

## **Prequel Edition**

It you are self-publishing the book and it isn't available yet, consider this marketing tactic. Before you upload it, make a separate ebook edition consisting of the book's forward and first two chapters. Have a new cover made adding the word Sampler or Prequel to it. (Most cover artist will do this for a nominal charge or they may even do it for free.)

Once you have this sampler ready, upload it and make it available as a free download. This should be done at least a month before the launch date of the complete book. The point of this activity is to get as many readers as possible to grab a copy of the prequel. If they are impressed by it, they will anticipate the availability of the complete book.

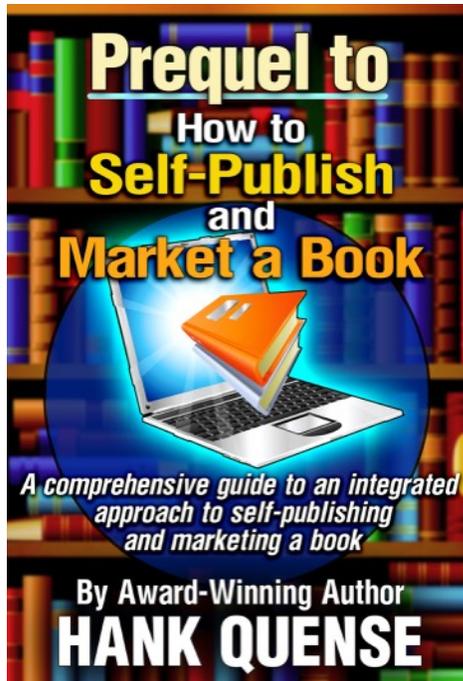
If you used Smashwords as the packager for the prequel, you can price it as a freebie. If your packager is Kindle, you will have to price it at \$.99 which defeats the purpose of having a free prequel. In this case, put it on your website as a free download.

Now tell the world about it. You can attach Prequel to emails, you can tweet about it. Generally try to give away as many copies as possible before the launch date.

This works well for both fiction and non-fiction books.

The more different formats you have for the prequel, the better. Both pdf and epub version of the ebook are easy to make. Getting a mobi version (for Kindle tablets) will be a bit harder. You will have to use a conversion service and the results may be unpredictable.

Here is the Prequel cover for my book *How to Self-publish and Market a Book*. I made it available about a month before the book was released and gave away as many copies as possible.



### **Signature Files**

Now is a good time for you to develop a sig file. Email signatures (usually called sig files) are a free way to publicize your book every time you send out an email. Think about how many times a day that happens!

Sig files are those links you see beneath the name of the person who sent you the email. Here is what yours could look like:

