

amazonadvertising


AMAZON AD
SCHOOL
A COURSE FOR AUTHORS

HOW TO CREATE YOUR FIRST AMAZON AD

with Bryan Cohen, Founder of Amazon Ad School

A LOW COST FORM OF BOOK TRAFFIC

- What is Amazon Advertising? It's a way to send potential readers to your book sales pages on Amazon (where browsers can buy your books)
- And while there are plenty of ways to get more eyeballs on your books, Amazon Ads are affordable and more reliable than some other types of promotion
- Amazon Advertising is also a platform that you can use to test if your book sales pages are actually getting readers excited enough to buy
- If the ads tell you that 100 readers went to your page and your sales dashboard shows that only five bought, then you might need to change out your book cover, your title, your book description, etc.
- All in all, it's a valuable part of an author's toolkit to help make books sell (or to learn what changes to make so they can sell better)

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER AMAZON ADS?

- With thousands of novels and nonfiction books published every day, simply putting the title up and telling your friends may not get you the results you're after
- If you've published a book (or you're about to publish a book) and you're not seeing much traction, then you may need to do more to get your title more attention
- Other advertising types like Facebook and BookBub tend to be pricier and more advanced, so Amazon is a good starter option (as long as you set your costs low)
- We honestly don't know if buyers are interested in our books until we have some cold, hard facts (a.k.a. data) and having some knowledge of how many readers have looked at your sales page can be very helpful
- Any time you spend money on marketing, there is risk involved, but the risk with Amazon Ads is relatively low and worth it to learn more about your books

THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF AMAZON ADS

- The first benefit authors think of when running ads is the chance for earning higher Royalties, but this is not the only perk of putting your ads out into the world
- Another benefit is improved Sales Rank, which may give your book more visibility and can even get it into the Top 100 Sales Rank for your genre
- A third benefit is the collection of essential data that will help you better learn your genre and understand if your books are on the right path to profitability
- Lastly, a fourth benefit is the eventual and inevitable "ah-ha moment" when you learn how the dollars and cents of marketing and publishing sync up to help you flourish as a successful author
- So, it's time to start learning how to dive into the Amazon Ad platform!

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL LEARN TODAY

- How to log into your Amazon Advertising account and ensure you're in good standing to run your first ad
- Where to look for your sales from Amazon Ads so that you can accurately determine if your ads are working
- How to set up the easiest Amazon Ad with just a few clicks
- Answers to your burning self-publishing and Amazon Ad questions and a whole lot more!

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Your full, undivided attention
- About two hours for the whole workshop with some extra time built on the end for additional questions
- Excitement about learning something new!

I HOPE YOU'LL STAY UNTIL THE END

- We'll have Q&A time throughout but some extended time at the end
- We'll share the link to the workshop slides
- We'll also let you know about free and premium opportunities to continue your Amazon Ad education

HOW DOES ZOOM WORK?

- While I'm presenting, you can type questions into the Chat
- Members of our support team will then reply directly to you in the Chat
- So, if you have follow-up questions, we recommend continuing to reply to that person directly (which will keep the main Chat less busy)
- Please make sure to keep your mic muted throughout the meeting or everyone will hear you excitedly writing down notes
- At various points in the workshop, we will open up Breakout Rooms for certain topics so if you get stuck we can help you continue to move forward

WHO ARE WE?

- I'm Bryan Cohen, an author of over 40 books, and I run Amazon Ad School (a school for ads) and Best Page Forward (a copywriting agency for authors)
- In the chat, and the breakout rooms, you'll see members of the Ad Squad, authors like you who make up the support team of Ad School
- All of us really like helping authors to succeed and we take special pride in answering all ranges of questions from the most basic to the extremely complex
- We hope that we'll be able to help you learn a lot today and actually complete setting up your first ad (for real, live on the workshop we want you to make an ad!)

AMAZON ADVERTISING PREREQUISITES

- To create an Amazon Ad, you'll need a Kindle Direct Publishing account and a book that you've published through KDP (if you published the ebook through KDP but the paperback through somewhere else, you'd only be able to advertise the ebook)
- If your book is not yet published or it was not published with Amazon, then you won't be able to run ads directly through Amazon Advertising (though there are workarounds if your book was published elsewhere)
- You'll also need to have a credit card added to your Payment Settings for your Amazon Advertising account (which we will go into)
- Amazon will bill you after your first \$1 spent on Ads, but those increments will grow over time (I'm currently billed for every \$500 in ad spend)
- You'll also need to advertise a book that fits with Amazon Advertising's creative policies (a cover that Amazon deems too sexy, a curse word in the title, or a book that talks about drugs and alcohol may not be accepted for ads)

