Notes for Indie Publishers, March 2016

Background: About Metadata

Metadata = information that helps readers find your book.

A book entry on Amazon or a POD vendor requires this information. Create and edit a Metadata Plan to ensure:
— Quick entry in online forms
— Easy editing later, to improve findability
— Not inventing the same information more than once!

Metadata includes, at a minimum:
— Title ... and subtitle
— Description
— Cover art
— BISAC category
— ISBN number
— Keywords
— Author Bio
— Editorial reviews

Example of a book’s metadata

Resources:
• Background info on Book Metadata — http://bit.ly/1KCY0IS

ISBN and BISAC Categories

The ISBN is another piece of metadata to track wherever you present your book details. This plan assumes that you will use the ISBN assigned by your Print-on-Demand vendor. You might also choose to use Bowker.

BISAC Categories:
The BISAC category tells the bookstore what shelf to place your book—physical or online “shelf.”

To determine the BISAC category, you can:
— Select from the POD vendor’s online list of categories.
OR
— Enter a category identifier from the BISAC website. https://www.bisg.org/bisac-subject-codes

Example of BISAC selections in CreateSpace UI:

You can copy from BISAC Online Lists

NOTE: CreateSpace allows entering only 1 category, but Amazon allows more than that.
Write to CreateSpace Help and ask them to add other BISAC categories.
Metadata Plan for <Your Book>

Complete these fields to use for entry wherever you must specify your book's metadata — publishing sites, your website, and so on. Delete the tips whenever you like.

In this plan:

- Book Title (as metadata)
- Online Description for Publishing Sites
- Book Cover Text and Art
- BISAC and Identifiers
- Keywords
- Author Name and Bio
- Social Media, Key Data, and Links
- Optional Metadata (for Web, PR, ...)
- Editorial Reviews

Tip #1. Always copy-&-paste from your Metadata Plan, so the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are always the same.

Book Title (as metadata)

- **Title:** <Type here>
- **Subtitle (if any):** <Type here>
- **Series Title (if any):** <Type here>

Tip #2. Search online for your title — is there anything similar that means you need to refine your title to prevent reader confusion? (It's OK to have the same title as another book; just know about it!)

Tip #3. Avoid cramming information such as a lengthy subtitle into the title. Bowker, for example, will trim excess information.

Online Description for Publishing Sites

Tip #4. You can use more words than on the back cover, but be brief and concise in the first 2-3 sentences (people might read no further...).

1-sentence hook

2nd paragraph—expand on the hook, emphasizing Character, Setting, Problem

What kind of book, for what kind of readers?

If desired: 1 sentence about the author or link to author’s website

<Type here>
Book Cover Text and Art

Cover basics

Share this precise information with your cover design artist.
Tip #5. This is identical to the content in the Title metadata section.

Title: <Type here>
Subtitle (if any): <Type here>
Series Title (if any): <Type here>
Author: <Type here>

Front-cover blurbs or call-outs to be cited on front cover
<Type here>

Back-cover blurb

Tip #6. The hook or theme pull-quote is usually at the top of the back-cover text.
<Type here>

Endorsement blurb:

Tip #7. If someone significant or famous — or any other writer or reviewer — wrote a notable blurb for you, quote a sentence (with their permission) ...
<Type here>

BISAC and Identifiers

Your selections from BISAC site: <Type or paste here>
ISBN (yours or as assigned by your vendor): <Type or paste here>
ASIN assigned by Amazon: <Type or paste here when known>
Keywords

<Type here; separate phrases with commas>

List 5 to 7 keywords—words or phrases that readers might search on and luck upon your book.
Different sites have different limits on number and length of keywords.
Check the Amazon help site for information about excluded keywords.

Tip #8. Expect to spend a half-day or more to create your first selection.
Then revisit every few months to find new, better fit for keywords.

Tip #9. Do not include other book titles or other authors’ names.

Tip #10. Keywords are strings, usually not lone words:
You’d search on “mystery in Seattle Washington” … not just “Mystery” or “Seattle”

Tip #11. For fiction, include keywords for
genre subcategory, theme, character, setting, era, and mood.

