Easy Book-A-Day Weekly Training:
Week One

Tony Laidig

Table of Contents

Introduction

Welcome to the Easy Book-A-Day Weekly Training. This is week number one. Tony Laidig, the instructor of this course, has decided to take on the challenge of creating a book each and every day in the month of February, 2013. It is not a requirement of this course for you to create a book a day as well. By going through this process, Tony is simply making the point that you can create a line of books fairly quickly. So, the object of this course is to show you how you can come up with your own books without taking a week, a month, or a year to do so.

From this lesson you will learn how to prepare for taking on this kind of challenge. You will also be introduced to some of the tools and services which will help you through this type of endeavor. More specifically, in this lesson you will learn about:

Planning and Preparation Tips

Tools and Services

BookSmart Software (Blurb.com) In-Depth

Transcription Lessons

Q&A

And Much More!

Planning and Preparation Tips

Planning and preparation is the secret to pumping out books as quickly as possible. There are a couple of things that you need to consider before beginning the process of creating your content. To begin, ask yourself the following:

What books do you plan to publish? That seems like an obvious question, but this is a question that is important to answer right up front. Whether you are planning on producing three books a month, one a week, or even eight books a month, you want to define exactly what you're planning on producing before you begin. So, to start this process you want write down exactly what your goal is.

What's going into your book? This is another obvious question, right? Not exactly, this entails some careful thought. At this point you want to decide what your sources will be, whether or not you are going to be using photographs, whether or not you are going to be conducting interviews, and so on. In order to make this process quick and simple, you will want to know what the process is going to be before you start.

What format are you publishing in? Again, this is probably something that you have worked out in your head, but it is important that you think it through and write it out on paper. So, is it only going to be published in print, is it going to be a photo-based book, do you want it to be put into the iBook Store? What exactly is your goal? You need to map out your plan before you begin because it could have an effect on what software you use to lay it out in, the number of photographs that you use, and so on.

What do you need to complete the book? This kind of ties into the second question, except it has more to do with the materials that you need. You may have some missing pieces. Do you have a copyright page, for instance? By the way, in this course you will be provided a template to help you to create this. Do you have an author bio to include? You need to make sure that you have all of the pieces that you need to complete your project.

What about tomorrow's book? Next week's? This planning process shouldn't be limited to the first book. You need to identify what your entire goal is and what that entire process will entail. This planning and preparation process will help you to not only recognize what you will need to work on right now, but plan for what is coming up as well.

Think about someone that is training for a triathlon. So, they have the swimming, the bicycling, and the running to practice for. You know that while they are swimming, they know that the bicycling is next. So, while they are still swimming they are thinking of how they are going to

approach the next event, and as they're on the bike they are thinking how they are going to transcend into the run. In other words, they are always preparing. In a sense, you will be doing the exact same thing.

The picture above shows the exact list that Tony is working from. Even though he has just begun the book-a-day process, he is already working through many of the books that lay ahead. These books encompass a variety of different subjects. One book is going to be about street performers, another will be about expired patents, and another will be about making baskets, and so on.

There is nothing fancy about this list, but it is very useful. He takes it out every morning so that he can plan out what he needs to do that particular day as well as to see where he is at in the process. At this point he has one gal that is creating a series of summaries based on some audio files that he sent to her, and he is using another service to transcribe some other audios. So, there are seven pieces of data that are being created for him based on previously recorded audio that Tony has made. He already has is staged out that within the next couple of weeks the content will be ready.

Tony is also working on a number of cookbooks that are based upon some recipes that his mother provided to him. He had these recipes on him while he was presenting this very lesson, even though he is on the road. He plans to prepare those recipes and photograph the dishes as he does so, but he can't do that while he is at a hotel, so he knows that those books are going to have to done last. Still, he is continually preparing for those books.

Most of the students of this course are not even going to try to create a book a day. That is fine. Tony is trying to demonstrate that this is an ongoing process and that looking ahead and planning is central to that process. Once you have decided what you want to do and exactly how you are going to do it, the next step is using the right tools to work quickly.

Tools and Services

So, what are the tools that Tony is currently using? You will be informed of what Tony is using through every step of this process, but it will be helpful for you to have a list of them as you move along with your own project. Some of these tools are paid and some are free, and in many cases you can find both paid and free versions of each available. So if you are not capable of using the paid versions, that's fine. This list will probably be added to in the future, but for now Tony is using the following:

Word processor – It stands to reason that you will need some kind of a word processor. There are, of course, many different options out there. Tony is primarily working in Microsoft Word (Office 365), but since he also has a Mac he is using Pages as well. Pages is kind of advantageous to use because it allows you to save to the EPUB format. There is a lot of benefit to this if you want to publish to the iBook Store, for example.

If you don't have Microsoft Word or Pages, you have the option of using Open Office, which you can download from OpenOffice.org. This program is free, and you can use it however you see fit. There is also Libre Office, which is also free. You can download this from LibreOffice.org. Out of the two free word processors listed, Tony prefers Libre Office because he feels that it is a little better developed in some respects.

Image editor – You're also going to need some sort of image editor, especially if you are going to be including photographs or illustrations in your books. Tony is using Adobe Photoshop because he has been using this program for over 20 years and that is what he is used to. You could also use GimpShop, which is a free image editor that is somewhat similar to Photoshop. You can also use Paint.net and other similar services that you can also use for free. You can even use Photoshop Elements for most projects.

One online service that Tony recommends is Pixlr.com. The reason that he chooses Pixlr.com over many of the similar services available is because it allows you to open up Photoshop documents, and it supports Photoshop document layers. That is another free option for you if you are unable to spring for Adobe Photoshop.

Page layout – You do not necessarily need this, but you may choose to use a page layout program, especially if you are laying out documents for print. Tony is using Adobe InDesign most of the time, but he is also using BookSmart, which you can get from Blurb.com. In fact, he used BookSmart for the first book that he created for this project. Later on, some of the things that you can do with this program will be demonstrated. BookSmart, by the way, is free.

If you are on a Mac, you can use iBooks Author. You should know iBooks Author has some limitations. For example, you can only really publish the iBooks Author files to the iBookstore. You do have the option, however, to save it as well as the PDF; then, you can use the PDF to publish to print and those kinds of things. This program is free also, but you do need a Mac to use it. It is template-driven, just like BookSmart is.

File Converters – You also may need to use a file converter. One that Tony is using is PDF OCR X. He states that this is his converter of choice for converting PDF documents into editable text. That is all that this program does. So, say that you are using public domain books from Google. PDF OCR X is a good program to use to extract that text. It is a paid program, but it is really not all that expensive. It is definitely under $50, and it may even be under $30. This program is available for both PC and Mac users.

ConvertFiles.com is a program that Tony just learned of. According to him, this is a pretty cool conversion site because you can convert a lot of different kinds of files with this tool. The ways in which Tony is using it will be demonstrated later on in this lesson.

You can use the InDesign Kindle Plugin to convert your files as well. This is a free Kindle Plugin that goes right into Adobe InDesign. If you are doing any kind of page layout in a design, this is a great plugin to use.   This plugin also allows you to export your documents as MOBI files, which you can upload directly to Kindle.

TOOLS AND SERVICES…

Paid or Free?

