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How Self-Publishing Made This Author A Best-Seller

NewsUSA

(NU) - When Jess Michaels isn't obsessively checking her steps on FitBit or watching daytime Court TV, she's a best-selling author who writes historical romances with heroines who speak their mind.

Her first foray into publishing began, as many picture the life of an author, with a traditional publishing deal. But after releasing a few books, Michaels decided to turn down an additional deal and try self-publishing.

"I'd begun developing an audience for my books and wanted to try something different. Authors I respected had success and greater control over their work with self-publishing, so I was eager to try it for myself," says Michaels.

She mastered it quickly and decided to go "strictly indie" in 2015, using Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) service to publish in both eBook and print. Since her decision to self-publish, she has been on the USA bestseller list ten times. Her husband quit his job at a large technology company and now works with Michaels to run their publishing company.

"I wanted more control over not just the creative writing, but also the marketing strategy, cover art, and other business aspects of publishing. I grew frustrated being unable to make these decisions going the traditional publishing route," she says. "I'm both a writer and entrepreneur, and I'm enjoying more creative and financial rewards than I ever have."

For Michaels, who says the initial idea of going indie was "taking a leap off a cliff and hoping you can fly before you crash," the resulting benefits have exceeded her expectations.

For those authors wrestling with the idea of self-publishing, consider this:

- Creative control. Self-publishing a book allows authors to build characters and stories exactly the way they want and, ultimately, retain full rights to their original material. A book that has been nursed from inception to novel remains yours.

- Get to market fast. Once a book is ready, self-publishing ser-



vices, such as KDP, guide authors through setting up their books and getting them in the hands of readers in just a matter of days.

- Make more money. Authors who opt to self-publish can set their own prices and take home a higher percentage of royalties.

While a self-published author serves as his or her own marketing department, indie publishers make marketing simple and effective. Self-publishing companies, such as Amazon, also offer authors additional promotional opportunities to make their work available to more readers.

Many authors find support through writers' groups online, such as Facebook groups, or in-person by attending workshops and writers' conferences. Most cities have local writing groups that meet regularly. These meetings can provide constructive criticism of your work and other resources.

"I fell into self-publishing by accident, and found that connecting with other authors and joining a local writers' organization helped me improve my technique and career tremendously," says self-published science fiction and fantasy author T.S. Paul. "When sales of my novels began to take off, I began working with freelancers and a virtual assistant, also, to grow the community around me."

Regardless of whether a writer is interested in romance, mystery, fantasy, or biographies, self-publishing with services such as KDP can empower them to pursue their dreams, especially if they're willing to study the business side of publishing as well as Jess Michaels did.

Who knows? Maybe the best seller list is closer than you think.

For more information, visit https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/.