SIGNING INTO AMAZON ADS

- In case you haven't jumped into Amazon Ads in a while (or ever), let's make sure we can get in!
- Sign into your Amazon KDP Account, go to Advertising.Amazon.com (not .Co.Uk), choose "United States" and then Sign In using the "Advertising Console" option
- If for any reason you run into trouble that way, you can go to your Bookshelf, then click the Promote & Advertise button, and select Create an Ad Campaign in the US manually
- Scroll to the Top Left 3 Horizontal Lines and select Billing & Payments
- Check your Payment Settings to ensure your account is up to date

SELF-PUBLISHED VS. TRAD BOOKS

- If you have books with a small press or traditional publisher, you Can run ads, but it's a little more difficult
- You'll have to create an account with PublishDrive to run Amazon Ads
- And you'll have to constantly check on the book's sales rank since you won't have access to the sales data
- We won't be covering this process today as we're focused on running ads through the ad platform itself, but we will cover this more during our free Ad Challenge in October

RECOMMENDATION: START WITH U.S. ADS

- We're so grateful to have a very international audience for today's workshop and several countries represented have their own ad platforms (UK, Australia, Italy, etc.)
- But for the most part, unless you write in a language other than English, we recommend you start with ads in the United States
- This is the largest marketplace for books (with the most readers) and it's a good way to learn how to run the ads before you consider running them outside of the U.S.
- If you don't want to listen to us (my four-year-old feels the same way), then you'll want to start with even lower bids/costs than we recommend for the U.S.

POTENTIAL AD ACCOUNT PITFALLS

- Having trouble getting your payment info to stick? Log in and out a few times and keep trying.
- Can't log in through Advertising.Amazon.com? Try the backdoor method by going to your Bookshelf, clicking Promote & Advertise, and then choosing to Run an Ad Campaign in the Amazon.com marketplace
- Amazon says you can't create an Ad for any particular reason? Create the Ad in "Draft" form and then call KDP Help to see if they can get the problem sorted
- All of your old campaigns not showing up? Make sure you Close/X out of any Filters and that you have your campaign dates set properly

IT'S TIME TO WORK

- I'm going to share my screen now so that you can see the process in action
- I'd love for you to do these steps right along with me by moving the presentation to one side of your screen
- You'll want to click Exit Full Screen and use your mouse on the edge of the Zoom window to change the size to one half of your screen
- Then, you can bring up your Internet browser in the other window and start working right alongside me to get your account ready to rock!
- Don't worry if you get stuck, we have a plan for that!



ARE YOU READY TO SEE THIS IN ACTION?

**LET'S GET OUR
HANDS DIRTY!**

BEFORE WE CONTINUE...

- Do you need to walkthrough logging into the account again?
- If so, we're going to set up a separate room so that you can get additional support right NOW
- We have set up The Help Desk breakout room and you can click the Breakout Rooms button to see it and ask to join
- Are you a more advanced author who's worried that we're not going to go into deeper topics? Five-figure a month author Quinn Ward will be running The Advanced Room for folks who have deeper questions about Ad Strategy (you can join that room at this time)
- Ready to move into the next section? Just stick around here and we'll go into the subsequent slides!

WHICH BOOK SHOULD I ADVERTISE?

- If you only have one book out, then the choice is pretty easy
- If you have multiple books, we recommend either the first book in a series or a book that you think has the best chance of profitability
- As we'll get into later, some books may be profitable with ads and some may not (but the only way to truly know is to run ads and test them out)
- Eventually in this ad strategy, we recommend running ads to all series starters and standalones, but for now, Just Choose One

PROFITABILITY IS THE KEY

- I'm in the home buying process and Amazon Ads are kind of like a home inspection for your books
- If there's a leaky tub or a crack in the foundation of your book that's causing readers not to buy, Amazon Ads will make that very clear
- You want to run ads to the book that has the fewest flaws and that will give you the best chance of making a positive return on investment
- This usually means the book with the biggest possible audience that may even have follow-ups (like sequels or other books in the series) as that can increase your potential earnings from the ads

STANDALONE VS. SERIES

- If you run an ad to a standalone book that doesn't have any other books connected to it, then all you can sell is that one book
- But if you run to the first book in a series (or a box set of the first few books in a series), then you can potentially get "Readthrough" into the other titles
- This is why many authors who have a series of titles see success on Amazon (because they sell more than just the book they're advertising)
- But worry not if all you have is one book or some standalones, because those can certainly sell as well