- Page Layout
  - **Adobe InDesign**
  - BookSmart (Blurb.com)
  - iBooks Author (Mac)
- File Converters
  - **PDF OCR X**
  - ConvertFiles.com
  - InDesign Kindle Plugin

Easy BOOK-A-DAY

Tony Laidig

Mobipocket Creator is a program that is not listed in the screenshot above, but it is important for you to know about. This program gives you the ability to convert your word documents, PDF documents, etc. into a MOBI file that you can upload to Kindle. A lot of people use this program. It is a PC-only program. Mac users can use InDesign in its place.

These are tools and services that Tony is using right now or that he has used since he got started on this project. There are definitely other tools that he will use as things come up, so this list will be added to as Tony moves forward with the project. For now, here is a list of some of the tools that you can use:

Word Processor

Microsoft Word (Office 365)

Pages (Mac)

Open Office (openoffice.org)

Libre Office (libreoffice.org)

Image Editor

Adobe Photoshop

GimpShop

Paint.net

Photoshop Elements

Pixlr.com

Page Layout

Adobe InDesign

BookSmart (Blurb.com)

iBooks Author (Mac)

File Converters

PDF OCR X

ConvertFiles.com

InDesign Kindle Plugin

MobiPocket Creator

Using Blurb.com's BookSmart

You may have never heard of Blurb.com's BookSmart. If you have heard of it or used it, you may not realize how powerful of a tool it can be for this type of project. So, let's take a closer look.

A lot of people in the training have asked "Can you take the output from BookSmart and somehow convert it into Kindle books?" At the time this question was asked, Tony did not know the answer. So, he looked into it and found the answer to be quite interesting. You will come to understand why in just a moment.

One of the awesome things about BookSmart, other than it being free, is that the designs are template-driven. This makes the design process much easier than just starting off with a blank screen in Microsoft Word. It also gives you the ability to publish your book in multiple formats. For example, you have the ability to publish your book in print (both hardcover and paperback) or you can have the book processed as a PDF. The software allows you to publish in a variety of sizes as well, which is really cool.

For a fee you can also output your book in the EPUB format so that it can be uploaded to the iBookstore. You can do this directly from within Blurb. The fee is $9.99. That is what that conversion process costs, and then you can submit it to the iBookstore directly from Blurb.
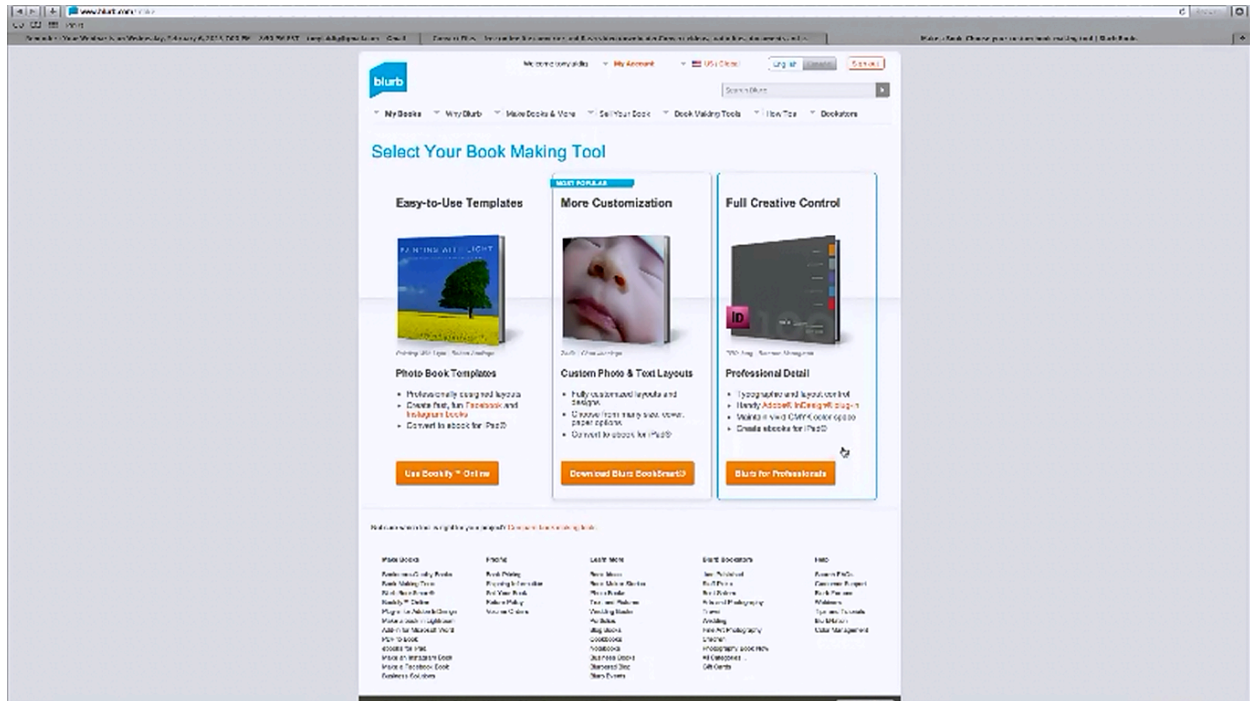
So, let's take some time to learn a little bit more about the things that you can do with this software. Go to Blurb.com, you will also see an orange 'Make Book' button. If you click on this, you will see that there are three tools available to use:

Bookify - This is their online service.

BookSmart – This is downloadable software which is available for both Mac and PC. It allows you to design both hardcover and paperback books as well as convert your books to be formatted for iPad.

Blurb for Professionals – This allows you to create your books inside InDesign using their templates, and it allows you to output them directly into an EPUB format.

Bookify
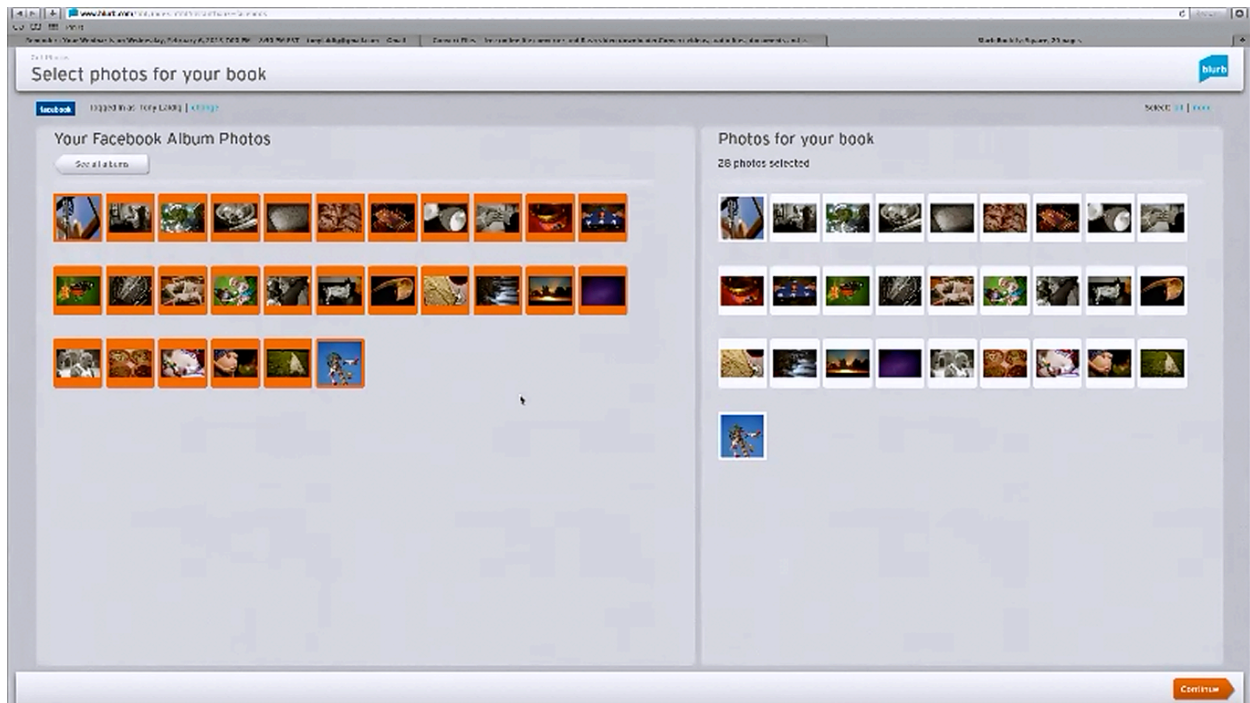
If you were to click on 'Bookify' and then 'Get Started', you will be given the option to make a Facebook book. So, you could then click on the 'Make a Facebook Book' button and then click on 'Get Started' to launch the program. The first time you do this it will prompt you for your Facebook login information, but then it will load all of the pages that you have as well as all your main photo albums that you have in Facebook.

