

Christian Publications INTERNATIONAL

2017-18 BOOK PUBLISHING PROSPECTUS

Christian Publications International (“CPI”) is a publisher of Christian books. This imprint focuses on helping new Christian authors, who often struggle to be taken seriously by major publishing houses, to get their work into print and made available to the general public, usually via the **self-publishing** or **sponsored publishing** option. It also supports established authors.

VISION

To be a recognized and trusted resource for dependable, biblical Christian publications that are fit for the modern age

MISSION

- To address two categories of reader:
 - White Fields = those outside The Kingdom
 - concerned Christians who recognise the huge question-marks over the institutional churches and the growing prevalence of apostasy within, and are seeking a dependable Christian resource to equip them for difficult times ahead
- To create materials that are well written and as easy to read as possible, yet bearing in mind that God graciously gave us a LIBRARY of 66 books as His primary mechanism to engage with Mankind
- To be a faithful witness in this post-Christian epoch
- To explore the Hebraic wherever possible and to marvel at God’s covenantal faithfulness to His People

BASIC AUTHOR QUESTIONS

Authors sometimes forget these basic questions: **Who** is your target readership? **Why** should they invest time in reading your book? **What** will they get at the end of it that they did not have at the beginning? **What** competing books are out there already and why is yours better (and it *has* to be better to have any chance of selling, especially if you are a new author). **Why** should a publisher spend precious time (and inevitably money) in supporting your work? If you cannot answer these basic questions then probably you do not have a book!

There are more Christian writers out there than there are Christian readers to justify the publication of their books. This is an age in which people read less than previous generations – and sadly this includes Christians. When a Christian reads a book this denies them time to read *the* Book, namely the Bible. Does God really want you to

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take away perhaps five or six evenings from a Christian brother or sister reading your text, when arguably they ought to be reading *the Book*?

It is true to say that many Christians feel a ‘call’ to write a book. It is often said there is a book in each one of us, too, but that does not mean each one of us should write one! And of course there is an insufficient body of readers to justify most books on commercial grounds.

Christians should not over-spiritualise this, thinking that someone else should fund their book because God has ‘called’ them to write it. Very many really good books do not get the exposure or readership they deserve – so why might God especially bless yours?

All this may sound downbeat, but it is realistic.

There *is* a case for publishing non-commercial books (occasionally), and a Christian publisher will no doubt sense a prompting of the Holy Spirit if they are called to ‘invest’ (and that generally means lose) money in supporting a book that has especial biblical or ministry merit.

So where does this leave the author who feels called?

First of all *test your calling*. Don’t start to write a book before chatting it over with some trusted Christian friends. The optimal way of using your books is sometimes as an adjunct to a speaking ministry. What this means is you may have (or plan to develop) a ministry where you make available one or more books that help to support the ministry (by resourcing your hearers/readers, helping them to remember and learn more about what you have taught; and possibly financially, but that cannot be the primary motive). You may consider that people are likely to want to buy your book when they have heard (and have been blessed by) your talk. Do you have such a ministry? Do you feel called to develop such a ministry? Remember that there are no guarantees in these areas. Books may or may not sell, so do not commit to what you cannot afford or in the expectation of profit.

If you feel you can answer all the questions above in a way that is honouring to God, then write a book prospectus to yourself (and, later, for a publisher) stating:

- What the book is about;
- Who the intended readers will be – segmenting them if possible into sub groups;
- What similar books are already out there, and how ‘successful’ have they been;
- Why people might turn to your book in preference to existing titles;
- How this book honours God;
- How long it will be (expected number of words, to nearest thousand);
- What the potential contents of the book will be (include any index and Appendices).

Then ask yourself how much you are prepared to invest in this yourself.

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It is this final question that is often the clincher! If you are not prepared to fund or support a book, then why should a publisher?

WHAT CAN CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS INTERNATIONAL DO FOR YOU?

CPI will produce a first class product, generally in paperback although we do have hardback experience. We can now assist in preparing e-book editions and are beginning to place books for production via Amazon CreateSpace (which enables genuinely economic printing of one-off copies of excellent quality, for shipment via Amazon globally).

- CPI supplies **ISBNs** and a recognised **imprint** with a growing backlist.
- CPI can assist with and enable translation to other languages.
- CPI sub-contracts all copy editing, proof reading, cover design, printing, etc.

