What's Amazon Author Central?

Author Central is a free tool that enables you to manage and track certain aspects of your books that are sold on Amazon.

You Can Use Amazon's Author Central to:

- Link different editions of your books: Kindle, paperback, etc.

- Add or improve your book descriptions

- Add interview excerpts

- Improve the formatting of your book description

- Enter a bio and other info to appear on your Amazon author page

- Add events, videos, and photos

Getting Started with Author Central

If you haven't already signed up for Author Central, go through the following steps to create an account:

- Go to https://authorcentral.amazon.com/ and click **Join Now**.

- Enter the e-mail address and password associated with your Amazon account, and click *Sign in using our secure server*.

- When prompted, enter the name your books are written under. A list of possible book matches appears.

- Select any one of your books. If your book is not in the list, you can search for it by title or ISBN. The book you select must be available for purchase on the Amazon.com website. Selecting the book creates the account.

- You'll get a confirmation e-mail. In some cases, Amazon may need to contact the publisher to verify you're the author, although I've never had to go through this process myself and don't know how often it occurs. ¯_(ツ)_/¯

A few basics

You can claim books that are self-published and those that are published through a separate publisher. The Author Central account is associated with you as an author and should let you claim all of your books, regardless of publisher or imprint.

It can take three to five days for your new Author Page to appear on the Amazon.com site.

Things you can do in the meantime:

- Work on your Thriller dance until it's really polished
- Modify your 3D printer to print with cheese
- Train a cobra for conflict resolution (admittedly, this may take longer than 5 days)
- Learn how to weld

Photo by Rob Lambert at Unsplash

You can begin adding content to an Author Page as soon as you sign up. Changes appear on the Author Page within 24 hours of the time you add them in Author Central.

Why should you fill out your Author Page? Because it's disappointing to go to someone's Amazon's author page and find nothing. That sucks. Don't be that author.

Amazon says: "The Author Page on Amazon.com provides a handy place for customers to **learn about you**. Helping customers get to know you is an effective way to introduce them to—or better **educate** them about—your books."

Making Changes to Your Author Page

To update the profile that people see, go to the top navigation bar and select Author Page.

Adding or modifying your biography

To modify or fill in your **Biography**, click *edit biography* in the first section on your Author Page. I recommend that you already have this bio written and thoroughly edited, and paste it in.

Adding blog syndication to your Author Page

To syndicate your blog posts on Amazon so people can see them on your Author Page, click on *add blog* in the **Blogs** section of the Author Page. Only posts added *after* you save your changes here will show up on your page.

Author Central supports all versions of **RSS** and **Atom** blog feeds. Your blogging platform may have a link where can copy and paste this from. Or, you can just choose the **View Source** option from your blog homepage and look for something like this:

<link rel="alternate" type="application/rss+xml" title="RSS" href="http://www.example.com/blog/rss.xml" />

Photo by Glenn Carstens-Peters at Unsplash

Adding events

You can enter both **in-person** and **virtual events**.

For a virtual event, enter **N/A** in the "Venue Name" and "Address" fields, and enter the URL or details of the event in the "Description" field.

To add an in-person event, go to the **Events** section and click on *add event*. A pop-up form will appear. At the top of the form, fill in the description of your event. This could be something like, "Come see me at Worldcon in San Jose on August 16-20, 2018. I'll be on several panels and will be signing books in the autograph room."

If you have an **additional event**, like a reading at a nearby bookstore during the con, mention it in the Event Description and then add it separately as another event.

Start typing in the venue name—there's a chance the venue might **pre-fill.** If it does, just click on it, and make sure it auto-fills correctly. If it doesn't pre-fill, then put in the venue name, address, city, state, and zip.

After you've created an event, it will be displayed in the Scheduled Events section. Customers can see the detail of the Event: Venue, location, time, a short description of the event, and the book you're touring with. This information appears on the Author Page.

Under **Book**, you can select a book that's connected to the event, if applicable. If you're doing a reading and signing for one book, it makes sense to select that book. Otherwise, leave it out.

Then fill in your Event Date and Start Time.

Author Page URL

On the right is your **Author Page URL**. Use this **link** to your Author Page wherever you want: on your website, in your email signature, blog posts, Facebook posts, Tweets, bookmarks, etc. If you click on *learn more*, you'll get some specifics about doing those things.

