

GREATER PHILLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE 2021

Workshop

Improve Your Book's Amazon Rank

Through Expanding Categories and Strengthening Keywords

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Is your book selling well? Would you like to attain a higher Amazon rank which would result in more sales? You can benefit from amazing sales if you learn the following strategies. As a self-published author, you can modify keywords and add up to ten categories to your book's Amazon listing. This handout describes techniques to boost your book's rank by adding book categories and strengthening keywords. It takes a little work, but the results are exceptional.

PART I: CATEGORIES

Amazon uses categories to rank books. The more competition a category has, the harder it is to attain a high book rank and vice versa. Typically, your book is placed in three Amazon categories as KDP.com only allows you to list three. KDP only lists 600 BISAC subject codes for you to choose from versus the 12,000+ Amazon categories. However, **you can put your book into ten categories**. To add categories, call or email Amazon with your book's additional categories through Author Central at authorcentral.Amazon.com.

Strategically choose additional categories with less competition, and your book's ranking will increase. When I added seven more categories to my book *7 Steps To Get Off Sugar and Carbohydrates*, it jumped from number ninety-eight in the diet category to number one in the healthy diet category. Healthy diet is a more specific category with fewer competing books. All it took was one phone call, and it became a number one Amazon best seller.

When your book ranks number one, Amazon posts a best-seller sticker next to it. That's advertising at its best, and it's free! When buyers see the label, they are much more likely to purchase the corresponding book. This causes sales to soar. The month after the sticker was applied to my book, I sold over 800 copies. For a year, my book has continued to be listed as number one on Amazon in at least one category.

When I added additional categories to my other six books, all of them were listed in the top one hundred books for at least one category. Imagine what this one change could do for your book, too! **When your book gets into the top 100 books for an Amazon category, your book becomes an Amazon best seller.** In addition, Amazon lists your book in the "Best Seller Section" for that category.

Figuring out categories is challenging since there are 12,000+ Amazon book categories for eBooks and print books. So I purchased the software program Publisher Rocket, which identifies the best keywords and categories. If you want to be strategic and sell more books, this software is indispensable.

Members of Christian Indie Publishing Association (CIPA) receive a 30 percent discount on Publisher Rocket (that discount covers one-third of the annual CIPA membership fee). One of the many benefits of belonging to this association are the discounts (free IngramSpark title setup, ISBN discount, and 20 other discounts). You can recover the cost of the membership fee by using the discounts. If you would like to join CIPA go to <https://christianpublishers.net/membership/>. If you are not a CIPA member here is a link to purchase Publisher Rocket: <https://susanuneal--rocket.thrivecart.com/publisher-rocket/>.

Determine Amazon Categories

STEP 1

First, to figure out the best categories for your book, you need to **determine the categories that your book is currently listed under** through Kindle Direct Publishing ([KDP.com](https://kdp.amazon.com)), Publisher Rocket, or NerdyBookGirl.com.

For KDP, sign in and click on your bookshelf. Go to your books listing and:

- Hover over the three dots on the right of your listing.
- Click on edit print book details.
- Toward the bottom of the first page of your book's information, three categories and seven keywords are listed.

In Publisher Rocket, click on the Competition Analyzer and type in your book's title. Your book along with your competition is listed. To find your book's categories, under the column, TYPE click on See the Categories. All the categories that your book is in will appear.

Or go to NerdyBookGirl.com's free category hunter tool at <https://nerdybookgirl.com/book-category-hunter/> and enter your book's ASIN or ISBN-10 number. The category hunter lists all the categories your book is listed in.

STEP 2

Get two sheets of paper or use a spreadsheet on your computer. **I created a category/keyword Excel spreadsheet template for you to use, and it is included in this workshop.** Make three columns: category, ABR for #10, and the category you will add. First, list the categories that your book is already in (note this on your spreadsheet). Go through each of the categories listed to determine which ones apply to your book. Categories are similar to genres, be sure that they match the content in your book.

Next, use Publisher Rocket to find out if these are the best categories. Publisher Rocket is easy to use and provides excellent training videos (<https://publisherrocket.com/tutorials/>). On the homepage of this software:

- Click on the category search.
- At the top click either eBook or book (print). You want to do a separate search for each format.
- Click on the category that applies to your book.

For example, click the category Christian Books and Bibles. On this page each category is listed on the left with four categories on the right. The acronym, ABSR, means Amazon best-seller rank. The first column indicates what the overall Amazon rank must be for the book to be number one. The next column lists how many sales per day the book needs to become number one. The third and fourth columns are the same as the first and second, however, it shows the number of sales needed to rank number ten, not number one.

List each category on your spreadsheet that pertains to your book. Let's say you have a devotional book based on Bible verses from the Gospel of Luke. That means you would list on your spreadsheet the following pertinent categories:

- Books: Christian Books and Bibles: Christian Living 182, 218.
- Books: Christian Books and Bibles: Christian Living: Devotionals 2564, 45.
- Books: Christian Books and Bibles: Worship & Devotion: Prayer Books 3634, 27.
- Books: Christian Books and Bibles: Bible Study & Reference: Meditations 6255, 19.
- Books: Christian Books and Bibles: Bible Study & Reference: Meditations: New Testament: 24,888, 9.

Since you were only allowed three categories per book, you probably chose the first three categories listed above. However, if you add the last category you only need to sell nine books in one day to become ranked as number ten in that category. That is much easier to attain than selling 218 books in the Christian Living category. You want to add some categories with less competition to achieve a higher sales rank in that category by selling fewer books.

Note: it is vital to identify your book's Amazon category by the category chain listed in Publisher Rocket so that Amazon will put your book in the correct category. You can do this by cut and pasting categories from Publisher Rocket into your Excel spreadsheet.

