCH

Before you even think about starting a publishing business, research your market thoroughly. Many businesses fail not because of insufficient funding but because their product or service did not have a viable market. So work out as honestly as you can whether your company satisfies a need in the books business. Can you see who your customers will be? Although the IPG has some successful general publishers among its members, many more are specialists, sharply focused on their niches in the market. Can you, too, see a clear enough gap and demand? Ask yourself also how your company and books will be special or unique. Look closely at the competition you will face in the market. Are you confident you can do better? Is your idea a long-term one or a passing trend? Answer your own questions as honestly as you can.

Formal market research is tricky in publishing. But tell as many family and friends as you can about your idea—especially those with small businesses of their own—and gauge their reactions. Speak to as many publishers as will give you a hearing, and not just those in specialisms close to your own—companies in different fields will have advice too, and may be better placed to take a detached view of your idea. Attend IPG events, and introduce yourselves to other members. The IPG's Annual Conference in March offers a particularly good introduction to life in independent publishing and a good chance to network.

It is important to soak up advice from booksellers too. Your nearest independent one is as good a place to start as any, and if you can find one with a particular responsibility or interest in your sort of publishing, ask them what they think about your business idea. Chat to agents, authors, librarians, printers, distributors and suppliers as well as publishers. Getting to know how they all fit together in the industry can take years, so start as soon as you can. Talk to anyone else you can think of connected with your potential market. Visit the London Book Fair, held each March. Read *The Bookseller* each week, either by subscribing or reading copies in a library or online, and keep an eye on Bookbrunch and Book2Book, the online news and views services for publishing. Subscribe to any magazines or journals pertaining to your field of publishing, and join any relevant trade associations, societies and groups. Follow some of the publishing blogs on the web to get a feel for the day-to-day challenges of running your own business, and read some books about publishing and starting a business.

The customer is king, and it will be up to you to give him or her exactly what they want. So talk to as many of your potential customers as you can, and understand their needs from the very start; they will provide plenty of ideas for your business, and will give you an idea of whether there is a big enough market out there. Go online to research communities of people interested in your niche. Work out what makes them tick and what makes them spend. If you want to publish in the educational, academic or professional spheres, try to get to know the communities and organizations that might buy your books.

Scope the size of your different retail channels, segmenting the market and identifying the major players. Even if you can't produce your full books just yet, start to gather material that you can use to help sell them to these retailers. Advance Information (AI) sheets—which show everyone at a glance all the key bibliographic and content information they need about a book—jackets and samples can all be useful, and the sooner you get advance orders for books, the better. See the Sales and Marketing chapters for advice on producing this material—AI sheets in particular—and on courting customers.

PLANNING

Many publishing businesses start out as hobbies, some happily staying that way and others evolving into fully-fledged businesses. Some are begun by people who have picked up experience elsewhere in publishing and want to strike out on their own, while others are opened by people with plenty of experience of business and none of publishing. All are equally valid routes. But however you get started, the key to fulfilling your ambitions and making your publishing work as you want it to, is exactly the same as it is in every sort of business—planning. Put down the building blocks of a sound business before you start to think too much about the books you hope will make you money. With very few exceptions, good businesses are good businesses from the start.

All serious new businesses need a business plan to help get them going, outlining their aims, strategies, markets and forecasts. Look at plenty of sample and template business plans before you start your own, and research your market thoroughly to help stimulate your thinking (see above). Then, think about who your business plan will be for. Might you need it to secure funding from banks, investors or grant providers? Some business plans will never be read by anyone except the person who wrote it—but they are no less essential for that, since they help to structure a new business, measure its success and avoid difficulties. Unless your publishing is going to be very small scale and ad hoc, every company should have one.

Business plans usually comprise the following:

An executive summary. A page or two overview of the whole business and a summary of the contents of the plan. Some busy readers will read only this, so make it snappy and professional.

The business offer. A succinct vision of what you are offering and who is going to buy it, plus details of your type of business and intended start date. Include a SWOT analysis, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The sales and marketing plan. The who, how, where and why of your sales. Plus strategies for reaching buyers; the size, segments and details of your markets; their future; and some analysis of your competitors.

Your background. Details of your skills and experience, and potted biographies of anyone you will be working with.

Your operations. How you will work: your office, equipment, suppliers and partners—authors, printers, distributors and so on.

