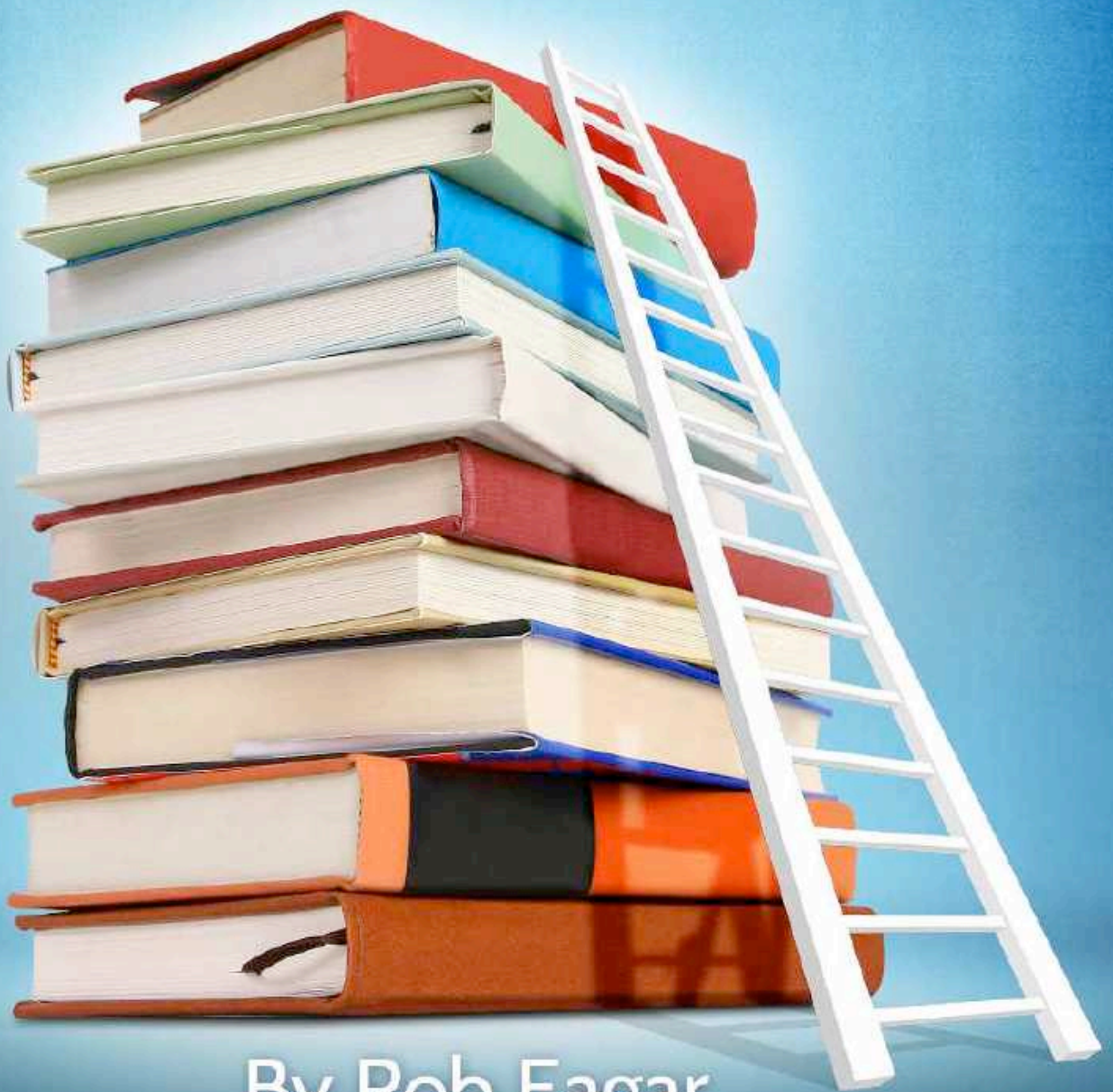


The Author Revenue Ladder

A Step-by-Step Guide to Help You
Make a Living From Your Writing.



By Rob Eagar

The Author Revenue Ladder

A Step-by-Step Guide to Help You Make a Living From Your Writing

Did You Know?

- The average self-published author makes less than \$5,000 from their books.
- The average traditionally-published author makes less than \$10,000 from their books.
- There is little money in books.
- There is a LOT of money available outside of a book if you know how to create it.

Source: <http://www.digitalbookworld.com/2013/self-publishing-debate-part3/>

Why Listen to Me?