At this point, you could open one of the albums and select all of your photos. When you click 'Continue' you will be led to a page where you can title your book and type in the author's name. Click 'OK', and you can view all of the photos from your Facebook album laid out as a book. Cool right? Once your book is opened up, you can add captions to each picture and type in additional info, if you like.

Essentially the program takes the photos that you have chosen and imports them into the initial layout. All that is really left to do is to create a cover. There are three choices for this:

Hardcover, Dust Jacket

Hardcover, ImageWrap

Softcover

The program offers a suggestion for the cover's design, but you can make changes to it if you like. In this case, the object of the game is to keep it simple, however. So, in his demonstration, Tony just left his 'Facebook book' as-is. Hopefully, you can see how you can put

together a photo book very quickly simply by using your Blurb.com and Facebook account. You also have the option to do the same thing using your Instagram account. This is the perfect solution for someone who needs to get a book out there to fulfill their 'Book-A-Day' goals, but doesn't have the time to work on it one day.
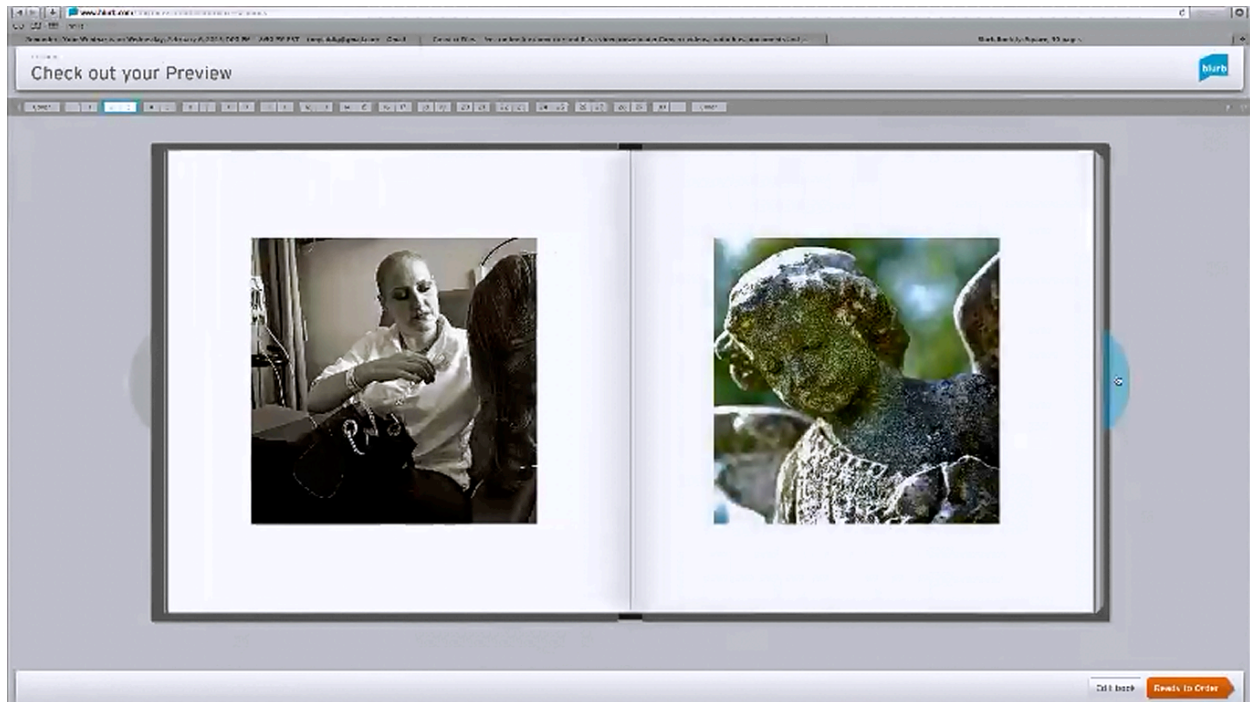
At this point you could continue editing your book, or you could just order it. The program allows you to change the layout and add text. You can also reposition your picture simply by clicking on it and dragging it into the position you want it to be in. You make your pictures fit into certain-sized boxes, and you also have the option to zoom in and out of the picture to make it appear differently. In addition, you have tools that allow you to change the color of each page. Obviously, this software allows for a lot of flexibility.

BookSmart

For the current project, Tony has been using the BookSmart software. To do the same, you would download the program, install it, open it, and the click on 'Start a New Book'. The next page will be a setup page which will allow you to title your book, choose between different book sizes, and so forth. The Standard size given here is 8X10, but there are several different sizes to choose from. There is an option labeled 'Trade' that should be taken into account as well. You will learn why this size is important later on in the lesson.

In his demonstration, Tony chose the 'Standard' option and moved forward by clicking 'Continue'. Next, you are allowed to choose between various types of books. For example, you can choose to have a book which is 'Text Only', 'Text & Photos', and so on. Choose the type of book you would like.

If you chose 'Text & Photos', like Tony did, the next page that you come to will allow you to browse your computer for photos by clicking on the button within the section labeled 'Your Computer'. It is recommended that you have all of the photos that you want to use placed into an individual folder beforehand; that way you can simply select them all at one time when you get to this point.

