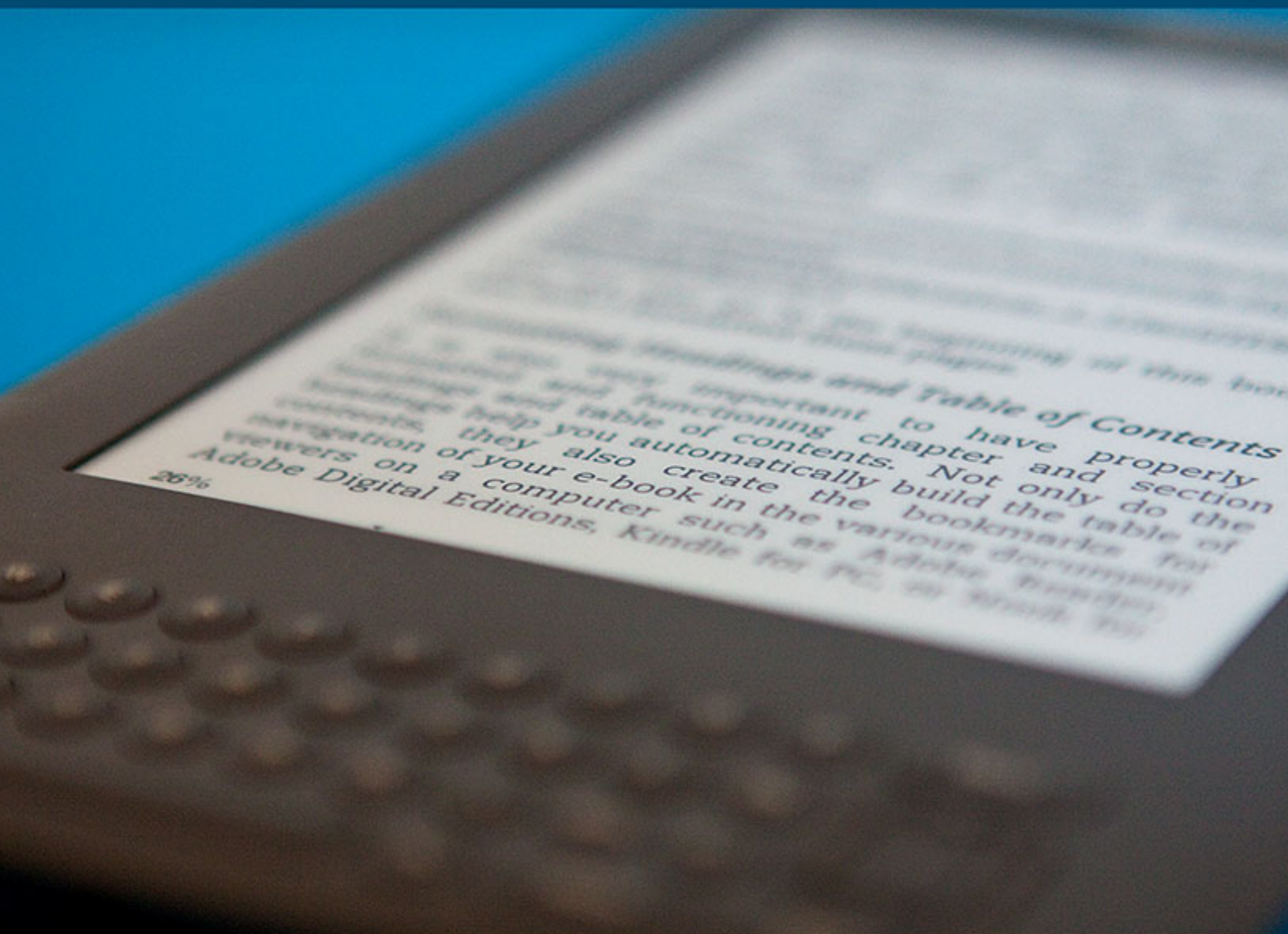


# The E-Book Handbook

A Thoroughly Practical Guide to  
Formatting, Publishing, Marketing, and  
Selling Your E-Book

an e-book by:  
Douglas J. Klostermann



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a *Full Stop.* publication

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### **The E-Book Handbook**

A Thoroughly Practical Guide to Formatting, Publishing, Marketing, and Selling Your E-Book

by: Douglas J. Klostermann

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# 1. So You're Ready to Write an E-Book