As a consultant, I've worked with over 800 authors across America, including several *New York Times* bestsellers. I know what works and what doesn't. In addition, I've written two books myself. My first book was self-published, and my second was traditionally-published. Neither made the bestseller lists. However, both books achieved something better than being a bestseller. They helped me make a six-figure income for over 10 years running. I'd much rather have money in the bank to comfortably pay my bills rather than appear on a paper list and live as a starving author. You'd be surprised how many bestsellers eek out a meager living.

If the average author makes less than \$10,000, why did my two books generate so much income? My secret is that I used my book as a ladder to create higher levels of revenue. My book wasn't the finish line. It was the foundation to building a thriving business.

For example, my first book sold over 40,000 copies. That's a decent number, but not enough to make a living by itself. So, I took my book's material and turned it into lucrative speaking engagements, audio products, and a video curriculum for small groups. In a short time, over half of my income came from ancillary products that I spun off from my book. The book was the initial rung in a revenue ladder that led to other income opportunities at higher-priced options. I used my book as a means to an end, rather than the end itself.



Authors who focus solely on writing books usually pump out a bunch of mediocre literature, pray for their books to sell, and scrape by financially. They wonder why being a writer seems so hard. It's hard because they never get off the ground. They stay stuck on the first rung of a ladder and never climb up. If you want to make a living as an author, you've got to write the best book possible. But, more importantly, you've got to use your book as the foundation to generate larger streams of revenue.

What If You Write Fiction?

Before we go further, I know that anyone who writes fiction may feel skeptical. You may be wondering, "Can a fiction author really build a revenue ladder?" The answer is yes. In fact, a novelist has just as many opportunities to create spin-off revenue as a nonfiction author. Some of the most successful authors on the planet are fiction authors, such as James Patterson, J.K. Rowling, John Grisham, Debbie Macomber, etc. They've made millions from selling movie rights, theatrical rights, short stories, teaching courses on writing, etc. This tutorial provides numerous income-generating ideas for novelists. The key is that you have to put just as much creativity into building your business as you do in creating your stories.

You are the only limit to your message. If you're a good writer who isn't making as much money as you hoped, you are probably unaware or unwilling to think outside of your book. Your book is the starting point for building your Author Revenue Ladder. Follow along and I'll show you how to get people to happily pay more money beyond just the typical book sale. Are you ready to build your ladder and climb to the top? Let's get started!

What Is an Author Revenue Ladder and Why Do You Need One?

The purpose of a ladder is to help people safely climb to a higher level. Climbing is achieved by using a set of steps, or rungs, which are placed at a comfortable and consistent distance apart from each other. When someone steps onto the first rung of the ladder, it doesn't take much effort to step up to the next rung and ascend higher.

Problems occur climbing a ladder when rungs are missing or the rungs are spaced too far apart to reach. In some cases, a ladder can be missing so many rungs that the entire structure is wobbly, unsafe, and unable to be climbed.

Trying to make a living as an author is similar to helping people climb a ladder. You want to provide enough "rungs" for people to comfortably step up to higher-priced options to buy from you. A rung represents a product or service beyond your book that someone would be interested to purchase. I'll give specific examples shortly.

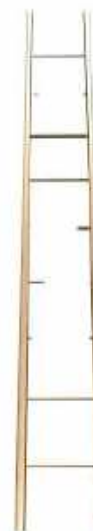


The Danger of Holes and Gaps

Imagine trying to climb a ladder that doesn't have enough rungs to reach the top. If you attempt to scale the ladder, the lack of rungs creates a "hole" that causes you to fall. This scenario is the same type of problem that a lot of authors present to their customers. If you don't offer enough product rungs for people to use, they will fall off your revenue ladder or climb down and sit at the bottom.

For instance, if you just sell your book and a few extra products, people won't continue to climb because there's a hole in your revenue ladder. A happy customer who buys your book will often be willing to reach for a higher priced product. But, if you don't offer the next step up, your customer will either fall through the hole you created or move back down to where they feel safe. Bye-bye higher revenue.

In addition, if your product rungs are priced too far apart, you create "gaps" that make people feel uncomfortable to reach for the next higher price point. So, they stop climbing altogether. For instance, if your book costs \$14.99 but your next price point is \$250, that gap is too large for most people to comfortably jump. Instead, you want to offer ascending price points that feel comfortable to consumers, such as \$14.99, \$24.99, \$49.99, \$99.99, etc. When someone takes the next step on your revenue ladder, it should feel like a natural step, rather than a risky leap.