Financial planning. The numbers: detailed forecasts and budgets for at least the first three years. Include cash flow, sales and profit and loss projections and risk analysis, and use the numbers to work out the capital you will need. For more on this, see the Financial chapter.

Keep your business plan as succinct as you can. It is more likely to be read if you can keep it short and to the point. Write in plain English and cut out all jargon, which rings alarm bells in experienced business plan readers. Stick to the facts and avoid anything that sounds like speculation or assumption. Remember that readers may not understand the publishing world, so use simple terms when referring to the industry. Present your plan as professionally as you can, neatly bound on good paper. Produce a version that is ready to email. The business plan will be the first contact many people will have with your business, so it needs to create a very good impression.

Plans need not be rigid and will almost certainly change over time. Many publishers look back on their initial plans and find they bear no resemblance to how they ended up. But you should at least feel comfortable following it. Above all, it needs to be realistic. If you plan honestly and carefully, then your business has every chance of success. But if you look for short cuts or try to be overly ambitious in your targets, the chances are that you will be setting yourself up for

failure. So budget what you think you will earn and achieve rather than what you hope for, and remember to factor into your cash flow the inevitable long delays in being paid. If anything, overestimate your costs and underestimate your sales.

Once you've compiled the first draft of your business plan, share it with people you trust to give you honest feedback. Ask any small-business people you know—preferably successful ones!—for their thoughts. Get advice from any local business support networks. Don't worry if people tear apart your business plan—it is better that they do so now than a bank or investor does so later. Take on board all feedback and fine-tune your plan. And don't file it away once your business is up and running. Instead, think of it as a living, working document, using it to monitor your performance and updating it whenever circumstances change.

FUNDING

The financial barriers to entry into publishing are low. For hundreds rather than thousands of pounds, anyone can produce and print a book and try to sell it. But to run a professional business that builds a list of books and is sustainable and profitable in the long term takes a lot more capital.

Most independent publishers are founded with money from their owners—perhaps using savings, an inheritance, a redundancy pay-off or the proceeds of a remortgage. Others raise capital from friends or family, in return for a share in the business; get support from corporate investors; or borrow from banks in the form of loans or overdrafts. Government support or local grants may be available. Many publishers use a combination of all the above.

However you fund your business, you will probably need at least a little money of your own. External investors like to see founders put up some capital as evidence of their commitment, and grants are likely to be on a 'matched' basis, meeting only part of the sum you need. If you don't yet have enough, don't give up the day job, and consider reducing your start-up costs or deferring your business while you save; you can still research and plan it in the meantime. Another way of subsidizing your new business might be to offer consultancy or freelance services in aspects of publishing you are already particularly good at—copy-editing, perhaps, or design.

New publishers often fail to realize what a cash hungry industry this is. Producing books soaks up money long before you start to see any come in, so it is essential to budget carefully for each of your books and to have either capital or another source of income in place to tide you over the first few years. Try to pay yourself a going rate in wages; many new publishers pay themselves a pittance while investing in the business, but your morale will suffer if you don't

have enough money to live as you like. But at the same time, be sure you can cope with several years of financial uncertainty. Successful new publishers might typically expect to make a big loss in their first year; break even in their second; and turn a profit in their third, though it can often take longer and it may well be many years before you fully repay your early outgoings or borrowings.

Given that most businesses that fail do so in these very early years, rigorous budgeting is absolutely essential in the first few years. Don't bury your head in the sand when it comes to money. Instead, discipline yourself to account for every penny you spend and to draw up basic accounts at the end of every month. Successful small companies keep very tight reins on cash and stay rigorously on top of cash flow, doing all they can to ensure any money that is scheduled to go out of the business doesn't do so until enough money comes in. Forecasting cash flow regularly and accurately is one of the biggest steps you can take towards ensuring survival in the first few years.

If you don't have the necessary skills and focus, enlist the help of an accountant, or perhaps a mentor from another publisher or small business who is prepared to guide you through the money maze. The IPG's own mentoring scheme may be able to help you with this. The IPG also organizes day-long training courses on financial management for independent publishers, run by the excellent Publishing Training Centre in London. They are an excellent source of help for start-ups in particular. Whatever you do, don't shy away from money management.

For more on financial planning, funding, tax and the vital importance of cash flow, see the Financial chapter.

PRACTICALITIES

All new businesses have certain legal obligations to meet, including notifying various registers and government agencies. If you have one, your solicitor will be able to advise on what needs to be done when, and even do it for you. Business Link can also provide a useful checklist of practical things to be done by all start-ups.