## My E-Book Story

One day, several months ago, I was in a bookstore reading some of the latest digital camera guides. As I looked through various books from different authors and publishers I became increasingly frustrated. Very few of them, it seemed to me, really seemed to “get it.” Only one or two of the books or series of guides appeared to be truly helpful to a new digital SLR user looking to not only learn to operate their camera, but to understand when and why to use the various controls and settings in real life. I thought back to the process I went through as I learned how to use my first digital SLR, and all the knowledge I continued to accumulate from experience, books, blogs, and forums, and was convinced I could do a better job of explaining how to use one of these cameras to their full potential.

Over the next few days I contemplated writing an e-book user’s guide for the latest digital SLR that had recently been released. I wondered how many e-books I could sell and tried to determine if it would be worth my time and effort. I concluded that based on the time I would have to invest in researching and writing the guide and the couple dozen copies I would probably – at most – sell, it would fall far short of being a profitable exercise. But I was still convinced that I could write a better guide, so I began working on it. After a couple weeks of intense effort I had completed the guide, put it up for sale using a shopping cart and digital delivery service called E-Junkie and informed the world about it on my photography blog. Two days later I made my first sale.



Figure 2 – One of my e-book camera guides for sale on Amazon.com.

Additional sales slowly followed, and then after two more weeks I discovered that I could also put my e-book up for sale online at Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com for free and with a minimum amount of additional effort (see *Figure 2*). Six months later I was offering five e-books, had sold over 1,500 copies of them, had spent less than 3% of the net profit in costs, and had recently learned I could also offer them for sale on the Sony Reader Store and on Apple iTunes and the iBooks App via an e-book distributor (or aggregator) called Smashwords. Eight months after my first sale my e-books were regularly at or near the top of the *Photography Equipment* and *Photography Reference* bestseller lists for Kindle e-books on Amazon and I was earning enough profit to be able to dedicate myself full-time to my e-books and my blog, the primary marketing tool for my rapidly growing e-book empire.

### Your E-Book Story

While I hope that your e-books are as successful, I'm not trying to imply that every e-book venture will have the same immediate results. Several aspects of what I lightheartedly refer to as my "e-book empire" were already in place and had developed slowly over long periods of time. I had started my blog in 2008 and developed it into a successful site about photography, photography equipment and techniques over the following couple years, and thus already had a small audience of potential e-book readers. I also participate in forums discussing photography and camera equipment and I have acquired photography and digital camera expertise from working as a professional photographer and through my experience as a salesperson in a camera store. I have always enjoyed writing, and have honed my technical photography writing skills with my blog. I have computer, Internet, Word, PDF, formatting, and HTML skills which I had learned over the previous decade or so, as well as graphic design, web design, and Photoshop skills from my careers as an architect and photographer. My website was already in place and I possess the basic knowledge needed to create new webpages. And I already owned a computer and the software required to write an e-book document (Word), create a cover (Photoshop or Photoshop Elements), and convert it all into a secure PDF document (Adobe Acrobat).

But I can tell you that if you have information, knowledge, or a story that others are interested in reading and the skills to write, format, put on sale, and market an e-book, much of the rest is both straightforward and free or very low cost. Even the types of software I mention above are available in free versions such as the OpenOffice software suite (<http://www.openoffice.org/>). Using a digital delivery site coordinated with a payment processor like E-Junkie and PayPal or an e-book publisher like Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing or Barnes and Noble's PubIt!, the transactions and digital delivery occur automatically with a minimum amount of participation by you once they are set up. However, keep in mind that this does not mean that once your book is written and put up for sale that your e-book venture will continue to prosper automatically as the income passively rolls in. Every aspect of it, including marketing, updating content, and communicating with past or potential customers takes continued effort and maintenance (see [The Daily / Weekly Routine](#) section). But all of it is something you can do, if you are dedicated, in your "spare" time. Yes, I know no one has spare time these days, but if

you manage to devote a couple hours a day to the process it will slowly but consistently come together.