Building an Author Revenue Ladder helps you identify new products and higher-priced opportunities that you may not have considered. Also, you're able to recognize where the gaps and holes need to be filled. Almost every author has the ability to sell higher-tiered options. But, you can't sell them if don't make them available. Creating your ladder will help you see where you're missing those important opportunities.

How to Build Your Author Revenue Ladder

I wrote this tutorial to help you create your own Author Revenue Ladder. Real ladders have a series of rungs spaced at a consistent distance. Likewise, you need to space your product offerings at consistent, higher price points. You can maximize your income by identifying where you have gaps and holes on your ladder. To simplify the process, I'm going to help you build a ladder based on 10 pricing categories or "rungs." As we explore each of the 10 sections, keep these three points in mind:

1. You don't have to follow my 10 pricing rungs verbatim. Use them as a guide to recognize options that you may not have known were possible. Based on your genre and writing experience, a different pricing structure may be more suitable. Make sure your rungs are close and consistent enough to avoid holes and gaps so that customers won't fall off your ladder.
2. If you're a new author without much experience, don't eschew the higher rungs on the ladder. Some of the bigger price points and revenue ideas may seem unrealistic right now. But, as your audience size and professional skills grow, higher ticket options can come available sooner than you think. If you avoid creating these options early, you may miss out on profitable revenue opportunities. As the old adage goes, "You can't win if you don't play."
3. As you read through this tutorial, avoid the desire to rush to the end. Stop at each of the 10 sections, and take a few minutes to write down specific products or services that you could offer in the spaces that are provided. Your goal should be to thoroughly fill out your Author Revenue Ladder in order to identify what new items need to be created and promoted. I've also provided a separate sheet at the end of this tutorial where you can list all of your ideas in one place.

The Author Revenue Ladder

Rung 1: Free Items

One of the fastest ways to make more money is to offer products for free. Some of you just thought to yourself, "Free?! That's an anticlimactic way to start this process, Rob. You just let all the air out of the balloon." Stay with me. I know that offering products for free may not seem like the path to big money, but it's a proven business truth. Most people are hesitant to buy a new book or product that is unfamiliar to them. When you give something free that people appreciate, they feel less risk to take the next step towards making a purchase.

Effective examples of free products include how-to articles, sample chapters, short stories, behind-the-scenes information, recipes, travel ideas, mini e-books, audio podcasts, and videos. Use them to build the credibility and trust necessary to convince someone to buy from you. An effective Author Revenue Ladder always starts with numerous free items that encourage people to climb onto the ladder in the first place.

For instance, several of my current clients told me that they bought my books or hired me for consulting because they liked the free articles on my website at www.startawildfire.com. My complimentary content made them feel comfortable enough to make a purchase. Likewise, the more you offer for free, the more you open the door to paid sales. Don't skimp on this first rung of your ladder. Offer at least 5 - 10 free items that provide genuine help, inspiration, or entertainment to the reader.

Take the First Step: List three items you can offer for free:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 2: \$.99 – \$9.99

If you're a new author or an established writer struggling to increase income from your writing, this rung on the ladder may be one of the fastest ways to create additional revenue. There are unlimited ways to generate money between \$.99 and \$9.99. Plus, skeptical people are more likely to try their first purchase from you at a price point under \$10.

You may not think there's much money to be made selling products at this low price range. But, I've found the converse to be true. I know several authors who have created short e-books on topics such as housecleaning, life coaching, and parenting. Each author sold over 20,000 copies at a price of \$4.99. Do the math and that yields over \$100,000! Their e-books were easy to create as PDF files, and they promoted their products using their personal website, social media network, and online retailers like Amazon. Not only did these authors make a lot of extra money. Their e-book success caught the attention of literary agents that led to new publishing contracts with a nice advance.

You can fill up Rung #2 on your Author Revenue Ladder with inexpensive products, such as small e-books, short stories, printed booklets, special self-help articles, study guides, audio teaching downloads, etc. Keep the content length concise and focused, such as 5,000 – 30,000 words total.

Look for niches within your nonfiction expertise or parts of a novel that might warrant more attention. Are there under-developed characters in a story that readers would enjoy learning more about? Does the audience for your nonfiction book voice questions about problems or issues that you didn't fully address? Use these opportunities to create separate products at an attractive price point.

As an aside, I'm not a fan of authors selling cheap trinkets, such as t-shirts, jewelry, mugs, and other stuff unrelated to their books. Those items can tie up your money in wasted inventory. Worse, selling trinkets can make you look like a huckster. Instead, only sell products directly related to your books and writing expertise.

