Publi

UX Research

Report

PRESENTED TO
Edvora

PRESENTED BY
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Introduction

This report summarizes the research conducted for Edvora screening process task. It is an informative summary that defines goals/objectives, research methodology and impactful insights.

Goals/Obectives

The following goals and objectives were created in response to the task given by Edvora.

- To allow users to publish an e-book on Kindle instantly without having to manually change formatting.
- To offer Amazon KDP approved templates, to make it easy for users to publish their work.
- To feature a drag and drop tool for users to create the book cover with ease
- To allow creative control with the implemented tools by not limiting users.
- Integrated final book layout and cover preview in two dimension and three-dimensional mock ups.
- Auto generated templates that meet KDP standards, for the user to edit to their specific needs

Problem Statement

Amazons KDP self-publishing has become the go to for many writers, the reason being is, most writers retain control of the publishing process and present their work directly to readers rather than going the traditional route by trying to appeal to industry people who let their professional decisions be influenced by their own basis.

Unfortunately, the entry barrier to publish a e-book on Amazon is quite complicated at times. This is where Publi comes in, Publi is a self-publication application for KDP e-books, it helps authors and writers publish books on Amazon by making the process easier and simpler to use. Publi helps the user publish their e-book with ease by supplying tools that make it proficient for them to format, design the cover and layouts, setting the size and overall, choosing the right options when publishing one's book.

Assumptions

My assumptions for the entry barrier of self-publishing a book on Amazon KDP:
- There are specific layouts that make a book professional that have to be meet
- The upfront cost of self-publishing might be expensive
- Designing a cover might need professional help
- Your book needs to approved before being published
- There is a minimum word count for a self published book that has to meet

Research Mythodolgy

In order to better understand how users can make use of Publi, I first researched the process to self-publish a book on Amazon KDP best described by them. This gave me a better understanding on the process for when I had to conduct the interviews. After analysing the interviews, I gained an understanding on the complications of the process from a first timer and an already self-published writer, thus creating solutions Publi can implement to make their process better.

Recruiting Methodology

For the interviews, I looked at interviewing individuals that have been through the process of publishing and currently has an already published e-book on Kindle and I also interviewed an individual who is looking to publish their first e-book on Kindle. I recruited these participants from older clients who one I designed their book cover for their published book, and the others from mutual friends who are in the process of publishing a book.

Summary of Participants

There were three people I interviewed in total. One was a male who has self-published a book on KDP, and the other two were females. The one is looking to publish a book for the first time and the other a hobbyist writer who would be interested in publishing a book one day. The male participant is a serial entrepreneur and one of the other females is a film producer and writer and the other a post-graduate law student. All the participants are familiar with the use of technology and online tools

Interview Questions

Age:
Gender:
Occupation:

Book Publishing

- Have you ever tried self-publishing a book?
- What do you know about book publishing?

Book Writing

- Would you hire a professional to write your book? if so why
- What do you know about book formatting?
- Why do you think its important to have a professional e-book cover?
- Would you pay a graphic designer to do a professional book cover? if so why
- What writing style do you prefer?
  Descriptive writing
  Narrative writing
  Persuasive writing
  Expository writing

Online Tools

- How long do you expect the online self-publishing process be?
- From a scale of 1-10, How computer proficient are you?
- Have you ever used an online drag and drop tool before, if so which one
- Would you translate your book to other languages? If so why

Participant 1

Age: **38**
Gender: **Male**
Occupation: **Entrepreneur**

Book Publishing

- Have you ever tried self-publishing a book?

Yes, I have but had to hire a professional to do it for me due to lack of experience and time constraints

- What do you know about book publishing?

I didn't know much but I have a bit of knowledge about it now, after publishing my first book

Book Writing

- Would you hire a professional to write your book? if so why

When I publish my second book I will definitely hire a professional, because it always makes to get professional if you want the final product to be of quality

- What do you know about book formatting for KDP?

I **am clueless unfortunately**

- Why do you think its important to have a professional e-book cover?