This guide will walk you step by step through the processes of formatting, converting, setting up the payment and digital delivery sites, uploading to additional publishers like Amazon and Barnes and Noble, creating a blog or website, marketing, communicating with customers, and keeping track of and analyzing your sales and expenses. And it contains tips and information gained from my experience and research which will help make the process as easy, low-cost, and efficient as possible.

### Exciting E-Book Statistics

Statistics about e-books, e-book publishing, and e-readers are being reported and discussed with increasing frequency. Many different numbers are presented and they are constantly changing, but the overall conclusion is clear: e-book sales are rising at a dramatic pace. As I write this, the Association of American Publishers reports that e-book sales in the United States just exceeded those of each of the other formats, including hardback and paperback sales, and grew 200% from February 2010 to February 2011 (<http://www.publishers.org/press/30/>). Amazon reports that electronic books are now outselling printed books on Amazon.com – hardcover and paperback combined – and e-book sales are three times higher this year than the same period last year (<http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=176060&p=irol-newsArticle&ID=1565581&highlight>). The Kindle e-reader is also currently the best-selling product on Amazon, Apple's iPads are selling by the tens of millions, Android powered tablet sales are increasing, and numerous other companies are developing and selling tablet devices. And both Amazon and Barnes and Noble have recently introduced more affordable e-reader devices. It seems there is no better time to join the e-book revolution.

E-books can be read on a PC or Mac, on an e-reader device like a Kindle, Nook, or Sony Reader, on an iPad, Android or other tablet, or even on an iPhone or other smart phone. PDF versions of an e-book can be printed by the purchaser on their own printer. The publishing playing field has never been so level for self-published, independent authors. Your e-books can be up for sale on Amazon along with all the printed and Kindle books, complete with descriptions, reviews, and an author page, and with the potential to be found and bought by anyone shopping and searching online. Not only are they available on Amazon in the United States and Canada, but also on Amazon.UK and Amazon.DE (Germany). With e-books you can publish your books as soon as you complete them, then make changes and additions to your text or descriptions at any time and have the new versions posted and available in minutes from your website or on E-Junkie, or at least within a couple days on Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. And through the Internet your e-books will be available to readers internationally.



## **2. Laying the Groundwork**

Before or as you start writing your e-book, it is important to begin putting some other elements of your future e-book empire into place. As I mentioned above, several important components had been established before I ever started writing and selling e-books, including a blog, a website, and participation in related forums. Each of these is important for creating awareness of your e-book and marketing it to potential readers. I suggest that you spend some time to build this foundation that will be required to sell and market the e-books you will be putting so much effort into. When your book is finally ready for publication and you are eager to start selling it, you'll be glad that some of the groundwork has already been established. This section is somewhat off the subject of e-books but I feel it is important to include as an introduction to other components of your e-book effort that you should consider. If this is not applicable to you, feel free to jump forward to the [Formatting Your E-Book](#) section.

### **Creating Your Blog and Website**

You will very likely find it beneficial to first set up a website and/ or a blog that you can use to both market and sell your e-books directly. While it is possible to reach an audience on Amazon without much effort on your part, you can widen your potential audience through your website and blog and the additional appearances on Google searches that they will bring. You can also make more profit from the e-books you sell directly on your own sites (*Tip!*). Pricing and royalties will be discussed in more detail later, but as an example: for the e-books you sell on Amazon.com, you will earn 70% royalty on the price you set (as long as this price is between \$2.99 and \$9.99). Royalties for e-books sold on BarnesandNoble.com are 65%. If you sell them directly from your website or blog using services such as E-Junkie for digital delivery and PayPal for payment processing, you can earn about 94% of whatever price you set. For example, most of my photography e-books sell for \$11.99 on my own site, and \$9.99 on Amazon.com, so I earn about \$11.27 per book when I sell one myself and \$6.98 per book when I sell one on Amazon. (Amazon also has a couple cent digital delivery cost, or higher depending on the file size.) At over \$4.00 more per sale, you can see it is worthwhile to sell as many copies as you can through your own channels! Even if they are sold for the same price on both sites, you will still earn about 94% vs. 70% net profit.