Once your photos have been selected, click on 'Choose' to stop browsing and then 'Continue' to move forward. For the next several steps in the setup, Tony just went with the default settings. However, you are given the options concerning the flow of your photos and your book's theme.
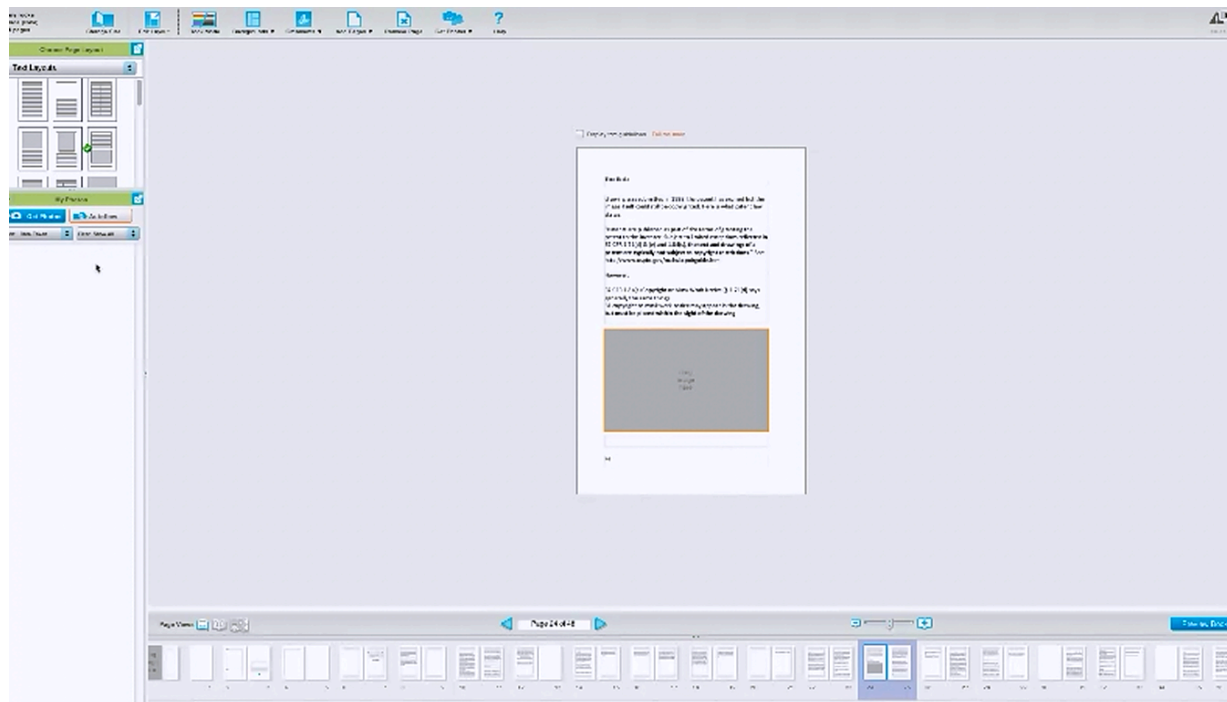
Finally, you will reach a screen where your photos begin to import. By default, 20 pages will be created which all contain the same layout. You can change this, however, and choose between different layouts. There are tons of templates to choose from. You will find these on the top left-hand corner of your screen.

There are boxes designed for text and for pictures. The size and shape of each box will be determined by which template you choose. You can choose templates for full pages of text or to include pictures only. To insert a picture, you simply have to click it and drag it into the

picture section of the page. Obviously, you can layout your book's pictures very quickly in this fashion.

If you already have your book written out, you can simply paste the text into these text boxes as well. There is a great deal of different text formatting options available for you to use. So you can resize and bold the fonts for your headings and so forth.

When you are choosing your book's type during the set up, there is an option call Word Import. This option allows you to access Word documents and import them into your book. The program will allow you to choose what the openings for your chapter should look like as well as the layouts for your text pages. You can import your entire manuscript using this option, but it will not import any pictures that are within the document. All of the text formatting from your manuscript will remain the same, however. So, you're heading will remain enlarged, bolded, and so forth.

You can choose templates that allow for pictures to be inserted. You can even use full page picture layouts for some pages if you like. The text will automatically re-flow around any picture you insert. You will have to import your own photos if you use this option, but then you can just drag and drop them into the template as before.

BookSmart, from Blurb.com, is primarily designed for creating books for their platform. So, you can create print books that you can sell from their site. You can create PDF books that you can download yourself. You can also generate EPUB files which can be automatically submitted to the iBookstore.

Another thing you can do is download these EPUB files yourself. Tony discovered something cool about this. He discovered that you can use ConvertFiles.com to convert these EPUB files to MOBI files. What this means is that you can actually use BookSmart's templates to create your book and then take the EPUB file, convert it to the MOBI format, and then upload it to Kindle. Now, remember that it costs $9.99 to the covert the file to an EPUB file, but it will allow you to have a more professional design than just working with Microsoft Word usually would.

Tony tested the conversion process, and his book converted perfectly. He even opened it up in the Kindle previewer to see how it would look in the Kindle Fire. According to Tony, it looked great. There were a couple of other things that he discovered during this process.

The first is that you do not want to have page numbers or headers placed in your manuscript. That is no surprise. You wouldn't want to have these in place inside of a Word document that you were going to covert for Kindle either. BookSmart makes it very easy to get rid of these though. All you have to do is click on the header and a tool bar will come up, and then click on the first dropdown menu and choose 'None'. Next, you will want to choose 'All Pages' from the

second dropdown menu, and then hit 'Apply'. You can do the same thing for the footer. So, if you have the pages numbered in the footer, you can get rid of this easily as well.

If you do not rid your manuscript of its headers and footers, whenever you convert your EPUB file into the MOBI file or Kindle, those page numbers will show up. As you probably already know, Kindle books are dynamic, meaning that there are no page numbers per se. That is because people use different font sizes, which throws off the number of pages. Headers will show up as well, and they will show up in strange places within the text over and over again. So, you definitely want to make sure to remove all of your headers and footers.

Another thing to remember is that you really want to be careful with font colors. One of the things that Tony has found in his experimenting is that if he had his font in a light grey, for example, the light grey converts. It might look okay in BookSmart, but when converted to Kindle, it will look too light. So, when you know that you are going to convert a book to Kindle after publishing it to BookSmart, you will want to be sure and use dark colors or black for all of your text.

Tony was very excited when he found out that he could convert EPUB files to MOBI files, and for good reason. BookSmart gives you the ability to layout your books very professionally and in a very easily. It really is a powerful tool. So, knowing that he could use BookSmart for his Kindle books as well made him very happy. There are ornaments and various elements that you can use which won't convert to Kindle, so you have to be careful about that. However, the template process speeds up everything and allows you to finalize your book very quickly.

Another thing that makes BookSmart great is that it auto-flows all of your text as you change templates. Also, once you choose your images and import them, then you can just drag and drop them into the templates. This makes things much faster as well. In addition to all of this, you still have control of your text. So, you can still edit it in any way you want to. From a design perspective this is perfect because you can make sure that all of your headings match in font style and so forth. There are a lot of very powerful options available to you here.

You don't have to use this program just for creating photo books, but you can. That is what Tony did. By looking at the screenshot above, you can see that this book consists completely of photos and a caption below which merely informs the reader of where the photo was taken. This book is available for sale online right now.

When he converted this to book to the .mobi format, the black background did not convert; however the page numbers did. That is how he discovered the problem. You should take note that the text automatically converted to black and the background to white.

Transcription Lessons

Tony isn't going through this entire Book-A-Day process alone. His girlfriend, Kerry, has decided to join him in this venture. She is a complete newbie, and Tony says that he feels fortunate that she hasn't strangled him already because she has encountered some challenges in her efforts. The first book that she is working on is a transcription-based book from an audio that she and Tony have created.

