

Dan Fitzpatrick



Topic: Self-Publishing

- the good and bad in self-publishing
- what do you do if you have an old version of a book you want to replace on a site like Amazon
- why he chose self-publishing over traditional/commercial publishing
- about his book

First, I want to start off by saying that I met Dan Fitzpatrick from the Amazon Discussion boards. He mentioned that he was an author of the book *Vision: Evan's Book*. It'd been a good two years since I'd read a serial killer thriller novel, so I figured it was time for another one and that is how I came to find out about him. I was pretty much hooked from the beginning because the story started strong and it kept going. What most intrigued me about his writing was his ability to keep me guessing. I love it when an author throws something at me that I never saw coming.

Anyway, I am pleased that he has agreed to let me interview him. If you have any questions for him or if you'd like more information about his books, I am going to post a link to his website at the end of the interview.

1. What was your best experience with self-publishing?

I think the overall gratification was the best part. The fact that I worked very hard to create something entertaining without the need of a literary agent or a publishing firm gave it a little something extra.

2. What was your worst experience with self-publishing?

There is one memory that stays in my head and probably will remain there. It didn't really have anything to do with the actual process of self-publishing, but I remember the day my book was published and I had just introduced it on Amazon. Within 5 minutes of my first post, I received an email with my first thread response. To make a long story short, I was pretty much destroyed. The guy was telling me that I pretty much had no future in writing and that what I was doing was, and I quote, "rude". I had always heard of the negativity that came with self-publishing before, but that experience made it real for me. I knew I was in for a long ride.

3. What advice would you give someone who is thinking of self-publishing?

Do your research and listen to the advice of other self-publishers. When I went in, I didn't have a clue what I was doing. To an extent, I still don't. Read the message boards, join groups, and listen to people's experiences. Most importantly, don't let those people who tell you that self-published books are inferior get you down. You worked hard on your book and you should be proud of it. Another piece of advice I can safely say from experience is take your time. Believe me, I understand the excitement of publishing your first book, but it's important that you make your book the best it can be. If it means waiting a while to do one last edit, do it. That was the biggest mistake I made, and it wasn't fun.

4. Your book *Vision: Evan's Book* was revised this year and published again. You were able to get Amazon to take down the old version and put up the new one. Could you explain the process?

I actually wasn't able to get Amazon to take down the old version. The first thing I did was I contacted my printer and halted production of the book. However, with POD, online retailers such as Amazon purchase a certain number of books to guarantee availability in the case of multiple customers. In my case, Amazon always kept 4 copies of the book. When I republished, I used the same ISBN that I purchased for the original copy. By default, the newer version took over. Amazon still had those 4 original copies they had previously

purchased from the POD printer. In the end, I had to buy out the rest of the original books because if someone ordered it, they got the original edition.

5. You had some obstacles as you were getting the old version off of Amazon. Will you tell us what those obstacles were and how you overcame them?

The biggest obstacle I had was the Amazon support team, both phone and email. Their phone support team only caters to purchasing customers. They kept telling me that I had to email a specific group in order to help me resolve the issue I had. I must have sent a dozen emails explaining my dilemma and I have yet to receive a response. That was over a month ago. (Date of interview: October 5, 2009.) It was really frustrating that even though the new product was displayed, anybody that purchased the new one would actually receive the original. Luckily, it only happened once and the customer was very understanding ☺. In the end, I gave up on the Amazon support team and just bought out all the books. There were 2 books left so I ordered 4. As I predicted, I received 2 old and 2 new. Unfortunately, there is still a hardcover edition of the original book. I just hope that the insanely high price for it will turn people away until I give in and buy that one as well. It just really stinks that when Amazon purchases from POD's, they keep it until it sells, even if the product isn't the correct one. There is no way around it. Just like you can't delete a message board you created, you can't delete a product.