Take the Second Step: List three products you can sell for \$.99 - \$9.99:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 3: \$9.99 – \$24.99

The next pricing rung of \$9.99 - \$24.99 usually encompasses more robust products, such as a full-size book (print or e-book) with a total length of 50,000 – 100,000 words. However, don't limit your options to just words written on a page or a screen. You can also sell audio or video teaching sessions in the 30 – 60 minute range at this price point.

Many people don't like to read long books. They prefer to learn or be entertained by audio or video. If you limit yourself to only selling words that you write, then you will limit your income potential. Instead, take what you write and offer the same content, or parts of it, in other formats. For instance, if you own a smartphone, you already have the capability to record high-quality audio and video without buying a bunch of extra equipment. Start small when experimenting with a new format. Don't dive in headfirst and spend a bunch of money creating audio or video products until you test a smaller version of the idea first.

The important point to remember about this rung on Author Revenue Ladder is that products in this range can easily bounce customers higher up your ladder. For example, if someone buys your book at \$14.99 and loves it, they might gladly pay a lot more to hear you speak in public, request a private engagement, seek personal coaching, etc. I'll discuss these options later. However, be aware of the ability that a lower rung on your ladder to cause someone to quickly jump to a much higher level. That's why you want to offer items at all 10 of the rung categories.

Take the Third Step: List three products you can sell for \$9.99 - \$24.99:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 4: \$24.99 - \$49.99

Offering products and services above the typical price point for a book is the key to significantly boosting your revenue. For instance, you can offer one-hour teleconferences or webinars on your field of expertise. Nonfiction authors can teach on specific topics and discuss current events. Fiction authors can share how they craft their stories or conduct research for their novels. More importantly, any type of author can conduct Q&A sessions with their audience, which is a favorite to most fans. Inexpensive services, such as Zoom video, make it easy to host a professional-quality meetings and webinars with large groups.

There are multiple benefits to creating teleconferences and webinars. First, you can charge for people to attend the live event and participate during the session. Second, you can record the teleconference and sell it for months and even years afterwards as a separate product. Third, you expand your customer base by offering content at a higher price point to people who may not be avid book readers.

Another popular offering in this price range are subscription plans, where people pay a monthly fee to receive exclusive content and get closer access to their favorite author through special articles, bonus material, group phone calls, and recorded videos. I helped one of my clients start a monthly subscription program priced at \$25 per person. The program maintains at least 75 subscribers per month. Multiply the monthly fees over a year and that author has made over \$20,000. That's a nice revenue boost for a few extra hours of work each month.

Take the Fourth Step: List three products you can sell for \$24.99 - \$49.99:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 5 - \$49.99 - \$99.99

Moving up the Author Revenue Ladder to Rung #5 highlights premium product options. Premium items can include an autographed library of every book by the author, special box sets, customized book editions, compilations of audio recordings, etc.

An important marketing principle to remember is that "people cannot buy it if you don't offer it." For instance, you should always offer a "Buy One of Everything" option at an attractive discount,

especially at live events and on your website. Most people may not purchase, but those who do will help to quickly raise your sales total.

Another premium product that works well for authors is offering online courses, which is a series of audio or video recordings that people pay to download or access online. Each session walks the user through a specific topic or problem. An accompanying participant guide can be sold or provided to the user. Online courses can feature brand new material, or you can dust off old material and make it relevant to your audience. You don't always have to create new content. Examine your current content and look for ways to repurpose, repackage, and resell.

Creating an online course can require additional labor and cost to set up. However, once everything is in place, the system can run itself automatically. When someone registers, they receive immediate access to your pre-recorded material. Their money goes into your bank account seamlessly. It's a great example of "making money while you sleep."

Take the Fifth Step: List three products you can sell for \$49.99 - \$99.99:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 6: \$99 - \$249

If you really want to maximize your revenue, you cannot let yourself get psyched out by the idea of offering higher priced products. You must believe in the value that you can provide to customers. You're not trying to please everyone. You're trying to please fans who love what you do. In their eyes, paying you \$100 or more is no problem. So, embrace a person's desire to move up your Author Revenue Ladder by offering products or services that appeal to them.

On the service side, you can offer private phone calls or web chats that people purchase on an individual or group basis. Fans want to get to know their favorite authors better. And, many have the means to pay for that type of exclusive access. I know nonfiction authors who offer private phone calls at an hourly rate to answer questions, offer inspiration, or provide solutions to a problem. Fans love the special access, and the author loves generating revenue without much labor intensity. It's a win-win for both parties.