She is bravely going through all of this even though she doesn't know anything about book publishing. She doesn't know anything about product creation either. Tony has given her a chance to share some of her experiences with you because it is important for her to share some of the things she has been going through, since of members of this class are newbie's too. The following section is an interview with Kerry in which she shares what she has been going through. It specifically has to do with transcribed audio, since that is what she is currently working on right now. The interview went as follows:

Kerry: Hello everyone. Well, it's been a challenge. I thought it would be easier than it has been. We thought I'd start with this kind of book because it was there, and we had the transcription, and it was a course that we taught together…but I found some very, very different things along the way. The first is that we talk very differently than we write. It was obvious when I pulled up the transcript and started looking at it and dissecting it and pulling it

apart…it was very interesting to go through step-by-step, paragraph-by-paragraph…and eye-opening because I realized that maybe we don't talk so well [laughter]...

We say a lot of words over and over…So, it was very challenging…it's been very challenging. I thought I could do it in a day. I'm on the third day and I'm still working on it, but it's almost done. The other thing was that I really thought that it wasn't going to take that long, but it does require…what I'm working on requires significant rewriting, depending on how we talk…and it's been a challenge to go through…and I've gone through it many, many, many times, changing things as I go…and learning…it's been a learning curve, but it's been a lot of fun.

The other thing is…I feel like I'm back in English 101 [more laughter]…Pay attention to sentence structure and punctuation. It's huge because the way that it's transcribed and the way we speak don't always come out in the transcriptions… So, you have to pay close [attention] to details as you're going through the process. It can take, like I said, a lot more time than you think, so plan accordingly. Like I said, I thought this was going to be an easy first task, and [it is] not the best choice for your first book. I should have chosen a picture book [Laughs]…like Tony did…but I'm going to get this done…and it might not be a book a day for me, but I am on this challenge…with Tony…and hopefully I'll get as many as I possibly can done by the end of the month.

Tony: Why don't you talk about your education process…that you've gone through over the last week or two?

Kerry: Well, I started out not knowing anything, and I've done one webinar…I've done a lot of teaching, but not this kind of teaching. My background is much different. [I'm in] sales, music; I'm also an artist…So, I decided…when we talked about doing this project, I said 'I need as much information as I possibly can from you…and Tony started sending me course after course after course…and I pretty much shoved as much information in as I could in what, about a week and a half?....About a week and a half…So, I've used all of the courses that have led up to *Easy Book-A-Day*…to get me to where I am…to know what I'm doing now.

Do I know everything? Absolutely not…I hang on every word that Tony says [Laughter]. I'm lucky that he's here with me for the first book so…I can use his expertise to help me…but it's been a lot of fun…I love a new challenge…I love learning new things…and I constantly go back and watch the videos…and read the notes…and just keep going through it and breaking it down.

Tony: Yea, and by the way…just so you know, she mentioned about course after course, but just so you know what courses she's using…are pretty much a lot of the same ones that you guys have. So, she has *Super Easy Books*…I have her going through that…I gave her the bonus videos that I gave away for the bonus that I offered for Super Easy Books…which probably most, if not all of you got those as well…and those really provided the foundation for a lot of what

she's learned…along we a lot of the stuff I've taught on *Expert Media Show*, which is available for free…and then, she also had access to the *Easy Book Illustration* course…for a children's book that she's working on later on to create some of these illustrations…but in a nutshell, that's about it….which again, is about all the same information that you guys have.

Okay, so, while I did want to help her through this, I also didn't want to give her…like a…super-duper unfair advantage…you know…over the rest of you guys because…you would think 'Oh, well, you know…you have access to everything Tony ever created.'…and that's actually not true. I mean, she doesn't…she has access to pretty much the same stuff you do because those courses and bonuses and stuff…really do have a lot of great information in there that you can use to do what we're doing here. So, that's kind of why we took that approach.

One of the real interesting challenges…it gave me a little bit of pause because she's really been struggling with the rewriting…and I've done this before…I've rewritten transcripts before. My creativity book…it's available on Amazon…was based on a transcription…The scary part for me is that I have multiple transcriptions that are in process right now. One of those…though… that we want to point out…and this is a key point here…and that is you may want to consider paying someone to summarize for you…because it is going to save you time ultimately…that time is spent by somebody…just not you.

So, that's another way to take the transcription process and speed it up…and I actually have somebody doing that with some of my transcripts…rather than writing it verbatim, they are summarizing what I said…and that saves a considerable amount of time…I can't share the resource that I'm using because I don't want her to be overloaded…but I think it's costing me…just to give you an example…for an hour and a half audio…I think for her to write a summary it's costing me about $50…which really isn't a huge amount of money when you get right down to it…so that's something to keep in mind…and you may know somebody who just loves doing that…and you know…more power to them…I don't understand how their brain works, but 'Yay'!

Kerry: My learning curve this week has been that I probably won't want to do this again…that I will pay someone to summarize. Although it's been a lot of learning and I've gotten a lot out of it…really, it's taken a lot of time to do it…going back over it…making sure things are correct…paying someone $50 or $60 to do that…that has taken me three days…definitely, I will consider that the next time.

Tony: One thing I'd like to say here…about transcription, however…is that when it comes to the transcription process…and of course that was one of the big things I said you can consider for creating a book quickly…is transcribed audio…and that is, if you're creating the audio specifically for transcription…as opposed to teaching something live and on the fly…you can

really control what you're saying and how you're saying it to the point where the editing process could be much easier. Now, the audio that we had transcribed…that Carrie's working with…we didn't really set out to turn that into a book, initially.

We did plan on creating a transcript, but that was just for the reference of the people who were involved in the course. So, as a result…she read back some of the sentences that I said, and I might as well had been talking in Swahili…I don't know what the hell I was saying. I mean it just didn't even make sense, especially from a reading perspective. From a talking perspective, it fits how I talk perfectly…but as we mentioned in the beginning…you know…we talk very different than we write…and there's nothing wrong with that.

You know…it's not like you talk like an idiot and sound like a genius when you write. I mean it's not like that, but there [are] certain things that you can get away with grammatically…that when you're speaking and then that's being transcribed…like sentence structure's a real big one. You may not realize it, but you say a lot of extra words…like 'um', 'ah', 'uh'…but you may talk in incomplete sentences or in run-on sentences or whatever…and when you're talking, that doesn't really stand out as much because that's just part of the voice inflection, or the dynamic, or whatever, but whenever you turn that into a transcription, now all of the sudden it's obvious that it's an incomplete sentence…it's obvious that it's a run on sentence…obviously that's going to have to be rewritten.

I'm not telling you not to do transcription or not to work with transcribed audio…that's definitely part of the process that you may want to consider because it's much quicker to get down your thoughts that way than to sit down in front of a blank screen and try to type it out…but just go into it understanding that you have some work ahead of you.

One thing that you learn as you talk more and more…and this is really key…this is something that I became very aware of partly because of my friends…a good friend of mind Felicia Slattery is a vocal coach, speaker, trainer kind of gal…and I remember one time I had her sit in on one of my webinars…to listen keenly to how I teach…and this was about a year and a half ago.

She took notes on the entire webinar and literally counted how many times I said um, uh, like, and different things like that…and key phrases that I would say over and over again that didn't add value to what I was saying…I was blown away…the count was in the hundreds with all of the stuff added together…and it made me become more aware…and that's part of the process of getting more used to speaking live and teaching and all of those things…is that ultimately you become better spoken…more well spoken…you're aware of what you're saying…and I still say those things at times…

Questions & Answers

From a credibility standpoint, how do you justify writing books on topics that are not directly related to your occupation?

