

## Sample Article for Time-pressed Reporters

(adapt for your publication)

### Broke Caregiver Shows how to Publish on a Shoestring

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You just know you have a book in you. You just don't believe you could accomplish the enormous task of publishing it yourself. "The cost is prohibitive," you'll say. "Never mind the expertise – and the contacts you have to have!"

Ruth Marlene Friesen however, was a caregiver for her parents in Hague, Saskatchewan, for 21 years, during which she wrote a novel, and persevered to teach herself on the internet how to publish and market it in a new electronic way.

"I've got this far," Friesen, a freelance writer, with some short-run self-published family histories, says, "on a shoestring too short to wrap around my finger, and with a lot of prayer. Miracles do happen again and again!"

"Miracles!" you wonder, "What kind of hope is that for me? I never see one."

Consider Friesen's starting odds. Single, getting her shelter and food as her father's live-in caregiver, she has no regular income, just what comes as gifts in answer to prayer, or through the odd freelancing or translation job she does on the side. She's quick to add, "I'm sure others can do this. If there's any catch, it's that only that I'm doggedly self-disciplined. Maybe more than most. And, I'm convinced God is helping me. But others can ask for that too."

Friesen got a Print-on-Demand contract with BookLocker.com so that her novel, *Ruthe's Secret Roses*, aimed at a general audience, but mainly young women in the teen to early twenties range, can be put in their hands in a paperback edition as well as the digital e-book version.

"When I signed up," Friesen says enthusiastically, "in March 2001, it only costs \$199 US for a POD contract. You will need to lay out \$95 US for a cover design (and any corrections you want to make to the final manuscript are \$99 US per go), plus to get listed in the big Ingram's book distributor catalogue so the regular bookstore chains will order your book is \$35 US."

"After that," says Friesen, "Any costs you incur are for your own advertising agenda. It doesn't matter now, if I sell one book or hundreds upon thousands; my publishing costs are behind me!"

Friesen concedes that in the long run it would be cheaper per book to have 5000 printed at a time, and she hopes the novel will reach such popularity that she can do it that way. "For someone without the money to invest," Friesen says, "or the household name, POD is a marvelous new way to break into print. Publishing has come within the grasp of poor caregivers and dishwashers - like me."

Author of *A Godly Inheritance*, and *Grandpa's Stories*, Friesen was online for two years before she spent a dime on anything online, aside from her internet connection. However, she's taught herself to build web sites, has several of her own domain names; <https://ruthes-secretroses.com>, <https://bouquetofenterprises.biz>, <https://agodlyinheritance.com>. She has published a weekly ezine full of progress reports on her publishing efforts and website, and inspirational articles since 2001. It now has a blog and RSS editions as well as the free email edition of *RoseBouquet*.

This prolific writer has registered two businesses, and now markets her novel, *Ruthe's Secret Roses*, some e-books she has written on the side, and some affiliate products from her web sites. The novel is described in detail on <https://ruthes-secretroses.com>

(559 words)

### **SIDEBAR: Publishing on a Shoestring**

If you have dreamed of writing a book, your wave to ride to success is just coming in. Here is Friesen's recipe for publishing on a shoestring;

1. **Write what you know and love.** Then polish, polish, polish! (Polish is her word for editing and improving the writing until perfect).
2. **Set aside regular hours** to get on the internet and explore the writing, the publishing and the marketing worlds. Learn by signing up for and reading free ezines.
3. At the same time **try out writing your own ezine, design websites, and learn to promote them.** You don't have to spend money right away.
4. If you have a non-fiction book, **set it up in a word processing program** (Libre-Office is free) and when edited and polished **save it as a PDF document**, then **set it up to sell it from your web site.** Use ClickBank or PayPal to collect the money. Right now I find that Stripe is the best option.

Fiction still sells better as a paper book, (but is fast catching on with the Palm Reader crowds) - so you'll need to learn all about Print-on-Demand for your stories to go places.

5. **Study marketing and promotion, and publicity**, and work all the angles you can, as often and as hard as you can. There are lots of free advertising avenues. Exhaust them first, and only use paid advertising once your income starts coming. Even then, be selective, or you will get ripped off. (The best place to learn these things is from MLSP; <http://Bouquet.weeklymarketingwebinars.org/>)

As she has time, Friesen keeps adding and hopes to weave mentoring and more detailed advice in these steps into her site, <https://ruthes-secretroses.com>. "At this point," she says with a big grin, "I'm still busy on step 5 myself!"

(297 words)