

USING ISBNs FOR YOUR SELF-PUBLISHED BOOKS

ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT
AUTHORS

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Alliance of
Independent
Authors

A NOTE ABOUT ALLI

THE ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT AUTHORS

This book is one of a number of self-publishing guidebooks and campaign books for authors produced by the Alliance of Independent Authors (ALLi).

If you haven't yet heard of ALLi (pronounced ally, "al-eye"), it is a global, non-profit association for self-publishing authors. Our mission is ethics and excellence in self-publishing and we bring together thousands of indie authors all over the world who are united behind this mission.

All our profits are reinvested back into the organization for the benefit of our members—and the wider author community.

Our intention is to empower today's author with the knowledge and mindset shift needed to become creative and commercial directors, overseeing the successful publication of each book, and of a profitable author business. For our members this means private forums, discounts and deals, a member support desk and other benefits but we also provide an outreach service to the wider author community.

Much of our work is educational, producing books and booklets like this one, a popular podcast and blog, and video resources that equip authors with the digital publishing and creative business skills

A Note About ALLi

they need. We also run campaigns that advocate for indie authors within the literary, publishing and creative industries.

Like all ALLi publications, this campaign book relies heavily on the group wisdom and experience of ALLi's team, advisory board and member base.

Some of what you find within has been published first on our Self-publishing Advice blog, which is written by our team and members. It also draws on discussions in our member forums, and interviews with members, advisers and influencers in the industry.

All this advice is generously and freely shared within, and beyond, our nonprofit association, with the intention of paying it forward and benefitting other indie authors.

Joining ALLi

As an ALLi member, you are not just joining a membership and advocacy organization, but also joining a movement. Whether you're self-publishing your first novel or your fiftieth, ALLi is with you every step of the way, with a suite of member benefits that includes free guidebooks, discounts and deals, member forums, contract consultancy, advisory board, literary agency, watchdog and more.

Your membership also supports our advocacy work for indie authors globally, from Alaska to New Zealand. The biggest benefit of all is access to ALLi's supportive, dynamic community of team, advisors and successful indie authors and authoritative advice you can trust.

If you haven't yet, is it time you joined us?

AllianceIndependentAuthors.org

INTRODUCTION

Pick up any paper book, flip it over, and on the back cover you'll find the ISBN at the top of the barcode. This 13-digit number is unique to that book in that particular format and edition.

This deceptively simple string of digits is at the heart of the databases and catalogues that drive the book supply chain, from distributors and wholesalers through to bookstores and libraries. The correct use of ISBNs will help you sell more books, earn more revenue, and reach more readers. Using your own ISBNs will also allow your books – and you as an indie author - to be included in publishing industry surveys.

With ISBNs a perennial topic in ALLi's Q&A podcasts and members' forum, the AskALLi team has prepared this short guide to enable you to make informed choices about using ISBNs for your self-published books.

You're about to discover:

- their significance within the wider book ecosystem
- how they work
- why you need them

Introduction

- how, when, and where to buy them
- how to avoid common mistakes
- answers to indie authors' frequently asked questions about ISBNs.

This short guide from the AskALLi team at the Alliance of Independent Authors offers guidance on the current best practices and ethics, based on the actual experience of ALLi members.

WHAT IS AN ISBN?

ISBN stands for **International Standard Book Number**. It is a unique numeric identifier that gives every format and edition of every book a universal ID reference.

The ISBN was formulated in 1965 when British bookstore chain WHSmith challenged Gordon Foster, Emeritus Professor of Statistics at Trinity College, Dublin to come up with an algorithm to help booksellers track books without the need for long bibliographic descriptive records typical of paper- and card-based systems, saving time and staff costs and reducing copying errors. Being entirely numerical, ISBNs work across different countries and are universally recognisable in any language.

Originally consisting of just 10 digits, the ISBN was expanded to 13 digits in 2007 to accommodate the ever-growing quantity of books published around the world. (The old 10-digit ISBNs may be converted to a 13-digit equivalent using free tools easily found online.)