First, choose a name for your company. This is fun but challenging. A name obviously has to create a good impression with your customers and, if you are publishing in a specific sector, it will help if it conveys what you do. In publishing, your name is your brand, among retailers and customers, in bookshops and on the web. If you need some inspiration for names, look at the IPG's online directory of members. Get tips from the National Business Register. Use Companies House to check that your intended company name is not already used by someone else, and check for registered trademarks at the Intellectual

Property Office. Also remember to check that the website domain for your company name is available too; Nominet can do this for you.

Next, you will need to decide which form of company you want to register yourself as. There are generally four options—sole trader, partnership, limited company or limited liability partnership—and each has pros and cons. Business Link has a good online tool to help you decide the right legal structure, and solicitors or business advisors will also be able to help. Bear in mind that the first two options, while simpler, leave you personally liable for business debts, while the second two give you protection. Small publishers are strongly advised to get this sort of protection, so that their personal assets are not at risk in the event of failure.

Limited companies must list themselves on the Registrar of Companies at Companies House, and all new businesses will need to register with HM Revenue and Customs. Contact each for the relevant forms and costs or ask your accountant or solicitor to register for you. Draw up your memorandum of association, outlining your company's name, address, objectives, liabilities and any share capital and shareholders; and your articles of association, stating the relationship between your company's directors and shareholders, the details of shares and the rights of shareholders. These can be done by your solicitor or yourself, perhaps based on templates available from a company formation agent or law stationer.

Sort out your company logo and stationery. You needn't spend too much on this, but a smart look helps to professionalize your business from the outset. Limited companies must also have a separate bank account, which can be set up once you are officially registered. As with everything to do with banks, shop around for the best terms, and look out in particular for charges and overdraft flexibility. Don't jump at the first account offered to you. Even in challenging economic times, banks should be competing for your business.

New publishers also need to register with the various agencies of Nielsen, in order to obtain ISBNs for their books and start supplying bibliographic data to customers. See the Bibliographic and IT chapter for much more about this.

OFFICES AND FACILITIES

Many independent publishers—perhaps the majority—start life in the homes of their founders. Basing yourself at home is certainly a good way of keeping down costs, though you need to check that your mortgage or tenancy and insurance agreements allow it and that you will be able to properly divide personal and work life. If you prefer to keep them separate, look in the local media for office facilities, and gather advice from as many sources as you can (see Resources for

some ideas). Local councils and Yell.com are other good places to look. Some independent publishers occasionally offer new ones desk space in their office on fair terms if they happen to have the room, and this might enable you to share some publishing-specific facilities and soak up advice from more experienced publishers. Ask around in the IPG or seek advice on the Forum if you are interested in sharing space. Wherever you get premises, check contracts carefully and have your solicitor scrutinize any agreements if you are unsure about them. Don't feel obliged to sign up to long leases if you don't want to, and sort out who is responsible for paying the utility bills. Register your new office with your local council for business rates, and don't forget insurance.

At their most basic, publishers need to equip themselves with nothing more than a decent computer, broadband connection, telephone and perhaps a fax machine. Apple Mac computers are widely used in publishing as well as PCs, and computers should have good design packages as well as word processing ones. Start learning as soon as you can about the systems you will need to meet industry standards on electronic trading, and incorporate IT spending in your business plan and financial forecasts. Take advantage of the huge amount of help provided by Book Industry Communication (BIC) and read the Bibliographic and IT chapter for more on this. Also register a website, even if it contains only basic contact details for the time being.

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Get help with your business wherever you can. The IPG and its membership are the best first port of call for just about any question you have, so take full advantage of the website, forum, e-bulletin and other services. The IPG's mentoring service, pairing publishers with some of our more experienced members, has also been valuable to fledgling companies. And remember to take advantage of members' free access to the Croner Business Support Helpline, staffed by trained professionals and offering advice on numerous aspects of business law and practice.

The government's Business Link portal has masses of free, up-to-date information, including useful tools to guide you through the early months and a network of offices around the country providing one-to-one support. Wherever you are in the country, there should also be regional or local development agencies whose job it is to help you launch smoothly and operate successfully, and financial assistance might be available if you are in an area that has been identified for support; in England, start looking at the umbrella Regional Development Agencies' website. Many towns and cities have breakfast or lunch business clubs that can be a good source of support and potential partners. Use the networks of Enterprise Agencies and Chambers of Commerce for networking. And for

training to sharpen up your business's competitiveness and profitability, get in touch with the Train to Gain project from the Learning and Skills Council.