YOUR ROYALTIES AT A GLANCE

- To give us the best idea of how to proceed with marketing and advertising...
- We need to know how much we're making from our books at this present moment
- The regular Kindle Direct Publishing Sales Dashboard is pretty clunky (and doesn't share KU Royalties)
- But there's a FREE special tool that many authors don't know about that can clear things up in a hurry
- The KDP Reports Beta Dashboard tells you exactly how much money you've earned so far this month from ebooks, paperbacks, and KU pages read (no audio for now)

HOW THE KDP BETA REPORT WORKS

- First, you need to go to the KDP Reports Beta Dashboard at Kdpreports.Amazon.Com/Royalties
- You'll be prompted to enter in an estimate for KU Pages Read (I usually just put in last month's amount) and your currency (I recommend U.S. Dollars even if you aren't in the U.S.)
- From there, you can see what you've sold so far this month as well as any date range since you've started publishing
- There are also options to see how many ebook sales, paperback sales, and pages read you've had for each book and country

ESSENTIAL DATA TO LEARN

- The most helpful thing about the KDP Beta Dashboard is that you can see at a glance how much you've earned during a certain time period
- It also gives you a starting point, so you can know how much you've earned before starting ads (and if that numbers goes up in the days, weeks, and months after running ads)
- We use The Split Screen Method to see all of our Royalties on one side and (eventually) all of our Ad Spend on the other side (we recommend not worrying about the Sales Data on the Ad Dashboard when you're first starting out)
- Using the KDP Beta Dashboard in conjunction with your Ads is essential to knowing whether or not your marketing is working

WE'RE GETTING BACK TO WORK

- I'm going to share my screen now so that you can see how the KDP Beta Dashboard works
- I'd love for you to do these steps right along with me by moving the presentation to one side of your screen
- You'll want to click Exit Full Screen and use your mouse on the edge of the Zoom window to change the size to one half of your screen
- Then, you can bring up your Internet browser in the other window and start working right alongside me to get a good view of your Royalties
- Don't worry if you get stuck, we'll have another breakout room at the end



**LET'S GET A LOOK AT THE DATA
BEFORE WE CREATE...**

**COME ON OVER TO
KDP BETA!**

BEFORE WE CONTINUE...

- Do you need more assistance on logging into your account OR checking out the KDP Beta Dashboard?
- We've set up a separate breakout room to help you with this
- All you need to do is join the Help Desk breakout room if you're having trouble viewing your KDP Beta Report
- If you're ready to learn how to create your first ad, then stick around
- If you've created plenty of ads and want to ask some more advanced questions, you can join the Advanced Room with Quinn
- Ready to continue? Let's get into it!

AUTO ADS CAN BE AWESOME

- Certain genres take extremely well to Auto Targeted Ads, which is especially helpful if you don't have 10 full relevant Categories
- Nonfiction books, children's books, written to market or trend books, and very specific subgenres can have big success with Auto Ads
- Most importantly, you can set up your first auto ad with a few simple clicks and then you've got the ad ready!

HOW AUTO ADS WORK

- With auto ads, Amazon chooses the targets for you based on several elements of your book that you chose upon publication
- This includes your 7 keyword phrases, your two or more book categories, and your title/subtitle
- If these elements accurately represent your book's genre and tropes, then an auto ad can be one of the most profitable ads you create
- If you did not set yourself up for success with your keywords and categories (as well as your title), then you'll want to re-evaluate those elements before you make your ad

KEYWORDS THAT MAKE SENSE

- Keywords (a.k.a. keyword phrases) are the terms that readers search when they're on Amazon
- If your Keywords aren't relevant (or similar enough) to your books, then your Auto Ads may struggle to target the right readers
- We recommend using Dave Chesson's deep dive into Keywords from his site on [Kindlepreneur](#)
- The short version of what to do: create three keyword phrases that contain your genre and/or tropes (story elements) like "paranormal romance" or "coming of age fantasy"
- Then fill the other four boxes with all other relevant terms and tropes (and you can put more than one keyword phrase into each of those boxes)

UP TO 10 RELEVANT CATEGORIES

- When you publish your book through Kindle Direct Publishing, you choose two categories as part of the Book Industry Standards and Communications (BISAC) list of "codes"
- But these categories are not a perfect match with the Amazon categories that you'll want to get your book into
- In order to ensure you get into the exact right categories for your book, you can actually reach out to Kindle Direct Publishing Help to ASK to get into different categories
- And the surprise for a lot of newer authors is that you can request to be in up to TEN categories, not just the two BISAC categories you pick when you're initially publishing
- To research categories, you can use the site BkLnk.com and the Catfinder tool to look up more subgenres that are relevant to yours