The ISBN is now a global system managed by the International ISBN Agency and used throughout the book trade for multiple purposes:

- to make it easy for distributors, wholesalers, booksellers and libraries to find, order and distribute all the different formats and editions of published books via trade directories, catalogues and databases
- to speed up sales in bookstores and facilitate stock control via electronic point-of-sale systems
- to allow the granular analysis of sales data, e.g. comparing sales of different formats and editions of a particular book, different subject areas, and different publishing houses.
- in some countries, to populate the databases of national lending rights schemes that make payments to authors and illustrators reflecting the number of times their books are lent out by public libraries.

Who May Buy ISBNs?

Any publisher, i.e. an individual or organisation who is publishing a qualifying product for general sale or distribution to the market, may buy an ISBN.

A publisher is generally the person or organisation taking the financial and other risks in making a publication available.

It is standard practice for indie authors to buy ISBNs for their self-published books. According to Eleanor Pigg of the UK ISBN agency Nielsen, the largest group purchasing ISBNs today are those who identify themselves as self-published authors.

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An ISBN for Every Format and Edition

A book may be published in many different formats by its first publisher. Over time, it may be published by multiple publishers. If you search online by title and author name for any classic novel that is out of copyright, you will find multiple editions and formats. There may also be completely different books that share the same title, as there is no copyright on book titles, nor indeed on author names. Therefore searching for a book just by author name and title can be confusing and frustrating.

Search instead by ISBN, and, with surgical precision, you will find exactly the right book in the format and edition that you are looking for.

This is because an ISBN is not just a number – it is the key to a whole raft of essential data and metadata about a specific edition of a book in a particular format. Not only does the ISBN reveal the title and author of a book, it also specifies the precise edition and format (ebook, paperback, hardback, etc.). ISBNs are unique and everlasting, so they offer a timeless way of recording a book's details.

Thus the ISBN is a far more powerful and sophisticated search tool than book title and author name alone.

From the viewpoint of a bookseller, plugging the ISBN into a book database will take them straight to the book's metadata, all of which will help them decide whether to stock the book in their bookstore – and to order the specific edition that they want.

ISBNs are also useful from the reader's perspective, because plugging an ISBN into a public search engine will take them everywhere that the book is mentioned online, including retail sites and the publisher's and author's websites.

The ISBN is thus a book's passport to discovery and distribution. Books without ISBNs languish in relative obscurity.

ANote about Other Kinds of Numbering Systems in Publishing

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I SSN

The ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) is used for journals, serials, magazines, newspapers, or any other kind of publication that will be constantly updated and issued indefinitely.

E AN

The EAN (the European Article Number) is the standard describing the barcode symbology and numbering system used in global trade to identify a specific retail product type, in a specific packaging configuration, from a specific manufacturer. The EAN used for books, known as the Bookland EAN, is exactly the same number as the ISBN, but without any hyphenation or spaces. The barcode graphic displays the ISBN above the bars and the EAN beneath the bars. So if you have an ISBN you technically have an EAN too.

A SIN

The ASIN (**A**mazon Standard Identification Number) is a ten-digit alphanumeric code that identifies products sold on **Amazon's online retail store, including books**. More about ASINs in Section 4 below.

CRACKING THE ISBN CODE

The value of an ISBN becomes clear when you realise that it is the key that unlocks all the information a bookstore or library will require about any book. If a customer can provide your book's ISBN, the bookseller will be able to identify your book, even if the customer can't remember the correct title, spell your name or describe what the cover looks like.

How can such a simple string of numbers make such a difference? Think of the ISBN as a coded shorthand message, and once you learn to read the code, you'll realise how meaningful it is. Let's now examine the key to the ISBN code.