Whether they seek it or not, all new businesses find themselves inundated with good-intentioned advice. Listen to all of it, but don't feel obliged to act on any of it. Much of what other publishers or small businesses tell you will be in the context of their own particular line of work, and no one knows your own company's requirements better than you. Take in what people tell you, but filter advice carefully and ultimately trust your instincts.

PARTNERS

All publishers will need stable, hardworking and reliable partners, so make finding them a priority. The quality of your partnerships may be the biggest factor in your success. Good small publishers realize that their size means they cannot do everything themselves, and that making partnerships work is essential.

In particular, think as soon as you can about who is going to print your books—assuming that print is your preferred medium—and who is going to distribute them. Other important partners include any external sales representation, both in the UK and overseas, and any help you might want with rights, marketing, publicity or editorial. Remember that cheapest is not automatically best when weighing up competitors for your business, and see the relevant chapters in this guide for advice about identifying good partners and maintaining good relationships.

Most small businesses will also want to have at least some contact with an accountant and lawyer. Ideally choose ones with some experience of the publishing industry, since it has quirks that not all will understand. As with banks, remember that these professionals will need your business even more than you need theirs, so negotiate good terms and don't settle for poor service. Accountants will often provide substantial free support and advice if they know they will get the contract to audit your accounts, and banks should be a good source of business advice as well as money; most will have piles of booklets and brochures available in branches and stacks of information online. Banks can often introduce you to useful people, so get to know your business manager and tap into their networks.

QUALITIES

What makes a good small publisher? The backgrounds of IPG members are incredibly rich and varied. With no professional qualification or experience required, publishing is an industry open to anyone. Perhaps the only firm conclusion is that anyone can do it if they put their mind to it.

Creative flair and a passion for the content you publish are obviously important. But so too are the sort of qualities essential to anyone running their own business—self-belief, commitment, drive and courage. Most good business people are also good salespeople, so start making yourself into one—this, after all, is the only thing that will actually make you any money. You are an entrepreneur and ought to feel like one. All businesses have ups and downs, so the ability to cope with pressure and deal calmly with both successes and failures is crucial. You will need support from your family and friends, and don't underestimate the personal sacrifices, exhaustion and isolation you will face. Good businesses reflect the personalities of the people who work in them, so don't change who you are to suit anyone else. Every book that is published is a gamble, so some kind of gambling instinct—whether safe or adventurous—is important.

Don't worry if you don't have any direct experience of either publishing or running a small business. Few independent publishers have both before they start, and none will have expertise in every sector. Instead, acknowledge the shortcomings in your experience or skills and fill in the gaps, either by outsourcing work or learning the ropes yourself. Train yourself as you go, and try to understand the basics of every discipline of publishing, even if you intend to outsource it in due course. Don't be afraid to ask questions, however naive they seem. Enthusiasm and energy can compensate for a lot, and a willingness to learn from others will help you to catch up.

SELF-PUBLISHING

Some people start their own publishing companies because they want a means by which to publish their own books. That might well be a valid enough reason, but anyone doing so needs to be doubly sure of their motivations for going into business. Consider very carefully if you are really able to make enough money from your book or books to cover your costs. Try to do so dispassionately, and seek the opinions of others you trust. If your books have been rejected by other publishers previously, ask yourself why, and consider whether there is really a big enough market for them. Making money is not the only motivation for publishing, of course, and seeing your book in print may be enough of a return. But do not enter publishing assuming that what you have written is good enough to make money. As it is with all publishers, the market will be the sole judge of that.

If you want to see your own book in print but do not want the risk of starting up a new company, there are a couple of options open to you. First, you could seek an established publisher for it; see the *Writers' and Artists' Yearbook* for tips on this, but accept that getting published can be difficult, and that publishers

reject many more books than they take on. Consultancies like Writers Services offer help to authors wanting to sharpen up their work for publishers. Second, you could prepare your book for print yourself, using the tips gathered in this guide, and then ask a printer to produce a set number of copies for you. Print-on-demand specialists can be a good option, since they will produce small quantities for you and top up with more as required, and you will find the contact details of some in the Print and Production chapter. This is recommended for people who want to sell or donate copies of their book to a number of friends or family.