### **Setting Up Your Blog**

If you don't have a blog yet, start setting one up and posting to it right away. You will ideally want to have a blog that discusses the same topics as your e-books. If not, you can at least use it to let people know your e-book is in the works. This will also give Google time to learn about it so that when the e-book is actually available it may already be appearing in Google searches. With your blog you can start to build an audience of potential readers and you may even begin to be seen as a reliable expert in your area of interest. It takes time and effort to build a blog audience, so don't agonize over the low number of hits you may get at first and the slow growth of those numbers. There are a few things you can do to help increase your audience that will be discussed later, but the best way to build search results and blog readership is *good content plus time*.

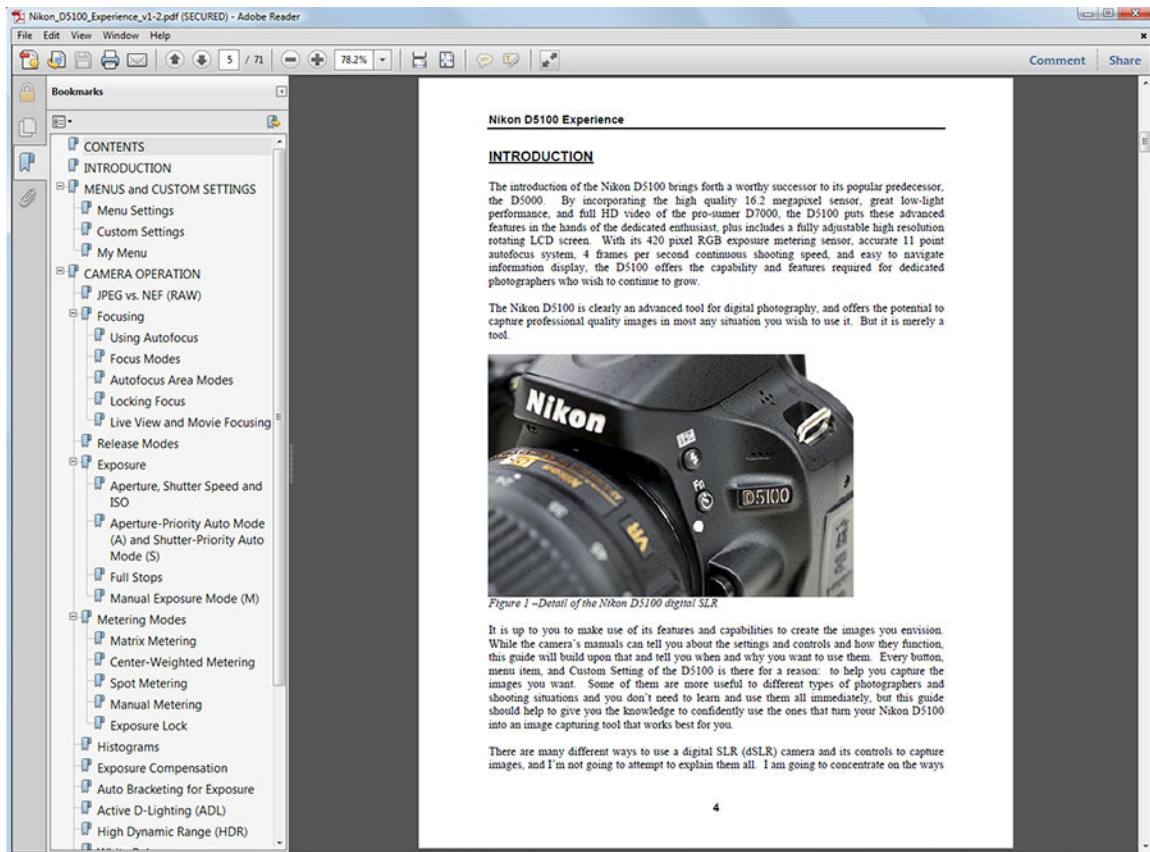
<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/52>

[http://www.amazon.com/Smashwords-Style-Guide-Distribute-ebook/dp/B004XWJ7UK/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1308179033&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Smashwords-Style-Guide-Distribute-ebook/dp/B004XWJ7UK/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1308179033&sr=8-1)

You can also go to the beginning of this book to see how I formatted these pages.

### **Formatting Headings and Table of Contents**

It is also very important to have properly formatted and functioning chapter and section headings and table of contents. Not only do the headings help you automatically build the table of contents, they also create the bookmarks for navigation of your e-book in the various document viewers on a computer such as Adobe Reader, Adobe Digital Editions, Kindle for PC, or Nook for PC (see *Figure 10*). Even if your book is a novel with chapters titled Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, etc, properly formatted headings and table of contents will allow the reader to quickly jump to these different sections of the text.