The ISBN's thirteen-digit number is divided into five parts, separated by hyphens. Here's what each part means:

- **Bookland prefix**
- The first three digits indicate that the identified product is some form of book (currently "978" or "979")
- **Registration group identifier**
- Identifies a country, area or language of the publisher, e.g. 1 = English language
- **Registrant identifier**

- Indicates the publisher who has registered this particular ISBN and how big a batch of ISBNs the publisher has bought - a useful indicator of the size of the publishing house (more on buying quantities in Chapter 3)
- **Title identifier**
- Signifies the title, its edition and format as designated by the publisher
- **Check digit**
- A single final digit is calculated by an algorithm to validate the ISBN

WHY DO INDIE AUTHORS NEED ISBNs?

Assigning your own ISBNs to your books makes them eligible to be included in the book trade distribution system, including bookstores and libraries. ISBNs make your books discoverable and manageable for everyone in the supply chain from distributor to reader.

However, when some publishing platforms offer free ISBNs to their authors, some people argue that they are unnecessary for indie authors. Why, then, does ALLi recommend an indie author buy them?

Here are five practical reasons that you should buy your own ISBNs:

- **You will be identified as your book's publisher.**

As we have seen, anyone in the book supply chain can tell from the ISBN who has published a book. Only with your own ISBN are you identified as the publisher. If you accept a free ISBN from a distribution platform, that platform will be recorded as the publisher, which diminishes your book's perceived worth in terms of quality and

potential margin. A bookseller spotting your book is from Amazon's stable will be highly unlikely to order copies for their store. (To understand more about how booksellers operate, read ALLi's Guide to Getting Your Self-Published Book into Bookstores).

Besides, one of the biggest advantages of self-publishing is that you are the publisher, retaining all rights. Why allow somebody else to be identified as the publisher of record?

- **Your books will be eligible to enter the library system.**

Overdrive, the biggest library supplier in the world, servicing more than 30,000 public, university and school libraries, requires ISBNs for ebooks. If you use only KDP's ISBNs, your books will be cut off from the millions of potential readers within public, university and school libraries. With ebook lending via libraries growing, this is an excellent opportunity to reach more readers.

- **You will be able to publish print books simultaneously on multiple platforms.**

ALLi's recommendation is that to maximise reach with print books, you should publish them on both IngramSpark (to reach bookstores and libraries) and KDP Print (to reach Amazon's online stores) using the same ISBN on both platforms. If you do so using ISBNs provided by each platform, Amazon will create two separate records for the same book, one for each ISBN, confusing readers and splitting reviews and sales across two different product pages.

- **Your work will be taken into account in industry surveys.**

Owning your ISBNs also ensures industry commentators and statisticians include your books in industry surveys, and so recognize indie authors who use them as part of the wider publishing

world. Nielsen and Bowker, the Australian ISBN Agency, the national libraries of New Zealand, Canada and many other countries provide reports on the publishing industry each year based on ISBN tracking. As many indie authors still do not use ISBNs for their ebooks, much of the indie world remains untracked on official reports. This gives rise to many misleading headlines about indie publishing and author income.

- **Your books will be kept for posterity in your country's National Library**

Many author-publishers prefer to have their own ISBNs not only because they believe it completes their book, but also because it means they are entitled (and in fact obliged) to submit a copy to their country's national library – the British Library, Library and Archives of Canada, Library of Congress, National Library of Spain, etc. - something they're very proud to do.

So while technically you don't need to buy your own ISBNs in order to self-publish books, if you want your books to be picked up by bookstores and libraries and reach readers beyond the confines of KDP, you really need them.

Why compromise the success of your indie author business in order to save the cost of an ISBN? If you are investing significant amounts of money to make your books the best they can be, for expert specialist services such as editing, proofreading, and cover design, the ISBN will make only a small dent in your budget.

If you want your books to be considered on a par with other publishers and publishing houses, if you want to be acknowledged by others in the industry as the publisher of record, then you need to use your own ISBNs.

It really is the hallmark of a professional publisher.

In the next chapter, you will find out just how much ISBNs will cost you, and where and how to buy them.