It depends on how you define 'occupation', according to Tony. If you were to go back to the list of books that he is producing, you would see that he is currently working on a book about making baskets. Now, he doesn't consider himself an authority on baskets, but in the house that he grew up in, making baskets was a regular part of the routine.

Tony's mother's side of the family is Cherokee, and so Tony was taught to make baskets at a very young age. So, this is something he has been doing, off and on, from that very young age. Is he an authority on the subject? No. However, he is using public domain content along with his own insights and thoughts.

Tony has not decided whether or not to publish this under his own name or a pen name for this book though. He feels like it is really important to only use your own name for things that you are known for or you want to be known for. Other things that simply interest you, you should publish under a pen name. There is nothing wrong with that.

If you were to look at Tony's blogs, you would see that they cover a wide array of subjects. He has a blog on the public domain, a blog on the paranormal, a blog on dog training, and a blog on classic cars. Is he an expert in all of those? No. He has photographed classic cars, he's had paranormal experiences, and he's owned dogs. These are all interests of his.

Tony is a photographer, a publisher, and expert on product creation. He doesn't know anything about street performing, but it doesn't stop him from taking pictures of them. It really just comes down to how you want to be known. The credibility issue is important. However, there are easy ways around that.

In those areas where you don't want to cause confusion in the marketplace use a pen name. That way people don't freak out when they see that you have written children's books, books on success, self-help books, how-to books on plumbing, and so on, and say "What the heck? This guy's offering children's books, and books on plumbing, and books on photography, and books on ghosts, and all of that. Yeah, I'm not going to buy anything." What should your pen names be? Use your imagination, but don't worry, people use pen names all the time.

Could you please provide a list of illustrations for free? I am not an artist; I need public domain images.

There are quite a few illustration and photography sites that you can use. Of course, what you use is going to depend on what type of illustrations you need. VisiPix.com offers 1.3 million images that are in the public domain and their all high resolution. It provides a combination between illustrations and photographs. So, that is one possibility for you.
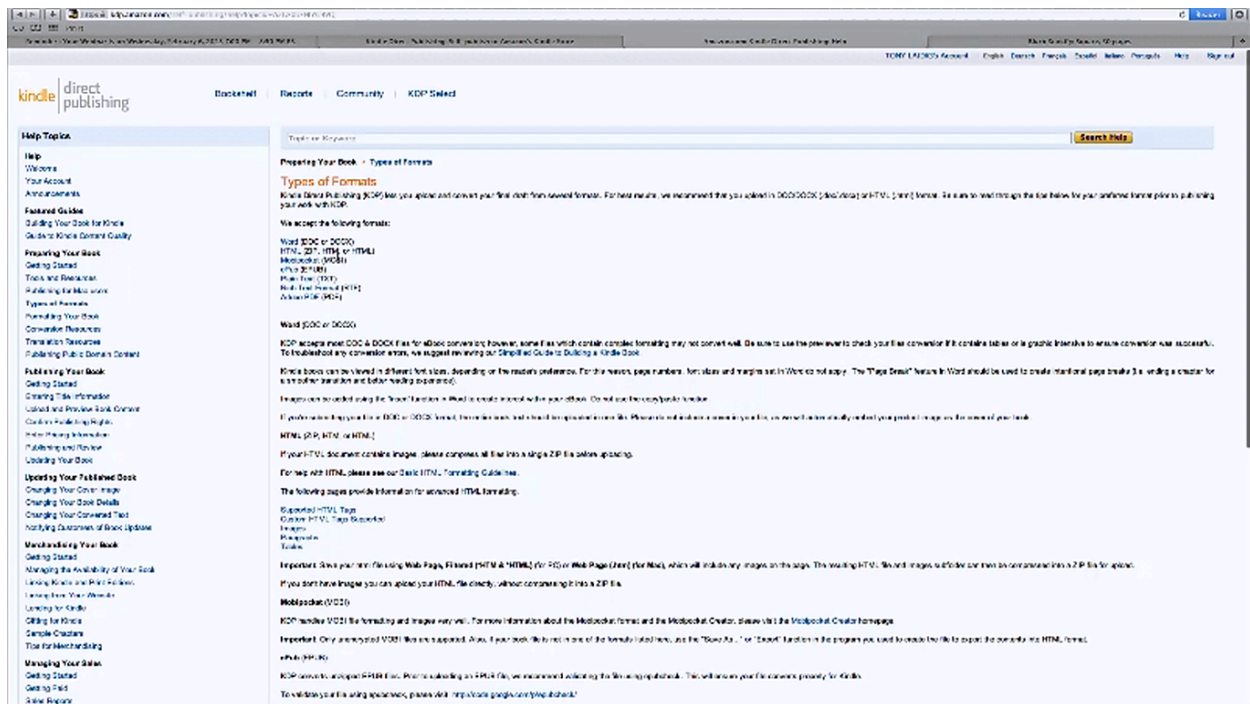
What are some formats that Kindle accepts?

Primarily you want to work with MOBI. If you've never submitted a book to Kindle before, you want to go to KDP.Amazon.com. KDP stands for Kindle Direct Publishing. If you are not a member, but you have an Amazon account, you can actually sign in with your Amazon account. Next, you would click 'Get Started', followed by 'Add a new title', and off you go. If you are unfamiliar with publishing to Kindle, there are a lot of guides and resources on how to get started and all of that.

If you click on 'Types of Formats' you will see that they do accept Word, HTML, MOBI, EPUB, RTF, and PDF. There are a certain stipulations for using each format. These are included within the guide. So, you'll want to read through those if you decide to use anything other than MOBI. Within the guide it states "KDP handles .mobi formatting and images very well." Amazon itself even recommends MobiPocket Creator.

Tony does not recommend using PDF files. It even states within the guide that "PDF files contain special formatting that may not export well in the conversion process. So, you'll want to keep that in mind. You should pretty much steer clear of using PDFs, according to Tony. You also should really spend some of these guidelines, especially the information on the types of formats to use. The instructions here are very clear.

How do I get help to get into the covers templates?

All of those are linked at the bottom of the member's area. So, when you get into the member's area, you scroll all the way down to the bottom. Here you will see a section where it says 'Bonus! Kindle Cover Templates'. There will be two links beneath this. If you click on one of those links, you will notice that there are video trainings available for each as well as a link to download the template files. It may take a little while for the videos to load because there are ten of them on the page, but they literally walk you through the process of how to use the templates.

Some our books are recipe books and cookbooks. Will you be sharing how you create a recipe book during the training?

Absolutely.

Do we have any Word templates that will layout recipes in a Kindle format?

There aren't any Word templates, specifically, that Tony is aware of. He doesn't use many Word templates. BookSmart has some recipe templates that they use. He has not used their recipe layouts yet, however. Tony states:

"Normally what I do with the recipe books is pretty straight forward. I use a photograph if there is one, the name of the recipe, and any intro information that I want to offer. Then I add in the ingredient list and the step-by-step instructions. It's pretty straight forward. It doesn't have to be complex."

If you want to create a certain type of book, such as a recipe book, you may want to consider going to Kindle and downloading a couple that are selling well. This way you can see how they are handling their formatting. That is exactly what Tony does.

Tony is actually creating two or three recipe books. He is creating them in different fashions, but they will consist of recipes that he got from his mother. They are recipes that he grew up with as a kid. Tony actually had his mom give him her original recipe cards, and some of them were actually his grandmother's recipe cards. He says that he is planning on scanning and photographing some of the original cards in order to include them as part of the book along with some stories about the memories he has of his mother making the dishes.