A third option is to publish your book with one of the so-called ‘vanity’ publishers, who will produce your book and sometimes sell or market it on your behalf in exchange for a fee. Tread extremely cautiously with these companies. Many are short-lived and leave behind them a string of disgruntled authors who have received little or nothing that they have paid for. Fees are often extravagant; the quality of service poor; and the percentage of people who sell enough copies of their book to recoup their outlay tiny. Without a proper publishing name or distributor behind it, you may well find it impossible to get bookshops to stock your book on any great scale. With one or two honourable exceptions, treat all offers and promises of sales with utmost caution. For sound advice on the perils of vanity publishing, see a free guide produced by the Society of Authors or an article in the *Writers’ and Artists’ Yearbook*.

RESOURCES

RESEARCH

IPG

Details of events at which to learn more about publishing, plus lots more useful resources including a searchable listing of all IPG members and contacts.

Web www.ipg.uk.com

Tel 01437 563335

Book2Book

Free-to-view website with industry news, links to other media and a daily e-bulletin.

Web www.booktrade.info

Bookbrunch

Subscription-based website and daily bulletins to keep you in touch with publishing news.

Web www.bookbrunch.co.uk

Tel 020 7242 9972

The Bookseller

The weekly magazine for the book business, also available online.

Web www.thebookseller.com

Tel 020 7420 6000

London Book Fair

The UK's biggest annual gathering of the book business and a great place to learn more about all its facets.

Web www.londonbookfair.co.uk

Tel 020 8910 7910

PLANNING

BBC Business Plans

Useful, impartial guide to writing a plan.

Web www.bbc.co.uk/consumer/start_a_business/businessplan.shtml

Bplans

Hundreds of free sample business plans to learn from, plus tips for writing your own.

Web www.bplans.com

Business Link

Lots of advice on planning, plus sample and real-life business plans to read.

Web www.businesslink.gov.uk

Tel 0845 600 9006

Business Plan Services

Advice and links, plus consultancy help if you need it.

Web www.bizplans.co.uk

Tel 08450 574065

TRAINING

Financial Management for Independent Publishers

Highly recommended day-long course, organized by the IPG with the Publishing Training Centre and tailored to the needs of small independents.

Web www.train4publishing.co.uk/guideto/ipg/finindep

Tel 020 8874 2718

PRACTICALITIES

Companies House

The national centre for business registrations and information.

Web www.companieshouse.gov.uk

Tel 0870 3333 636

HM Revenue and Customs

Everything businesses need to know about tax. Regional offices also provide useful workshops for new businesses and employers.

Web www.hmrc.gov.uk

Tel 08456 070 143

Intellectual Property Office

Searchable database of trademarks.

Web www.ipo.gov.uk

Tel 08459 500 505

National Business Register

Sound online guide to choosing a company name.

Web www.start.biz/business_names

Nominet

The registrar for internet domain names in the UK.

Web www.nic.uk

Tel 01865 332211

OFFICES AND FACILITIES

Book Industry Communication (BIC)

Every publisher's best friend when it comes to equipping their systems for electronic trading and meeting industry standards.

Web www.bic.org.uk

Tel 020 7607 0021

Finding an office

Useful tips on securing premises.

Web www.smallbusiness.co.uk/channels/office-and-homeworking/finding-office-space

Tenancy advice

Tips on contracts from Communities and Local Government.
Web www.communities.gov.uk/citiesandregions/propertyissues/businessstenanciesguidance
Tel 020 7944 4400

Yell.com

A good place to start looking for property agents near you.
Web www.yell.com

ACCOUNTANTS AND SOLICITORS

Institute of Chartered Accountants

Directory of accountants across the country.
Web www.icaew.co.uk
Tel 020 7920 8100

The Law Society

Directory of solicitors across the country.
Web www.lawsociety.org.uk/choosingandusing/findasolicitor.law
Tel 020 7242 1222

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND ADVICE

IPG

Website, forum, bulletin, events, mentoring and much more to help every new publisher!
Web www.ipg.uk.com
Tel 01437 563335

British Banking Association

Tips on making the most of your business bank account.
Web www.bba.org.uk
Tel 020 7216 8800

British Library Business and IP Centre

Excellent resources to help start and grow businesses, with an emphasis on protecting intellectual property. Visit in person or online.
Web www.bl.uk/bipc/index.html

Business Link

Government support, advice and resources for businesses of all sizes, with a network of local offices across the country.