HOW TO BUY ISBNs

I SBN Agencies

The only place to buy ISBNs that you will truly own is from an official ISBN agency. There are over 160 ISBN agencies worldwide, each appointed as the exclusive agent responsible for assigning ISBNs to publishers in their country or geographic territory.

In the US, the agency is Bowker, in the UK it's Nielsen, Thorpe-Bowker in Australia, Raja Rammohan Roy in India, and in Canada, it's the ISBN Canada online system. To find the agency allocated to where you are, visit www.isbn-international.org/content/national-isbn-agencies.

These agencies allocate the publisher prefixes and ISBN numbers to publishers in their territory. ISBNs are sold in various quantities, from a single one up to a batch of thousands. The agencies then feed data from their databases into the global records held centrally in the Publishers International ISBN Directory. This is a huge undertaking – in the UK alone, for example, there are over 60,000 publishers.

The agencies also promote the importance of the ISBN for a proper listing of titles with bibliographic agencies and provide technical advice and assistance to the book trade on all aspects of correct ISBN usage. They all operate to ISO Standards.

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I **ISBN Prices**

Publishers may buy ISBNs only from the chief country in which their publishing business operates. You are not allowed to shop around on price. The price you pay therefore depends upon where you are in the world. Some countries' governments subsidise ISBN costs. Canada and France are among the nations who issue ISBNs free of charge.

Where ISBNs are sold at a price, there is often a significant economy of scale. In the UK, for example, at the time of writing, Nielsen's published prices are £89 for 1, £164 for 10, £369 for 100, £949 for 1000. Even larger quantities are available on application. That makes an ISBN bought on its own almost 90 times as expensive as the unit cost of a single ISBN bought in a batch of 1000.

Once you have bought your ISBNs, you can use them as quickly or slowly as you like – there is no use-by date, and the numbers allocated to you will be forever yours. Therefore it makes economic sense to buy as large a batch as you can afford. You will be surprised at how quickly you use them up, especially if you are intending, as most indie authors do, to publish every new book in more than one format, each one of them requiring its own ISBN.

T **Third-Party ISBNs**

Buying ISBNs from your designated agency is the only way to be recorded as the official publisher of your books. However, some third-party organisations offer ISBNs or similar codes for a fee or for free. Let's consider the three main alternatives to buying ISBNs direct from an official agency.

- **Paying a Publishing Services Company for ISBNs**

If you have opted to publish your book via a publishing services company, that company is likely to offer you the option of using one of its ISBNs, either as part of a bundled package cost or as an item from its menu of optional paid extras. If you use the service company's

ISBN, they will be the publisher of record, not you. They might consider this an advantage if their proprietary imprint is known and respected in the trade and taken as an indicator of beautiful books published to a professional standard. On the other hand, the imprint will demonstrate to those in the know that you have paid someone else to publish your book, which may undermine your credibility as a truly independent author. If you believe their imprint will disadvantage you, you might propose that you buy your own ISBNs and ask them to use those instead.

Caution Before signing a contract with any publishing services company, check that they are an approved partner member of ALLi, which will ensure their charges are fair and transparent, and that their services meet professional standards and comply with ALLi's Code of Ethics.

You can find a link to ALLi's directory of approved services [here](#).

- **Accepting Free ISBNs & ASINs from Publishing Platforms**

Both IngramSpark and KDP, the main platforms used by indie authors to produce and distribute their books in print and digital format, offer the option of free ISBNs.

IngramSpark recently introduced this as a customer service in the US only (at the time of writing), but even so, on their website they recommend you buy your own ISBNs if you can:

“At IngramSpark, we believe it's in your best interest to be recognized as the owner of your work and a publisher in your own right, which is why we encourage publishers to purchase their own ISBNs.”

Whereas IngramSpark's are agency-sourced ISBNs registered to their own imprint Indy Pub, the codes available free from KDP are Amazon's proprietary equivalent to the ISBN – the ASIN or Amazon Standard Identification Number (ASIN). You can use their ASIN instead of an ISBN, but even if you input your own ISBN, Amazon will still use its ASIN on its website. However, the ISBN's

metadata and the book's page on Amazon will still show you as the publisher of record.