Photos

In **Photos**, click on *add photo* to add your author photo. You can add up to eight images, and choose the order in which they appear. So you can include the photo of your selfie with that falcon wearing a tiny, eye-covering leather helmet, *and* the one of you doing a reading at (let's be honest) a poorly-chosen location: the Nautica Malibu Triathlon.

The most recently added photo becomes the primary one customers see on the Author Page.

Supported formats include JPEG, PNG, and GIF. Your photo should be between 300 to 8000 pixels in width and height, and no more than 4MB in size.

If you click *manage photos*, you'll be able to delete a photo or rearrange the order of the photos. Like the one with you in the **river** with an **anaconda** around your neck. That's a good one.

Videos

In **Videos**, you can share video interviews, book trailers, or book signing videos. Click on *add video* to upload a video. Supported formats include AVI, FLV, MOV, MPG, WMV, MP4. The files must be under 500MB.

Adding or Changing Information About Your Books

Adding a Title

If you have written a book that doesn't appear in your bibliography and is available on Amazon.com, you can add it.

1. On the Author Central **Books** tab, scroll to the bottom of your bibliography and click **Add more books**

2. In the Search field, enter the book title, ISBN, or author name and click **Go**.

Once you've found the missing title, click *This is my book* below that book. If the Amazon catalog lists your name as the author, you're all done.

If you're not listed as an author

If your name is not listed as an author of the book you are adding, click **contact us** under the "Need your name added" heading, and then:

1. Under "Select an issue," select **Add a book**.
2. Under "Select details," make the appropriate selection.
3. In the field that appears, make the appropriate selection.
4. If possible, provide verification that you have contributed to the book, such as a link to your publisher's website.

Once your book has been added

In the top navigation bar, select **Books**. It will list all of your books available on Amazon. You can sort by title or publication date.

Choose one of your books. On that book's page, you'll see **Editions** on the right. This is where you'll see the different editions of your book: Kindle, paperback, and so on.

Photo by Aliis Sinisalu at Unsplash

Then you'll see two tabs under your book's title: **Editorial Reviews** and **Book Details.**

Editorial Reviews

Under **Editorial Reviews**, you'll have several options for filling in information.

The first option is **Reviews**. This is where you can put some excerpts from your book reviews. Another option is to put these in your main description, but we'll come to that soon.

According to Amazon, the reviews should be transcribed, unaltered text. The name of the source should be credited after the quotation. Quotes from outside reviews should follow "fair use" copyright guidelines and be limited to 1-2 sentences.

Product Description

This is the main description of your book. Again, I recommend you paste in text from a text file that you have already thoroughly tweaked and edited.

My recommendations for your product description:

- Put a few brief excerpts of your favorite **reviews** at the top, and attribute them.
- Make your description **scannable**. It should be quick and easy for someone to read.
- Make your paragraphs **short**—limit your paragraphs to a few sentences.
- Use formatting tools: **Bold** or italicize selective words to make them stand out for scannability.
- Use a catchy **headline** and/or three lines of succinct description before your main body text.

To show what I mean by three lines of short description, in Leigh Bardugo's *Six of Crows* description, you'll see:

A convict with a thirst for revenge.

A sharpshooter who can't walk away from a wager.

A runaway with a privileged past.

Click *Preview* to see how your description looks in the preview panel. Once you're happy with it, **save a copy** of the final text somewhere else, since there are situations where your edits may get replaced and you'll have to go back and redo them.

Here's a helpful article for **optimizing** your **descriptions**:

If you significantly change the text of your description on Author Central, you may want to send that modified text to marketing@curiosityquills.com so that CQ has your updated copy.

From the Author

In this section, you should include a **message** from you about your book (aside from "help"). Amazon suggests you include something about your experience writing it (not the actual slough of self-doubt and despondency you experienced, but the Disney version of it), and how it relates to other books you've written.

From the Inside Flap

This is simply content transcribed from the inside flap of your book without any changes. You can almost certainly just leave this alone, unless you happen to have a hardcover edition where this content exists.

From the Back Cover

If you already have the back cover text in your Product Description, you can likely leave this blank, or add a drawing of a giant robot with his ocelot sidekick.

About the Author

This is where you can add your short bio. This section should be the same or similar to the biography as it would appear in a book. The text can be up to 2000 characters (about 400 words).

Remember to regularly update your Author Page

Add any **updates** to your Author Page as needed: events (including FB Live), new blurbs/reviews, awards, a good Publisher's Weekly review, or other info.

If you need assistance

Email marketing@curiosityquills.com, or ask on Facebook!