Some of the recipes weren't originally his mother's, but that is okay. His mom is the one who made them. So, that is going to be the unique spin on the book. As he makes his dishes, Tony says that he is going to photograph them himself. You should probably do so too. You can handle recipe books in a lot of different ways, and you should strive to find ways to make yours unique as well. At the same time, however, you can look to see what other successful authors are doing so that you have something that you know works to model after.

Should I use PaintShop Pro?

You can definitely use PaintShop Pro as an image editor.

I'm using Microsoft Publisher to layout my book because that is what I had at the time this began. Is there a drawback to using this program? Am I going to run into problems that I don't know about?

You can definitely use this program, but there are a couple of things to keep in mind. First of all, you should keep your fonts simple. So, just use basic fonts because ultimately you will need to export your book as a PDF. Another thing that you will want to do is make sure that your images are all under 300 dots per inch (dpi), 100%. So, even though it's really easy and tempting to allow those programs to resize those images for you, do your best to keep your images at 100%, at 300 dpi. If you do that, you should be able to output it with no problems.

Another thing you may want to watch for, with that particular program, is that you may have bleeds, like if you have photographs bleeding off the page or something like that. You could potentially encounter issues there. To reiterate, it is recommended that you avoid bleeds, have your pictures at the correct resolution, and not use a lot of different font styles. Just stick with one or two. That is actually just a good publishing practice anyway. You definitely can use Microsoft Publisher to produce books, especially print books, however. You just need to recognize the few elements of using the program discussed above.

Is there a Windows version of PDF OCR X?

Yes. There actually is. It's available for both PC and MAC.

If I use Blurb's BookSmart, do I have to use them to print my book?

Yeah, that is primarily what their service is for. The thing is that it is not an exclusive-type thing. You can publish it there, but also publish it to CreateSpace or something similar.

What is MOBI?

This is one of the recommended formats for publishing to Kindle.

I downloaded InDesign CS2. Can this be used in the place of InDesign CS6 to start off?

You should be able to. Tony says that he is unsure whether or not the plug-in that Amazon offers will work with CS2. During his presentation, he found that Amazon supports CS4 or higher. So, from that perspective you may want to consider not using that for your layout. As far as an alternative, you can still layout your manuscript in Microsoft Word or something like that.

What happens if you pay Blurb.com to create an EPUB file and then the EPUB document needs to be edited? Do you have to pay them again, or can you use something else?

They actually have an online editor that you can use once the digital version of your book is created. Tony is fairly certain that you don't have to pay multiple times if you re-output your EPUB file.

Can you take the Blurb book and upload it to Kindle?

This will work if you convert it. According to Amazon, you can upload EPUB files and they will convert them. You can try it both ways to see what works better, but according to Tony, it is better to convert the file to the MOBI file format first using www.ConvertFiles.com.

What resolution do the photos in Facebook have to be to get the proper print quality?

Bigger is definitely better. Obviously, if you use smaller pictures, they are going to come out looking a little grainier than they otherwise would. Tony says that he has noticed that Facebook has been increasing their resolution for newer photo albums. In other words, he noticed the photos in his older albums were of a lower resolution. The Blurb software is designed to up the resolution of some of the images, but that also can make them blurry. They have actually placed a statement on the site about that. You want to be sure and recognize that if you choose and older album the photographs may not be as sharp.
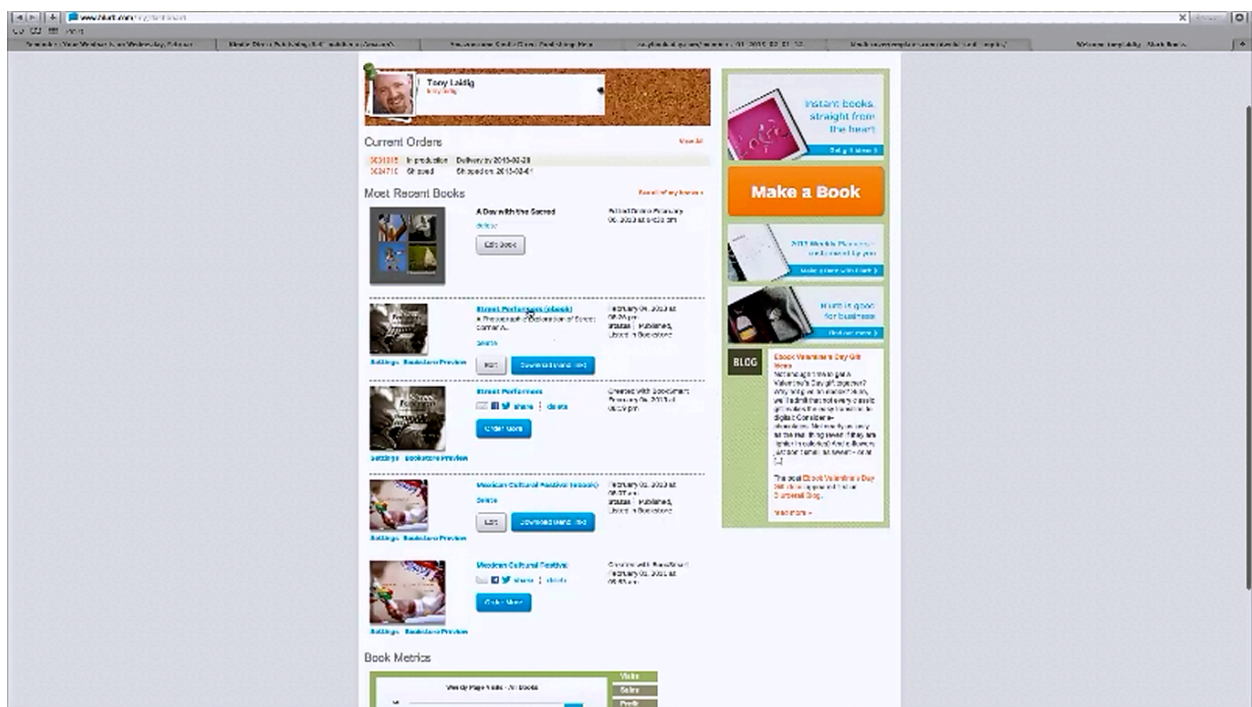
How do you go from a Blurb proof to a Kindle book if you don't want the print book?

The software, by default, creates your print book. By looking at Tony's page (pictured above), you can see that two of his books have been created both as an eBook and as a print book. He has also created them in EPUB format; that is why you don't see that as an option here anywhere. So, he has paid the $9.99 for the EPUB file and has submitted it to the iBookstore. It is pending review.

He still has the ability to download and edit all of these books. So, if you didn't want your print books, you would just hide the print books and then download your EPUB file once you have had it created. Then you would just use ConverFiles.com to covert the EPUB file to the .mobi format.

Blurb books seem so much like iPhoto books. I made several iPhoto books and sold some, but they seemed expensive, and I haven't used them in years.

There are some similarities. The templates seem to be more comprehensive with Blurb. The books can be a little bit expensive, especially the hardcover ones. If you create a book that is 60 pages long, you will probably be spending $35, which is a little bit high. However, you have to remember that we are talking about producing books quickly.