On the product side, study kits and group curriculum are popular, especially with nonfiction audiences. If you write religious, educational, or leadership books, you should expand your material into a multi-session training curriculum that can be used by church groups, schools, and businesses. One of my clients wrote a leadership book that was turned into a \$250 training kit, which includes video teaching sessions, a facilitator's guide, and participant booklets. Companies across America use this material in their training departments and they also buy case quantities of the author's book, which we'll discuss more on the next rung of our ladder.

Take the Sixth Step: List three products or services you can sell for \$99 - \$249:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 7: \$249 - \$499

One of the most overlooked ways to generate additional revenue from your writing is through bulk book sales. Sell 25 copies of your book at \$10 each and that's \$250. Sell 50 copies and that's \$500. You get my point. Here are three ways to capture bulk sales:

1. Speaking events – Whenever you get booked for a speaking engagement, offer the event director a special price to buy a copy of your book for every person in attendance. The event director looks good by providing additional value to the attendees. And, your book cost can be built into the event ticket price to make the sale profitable for you and them. For example, I spoke at a large event where over 750 attendees got a copy of my book. I made over \$5,000 just from the book sales.
2. Gifts – Bulk book purchases can also occur as gift opportunities. Many businesses and non-profit organizations like to buy books as gifts for their employees or top donors. Show how your book matches the company objectives or aligns with their key goals. You can also offer to include a special message to the group or provide books with a customized cover.
3. Book Clubs and Study Groups – As mentioned earlier, churches, schools, and businesses are constantly looking for effective group study material. Plus, don't forget about the large number of book clubs that exist, especially those that like to read fiction. Make people aware of case quantity discounts to buy your book in bulk. Start at a 30 – 40% discount and go down as the quantity requested goes up. Some people find it frustrating to buy books in bulk from Amazon or Barnes & Noble. Offer these discounts yourself and ship from your office or home.

Besides bulk sales, there are other great ways to make additional income on Rung #7 of the Author Revenue Ladder. As your author popularity grows, you can offer private dinners or backstage meetings at events with fans. Promote the opportunity by giving away a few spots as part of a contest. Everyone else pays an additional fee to be part of your inner-circle for a day and meet you in person. You can conduct Q&A sessions, take photographs together, sign books, and just have fun.

Take the Seventh Step: List three products or services you can sell for \$249 - \$499:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 8: \$500 - \$999

When I was a brand new author struggling to make adequate income, Rung #8 became my secret weapon to success. I discovered that there was more money in public speaking than there was in book sales. Even better, the more I spoke, the more books I sold. The two approaches worked together in perfect harmony.

If you're new to public speaking, your starting fees will probably begin in the range of \$500 - \$999. Any less than that doesn't make speaking worth the effort. But, as your skills grow, you can quickly move up to higher fees and higher rungs on the Author Revenue Ladder, which I'll discuss more in the next section.

The journey into public speaking should start small so that you have a chance to hone your skills first. If you know other authors who speak, ask them for recommendations to event directors whom they've worked with in the past. Most event directors are willing to give new authors a small workshop slot to cut their teeth in front of audiences. If you're a hit with

audiences, event directors will feel more comfortable giving you higher profile opportunities, such as a small keynote slot or a half-day seminar. As your presentation skills improve, event directors will recommend you to their peers and other leaders will contact you for their events.

If you write fiction, you have just as much opportunity to speak as nonfiction authors. However, instead of talking about your story, talk about the adversities that the characters face in your story. Relate the issues in your novel to the real-life situations your audience might face. Pull the nonfiction themes out of your fiction book. Fiction authors can also make decent money teaching private classes on how to write a novel or improve storytelling skills. Successful novelists are in demand as teachers for those who want to learn how to write their own stories.

Take the Eighth Step: List three products or services you can sell for \$500 - \$999:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 9: \$1,000 – \$4,999

The upper rungs of the Author Revenue Ladder represent some of the most exciting opportunities, especially if you have an effective brand and an active following of readers. You can garner well-paid keynote speaking engagements on your own or work with a reputable speakers bureau. If you're unable to travel, you can stay at home and conduct full-day workshops or events where you live. Have the audience come to you.

Some of my clients conduct one and two-workshops with small groups where attendees pay a premium price to receive personalized instruction. I know other authors who form private groups or inner circle clubs that run for a full year with an annual membership starting at \$2,500 and higher.

You might think no one would pay that kind of crazy money. Yet, there are a lot of people who will gladly pay expensive fees to gain direct access to their favorite authors. In their mind, the money is a bargain compared to experiencing a closer relationship. You just have to make those options available. As I've stated before: people cannot buy it, if you don't offer it.