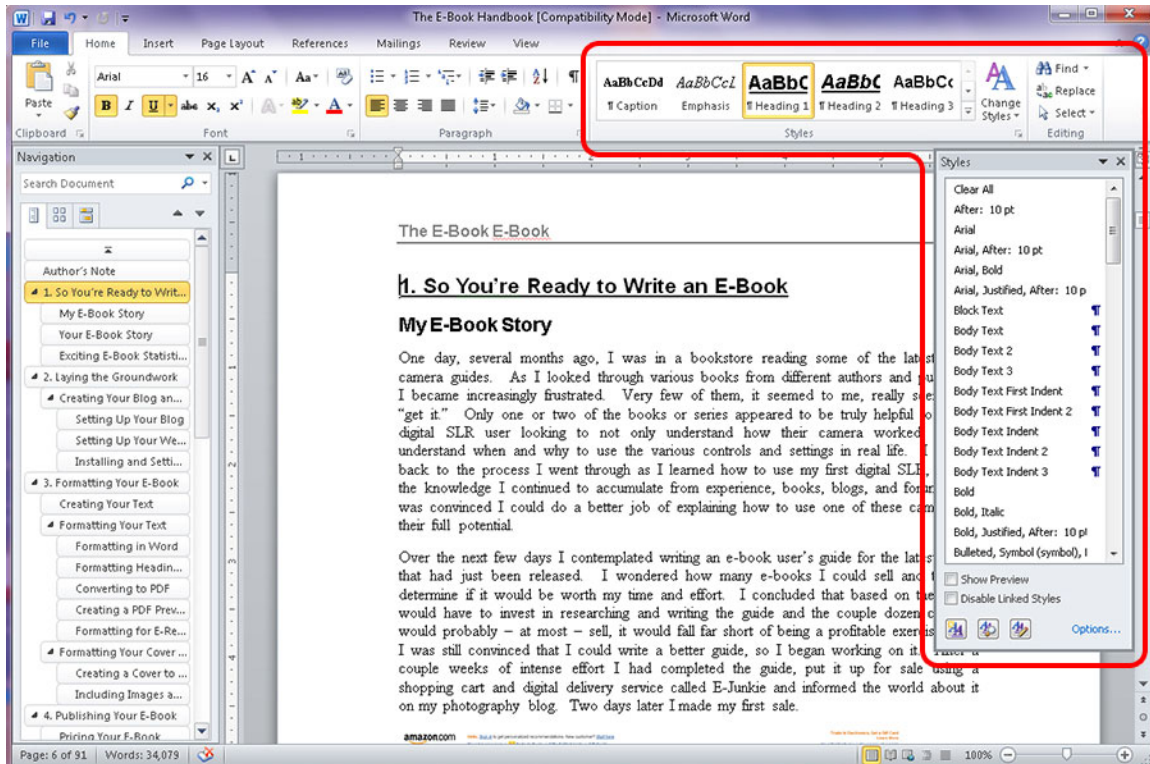


*Figure 10 – PDF e-book being viewed in Adobe Reader, with bookmarks (of chapters and sections created from headings) seen on the left.*

**Creating Headings:** You can use Word’s Table of Contents (TOC) field to create a table of contents after first setting up and using headings throughout the body text. To do this, format your headings for chapters, sections, and sub-sections using Word’s Heading styles. Use the default Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3, etc. to create chapters, sections, and sub-sections, or else modify those defaults for the font, size, and formatting you

## The E-Book Handbook

desire. In the current version of Word, Headings are located under the *Home* tab in the *Styles* section. To view more options, click on the tiny arrow at the lower right corner of this section under where it says *Change Styles* (see *Figure 11*).



*Figure 11 – Make use of the default headings for your chapters, sections, and sub-sections. Access additional options by clicking the tiny arrow under “Change Styles.” The “Navigation Pane” or “Document Map” is also visible on the left.*

In older versions of Word, Headings are located in the *Formatting* tool bar next to the font name, with additional options accessible with the adjacent AA icon or from the *Format* menu > *Styles and Formatting*. To format a chapter or section name as a heading, type the chapter or section name in your document, then highlight it and select *Heading 1* for the chapter titles, *Heading 2* for sections, and *Heading 3* for sub-sections. Repeat this process for marking every chapter or section title throughout the text.