HOW YOU PAY FOR ADS

- Amazon charges you for campaigns every time that a potential reader clicks on your ad (just showing the ad is free, but when someone clicks, you pay)
- The amount you pay is connected up with what you choose as your Bid (usually between 15 and 35 cents based on your type of book)
- We recommend you select "Down Bid Only" which means you'll pay what you bid (like 30 cents for a standalone) or less (anywhere between 2 and 30 cents but not more)
- If you were to get 10 clicks on your ad and your bid was 35 cents, then you'd likely pay anywhere from \$2.50 to \$3.50 for those clicks
- And if you sell a couple of books from those 10 clicks, then you'll end up with a Profit!

THE LOW-COST BIDDING STRATEGY

- We have a strategy for keeping your costs as low as possible (while giving your ads a better chance at profitability)
- If you write a book that begins a series, we recommend you bid 35 cents or less (and you can ignore Suggested Bids that are higher than 35 cents)
- If you write a standalone book, we recommend you bid 30 cents or less (ignoring higher Suggested Bids)
- If you write Children's or Low Content (like notebooks), then we recommend you start by bidding 15 cents or less (ignoring Suggested Bids)
- While you may be tempted to bid higher or select "Up and Down Bidding," we recommend against it (one author we know has stuck with low bids all the way up to \$23,000+ in monthly royalties, so higher bids are not required)

SETTING UP AN AUTO AD, PART 1

- First, you'll click on Create Campaign and then select Sponsored Product (not Lockscreen or Sponsored Brands)
- Then, you'll want to add a Name for your Campaign with acronyms you'll remember for future use
- I'm a big fan of this formula: Book + Ad Type + Source of Targets + Bid + Version of Ad Copy (if applicable)
- For my book The Dark Souls with an Auto Ad and a 35 cent Bid, that would look like: TDS SPA 35
- A Note on Bidding: We recommend you bid 30 cents in the U.S. for a standalone, 35 cents in the U.S. for series entry points, and .15 cents for low content or children's books (and even lower internationally)

SETTING UP AN AUTO AD, PART 2

- Choose a Campaign End Date of Sept 30th, a Budget of \$5 per day (you'll spend less than that), and Automatic Targeting
- Select "Standard Ad" and choose a Group Name that you will remember (like TDS Auto Ad)
- Next, you'll want to pick your book from the list (you can choose the ebook or the paperback for your ad)
- Then you'll want to select "Dynamic Bid Down Only" (as opposed to Up & Down which can double your Bid)

SETTING UP AN AUTO AD, PART 3

- You'll want to change the Bid from 75 cents to either 35, 30, or 15 cents based on the kind of book you have
- You can ignore Negative Targeting (this is an advanced feature that you don't need to worry about at this time)
- You'll always, always, always want to double check your ad (particularly the bid)
- Lastly, Click Create Campaign and you'll have your ad ready to go out into the world!

YOUR AD HAS BEEN MODERATED

- This is the email authors receive when an Ad has been accepted (yes, I think it's pretty weird language too)
- Check the email and make sure it includes the words "eligible to be served," which means that your ad is good to go
- If the email says that the ad isn't eligible for some reason, check to see what the problem is
- Once you've identified the issue, you'll need to create a brand new ad (there's no way to edit existing rejected ads) and try, try again
- Amazon has had an On and Off glitch where they say the words "not approved" and "eligible" in the same email (you can ignore the not approved if it says eligible, you're good to go!)

AUTO AD PITFALLS

- Not Serving: Auto Ads can have difficulty getting started and you may have to keep the Bid the same while increasing the Budget to wake them up
- Getting Off Track: While Auto Ads can start targeting very relevant books and search terms, they can sometimes target a few weird titles and get off track (like a Pandora radio station) and you may have to restart them from scratch
- Targeting Your Own Name: Auto Ads will sometimes target your own name and books, but this isn't something to worry about because you'd rather take that ad space than cede it to someone else

OUR LAST WORK SESSION OF THE DAY

- I'm going to share my screen now so that you can see how to create your Auto Ad
- I'd love for you to do these steps right along with me by moving the presentation to one side of your screen
- You'll want to click Exit Full Screen and use your mouse on the edge of the Zoom window to change the size to one half of your screen
- Then, you can bring up your Internet browser in the other window and start working right alongside me to set up your first (or next) ad
- Don't worry if you get stuck, we'll have another breakout room at the end

The background is a solid teal color. It is framed by a decorative border of white line-art icons of open books. The top border consists of a row of book spines. The left and right borders consist of a vertical stack of open book icons. The bottom border consists of a row of open book icons.