Take the Ninth Step: List three products or services you can sell for \$1,000 - \$4,999:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Rung 10: \$5,000 and beyond

We've reached the top of the Author Revenue Ladder, but this is really just the beginning. There is no limit to the type of money-making products and services you can offer. If you're an established author, concentrate on developing as many different options at this rung as possible. If you're a new author, don't ignore the possibilities. One or two successful sales could generate a large new revenue stream.

Several of my author clients make \$5,000 – \$10,000 per speaking event. Others use their expertise to become consultants who earn \$25,000 - \$100,000 per individual project. Some of

my fiction clients have sold the movie and theatrical rights from their novels to filming studios and theater companies. Selling movie rights can lead to payments of \$50,000 for little-known books up to over \$1,000,000 if you're book is a major bestseller. One of my clients makes extra income as a paid spokesperson for a Fortune 500 consumer products company. When you reach the top of the Author Revenue Ladder, the opportunities are dizzying.

Some of you reading this tutorial have the ability to generate this level of income right now. You just haven't given yourself the freedom or the confidence to pursue these opportunities. If you're frustrated with your income level, the only thing holding you back is yourself. Pick one or two premium options and pursue them.

Take the Tenth Step: List three products or services you can sell for more than \$5,000:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How to Create New Products and Services

Now that we've climbed the 10 rungs of the Author Revenue Ladder, you may be wondering, "How do I create new products to fill up my ladder? How do I decide what makes sense and what doesn't?" The answer to these questions lies in combining three important factors, which are: Need, Competency, and Passion.



Factor #1 – Need

The best way to create ideas for new products and services is to start by identifying the needs of your audience. This is the most important factor. That's because if there is no need, then no one will purchase from you – no matter how competent or passionate you may be. To identify needs, begin by asking yourself these questions:

- What problems does my audience struggle with the most? Where could I really help them?
- What topics or issues would my audience want to know more about?
- What topic gets my audience's attention the most or causes the biggest reaction?
- Is the problem big enough that a lot of people would pay for my solution?

For example, one my clients created a bestselling book and whole series of products based off of a blog post that garnered over 200 comments in one day. She called me and said, "I've found

a nerve with my audience!” I encouraged her to continue writing for that nerve and unpack the needs her blog post had exposed with her readers. She saw the opportunity to address issues that her readers were struggling with and provide tangible answers. She made sure to fully address the need by creating a book, ebook, video study curriculum, devotional, youth edition, and a national speaking tour on the topic. In other words, one blog post led to a landslide of revenue!

Using myself as an example, I created this tutorial because I’ve met too many authors who struggle make sufficient income from their writing. I identified the need and took steps to provide a solution. Besides the written tutorial you’re now reading, I could also meet this need by offering a paid teleconference with Q&A, create an audio teaching product, host workshops on the subject, etc. When you see a need, don’t just create one product. Provide answers in various formats in order to reach all segments of your audience.

If you write fiction, you can identify needs by determining what characters, settings, or situations your readers love the most. Listen to reader feedback and let them tell you what parts of your stories or main characters they’d like to know more about. In addition, connect your fiction to nonfiction themes that you can address as separate products (see more about this topic in the Q&A section at the end of this tutorial).

Factor #2 – Competency

Once you’ve identified an audience need, you must assess if you are competent enough to meet that need. Otherwise, people won’t think that your product or service is worth buying. For instance, I don’t know much about how to fix a car. If you ask me an automotive question, my response would be, “Call a mechanic or Google the answer.” Since I’m not skilled in mechanical issues, I can’t meet the need of someone with a car problem.

Before you invest your time and resources into creating a new product or service, make sure you can deliver a skillful answer. Without competency, customers won’t think your product is very good. Thus, you won’t get much word of mouth and you won’t make much money. Competency is the ability to skillfully answer a problem in a way that satisfies your audience.

For instance, if you want to launch a new coaching or training service, you must be a competent speaker who is comfortable interacting with people. If you want to launch a new video curriculum, you must be competent at teaching while staring into a camera lens. If you want to launch a premium subscription service, you must be a competent at generating new ideas quickly and writing good articles in a short period of time.

One of my clients was an award-winning novelist who received repeated requests from other authors to help improve their writing skills. I encouraged her to meet the need by reviewing a few manuscripts and giving feedback for a nominal fee. She gave it a try and found that she had a knack for helping authors craft better stories. My client saw the need, knew she was competent, and started a small side business helping authors. Demand grew so much that she eventually hired two people to help keep up with all of the orders.