The cover is like the packaging of the book, It sets the tone of what type of book

- Would you pay a graphic designer to do a professional book cover? if so why

I **did pay a graphic designer to do my cover for the first book**

- What writing style do you prefer?

Descriptive writing

Online Tools

- How long do you expect the KDP self-publishing process takes?

The process sometimes is daunting because of changes one has to do before getting an approval, so don't expect anything less then a month.

- From a scale of 1-10, How computer proficient are you?

I am computer proficient but I don't know every software out there 7/10

- Have you ever used an online drag and drop tool before, if so which one

Yes, when I created my first business website back in the day, it was Webbly if I am not mistaken

- Would you translate your book to other languages? If so why

No I don't see the need to translate it

Participant 2

Age: **31**
Gender: **Female**
Occupation: **Film and series producer**

Book Publishing

- Have you ever tried self-publishing a book?

No, but looking to publish one this years

- What do you know about book publishing?

Not much, I know it is quite a process

Book Writing

- Would you hire a professional to write your book? if so why

No, I believe I am a good writer from writing a couple of award winning scripts before

- What do you know about book formatting for KDP?

I know there is a standard format for most KDP published books

- Why do you think its important to have a professional e-book cover?

The visuals are just as important as what's inside, cover is the first interaction you have with the book

- Would you pay a graphic designer to do a professional book cover? if so why

No graphic designers are quite expensive, if I had to publish my short stories I would rather do the covers myself to make sure I make exactly what I want

- What writing style do you prefer?

Narative writing

Online Tools

- How long do you expect the KDP self-publishing process takes?

Once you done the layout and cover, I think it should be a quick process, a couple of days maybe

- From a scale of 1-10, How computer proficient are you?

I am quite proficient 8/10

- Have you ever used an online drag and drop tool before, if so which one

Yes I have, Canva, Wix for one of our films

- Would you translate your book to other languages? If so why

Yes, I would like to translate the work that I write since it is mostly stories

Participant 3

Age: **25**
Gender: **Female**
Occupation: **Post-graduate student (BCom in Law)**

Book Publishing

- Have you ever tried self-publishing a book?

No, I will publish my writings in the near future

- What do you know about book publishing?

I don't know much, haven't done any research about it

Book Writing

- Would you hire a professional to write your book? if so why

No, I want my work to feel genuine and original as possible

- What do you know about book formatting for KDP?

I don't know much about that

- Why do you think its important to have a professional e-book cover?

The book cover is important as it can make the book more professional for a reader who is interested in a new author

- Would you pay a graphic designer to do a professional book cover? if so why

No I think graphic designers are expensive, something like Canva can make nice book covers

- What writing style do you prefer?

Descriptive writing

Online Tools

- How long do you expect the KDP self-publishing process takes?

Not sure maybe a week should be enough

- From a scale of 1-10, How computer proficient are you?

8/10

- Have you ever used an online drag and drop tool before, if so which one

Yes, I used Canva a lot for my presentations

- Would you translate your book to other languages? If so why

Yes, having your work translated seems interesting, because I can connect with a broader audience

Insights

Analysis Method

I analysed each of the interviews individually and then compared them to one another. I noted all the similarities, differences, and findings. These results helped me understand the user's problems and motivations of publishing a book on Amazon KDP, this information is key to developing recommendations, personas and scenarios.

Findings and Recommendations

In general, the interviews have all used some sort of online design tool in the past. The evident difficulty that was faced with the participants was getting a book formatted the right way before publishing. The other problem I found was the making of the book cover, the participants were mostly writers and not designers and making a professional book cover that meets Amazons KDP standards was a daunting task, this forced the hiring of a graphic designer, who was going to charge a lot. The participants all wanted a simple way of self-publishing a professional book entirely by themselves.

Findings 1

The formatting of the layout is tricky when self-publishing a book

The three participants all complained or were not aware about the acceptable Amazon KDP book formats. One of the participants who has a self-published book on Amazon talked about his past experiences and how he had to hire someone just to publish the book on KDP, as it was giving him errors and the feedback, he continuously got was reluctant.