**WANT TO SEE HOW TO
SET THIS UP?**

**OF COURSE,
LET'S GET STARTED!**

BEFORE WE CONCLUDE...

- We'd like you to create your Amazon Ad right here on the workshop
- If you need some additional assistance for this, then we've set up multiple breakout rooms to help you
- Click "Breakout Rooms" and join the Help Desk if you need more guidance
- We'll all come back here for our main Q&A session at the end (which will begin shortly)

TWO OTHER PROFITABLE AD TYPES

- While there are more than two other ad types, we recommend that most authors below \$500 a month in Profit avoid Sponsored Brands and Lockscreen Ads
- We tend to recommend most authors use Auto Ads as well as Category and Keyword Ads
- With Category Ads, you can choose an entire genre to target all at once
- With Keyword Ads, you research and choose the targets that you want Amazon to use
- We have seen this combination of Auto, Category, and Keyword Ads function really well together to increase Royalties and Profitability

THE BENEFITS OF CATEGORY ADS

- Category Ads allow you to target all of the books in a certain subgenre (like Sci-Fi Romance OR Coming of Age Fantasy)
- These ads often get more Impressions and Clicks more quickly because they target a lot of different books at once
- They can also help you learn more about your genre by seeing the kinds of books that lead to Clicks and Sales
- Some folks overdo it a bit with too many Category Ads, but it's best to stick with a few here and there
- And like all of the ads we recommend, we hope you'll start with that 15-35 cent range based on your type of book

THE BENEFITS OF KEYWORD ADS

- Keyword Ads are extremely cool because you get to research words readers might search on Amazon (like book titles, author names, or search terms like "fantasy")
- You can research these keyword phrases on Amazon, Goodreads, BookBub, Barnes and Noble, or just come up with them on your own
- The bulk of ads you'll create will end up being Keyword Ads because it doesn't make sense to make too many Auto or Category Ads (but as long as you research more keywords, you can make more ads)
- We recommend about 100-150 keywords in your ads (with Broad Only selected at first with Phrase and Exact being used later on in the process)
- And, of course, keep your bids low in an effort to keep your profit higher!

HOW THESE ALL WORK TOGETHER

- Once your account is set up and ready to run ads...
- And you have an idea of how to look up your Royalties on the KDP Beta Dashboard...
- You can start creating Auto, Category, and Keyword ads to get more traffic to go to your books
- When you run the ads for a few weeks or months (gathering at least 100 clicks for your book), you can assess if your ads are Profitable
- If they are Profitable, then you run more (and if you're not, you fix up your book sales page to try to make it profitable going forward)

A FREE CHANCE TO LEARN MORE

- This concludes our presentation and we'll have time to answer as many questions as possible
- Obviously, we've only had the chance to just scratch the surface on making ads and making them work
- Fortunately, starting the week of October 13th, we have a week-long free course called the 5-Day Amazon Ad Profit Challenge
- This program comes with the same level of support as the Workshop and is likewise totally free
- Just go to AuthorsAdvertise.com and/or click the link in the Chat to sign up for the upcoming event

DIVE INTO THE MATERIAL IMMEDIATELY

- If you don't want to wait until October, we have a premium program called Amazon Ad School that'll let you dive in right away
- This includes our limited-time free material from the 5-Day Challenge as well as our 5-module course, weekly live sessions, and a whole lot more
- We usually keep the course closed down between Challenges, but we've opened it up for a few days if you want to jump in
- This program is a \$900+ value, but it's just \$297 for the next few days
- Go to AdSchool2021.com to join Ad School before Tuesday (or the next Challenge)

SLIDES & DOWNLOADS

- For your convenience, we've set up a download link for today's slides, which you can get at BestPageForward.net/workshopslides
- This includes our limited-time free material from the 5-Day Challenge as well as our 5-module course, weekly live sessions, and a whole lot more
- Our sponsors for today at Amazon Advertising have also provided us with some extra Best Practices that you may find helpful at BestPageForward.net/AmzBP
- And if you need any of the other links that we shared today, just let us know and we're happy to provide them

NOW IT'S TIME FOR... THE Q&A!

- If you still want walkthrough help, we've got multiple rooms up and running
- But if you've got a question, you can ask it right now
- I want to give a big shoutout to Amazon Advertising for sponsoring this event
- Thanks so much for coming to this workshop today!