Factor #3 – Passion

If you’ve identified a need with your audience and assessed that you’re competent to meet the need, there’s still one more important question to ask yourself, “Do you feel a passion for the issue?” In other words, are you genuinely excited to talk about or write about the identified need? Do you feel driven to help people get the information, inspiration, or entertainment that they’re searching for? Will your interest in the topic remain constant or fizzle out in a few months?

Some people think that passion is unimportant if you see a need and have the skill to meet it. The problem, however, is that a lack of passion can create a sense of disconnect with your

audience and your own products. For instance, if you're not really passionate about meeting people's needs, your audience will be able to feel it. Your writing or speaking will seem flat, uninspiring, or didactic. Word of mouth, which is the key to success, will be hard to attain because people rarely tell their friends about a lackluster product or service.

In addition, a lack of passion can lead to burnout with your own material. If you launch a new product, you need to consistently promote that product over time to achieve its full sales potential. If you lack passion, you'll give up too soon and fail to reap the full rewards.

If you lack passion for a subject, there's no point in trying to "fake it until you make it." Look for other opportunities where your passion intersects with your competency and the needs you see. For instance, the client whom I mentioned earlier that started a manuscript review business made an important conclusion. She admitted a lack of passion to reviewing other people's manuscripts, because it prevented her from pursuing her real passion – writing her own books. She made a wise decision to exit her business and stick with her first love – writing her own novels. She turned over the business to her associates and let them move forward without her.

Life is too short to waste time creating products and services that don't match your passion – even if you need the money. You'll make more money faster when you strive to combine your passion and competency with the big needs that you're able to meet. You'll be happier; your customers will feel your excitement; and your bank account will thank you, too.

Summary

I hope our journey up the Author Revenue Ladder has opened your eyes to the numerous ways that you can boost your income. If you write good books that people enjoy reading, there is no reason you should live as a starving writer. You just have to think outside the book.

People will pay to read the words you write. But, they will pay even more to hear you, meet you, and engage with you in person. In addition, our culture is becoming less attached to the printed book. People want to purchase written material in other formats, including e-books, audio, video, etc. The more you take what you write and offer it in different ways, the wider an audience you'll be able to attract. The wider an audience you attract, the more customers you can acquire. The more customers you acquire, the more money you can make. The more money you make, the more flexibility you have to continue writing, touching people's lives with your words, and living out the dream of being a successful writer.

Most people are hesitant to climb a ladder that's missing rungs or contains steps that seem too far apart. They remain at the bottom or avoid the ladder altogether. You don't want your customers to feel the same way. Give them the confidence to climb onto your Author Revenue Ladder and reach for higher levels. As they ascend upwards, so will your career as an author. And, that's a happy ending everyone can enjoy!

Wait...there's more! Continue reading to see Rob's answers to frequently asked questions and view a one-page printable Author Revenue Ladder page to track your progress.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. All this talk about money feels too mercenary. Can't we just enjoy writing as art?

Writing is an art. However, if you want people to purchase what you write, then you enter into a business transaction. People give you money first, and you give them information, inspiration, or entertainment in return. Authors who ignore sound business principles usually wind up unable to continue writing because they can't pay their bills. Then, there is no art for anyone. The most creative artists are those who can feel free to express their creativity without constantly worrying how they'll provide for themselves or their family. The world doesn't need more starving artists. We need more thriving artists.

2. I'm a first-time author just starting out. What are the easiest ways for newbies to increase their income?

First-time authors may not be able to immediately sell premium products at high prices, but there are several ways to generate additional income. Start by maximizing Rung #2 (\$.99 - \$9.99) on the Author Revenue Ladder. Sell products that are easy to create and distribute as PDF files, such as short e-books, how-to guides, and short stories. In addition, offer audio downloads in an mp3 format. I recommend a company called www.e-junkie.com for selling digital downloads.

To survive as a new author, you've got to attract as many new customers as quickly as possible. To do this, develop a network of friends, bloggers, social media followers, and other new authors to help promote your products. Give them free copies of your products in exchange for positive reviews and promotion to their audience. Share some of the revenue by offering an affiliate program. Be willing to return the favor when they ask for your help promoting their stuff. Selling low-priced products works to a first-time author's advantage, because people are more comfortable taking a risk on a new material that only costs \$.99, \$2.99, or \$4.99.