Recommendations

The option of having a drag and drop tool was a suggested solution, the participants all had some previous experience in using some sort of drag and drop tool to design something online. So Publi will have to ensure it has all the acceptable Amazon KDP sizes on their templates that they will offer to users to edit as they please giving them creative control but also keeping it within the acceptable standards. The drag and drop tool would have the users pick their book, and book type, and then would have to upload their transcript in PDF or Word document. The algorithm would automatically copy and past the text as is into the chosen template. The user can then view a preview of the book layout and do changes were needed, without affecting their transcript.

Findings 2

The participants stress on not having any skills in designing a book cover

The first user stated having to hire a graphic designer to design their book cover. The book cover had to professional and meet the KDP standard size. All the users however had no idea about format of designing a spread book cover, because they didn't have any understanding of bleeds and book splines. The other two participants also commented on not having a budget to hire a graphic designer.

Recommendations

The use of a drag and drop tool to design a professional book cover is the suggested option. Publi will have perfectly sized blank spread templates from the chosen book size, that will enable the user to drag and drop elements, upload whatever picture they desire. There would also be guidelines and a tutorial that would help the users maintain the KDP standards. They would have full creative control of creating the cover without worrying about cutting lines and bleeds, Publi will also offer options on colours.

Findings 3

The simplicity of self-publishing should be simple especially for new writers.

The most frustrating thing about self-publishing a book on KDP is the process not being simple and easy for a new user. The participants all wished for the process to be as simple as purchasing something online. This created a lot of options and possibilities on the features of Publi. The one participant also mentioned the process feeling like an application form.

Recommendations

The best suggestion is to have Publi as a tool/online application that is synced with Amazon KDP. This would give users full control of the entire process of publishing their book without having to use third party applications to a particular solution.

Conclusion

From the interviews with the participants, it was evident that most users are looking at reliability and simplicity, when using an online product. They also want to have previews on how their final product will look like. Users also want an easy quick system to use, so Publi would have to have a final mock-up that will give a realistic preview of their book before publishing.

Persona Justification

Building the appropriate persona required, me to do research on how the Amazon self-publishing process works, and gathered data from reviews, there after I conducted three interviews, that covered a broad demographic from someone who is already a self-publisher to a writer looking to publish in their near future. Accordingly, I decided on the general background of the persona: A female who is a frequent computer and writing hobbyist.

Jenny King

32/CPT/Single/Marketing Analyst

PERSONALITY

Driven

Tech Savvy

Extraverted

MOTIVATIONS

Networking

Convenience

Structure

GOALS

• Be a leader in my field of work
• Publish books about marketing in tech

FRUSTRATIONS

• juggling multiple tasks

• missing calendar reminders

• lost emails

Scenario

Jenny is a marketing analyst with over 10 years of working in the industry, she spends most of her time doing working and talking to clients. Jenny is an independent and a workaholic and tries to keep on her scheduled daily tasks. She lives alone and is currently single, being single doesn't affect her as much as she is an introvert and enjoys her alone time.

Jenny is an avid writer and also enjoys reading. She is currently interested in publishing some of her written work about marketing technological products. The reason she wants to publish her work is to make an extra side income while teaching young marketers about marketing in the tech industry. She wants to be involved in the whole process of publishing her book and doesn't mind doing everything on her own as she is very much capable. She however does not have experience in graphic design, so she will be struggling when formatting her book to meet Amazon KDP standards.

Jenny chooses to use Publi to self-publish her book, she visits the Publi online website and creates an account which would link to her other accounts including Amazon KDP. After her registration is done, she would then start with the self-publishing process, by choosing on the available size options book cover type, paper type. Publi would then generate a template from her chosen options. She then can upload her transcript in PDF form or a word document, and Publi would translate the transcript to the generated template. She has options to change anything she wants and add more elements to her layout. She can preview the final layout and move on to creating her book cover, Publi will generate the accurate book cover depending on her previous options and she can then drag and drop elements, upload images, and write title of her book cover. Jenny can view a preview of her final book and go back if she needs to make certain changes. When she happy with the formatting of her book and cover, she can proceed to the pricing options and set prices for her book. Publi will link all these to Amazon KDP and her book will be ready and published.