STEP 3

After you identify up to ten categories for your eBook and print book, either call or email Amazon through your author central page. Go to Author Central at AuthorCentral.Amazon.com. Sign in and click on Help, which is located at the top right corner near your name. Click contact us. Next, Amazon Author Central will ask you:

1. How can we help? Check Amazon Book Page. Next a drop-down menu appears. Click update Amazon categories. Here is where you fill in the information requested including the ASIN or ISBN numbers and the marketplace (.com, UK, DE, etc.), eBook or print book, preferred category. Continue to follow the instructions in the template. You can download the Excel spreadsheet you created with the categories for either the print book or eBook.

2. If you prefer not to fill out this information but instead talk with someone, click on Update book information instead of Update Amazon categories. You can choose to call by phone. Amazon returns calls promptly.

Whichever method you choose, one day later check to see if the categories have been added to your eBook and print book. You should hear from Amazon within 24 hours stating that they received your information, and your category changes will be live within 24–48 hours. As your book's Amazon rank rises, take screenshots of your improved ranking. Post those ranking graphics on social media.

Be aware that Amazon only lists three of the ten categories. If you want to see what categories your book is listed in, go to Publisher Rocket and click on Competition Analyzer. Type in your book's title. A screen will appear with your book and competitive books. For your book, under TYPE click on See the Categories. All the categories that your book is in will appear. Make sure author central put your book in the correct categories.

Improve Sales Rank with Promotions & Book Reviews

Book Reviews—before you modify your book's categories, you should work on increasing your book reviews. Positive book reviews are one of the most important Amazon Search Engine Optimization (SEO) metrics. A book with twenty-five reviews has a much better chance of improving a book's sales rank than one with three reviews.

Book Promotions—to enhance the effects of your book's improved sales rank, run promotions at the same time that you expand your book's Amazon categories. Here are some examples of promotions you can run:

1. [Kindle Count Down Deals](#) through KDP Select
2. [Amazon Ads](#) (look for a future CIPA Take-Action Workshop on this topic)
3. [BookBub Ads](#)
4. Email your list
5. [Bargain Booksy](#)
6. [Ereader News Today](#)
7. [Robin Reads](#)
8. [Books Butterfly](#)
9. [The Fussy Librarian](#)
10. [Book Barbarian](#)

This article (<https://kindlepreneur.com/list-sites-promote-free-amazon-books/>) reviews over 100 of the top free and paid book promotion sites. Please share the results of your book's category expansion me at CIPA@ChristianPublishers.net. I would love to hear about your success!

Determine Stronger Keywords

PART II: KEYWORDS

The second tactic to increase your Amazon ranking is strengthening your book's keywords. Amazon allows you to list seven keywords for each eBook and print book. That's fourteen keywords, not just seven. Strengthen your keywords by using Publisher Rocket. This software lists how many Amazon searches are performed per month for each keyword so you can select the keywords with the most searches.

STEP 1

Determine the seven keywords currently listed for your book in your book's title setup in Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP.com). For KDP, sign in and click on your bookshelf. Go to your books listing and:

- Hover over the three dots on the right of your listing.
- Click on edit print book details.
- Toward the bottom of the first page of your book's information, three categories and seven keywords are listed.

STEP 2

Now it's time to create another spreadsheet (eBook and print book). I created a category/keyword Excel spreadsheet template for you to use. The keyword section is in the second-half of the spreadsheet. The first column for your keyword area will be titled keywords. Document your original seven keywords listed in Kindle Direct Publishing on your spreadsheet.

Next, use Publisher Rocket to find out if these seven keywords are the best ones to use for your book.

On Publisher Rocket:

- Click on keyword search
- Choose whether you are searching for a print book or eBook (do each book format search separately)
- Individually type in each of the seven keywords to determine its ranking

For example, let's look at the keyword Christian devotion. When I type this into Publisher Rocket, it provides a couple dozen different keywords related to it. Right beside the new list of keywords are five categories: number of competitors, average monthly earnings for those competitive books, Google searches for that keyword per month, estimated Amazon searches for that keyword per month, and a competitive score that tells you how stiff the competition is for that keyword.

Next, click on the orange button to the right of each keyword. Up pops numbers for these five columns. For your spreadsheet, list three columns: keyword, Amazon search per month, and competitive score. Here are the findings for the keyword Christian devotion:

- Christian Devotion, 4855, 85
- Christian Devotional Books 7309, 85
- Christian Devotionals, 9516, 85
- Christian Devotions for Women, 5991, 85
- Christian Devotions, 100, 85.

From this list, the first four keywords would be excellent to use for a devotional book. However, the last one, Christian devotions, only had 100 people search for it on Amazon per month, so it would not be an effective keyword.

You continue to use Publisher Rocket to analyze all seven keywords that you previously used for your book, as well as any other pertinent keywords that you can think of. You want to narrow your list of keywords to those that receive high Amazon searches every month and lower competitive scores.

For my newest release, *Solving the Gluten Puzzle*, over 18,000 monthly searches are performed for the fourteen keywords (seven for the eBook and seven for the print book). After you figure out the best keywords, add them to the Kindle Direct Publishing, IngramSpark or Lightning Source detail section for your book.

STEP 3

After you figure out your additional categories and more robust keywords, it is time to update your Amazon book description on KDP.com. Amazon needs more information about your book to get it into the appropriate readers' hands. Add your new keywords to the description and include any awards your book received. Your Amazon book description and author page are prime, free real estate for book marketing.

I highly recommend purchasing Publisher Rocket and selecting additional book categories and keywords for each of your books. After you add them to your book's listing, your book's sales rank will soar. Give your book every chance to succeed, and you will be amazed at its growth.

If you don't want to determine your categories and keywords. I can do it for you. See my rates at <https://susanuneal.com/book-categories-and-keyword>.