Neither IngramSpark's ISBNs nor Amazon's ASINs can be used on other sites. Bearing in mind that ALLi's recommendation is to publish your print books simultaneously via KDP Print and IngramSpark for maximum reach (via online buyers, bookstores and libraries), unless you plan to publish your books only via one or the other platform, using their codes instead of yours is therefore a non-starter.

- **Dealing with ISBN Resellers**

Cautions the International ISBN Agency stipulates that ISBNs are not transferable and should not be resold. However, there are some online companies who are not official ISBN Agencies, who hide behind names, URLs and websites designed to make themselves look like official agencies, then act as third-party resellers. They bulk buy ISBNs in their own name to take advantage of the economy of scale of large batches and sell them on at a significant mark-up. This means that when anyone looks up your ISBN, that company will be recorded as the publisher – not you, nor your imprint. So – before you buy your ISBNs, visit www.isbn-international.org/content/national-isbn-agencies, identify the sole agency for your territory, and deal only with them.

HOW TO REGISTER YOUR ISBNs

Once you have acquired your ISBNs from the right agency (usually emailed to you promptly on the day of purchase), you need to make sure you use them correctly. Also, make sure you store the file they send you safely, as this will be the only one you receive.

At the Outset

When you acquire your first batch of ISBNs, you may be asked by your agency to submit the details of the book you plan to use the first of the batch to publish. This will include stating the name of your publisher, which may be your pen name or the name of your imprint, if you have one. (For more about imprints, see <https://selfpublishingadvice.org/should-self-published-authors-create-their-own-publishing-imprint>).

All future books will be allocated to your name or imprint, unless you contact the agency to ask them to add a different one. You may thus use your batch for more than one author name or imprint, but they will all be owned by you.

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U pdating Your Agency Records

As you publish each new book, you may choose to update the agency's database to complete the details of each book against its allocated ISBN. You will need to contact the agency you bought your ISBNs from to find out how to do this. (On Nielsen in the UK, for example, you have to set up a free account at www.nielsentitleeditor.com.)

However, provided you are completing all the book's metadata on your chosen publication platforms, it will filter through to the central agency records. If, for example, you publish via Ingram, which sends out its entire book database into the distribution chain once a week, the book's metadata that you input on Ingram's database will overwrite the agency's record.

While some authors choose to update their agency's database each time they publish a book, others prefer to update it only via the publishing platforms to avoid duplicating effort. The choice and the responsibility are yours.

Having invested in your ISBNs, you need to make sure you use them correctly to avoid waste and confusion. In the next chapter, you'll learn when you need one – and when you don't.

HOW TO USE YOUR ISBNS

You need to assign ISBNs to any book that you are planning to sell commercially via the book distribution supply chain. Remember, you need a unique ISBN for every different edition or format of a book, e.g. ebook, paperback, audiobook, hardback.

This ISBN, and only this ISBN should be used wherever you publish that format of your book. Therefore if you are producing a paperback book, for example, and publishing it simultaneously via IngramSpark and KDP Print, you should use the same ISBN. If you then choose to have a private print run at your local printer, you should again use that same ISBN.

When you publish the ebook, you must use a different ISBN. As you probably know, there are two popular ebook file formats - .mobi (Amazon's proprietary format for Kindle) and .epub (for every other ebook format). Some authors choose to use a separate ISBN for each ebook format, whereas others use the same one for both, on the basis that from the reader's perspective, an ebook is an ebook. There is no fixed guideline on this – it's up to you.

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When to Use A New ISBN

Whenever you make a significant number of changes to an existing book - adding new chapters, a new introduction or foreword, or undertaking a major rewrite or edit - it counts as a new edition, which means it requires a new ISBN. Changing the trim size or binding also counts as a new edition, even if everything else about the book remains the same.