Tip #12. For nonfiction, include keywords for
location, era, character roles, cultural or professional terms, and causes / results.

Tip #13. Check other genres and subcategories for possible phrases.

From Amazon: “To list your title in certain sub-categories for Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk, you'll need to add Search Keywords in addition to the categories you choose for your title.

Keyword Resources:

- KDP keyword requirements:
  https://kdp.amazon.com/help?topicId=A200PDGPEIQX41
  (You need to have a KDP account for the link above to work.)
- Google Trends—for checking trends in search terms:
  http://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/tools/google-trends.html
- The Importance of Keywords to Ranking Your Book on Amazon
- How to Choose the Right Kindle Keywords
  http://kindlepreneur.com/how-to-choose-kindle-keywords/
Author Name and Bio

Tip #14. Specify your name in the exact format that will be entered everywhere.

**Author Name**

<Type here>

Tip #15. If you use initials, leave no space between the initials:

E.A. Stewart

**Author Bio**

This is up to 250 words to paste in Amazon and POD vendor Author box.

Tip #16. Consider these guidelines:
— Write in 3rd person
— 1st line states your name, what you do, and (often) where you live.
— How many books you’ve published, how long you’ve written?
— Won any awards, or been on any bestseller lists?
— Are you working on other books?
— Don’t reveal too much that’s personal.

**Bio for publishing sites**

<Type here>

**Bio for social media**

<Type here>

Tip #17. You might create a longer bio to use on social media sites:
— Your website  — Amazon Author Central  — Goodreads, and so on ...

Social Media, Key Data, and Links


Search engine optimization (SEO) is beyond the scope of this simple plan. SEO mostly focuses on searchable text in Headlines + 1st 100 words on web pages.

**Your Author website**

<Type or paste here>

**Your Author page on Amazon**

<Type or paste here>

Tip #19. Create this page as soon as your ebook is live.
https://authorcentral.amazon.com

**Your social media home pages**

List the addresses of other social presences you create, such as:
— Goodreads  — Twitter  — Facebook
— and so on ...

<Type or paste links and site names here>
Optional Metadata (for Web, PR, ...)

**Audience (geographic, age range):**
<Type or paste here>

**Tip #20. Age Range info from Amazon.**
https://kdp.amazon.com/help?topicId=AF9XK4TA1PSBV

Narrow age ranges work best—limit your age ranges and grade levels to a span of 3-4 years to make sure the most appropriate customers are seeing your books. ... Make sure your books’ age bands are as narrow as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age; Grade Level; Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 2; N/A; Board books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 5; Pre-school; Picture books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 8; Kindergarten – 2nd grade; Early-level readers, first chapter books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 12; 3rd grade – 6th grade; Middle-grade chapter books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 – 18; 7th grade – 12th grade; Teen and young adult chapter books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Genres (as list):**
<Type or paste here>

**Topic:**
<Type or paste here>

**Timeframe:**
<Type or paste here>

**Setting or Location:**
<Type or paste here>

**Language:**
<Type or paste here>

**Publisher, Status, Availability:**
<Type or paste here>

**Format, Publication Date, Price, Supplier:**
<Type or paste here>

**Number of words, number of pages, file size:**
<Type or paste here>

**Bestseller listing:**
<Type or paste here>

**Library of Congress and Dewey #s (if identified):**
<Type or paste here>

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**Editorial Reviews**

**Tip #21. You cannot republish Amazon reviews without permission from the reviewer.**

**Tip #22. You can include review mentions from magazines and major review sites on your web.**

The methods for entering and including editorial reviews differ on each publishing platform.

**CreateSpace Guidelines:** https://www.createspace.com/Help/Index.jsp?orgId=00D300000001Sh9

**Amazon:** Add in Editorial Reviews section on Author Central— in each Author Central for each country where the book is distributed.

**Media mentions:**
<Type or paste here>

**Key review journal recommendations:**
<Type or paste here>