



Publication scams

The Set-Up

An offer to make your publishing dream come true.

The Hook

You need to finance the publication of your material.

The Sting

A few very expensive copies, if any, and a dream still unfulfilled.

How publications scams work

You dream of being a published writer. Then you receive an email saying you have been selected for publication. You are delighted, but it turns out that to make it into print you must pay the publication costs yourself. You decide to go for it, but the costs are huge and you end up with a garage full of books you don't know how to sell. Or worse, you end up with no books at all ... or just a few copies that cost you several hundred dollars each.

Self-publishing is a legitimate avenue into print and some successful authors began their careers that way. However, scammers will deceive you into believing they run reputable publishing houses, and will charge you far more than it would cost to self-publish on your own.

Variations on publications scams

Publishing Competitions

Scammers invite would-be writers to submit material for a competition. The prize is publication. When authors and poets submit their work, everybody wins. The scammers produce a book containing the work of every entrant, then charge the writers massive fees to publish the work. The result is a book that is either never produced ... or in such a small print run that the only people who get a copy are the writers.

Protect yourself from publications scams

As much as you want to be published, be realistic about the publishing industry. Any publisher claiming to offer profitable opportunities for new writers should be treated with the utmost caution.

Keep plugging away at the tried and true method: get an agent, who will submit your work to publishers.

If you are open to the possibility of financing your own publication, investigate it properly. There are legitimate self-publishing companies that will charge you much less than scammers would. Talk to the mainstream bookseller chains about the terms for getting a self-published book on their shelves.

Help protect others from publications scams

If you have received this kind of scam letter, please share your story with us. We will treat your report in the strictest confidence and remove your personal details before posting your story on our site.

[Report your scam story to us.](#)