Web www.businesslink.gov.uk

Tel 0845 600 9006

Chambers of Commerce

A countrywide network of businesses and support groups.

Web www.britishchambers.org.uk

Tel 020 7654 5800

Confederation of British Industry

Leading UK body for employers.

Web www.cbi.org.uk

Tel 020 7379 7400

Croner Business Support Helpline

IPG members get unlimited access to this invaluable helpline to answer your queries on countless aspects of business and law.

Tel 0844 561 8133, quoting the password supplied with your membership details

Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

Government department offering support for businesses.

Web www.berr.gov.uk

Tel 020 7215 5000

Federation of Small Businesses

UK-wide association with some information for start-ups.

Web www.fsb.org.uk

Tel 01253 336 000

Forum of Private Business

Has some useful resources for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Web www.fpb.co.uk

Tel 0845 130 1722

Institute of Directors

Membership association for directors with some useful advice and networking opportunities.

Web www.iod.co.uk

Tel 020 7839 1233

National Federation of Enterprise Agencies

Umbrella group for enterprise agencies supporting small businesses, and a good first port of call for any help that might be available in your region.

Web www.nfea.com

Tel 01234 831623

Office of Fair Trading

Some advice on keeping your business within consumer and competition law.

Web www.of.gov.uk

Tel 08454 040506

Regional Development Agencies

A network of eight English regions offering local advice and support to businesses.

Web www.englishsrda.com

Tel 020 7222 8180

Small Business

Handy website of free advice and resources.

Web www.smallbusiness.co.uk

Small Business Journey

Useful help for small and medium enterprises, put together by the Small Business Consortium.

Web www.smallbusinessjourney.com

Tel 020 7566 8650

Train to Gain

A free service from the Learning and Skills Council that offers training to help businesses improve their competitiveness and profitability. The IPG sometimes brokers courses especially for members on the scheme's behalf; look out for news of forthcoming sessions.

Web www.traintogain.gov.uk

Tel 0845 600 9006

UK Trade & Investment

Government agency to help companies export overseas. Can help publishers set up export links and identify opportunities for sales.

Web www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

Tel 020 7215 8000

SELF-PUBLISHING

Society of Authors

Free guide to self-publishing and excellent advice on avoiding unscrupulous vanity publishers.

Web www.societyofauthors.org/publications/vanity_publishing

Writers' and Artists' Yearbook

The online version of the popular book—see below for the print version.

Web www.writersandartists.co.uk

Writers Services

One of the web-based consultancies offering advice to would-be writers.

Web www.writersservices.com

BOOKS

British Book Publishing as a Business Since the 1960s by Eric de Bellaigue (British Library Publishing, £19.95, 9780712348362)

From Pitch to Publication: Everything You Need to Know to Get Your Novel Published by Carole Blake (Pan, £6.99, 9780333714355)

A Guide to the UK Publishing Industry by Paul Richardson and Graham Taylor (Publishers Association, £9.99, 9780853863335)

A History of British Publishing by John Feather (Routledge, £21.99, 9780415302265)

How They Started: How 30 Good Ideas Became Great Businesses by David Lester (Crimson Publishing, £12.99, 9781854584007)

How to Write a Business Plan by Brian Finch (Kogan Page, £8.99, 9780749445539)

Inside Book Publishing by Giles Clark and Angus Phillips (fourth edition; Routledge, £19.99, 9780415441575)

The Insider's Guide to Getting Your Book Published by Rachael Stock (White Ladder Press, £9.99, 9780954821951)

The No-Nonsense Guide to Starting a Business (Business Link, free, available direct)

Publishing for Profit: Successful Bottom-line Management for Book Publishers by Thomas Woll and Philip Kogan (Kogan Page, £19.95, 9780749429409)

The Small Business Start-up Workbook by Cheryl Rickman (How To Books, £12.99, 9781845280383)

Spare Room Start Up: How to Start a Business from Home by Emma Jones
(Harriman House, £12.99, 9781905641680)

Starting Your Own Business: The Good, the Bad and the Unexpected by David
Lester (Crimson Publishing, £12.99, 9781854584014)

The White Ladder Diaries: The Pain and Pleasure of Launching a Business by Ros
Jay (White Ladder Press, £9.99, 9780954821975)

Writers' and Artists' Yearbook (A&C Black, £14.99, 9781408102640; updated
annually)