3. What if I tried several of the ideas in this tutorial and nothing worked?

If you try several of the ideas in this tutorial without success, you may need to evaluate your competency level. For instance, let's assume you follow the steps on the Author Revenue Ladder and create new speaking presentations, how-to articles, or short stories. When you promote these products, nobody purchases them or spreads word of mouth. If that happens, you may not be an effective writer. To address the issue, consider improving your craft by taking classes, reading instructional books, or joining a writer's critique group. If that doesn't work, it's okay to discontinue writing and pursue a different path that fits your God-given skills.

Just because a friend or family member says you can write doesn't mean you're a good writer. You're a good writer when people willingly buy your material. I've met too many people who tried too hard to be a writer and wound up depleting their entire life savings. It's depressing to hear their stories. Don't beat a dead horse. Find another way to produce the income you need and enjoy writing as a fun hobby. Life is too short to hate what you do. There are always other options to make a better living.

4. I write fiction and I'm still struggling for ideas to put on my Author Revenue Ladder. Nonfiction authors seem to have it easier in this area. Can you help?

After coaching over 800 authors of all genres and experience levels, I've noticed a tendency for some novelists to believe that nonfiction authors have life easier. They think that making money from fiction stories is harder to do than selling nonfiction products. However, this belief is a misconception and will limit the income potential of any novelist who carries that mindset.

There is no advantage to being nonfiction writer over a fiction author. Both are equal and pursuing the same goal, which is to sell more books and make a living. Novelists have just as many options to make money as their nonfiction counterparts. Some options are even superior to anything a nonfiction author can dream about. For instance, novelists have a much higher chance of getting their books turned into a lucrative blockbuster movie, theatrical play, or TV show. Hollywood can't function without novelists.

Also, I'm surprised by how few fiction authors take advantage of writing and selling short-stories. If you want to make more income in-between novels, write short stories that focus on secondary characters, explore other settings, fill-in gaps from past stories, etc. Stephenie Meyer, the famous author of the "Twilight" trilogy, released a short story in-between her novels that was so successful it became a *New York Times* bestseller by itself! If you're a storyteller, write short stories along with your major books.

Another advantage for fiction authors is the ability to produce both fiction and nonfiction products. If you can write good fiction, you can usually write good nonfiction. In contrast, most nonfiction authors aren't very good storytellers. If you're a novelist who wants to generate more income, don't limit yourself to fiction. Cross over and create nonfiction items as well.

For example, I know a novelist who wrote stories about ancient women set in the Middle East. To reach a wider audience, she took her knowledge of the time period and wrote a nonfiction book called "Beauty Secrets of the Bible," which generated a lot of media attention, supplied extra income, and helped create exposure for her fiction books. A great way to make more money as a novelist is to sell nonfiction products.

Keep these points in mind as you create your own Author Revenue Ladder. I purposely avoided separating my ideas into fiction or nonfiction versions, because I trust that you are smart and creative enough to see the opportunities available - no matter what type of author you may be.

About the Author:

Rob Eagar is one of the most accomplished book marketing experts in America. He's personally coached over 800 authors, consulted with top publishing houses, and helped clients hit *The New York Times* bestseller list three different ways, including new fiction, new nonfiction, and backlist nonfiction. He even helped a book become a *New York Times* bestseller after 23 years in print!

Rob's consulting firm, Wildfire Marketing, has attracted numerous bestselling authors, including Dr. Gary Chapman, DeVon Franklin, Lysa TerKeurst, Wanda Brunstetter, and Dr. John Townsend. In addition, he's consulted with imprints of the world's best-known publishers, such as HarperCollins, Hachette, and Simon & Schuster.

Rob's professional-level instruction can be found in *The Author's Guide* series, a collection of books dedicated to teaching authors essential marketing skills, including:

The Author's Guide to Email Marketing <http://getbook.at/AuthorEmailMarketing>

The Author's Guide to Marketing Books on Amazon <http://getbook.at/MarketBooksonAmazon>

The Author's Guide to Write Text That Sells Books <http://getbook.at/WriteTextSellsBooks>

For more information, visit: <http://www.RobEagar.com>

My Author Revenue Ladder

Instructions: Start at the bottom of the ladder and fill-out three products or services that you could sell at the price range listed next to each of the 10 rungs of the Author Revenue Ladder. Avoid any gaps or holes where you have nothing to sell on any of the rungs. The more complete your ladder, the more opportunities you have to generate additional revenue.

Rung #10: \$5,000+

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #9: \$1,000 – \$4,999

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #8: \$500 – \$999

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #7: \$250 – \$499

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #6: \$100 – \$249

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #5: \$50 – \$99.99

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #4: \$25 – \$49.99

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #3: \$10 – \$24.99

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #2: \$.99 - \$9.99

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Rung #1: Free

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

