YOUR HANDBOOK ON SELF-PUBLISHING TAROT OR ORACLE CARDS

Is there a formula for success? Yes, yes there is. And step by step, variable by variable, I will take you through that formula. Run your own fact pattern into that formula and you will produce the best possible outcome for yourself. I'm going to share with you how you can maximize the marketability of your indie deck project.

No matter what your deck project is, we'll nudge it farther along to bring you more marketing power, more sales, more visibility, and to make your project the best version it can possibly be.

Trim Size: 8.5” x 11”
Page Count: 245 pages
Word Count: 90,000 words

CONTENTS OF HANDBOOK

Introduction
A Fair Warning…
Illustrating and Designing Your Deck
  What is the defined theme of your deck?
  What story does your deck tell?
  Is your deck based on a comprehensive system or structure?
  Consider the architecture of your deck
  How many cards are in your deck and why it matters right now
  How does your deck add value to existing canon?
  Who is your deck’s target audience?
  List three of your deck’s comparables
How marketable is your deck?
  Your deck is accessible and gives access
  Yes, the aesthetics matter
  Caring about aesthetics isn’t superficial
  Timing matters, unfortunately
  Your deck presents a solution to a problem

Keywords on tarot or oracle decks
Renaming the card titles in a tarot deck
Assessing the learning curve for your deck
Collaborating with others on a deck
Cultural appropriation: avoiding that accusation
Inclusivity and diversity issues
Using public domain images
Can you trace copyrighted images?
Distinctions between copyright and trademark
Card back design matters
Keeping a deck design journal
How do you finish your deck project?
Testing the usability of your oracle deck

The Little White Booklet
  Do you have to include a little white booklet?
Should you go with a digital LWB or printed LWB?
Is it written for a beginner or a fluent reader?
Will it be in black and white or in full color?
Consider your font size
Allot for interior margin gutter
Does your LWB need to contain card meanings?
Typical content in an LWB

Writing a Companion Book
  Do you need both an LWB and a companion book?
Should you publish a companion book?
Writing the card meaning entries
Do you have to include card spreads?
What is the purpose of your companion book?
Offering digital books vs. printed books

**Formatting the Digital Files for Production**

**General Tips**
- Scanning in your artwork
- The 200% Test for Resolution
- The DPI resolution of your digital image files
- Customized vs. industry standard sizes
- Follow the manufacturer’s templates to a tee
- Considering CMYK vs. RGB
- Borders versus borderless
- Editions, print runs, and the difference

**Formatting and Printing the Deck**
- Check the illustrations multiple times
- Proofread the captions multiple times
- Name Image Files 01, 02, 03, up to 78, etc.

**Formatting and Printing the LWB**
- Format the digital manuscript in actual size of the booklet
- Saddle stitch, perfect binding, and lock line binding
- Page setup specifications
- The mirror margins and gutter
- Print-check the font size and font type
- Too much blank space at the bottom of the pages
- Total LWB page count is a multiple of four
- PDF/A compliant files: embed the fonts

**Box and Packaging Design**
- What is your objective for the packaging design?
- Clamshell box, top and bottom lid box, tuck box, etc.
- Raised print, gold foil, and decorative elements
- Printing ISBNs and country of origin
- Keep total weight under one pound (sixteen ounces)
Production Costs for Self-Publishing a Deck

- Running your overhead cost projections
- A review of my actual production costs
- The takeaway points from my disclosure of numbers
- Setting a crowd funding campaign goal

Printing and Producing Your Deck

- Cardstock GSM
  - Will your card design hold up to wear and tear?
- Card cores
- Your finish options
- Print-on-demand self-publishing
- Should you buy a sample from the manufacturer?
- Hiring a go-between print service
- Obtaining an ISBN number
- Do you have to register a copyright?
- Do you have to register a trademark?
- Having your manufacturer sign an NDA
- Working with Chinese manufacturers
  - Printing your decks in China
  - Intellectual property in China
  - Business culture tips for Chinese dealings
- Deciding on your print run order quantity
- How do you choose which printing company to go with?
- Getting comparable price quotes (RFQs)
- What are the exact shipping and delivery terms?
- Do not change your mind
- Squeaky wheel gets the oil: requests for status updates
- Video chat with your manufacturer’s sales contact
- Average production lead time
- The deck printing and production process
- When the decks ship to you (U.S. import only)
Marketing and Sales Tips

The best publicity tip ever
How will your deck amplify the reader?
How to generate buzz
SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
Querying for deck reviews
How about media kits?
You have to explain yourself and what you’ve done
Social media marketing tips and thoughts
Make your first print run special
Create a separate e-mail address for customer service
Be a communist or a capitalist, but don’t be nice
Set aside a reserve of decks in case shit happens
Order first then sell vs. order based on pre-order sales
Market with e-mail newsletters
Sample terms of purchase
Weekly and monthly sales check-ins
How to increase the profitability of your deck
Free giveaways are a terrible marketing strategy
Pitch how your deck will make a difference in people’s lives
Dealing with a sales slump

Packing and Shipping Your Deck

What is the shipping manifest?
International shipping considerations
Preparing customs declarations
Buyers pay the customs (import) fees
Buyer-seller codes of liability
Refunds and replacements
The dark side of handling customer service
A padded envelope isn’t enough
How to deal with angry customers
Including freebies and bonuses in the packaging

Submitting to Traditional Publishers
Miscellaneous Tips and Insights

- Fulfillment and distribution services
- There will be people who hate your deck
- Self-care and mental health
- Dealing with bootlegged copies of your deck
- Have an exit strategy ready
- You are your brand

So in the end, was it worth it?—Final Lessons

Work Notes: Before Starting Your Deck
Work Notes: Funding and Financial Projections
Work Notes: Product Design and Print Order
Work Notes: Marketing Strategic Plan
Automatic Writing Exercise
Creative Visualization Exercise

FULL COURSE DESCRIPTION
https://tinyurl.com/indiedeckcourse