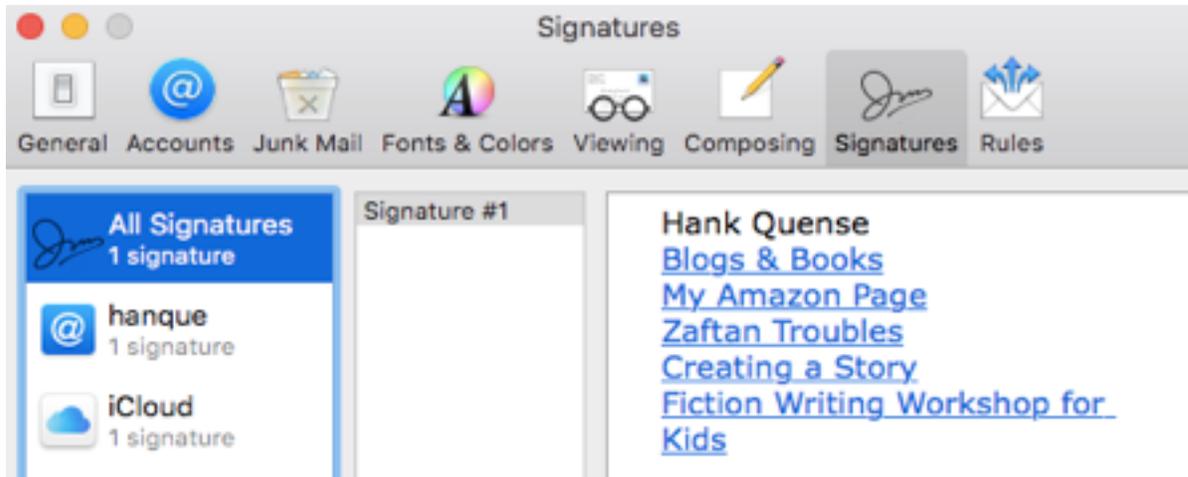
Your name

Title of your book

Location of your website

The last two lines would be linked to a webpage, the first to a book buying page like Amazon, the second to your blog page.

Sig files are easy to implement and only take a few minutes. For the Mac mail program, open mail, click on preferences and then on signatures. This will open a new screen like the one shown below.



#

On the left is a list of your email accounts (if you have more than one). The middle column lists the signatures you have established. Right now, it's probably blank. Click on the (+) button and type a file name, such as 'sig 1'. In the right column, you can add the sig files you want and they will be linked to the sig name. To do this, type the name of your book in the right column, highlight the book name, right click on the mouse and click on 'link' and then type or paste the URL of your book page. Close the screen and every time you send out a new email, the link to your book's page will go with it.

With Gmail, go to the settings page and scroll down to Signature. There you'll see a text box to add whatever you want appended to your signature. You can add links as you need them. Other email programs will have a similar process to build a sig file.

If you use Outlook, this link will provide information about sig files in that program: <https://www.mail-signatures.com/articles/outlook-email-signature-location-and-backup/>

## **Sampling**

One of the ripple effects of the new world in publishing is that many of the books now available are pure garbage. People who don't know how to create or write a story nevertheless do exactly that and expect readers to buy their drivel. This situation has led to the development of sampling, a technique that allows a potential reader to taste the product before spending money. Today, no one buys a book from a new author or, indeed, any author, without first reading a sample. Your book will be no exception. If you want readers to buy your book, you'll have to provide them with samples of your work.

One simple way to provide sampling is on the book's Amazon webpage. Make sure you check off the box that allows sampling. This puts an arrow near the cover icon that reads, 'Click to look inside.' It's a sample, in other words.

When you upload a book to Smashwords, you'll come across a box labeled, "Allow Sampling." Check it off and then you'll be asked to specify a percentage of the book to sample. If you check off 10%, what the sampler will see is mostly the front matter stuff and sadly little of the book's text. I recommend allowing at least 20% as the sample size. Other packagers will provide a similar option.

### **Trailers**

Trailers are short movie-like films about your book. They are designed to educate, entice and entertain viewers. When you watch TV, you are constantly bombarded by trailers for movies and TV shows, so you have definitely seen trailers; you can't escape them.

If your marketing budget has funding for a trailer, it is best if you can get it before the launch date and use it in your pre-launch marketing.

Trailers can be expensive if you hire a top-notch production company to put one together for your book. Think \$1,000 or more. With advances in

software and competition, many production companies now make trailers for a modest fee, generally less than \$100. These less expensive trailers can be just as effective as the more expensive ones. You can do a web search to find trailer production companies, but you can also ask on LinkedIn and Goodreads.

You can make a trailer yourself. I do. Granted, my trailers aren't as classy as the ones put out by an expensive production company, but mine get the book's message out.

If you make or commission a trailer, put it on your webpage as well as YouTube and Vimeo and add a link to it in your blog posts. You can also add the YouTube trailer link in tweets. Add the trailer link into your sig files if you wish. Make sure you add it to your Amazon Central page.

If you have a publisher and it didn't make a trailer, tell it about your trailer and ask the publisher to add a link on your book's web page.

If your self-published book is currently available, see if the packager has a option to add the trailer to its information about your book.