For traditional offset litho print production the minimum print run is usually 2,000. Usually a run-on of 1,000 copies (ordered at the same time) enables an average *print* cost of around £3000, including layout, editing, cover design and ISBN, or circa £1.00 per copy. Shorter print runs are possible using PoD or equivalent technology. This raises unit cost, however, often to around £3 to £4.

CPI registers all new titles with Nielsen Bookdata and deposits all new titles (as a legal requirement) to the British Library and other libraries of legal deposit.

Distribution is currently through two main avenues:

1. Our website
2. A major Christian wholesale distributor and some independent book shops

A third fulfilment route, via **Amazon CreateSpace**, is our preferred delivery mechanism for those titles that should have international appeal.

CPI can help with further **publicity** i.e. producing New Title Information sheets, further **advertising** to the trade, and sending out general publicity sheets, advertising all CPI titles, to a variety of different Christian bookshops in the UK. Costs, if any, to the author are discussed beforehand, so that the author can decide what services to use.

CPI will send out complimentary copies of its books for **review** purposes (especially new titles) to a number of relevant periodicals. NOTE: we must be realistic here as well! Many periodicals will not bother to review books. They already have a constantly renewed tidal-wave of fresh titles from the USA, backed by money, and authored by well known writers. Periodicals are generally not well disposed towards unknown authors!

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CPI can arrange warehousing for a modest cost. Authors can elect to hold copies at home (we recommend this, if you have room) but should note that they may then have to be actively involved in sending out copies, dealing with orders, etc. Warehousing is no longer the modest cost it once was, partly because insurance premiums and climate control are now the biggest cost factors.

CPI will register the book on Nielsen database, so the book can be searched by any bookstore/wholesaler.

SOME LIMITATIONS

CPI will generally support titles that meet its overall Christian ethos. If a title will not 'fit' with that overall thrust then CPI is less likely to be able to devote the time and energy to undertake the publishing work. Having said that, some authors want to handle all marketing themselves, so CPI may be able to assist in providing the ISBN and some guidance, but take no active part in distribution. These matters can be explored quite simply in an initial phone call.

COMMERCIAL REALISM

In today's Christian bookselling market, authors need to be realistic and aware that they are unlikely to recover all their costs. They should typically see their publishing project as part of their Christian ministry, and/or something they feel strongly led to do through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. *Whilst it is possible that a 'bestseller' will emerge, this is very unlikely.* Some authors have itinerant speaking ministries and actively sell their own books to audiences who are predisposed to buy. Others may feel it appropriate to gift a proportion of their books either to the developing world, where there is considerable need but limited resources, and/or to specific UK readership groups. Such gifting will sometimes lead to follow-on retail orders.

Some authors allow the book to take its course in the selling market for a period of, say, two years and then gift the remainder to a worthy cause, retaining a number for their personal use.

To recognise at the outset the unlikelihood of full cost recovery, authors are freed to concentrate on the possible ministry applications of their book. Royalty income / partial cost recovery, should then be considered as a bonus to the overall ministry objective. This realism also enables a low RRP strategy, which can actually support sales and therefore assist cost recovery.

If, after going through the notes above, you still feel either the call to write, and/or already have a book you feel is a realistic proposition, then please feel free to contact CPI initially by email at: contact@christian-publications-int.com

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ETHOS

CPI attempts to be Scripture based, honouring the Word. Accordingly, for many titles we include a publisher's note to encourage readers to check our books against the peerless witness of Scripture. Two such notes are reproduced here:

- *The contents of this book (concerning thoughts, words and actions imaginatively attributed to the characters depicted) represent the reflections of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher. Readers are urged always to refer to the Holy Bible, and to understand only Scripture itself as being the authoritative record of the lives of the people depicted in this book.*
- *As with all CPI publications, throughout this book the reader is asked to compare what is written with the Bible, and if at any point a conflict is found to accept what is written in Scripture.*

GROUP BIBLE STUDY

Some books lend themselves to use within a group study context, e.g. at local church Bible Studies. Authors should consider devising Bible Study questions and leader prompts. These can be included as appendices at the end of a book, or made available as a downloadable PDF via the CPI website.

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