However, you are allowed to make minor changes to a book without needing to apply a new ISBN, provided it is still essentially the same product. Thus fixing typos or spelling mistakes, updating front or back matter, or changing the cover does not require a new ISBN.

If publishing a revised edition with a new ISBN, you will have to set it up as a new book, because the ISBN is one of the fixed metadata fields on self-publishing platforms that cannot be changed after publication. When you set up your new record, mark it as a second edition (there is a special field for this), and it should supersede the first one on the various databases.

Books That Don't Need ISBNs

If you are producing a book that you are not planning to sell commercially via the book distribution network, you do not need an ISBN.

Examples of this kind of book are:

- A yearbook for your children's school
- A personal memoir for family and friends
- A community project for hand-selling at local events
- A catalogue of your books for promotional use

That is because these will never be added to the publishing trade databases nor sold through electronic point-of-sale systems, so an ISBN would serve no purpose.

FAQS

Does the ISBN protect my copyright?

No, it is only an identifier – effectively a product code, and nothing to do with copyright. (However, you may be reassured to know that an author automatically holds the copyright on their book from the moment of creation.)

Do I use one ISBN per book?

One per format of each book. Each ISBN signifies a particular format of the book, and each format counts as a distinct product, even though the content may be the same. It may help to compare your book to a grocery product – a special edition tin of teabags is a different product to a cardboard box of teabags, even if the same type of teabags is in both.

Do translations need different ISBNs provided the format is the same, e.g. the paperback?

Yes, because the book in translation would be a different product. A bookseller ordering your paperback in French will not be happy if he

receives the English language paperback, so you need to differentiate between the two versions with separate ISBNs.

Do I need a new ISBN every time I update my book?

It depends how much the book will change. If you're just correcting the odd typo or error, or updating the front or back matter, it will still be essentially the same product, so no need for a new ISBN. If, however, it's a major overhaul, like a complete rewrite or you are adding new chapters or sections, it will be recognisably a different product, so should be issued as a new edition with a new ISBN. There is no precise measure of the degree of change before a new ISBN is needed, and there are no ISBN police who will check up on you, but it is good customer service to play fair. A good rule of thumb is to apply a new ISBN if 10% or more of the copy will be different.

Do I need a new ISBN if I change my book cover?

No, that's only a cosmetic change, not affecting the nature of the product.

I'm switching from paperback to hardback, but it's still a print book – does that need a new ISBN?

Yes, even if the only difference is the nature of the binding, they count as different print formats.

Does a price change require a new ISBN?

No, because the product will remain the same. The price will be part of the metadata held in the supply chain databases and online store sites related to your book's ISBN, but you can change your price at any time.

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I f I change the trim size of my paperback, will I need a new ISBN?

Yes. Different sized books are different products, so need different ISBNs.

I 'm moving country. Can I take my ISBNs with me?

If your main publishing business is still associated with the territory in which you bought your ISBNs, yes. But if you need to buy a new batch in your new home, you'll need to use the relevant agency for that country.

D o I need a different ISBN for every country I publish in?

No, thank goodness! It is an international code that you can use to distribute your books anywhere in the world. This is just as well, as most indie authors publishing on platforms such as KDP and IngramSpark have an international reach, so being a globally recognised product code is one of the many benefits of the ISBN system.

I am publishing a book with another author – whose ISBN should appear?

In the case of a joint publication, both publishers are entitled to have an ISBN on the book. It should be made clear which number identifies which publisher. However, if only one publisher is to hold stock and distribute the publication, then it is recommended that only that publisher's ISBN should appear on the book.

W hat do I do if I reprint a book with a new publishing name?

If the book is republished under the imprint of a different publisher, it should be assigned a new ISBN belonging to that publisher. The new publisher should be quoted on the title page verso with the relevant ISBN, but details of the previous edition (publisher,

ISBN, date) may also be provided for clarity. A separate ISBN should also be assigned if the same publication is published under a different imprint name by the same publishers.

Can I buy an ISBN on behalf of someone else?