***Building the Table of Contents:*** When you have created all your headings, go to the beginning of your document where you wish to place the table of contents and insert it. To do this in Word 2010, access the *Reference* tab and locate the *Table of Contents* group. Click on one of the *Automatic Tables*, or else choose *Insert Table of Contents* and select your options. You likely want to *Show Page Numbers*, *Right Align Page Numbers*, and use a *Tab Leader* of dots or dashes. Choose how many levels you wish the table of contents to contain, for example three levels consisting of chapters, sections, and sub-sections. You can modify the appearance of each level on the table of contents page, independent of how the headings appear in the text, by clicking the *Modify* button. For example, you can modify the text size, line spacing, or use bold or italics to make the various levels of the table of contents easier to read. Generally, I set them all for Arial and 12 to 14 points so that the entire table of contents fits on one page if possible. With

*Nook Apps* – apps to read e-books on multiple devices including computers, phones, and tablets:

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/u/free-nook-apps/379002321/>

## WordPress

*WordPress Software* – to host your WordPress Blog on your own website:

<http://wordpress.org/>

*WordPress Themes* – to choose the appearance of your blog:

<http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/>

*WordPress Plugins* – to extend the capabilities of your blog:

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/>

*WordPress Jetpack Plugin* – to incorporate important blog elements such as social media buttons and stats:

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/jetpack/>

*WordPress Google Analytics Plugin:*

<http://yoast.com/wordpress/>

*WordPress XML Sitemaps Plugin:*

<http://www.arnebrachhold.de/projects/wordpress-plugins/google-xml-sitemaps-generator/>

## Amazon Author Central

*Amazon Author Central – USA* – for creating your author profile and formatted e-book descriptions and for viewing your sales rank chart:

<https://authorcentral.amazon.com/>

*Amazon Author Central – UK* – for creating your author profile and for viewing your sales rank chart on Amazon.uk:

<https://authorcentral.amazon.co.uk/>

*Amazon Author Central – Germany* – for creating your author profile and for viewing your sales rank chart on Amazon.de:

<https://authorcentral.amazon.de/>

*Babelfish* – To translate your keywords into German:

<http://babelfish.yahoo.com/>

## Search Engine Optimization

*Sumit URL to Google:*

<http://www.google.com/addurl/>

*Sumit URL to Yahoo:*

<http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/submit>

**What readers are saying about Doug's previous e-book camera guides,  
*Nikon D5100 Experience* and *Nikon D7000 Experience*:**

“This manual is a clearly written, concise and useful explanation of the rationale for the seemingly infinite and often confusing settings options for the D7000. Used in conjunction with the Nikon manual I feel a bit more confident in understanding how to at last proceed in getting better photographs.”

-WLS

“This guide is very useful for beginners to experienced users. This book is written in a human way by an experienced photographer who gives you the tips you need to create a beautiful picture. I would recommend this e-book to every new Nikon D5100 buyer!”

-Oliver

“I read it from front to back in one sitting, playing with the camera as I went along, and I found it covered all the major things I was having trouble with. There are many sensible real-world suggestions for configuring the camera that are very helpful, the author writes clearly and concisely, and his approach is accessible and friendly.”

-Jay M.

“It's clear, concise and gets to the heart of the camera's multiple and often confusing options. Very highly recommended - for experienced user and beginner alike.”

-GSA

“This book, together with the manual that came with your camera, is all you need to start discovering all the potential of the D7000.”

-Max M.

“It's the first guide I've read which has taken me through all the settings in an understandable way. I now feel that I have control over the camera.”

-Peter S.

“I would recommend this to anyone who wants to get a quick start to using the D7000. Manuals are nice, but this e-book highlights the important information and gives a quick, easy to understand explanation of most all of the functions and controls.”

-Ray M.

**Purchase *The E-Book Handbook* by Douglas Klostermann at:**

**[http://www.dojoklo.com/Full\\_Stop/The\\_E-Book\\_Handbook.htm](http://www.dojoklo.com/Full_Stop/The_E-Book_Handbook.htm)**