



LUCINDA LITERARY

What Publishing Path is Right for **You?**

At Lucinda Literary, we have developed a tool based on a question we are repeatedly asked by writers: should I self-publish, or pursue a traditional book deal? The answer varies according to the project, the author, and the timing, but here are some general findings based on our conversations and experience with publishers.



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About You: Number of People You Currently Engage

Traditional: You are engaging an audience of 20k+ or are on track to do so

Self: You have a 5k audience (or less), or a huge online audience that you actively serve through online programs, which is your core focus

Of course, this question does not apply only to social media. There are many ways in which writers can demonstrate being connected to a larger audience, whether via a publication they regularly write for, an active speaking schedule, an affiliation with a large organization, a network of high-profile authors and influencers.



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About You: Number of People Your Book Could Reach

Traditional: You believe your book could reasonably reach 20,000 people or more if given the right distribution

Self: It doesn't matter how many people you reach with your book. What's most important is getting it out there



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**About You: Media Potential
(publications, TV appearances,
speaking roles, etc.)**

Traditional: Mainstream media (i.e. NPR, *New York Times*, and major televised news outlets) will clearly see the “hook” in your idea—it’s “newsbreaking” or reveals a larger trend

Self: Media attention is a nice to have, but not a need to have



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About Your Book: Timing of Your Book or Story

Traditional: You don't mind waiting 1-3 years to release your book. You're prepared to spend months of work editing, building your platform, and promoting when the time comes

Self: You feel that your story needs to be seen immediately. You're willing to take a risk and see what comes of it!



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About Your Book: Your Book's Fit With Previous Bestsellers in the Genre

Traditional: There are a number of popular books with top publishers that resemble yours, by authors who started where you are now

Self: Most of the books that resemble yours (or authors with a similar profile) are self-published works



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About You: Creative and Financial Freedom

Traditional: You're excited by the idea of a big team behind you – even if that means not getting to make all the decisions! You realize that, in exchange for a publisher's production and distribution, you'll receive less of the profits

Self: You want maximum creative control and financial upside if the book performs



So, which one is right for you?

If you:

- Feel that creative control is more important to you than having a team behind you
- Have time and resources to dedicate to promoting your own work
- Know your book is in a good place to get published as is
- Feel that your book's topic is particularly time-sensitive
- Are just plain tired of waiting for others to see your book's potential, and are ready to take matters into your own hands

Then **self-publishing** is a great choice for you!



So, which one is right for you?

If you:

- Feel like you'd do better working with a larger team to further your book's development

- Think your book could grab the attention of major news audiences or become a media phenomenon with the right professional assistance

- Have no problem waiting years for your book to publish, but feel confident about its potential in the publishing industry

Then the **traditional** publishing route might be a better fit.