It is all about how you position everything. If you are an author doing a photo book because you have pictures that you want to offer, make it a special edition that you sign or something. That will justify your higher price. Not all of the books that Blurb offers are super-expensive. They do have trade paperback books and all of that as well.

Keep in mind that this is just one option, and that is why Tony shared it. He is not telling you to start using Blurb.com exclusively. This is just one option that is available to you. It will be brought up several times this month as everyone is working together.

If you have Word templates for Kindle, should you use Blurb?

You don't have to use Blurb at all. It is just that Tony has found their BookSmart software to be the best option for some of the books he is trying to create.

Can you do this on a Mac?

Yes, absolutely. Everything that has been demonstrated you can do on a Mac because that is what Tony used during his presentation. This applies to the rest of the course too because he doesn't even own a PC.

What is the InDesign plug-in for Blurb like? What kind of outputs can you get from that?

It works very similar to their BookSmart software, except you don't have all the extra templates. You create your own templates and designs. All the actual book sizes that they offer are built into the plug-in. So, you go in and choose the size of the book you want, and it automatically creates InDesign template pages for the size that you have chosen.

You create the designs, put in your text and images, and so on. Once you are done doing that, the plug-in will connect you directly to the Blurb website, just as if you used the BookSmart software. This takes you through the rest of the process, including the ability to create the eBook, download it in the EPUB format, and all of that.

Is Word or another word processor better to use?

Tony says that he uses Word, at least as a starting point. There is only one issue that he has with Microsoft Word, and that is that they have a tendency to put a lot of junk into the behind-the-scenes formatting that can cause problems when you upload to Kindle when they do their conversion process. If you look in the 'Types of Formats' guide, they'll actually tell you that right on the site.

At the very top of the 'Types and Formats' page, you will notice that it accepts .doc and .docx, but some files which contain complex formatting may not convert well. So, they actually have a simple FAQ guide for building a Kindle book. You should keep that in mind. If you read on, you will see where it says that you can't have page numbers and headers. It also says that you will want to be careful of font sizes and other things like that.

If you follow the Kindle guidelines, for using Microsoft Word it could potentially lessen the pain that you actually go through. Tony has created the books that he has available on Kindle in Microsoft Word. So, there is no problem with it, if you pay attention to how you should do it.

Does Kindle offer software for you to publish books with?

No, they only offer converters.

Do you remove the headers and footers after converting it?

No, before you output your book. The same is true for Microsoft Word. If you are creating books for Kindle using Microsoft Word, Pages, Open Office, or any other word processor, you do not want to have headers, footers, or page numbers. The reason why is that they will show up in the book, but not in the way you intended them to. So, people will be reading your book and all of the sudden there will be a '4', they will read a little bit further and all of the sudden there will be a '5'. They will show up, but not in the appropriate places.

Let's say you have a header in your manuscript that includes the title of your book. People will be reading along and all of the sudden they will see the title of you book in random places and it will appear over and over again, but not at the top of the page as it was meant to. The same thing will happen with the footers. That is why you want to make sure they are never placed in your document, and if they have been, you want to make sure they are removed before publishing to Kindle.

Has your street book sold any yet?

Tony says that he doesn't know for sure, but he doesn't think so. When Tony presented this lesson, the book was only available for a day however. He did notice that he had already had some visits. As his books make sales, he will be sharing this information with the members of this course though.

Will BookSmart import custom styles from a Word file?

To a certain degree it does. For example, if you have used larger fonts, bold, or italics for a chapter title, it does import those types of things. It doesn't support things like bulleted lists though.

How did you get the black background in BookSmart?

It's very simple. It's a template that they have. If you go into BookSmart, there is a 'Background' menu at the top of the screen that you can click on to view a number of different background color choices. You can even choose from a number of different patterns to place in the background. If you don't like any of the default colors, then you also have the option to customize your color.

The program also remembers the colors that you use. So, if you are playing around with different ones, you can always return to the one before. This is also helpful if you want to apply a certain color to more than one page.

Once you publish on Blurb, can you make changes?

Yes. You always have the ability to edit your book. You will find the option available within Blurb.com, or you can just pull up the original document in BookSmart. After you make your changes, you can just re-upload the book and the changes will be applied.

Do you need a separate account for each pen name?

No. As a matter of fact, you're only allowed to have one account in Kindle, and if you try to fudge the system and have more than one, you could get banned. Don't just think of yourself as an author. Think of yourself as a publisher. Let's say you are a publishing house, and under your publishing house you are publishing for five or six authors. Self-publishing in Amazon comes down to the same thing, only in this case all of the authors are really just you. The public at large doesn't know that of course, but why should they?

In film school we were taught to get releases from people that we photograph or shoot on film?

Yes, that is a good practice to follow. It's not always possible though. There is a lot of flexibility in shooting photos and video in public, so you can legally get away with it. Photographers do have rights. Just think about it: Do you think that Julia Roberts is going to sign a model release for all the paparazzi that photograph her and sell their photos to magazines? It is very doubtful.

There are legal rights that we have as photographers. Say, for example, that you were to take a photograph of the street performer in the picture above, and he asks you what you intended to do with that photo. You reply that you were going to use it in a book because you thought he looked kind of cool. You can do something like offer to send him a copy. There are a lot of things like that which you can do to soften that situation.

What kind of device would you use to record phone conversations?

There are a couple of different ways that you can do this. You could use Google Voice. This is a free option that you can use if you have a Gmail account. You can sign up for Google Voice and have someone call you on it, and whenever they call you can just hit the number 4, and it will record your entire conversation. Then, you can save it as an MP3 that you can download.

If there are going to be multiple people on the call, another option is to use a free teleconferencing service that can record. The one that Tony uses most often is ConferenceTown.com. It's free, and all you do is have people call into a certain line. You have the option to record the conversation and save it as an MP3 on here as well. You can then take your MP3 file and ship it off to your transcription services.

How did you find the gal who is doing the summaries for you?

Actually, it was through a friend of a friend. Tony recommends that you consider looking for services on Craigslist. You could look on Craigslist for people who are offering services. Also, if you attend marketing events, you can usually find people who are offering transcription services, virtual assistant services of all kinds, and you may even find a writer who is looking for a little extra work.

There are a number of ways that you can locate people like that. You can even look on sites like Fiverr.com or oDesk.com. On these types of outsourcing sites, you can just post a job description saying that you have some audio or video you want summarized.

A member named Stephen commented that you can use Serenity Editor to edit your documents. He says that it catches grammar and spelling mistakes that Word doesn't. It costs $55 for the standard version, or $75 for the version with a Word plug-in. You can download a free trial, but he says that it is a Window-only program.

How do you transcribe a Microsoft PowerPoint into a book format?

The process is pretty straight forward, according to Tony. He says:

"I record my webinars. I use Camtasia whenever I teach the webinars, and they are all essentially PowerPoint-driven, as you've seen tonight. Myself, I use a converter called…iFunia Audio Converter…and that allows me to import the videos that I'm recording…and it will convert directly to an MP3. That is on the Mac, but there are PC versions…PC software that will do that as well….that you can use for free."

To reiterate, Tony records his webinar using Camtasia and then he uses a converter to strip out just the audio. Then, he sends that to the transcriber or to the person doing his summaries.

If you have any additional questions, feel free to ask those in the Facebook group. Tony or someone else in the group will try to address these as soon as possible.   Thank you for your time, good luck, and have a great week!