

## WRITING A BOOK CAN START A NEW CHAPTER IN YOUR PROFESSION

The surge in self-publishing and digital books is putting dreams of being an author within reach. Some professionals want to have the next bestseller; others use books as a marketing tool to promote themselves. Just don't expect to get rich.

A savvy businessperson can write a book because of the way technology is changing publishing and book distribution, says Newt Barrett, president of Content Marketing Strategies, a division of Naples-based Voyager Media.

His authors do not receive an advance, but earn royalties from digital and print sales that are at least two and a half to three times higher than a traditional publisher, he says. Here are three tips for becoming an author.

### DEFINE YOUR NICHE

Find a topic or perspective not covered by other authors or explore new territory, Barrett says. For example, the colorful coffee table book *Chico's—A Love Story* (Rizzoli New York) marks the brand's 30th anniversary. "It's providing evidence of the authority and the importance of this brand," says Rochelle Udell, group senior vice president of creative for Chico's, who spent 20 years with *Condé Nast*. "Books do that."

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### GET LEGAL ASSISTANCE

An attorney can review publishing contracts and provide guidance to help protect your work. Two myths, though, are that copyright protects your idea for a book and you can trademark the book name (although a series name can be trademarked), says attorney Jeanne Seewald, managing partner of the Southwest Florida offices of Hahn Loeser.

### CONSIDER YOUR SELLING STRATEGY

"The hard part is figuring out how the heck you're going to sell books," Barrett says. A lack of bookstores can be an obstacle. Consider other retail outlets, such as boutiques, as well as speaking engagements and online sales.

### CASE STUDIES

Here's how four local professionals added the title "author" to their résumés (hint: early mornings were involved).

#### REBECCA ZUNG-CLOUGH

**Occupation:** Attorney

**Book:** *Breaking Free: A Step-by-Step Divorce Guide to Achieving Emotional, Physical and Spiritual Freedom* (August 2013)

**How she did it:** Zung-Clough developed the book through journaling and interacting with clients. It includes daily readings, exercises, mediations and affirmations. "It's not a long legal treatise that would be difficult to swallow." She self-published the book using CreateSpace, Amazon.com's self-publishing arm, and she makes a royalty on each book sold.

**Her goal:** "Eventually I would like it to help people on a national scale. That would be my absolute dream."

#### ALYSIA SHIVERS

**Occupation:** Realtor, John R. Wood Realtors

**Book:** *Moving to Naples: The Un-Tourist Guide* (Voyager Media, June 2013)

**How she did it:** Shivers, former managing editor for *Gulfshore Business* and *Gulfshore Life*, was asked by Barrett, a former colleague, in fall 2012 to write what would be the first in the *Moving To* series. Shivers and Barrett poured over an outline for the book. "You go to bed at night and have a thousand ideas going through your head. I initially was up at 2 o'clock [in the morning] writing. All of a sudden the excitement was there." The book took four to five months to write.

**Her goal:** Shivers will receive a percentage of the sales, but doesn't have financial goals. The book has brought her clients from as far as Washington and California. "As a Realtor, you're always trying to position yourself as the expert in the