

The best practices document is compiled using feedback from past participants and insights from the Inkfort Press staff, and is broken down below into four sections.

Please reach out to InkfortPress@gmail.com with any questions, feedback, or suggestions for this document or the event overall.

Writing

- Books that got the most engagement throughout the event were typically between 20k to 40k words.
 - In other words, longer books might better match the “market standards” but did not necessarily perform best at this event.
- Utilize as much of the available time as possible.
 - Waiting until the last minute makes finishing more difficult.
 - 10,000 words can be finished in 60 days by only writing 166 each day.
- The content **should** match the cover.
 - There are absolutely times and places suited to subverting expectations; however, keep in mind that readers use covers as a tool for decision-making.
 - If a casual romance reader books up a beach-read-looking cover and finds a body horror book inside, they will not be pleasantly surprised. They will feel lied to.

Editing

- The Beta Reading Phase allows books at 75% completion, the further along the book is, the better the reader feedback.
- Write, edit, and polish at the speed that works best for that individual, even if it means skipping the Beta phase.

Publishing

- Paperback versions of books are allowed within the Derby—however:
 - The paperback version must use the pen name if published during the event.

- If the author switches to a different name later, KDP requires the paperback version unlinked and a new one made.
 - Which is different than ebooks which are changeable.
- The listings will stay on the author's kdp page forever.
- Ordering author and proof copies does violate the no-spending rule.
- With all that said, the recommendation is to wait until after the event to create a physical copy.
- Adding a series title/subtitle to books is allowed, and it might be useful if you are planning a series or need to stand out among popular titles.

Marketing

- Serialization can aid in sales, but it's important to consider the best site for the type of story.
- Some genres have readers who are more rigid about the length of the story, which is worth considering early on in the writing phase.