No. When you buy your ISBNs, they are allocated to you and are not transferable. An imprint can be assigned, but the original purchaser will be listed as the publisher of record.

I have more ISBNs than I need – can I give one to a friend?

No, ISBNs are not transferable. The only way your friend can use your ISBN is if you become their publisher.

I bought a batch of ISBNs in my own name and now I want to start my own imprint. Can I use those ISBNs for my new imprint?

Yes, you can – but you will need to contact the agency you bought them from to add your imprint to their records. You should also specify your imprint when you upload your book to your chosen publishing platforms.

Now that KDP converts its ebooks into .epub, do I still need a separate ISBN for the KDP version?

Some authors have always used the same ISBN for the ebook across all platforms, regardless of whether it's a .mobi or an .epub. The rationale is that to the end-user – the reader – the ebook looks the same. There are no rights and wrongs on this one – just do whichever makes you feel comfortable.

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My book is produced as a number of volumes due to its size. Do I use the same ISBN for each volume or a separate one for each?

One ISBN should be assigned to each volume and another to the whole set. Both the ISBN for the individual volume and for the set should appear on the book. Although the books may be sold as a set, they may not always be kept together, e.g. different volumes may be loaned out in a library, hence the need for both.

Where do I put the ISBN on my book?

You should include your ISBN on the copyright page of your book and also in the barcode on the bottom right of your book's back cover. You may ask your cover designer to include the barcode in your design, which gives you the opportunity to make it look prettier than the standard barcode that would otherwise be superimposed at the time of printing at KDP Print or IngramSpark. If you don't include your barcode in your cover design and are having a private print run elsewhere, make sure that your printer can apply the barcode for you. A bookstore is unlikely to accept a book without a barcode.

I've used up all my ISBNs – what do I do now?

Just apply for your next batch from the official agency serving your country. Although there will be a different publisher prefix this time around, as each prefix allows for only a fixed number of ISBNs, you will still be identified as the publisher. It is quite usual for publishers to have more than one prefix assigned to them if they are publishing many books.

CONCLUSION

We hope that this short guide has helped you understand the role of ISBNs in the book ecosystem and their power in raising the discoverability of your books.

You now have all the information you need to invest in your own ISBNs for your business and to use them appropriately as you publish books of all kinds, both in first and subsequent editions.

You should also now be able to avoid common errors and use your knowledge to grow your indie author business.

Until next time, happy writing, planning and publishing!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

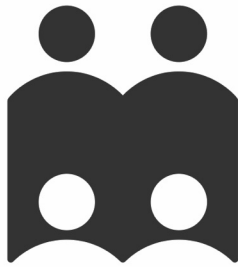
All good books are a team effort. As well as the author whose name goes on the cover, there's the creative team of editors and designers and formatters who make the book, as well as the distributors and marketers who take it to readers, and the long list of supporters—from family to work colleagues—without whom a book cannot happen.

Then there are the other writers. Everyone who writes a book owes a debt to long line of authors who have gone before. And to all writers, from journalists and academics to storytellers and poets, who publish relevant ideas, information and inspirations that, quite literally, underwrite the book.

As mentioned in the introduction, Alliance of Independent Author (ALLi) guides also rely heavily on the wisdom and experience of our members and advisors, freely shared within and beyond our non-profit CIC (Community Interest Company) with the intention of paying it forward and benefitting other indie authors.

For this guide to ISBNs, particular thanks are due to Eleanor Pigg of the Nielsen ISBN Agency, ALLi Partner Member IngramSpark, Author Member Giacomo Giammatteo, and all the ALLi members and advisors who have contributed knowledge and experience. Our thanks to you all.

ABOUT ALLI




Alliance of Independent Authors

ALLi, the Alliance of Independent Authors is the global association for self-publishing indie authors.

Join us for reliable advice and advocacy, discounts, free guidebooks and resources, member forums, contract review, motivation, education and support from a wonderful indie author community.

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WE'D LOVE YOUR FEEDBACK

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