

EA: Find Your Book's Weak Spots

What is an Editorial Analysis and why do you need one?

An Editorial Analysis, or EA, helps determine the likely usability of an author's book, in its current form, by identifying its strengths and weaknesses.

The EA is designed to determine if a book is written in a way that will speak to its intended readership, if the book is written with proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and if it is written in an organized manner.

It also looks at how well the book follows *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS) formatting. The CMS provides guidelines for many aspects of style, including how commas are used and where the preface goes.

Getting an Editorial Analysis for your manuscript makes it easy to determine how much more work should be done before it goes to layout. The EA will tell you what level of copyediting you should have. Whether the book needs a light edit or a more intensive



OK, so we won't be looking quite this closely at your book, but an Editorial Analysis is an in-depth study of your manuscript to help determine what kind of help it needs to be the most successful book possible!

developmental edit, the editing should be done before your book designer begins styling your pages for print.

Why You Should Listen

The first step to becoming a successful author is having an excellent book. It's important not to let hubris get in the way of this—and quite often it does.

Here are the most frequent excuses we hear for not getting an EA, and for not listening and acting on the results:

- I've already edited my book. It's fine.
- I had my friend, who is an English teacher, proofread it already.
- No one cares if the commas conform to CMS.
- Readers will know what I mean.
- I don't want to spend the money.

First of all, an EA comes with nearly every package that Wheatmark offers, and if you have one done before committing to a package, that cost will be

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

eBook Sales Climbing

The

American Association of Publishers (AAP) recently reported some



*Sam Henrie
President*

astounding statistics about book sales in the U.S. While book sales overall are down 4 percent in 2009, eBook sales are up 154.8 percent (www.publishers.org/April2009Stats.htm).

Every year since 2000, we in the publishing industry have been told by one pundit or another that "next year will be the year of the eBook," only to be disappointed when the next year rolled around.

No more!

2009 *is* the year of the eBook—the numbers don't lie!

Here's why it's finally here:

- Independent authors now publish more

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Editing for Redundancy: Twice Isn't As Nice

A pitfall to watch out for when drafting your manuscript is redundancy. It's easy to fall into the redundancy trap. Here are a couple of ways it can manifest itself and how to fix the problem.

You overexplain a concept

This common problem generally shows up more often in nonfiction. Wanting to make sure readers understand a concept, the author attacks the idea from different angles in various places in the text. What's wrong with this? At best, the technique probably won't enhance your readers' understanding. At worst, you'll bore them by telling them the same thing over and over again.

One way to address this is to work on your editing skills. Read your text out loud or ask someone unfamiliar with the subject to read it; you'll likely find ways to tighten your language and explain yourself without repeating yourself. Another option is to provide examples, charts, and other elements that help illustrate your point without rehashing the concept in the main text.

You reorganize your book

Many authors get so involved with the process of reorganizing their books, they forget the small details—like whether they've already said something. This, again, is an editing problem. It can also be a structur-

ASK AN EDITOR



ing problem. Before beginning your book, create an outline or road map of your content's progress. If you're writing fiction, this is a great way to keep track of characters, plot points, and the rules of your book's universe. For

example, if you've introduced a character named Von in the third chapter who is the cousin of Van and they can both see through walls, don't reintroduce Von in the 10th chapter and have him unable to see the murderer behind the door. This is a form of redundancy with a dash of careless mistake. Fortunately, it's easy to fix these as long as you pay attention and enlist another pair of eyes. There are even computer programs available to help authors track these issues!

With nonfiction the problem rears its ugly head when cut-and-paste goes unchecked. This is why editing is so important. If you have elected to have your book copyedited fairly heavily, someone will catch these mistakes and will happily flag them or fix them. And if you take care to edit your own work before submission, the professional copyeditor will be able to turn the job around significantly faster.

Recent Title Releases: From Tall Tales to Publicity

Marketing 2.0: Bridging the Gap Between Seller and Buyer on the Social Web
By Bernie Borges

Grow Your Stock Exchange with Futures and Options: A Guide to Understanding These Financial Instruments
By Charlie Rubin

The Buddha Teaches Acceptance
By Richard Duffley

Polar Bears in the Kitchen
By Joan Leslie Woodruff

Time in a Box: An American Family History
By Marilyn Way Merryweather

How Do You Say...?: English-Spanish Picture Dictionary
By Amy Riaz

Out of Darkness, Into the Light: An Alaskan Anthology
By Fairbanks Arts Association Community Writers Group

Life Has a Beginning: Reproductive Controversies
By Adrian Van Hofwegen, MD

Love My Country, Loathe My Government: Fifty First Steps to Restoring Our Freedom and Destroying the American Political Class
By Walter "Bruno" Korschek

Why the JFK Assassination Still Matters
By Richard Buyer

Unlocking the Power of Publicity
By Robin D. Cook

Unique Vessels: How Do You Make These Things?
By Edwin K. Hill

Apple Peelings of Faith
By Teresa Tuten

Trickster Jack
By E. Reid Gilbert

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books than the rest of the publishing industry, and independent authors are quick to take advantage of the higher royalties and increased sales eBooks give them.

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- Amazon is aggressively marketing its eBook reader, Kindle.

Wheatmark is now recommending that all of its authors publish their books both for print and for the Amazon Kindle. To find out how to get started with Kindle, contact your Wheatmark publishing consultant.

Chess Book Earns Finalist Spot for eBook Award Nod

This month's Author Spotlight is beaming bright on author Ray Cheng's amazing juggernaut of a book, *Practical Chess Exercises*. The title has become Amazon.com's number one-selling chess book, is a Wheatmark Great Expectations title, has a top-selling Kindle version, and is often lauded by chess masters and enthusiasts for its excellence.

Recently, *Practical*

Chess Exercises was named a finalist for the 2009 Benjamin Franklin Award in the eBook category. The award is given out by the Independent Book Publishers Association and we couldn't be more proud.

eBook formats are a fairly new phenomenon in publishing, and to have a Wheatmark title recognized in that category



is an amazing testament to the author, the book, and Wheatmark's commitment to helping authors succeed.

Did You Know?

Wheatmark Creating Author Tutorials Online

One of the things that keeps us ahead of the pack is our willingness to share our expertise in book sales. The availability of the Internet is bringing about new, better marketing strategies—but they can be hard to navigate. In order to help our authors thrive, we've started developing video tutorials, free downloadable materials, and other types of educational materials to help you figure out your best marketing bets. Check in with our blog for notices as these new materials become available! www.wheatmark.com/blog

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deducted from your final sign-up fee. The cost of copyediting is more, but the final product will be worth it. It would be a shame to spend money on publishing a book, only to have it not perform because of elements that could easily have been fixed for a few dollars more.

Two, you and your friend the English teacher are not professional book editors. This isn't a reflection on your skills, it's a reflection on how well trained professional book

editors are. They read tons of pages a year and know what to look for, how to look for it, and how to expertly make the correction.

And thirdly, your readers do care about the commas. They may not be fully aware of what's putting them off when such details are wrong, but it will bother them nonetheless. Book readers have been trained for decades to expect certain guidelines to be followed and when you ignore that expectation, you frustrate them.

You slow them down. Slow them down too much and they'll stop reading entirely.

You've taken the time and energy to write a book you believe people will want to buy and read. Don't sell it short. Use the resources that will help it be as excellent as it can be!

Have you been learning The 7 Steps to Self-Publishing Success? Check out www.wheatmark.com to get started!