6. If someone else wanted to do the same thing, how should they proceed?

Unfortunately, they would have to buy the remaining copies listed on Amazon as I did. It's very important that the printer halts production BEFORE they do this. Otherwise, Amazon will purchase more from them, thus, bringing you back to square one.

The easiest way is to make sure that you are 125% sure you want your book to be sold through Amazon as it is. Make sure your book is as perfect as you can get it. Your product will stay there until it sells, no matter what.

Another way would be to change the ISBN number on the newer version. That gets rid of the chance of someone purchasing the original if they choose to purchase the newer one.

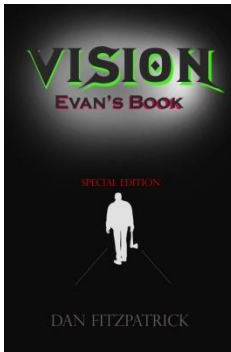
This was a very frustrating process and it put my book on hold for over two weeks, after I told everybody that it was available. I received many emails telling me they were unable to buy the book even though they tried. I don't like to think of how many people were turned away because of that. It's not good business to make promises to potential customers that you can't keep.

7. Now, I want to ask some questions about your book. You decided to self-publish it instead of submitting to agents and commercial publishers. Why?

I decided to self-publish for a few reasons. The main reason is that I wanted to have total control of my book. I created it so I should be able to keep it. I did some research on the agent/commercial process and from what I read, it just turned me off. I've read that some commercially accepted authors submit their books, and six months later when they get it back, they don't even recognize it because there were so many changes. Second reason is that I've heard that there is a LARGE decline rate. I didn't want to put so much time and effort into something only to have it denied (that's not a lack of confidence; it's a lack of patience). The third reason was the time factor. Even if my book was accepted by an agent/publisher, I didn't want to wait an additional 1 to 2 years for my book to become available. I want people to read it and I don't have the patience to wait that long for something I can easily do myself in less than half the time. So here were my choices: Have no rights, potentially have the story changed, and if accepted, potentially wait 2 years. Or, do it myself, have 100% creative control, I create the timeline, and I make ALL the rules. It was a no-brainer for me.

And now for the book:

8. What is the book about? What is it that you hope the reader will take away from it?



Here's the synopsis ...

**In 1944, the SKP conducted an experiment. It was intended to create a supreme being. A being that would strike fear into the hearts of those who committed acts of extreme violence ... they failed. M. Sebastian Siman, the world's deadliest serial killer, was born.

Jade Walker was a librarian at Ringford University. He was a simple man with a simple life. When Jade learns that the woman of his dreams, Laura Brock, is the primary target of M. Sebastian Siman, he is forced to face his destiny ... a haunting destiny he was cursed with as an infant ... a destiny he is unaware of ... the same destiny that was given to M. Sebastian Siman.

In order to protect the woman he loves, Jade joins forces with the new SKP leader, Agent Flynt, who has possession of a book which holds the key to Jade's abilities ... the same abilities that has made M. Sebastian Siman the deadliest serial killer in history.**

In a nutshell, it is a game of cat and mouse. It's a good killer versus an evil killer.

One of the hardest things about writing is telling people what your book is about, especially when there are so many aspects of the book you don't want to give away. My goal was to add intrigue and, from what I've heard, I've been

successful. I wanted to create something unique. I hope that this synopsis will at least tempt potential readers to at least read the free sample I provide on my website. ([Click here to read the free sample.](#)) I can only hope that rest will be history. I'm confident enough in the story that if people take the chance to read the first few pages, they won't be able to put it down.

As for what I want the reader to take away from it. I simply want to entertain them. That's my goal. I want people to read the last page and say, "That was such a fun book to read. I can't wait for the next one." From what I've heard from personal responses, that is exactly what they say.

With all of the negativity in the world right now, it's important that we take a break. I firmly believe that anyone who reads *Vision: Evan's Book* will be given that much needed break. The suspension of disbelief is a powerful thing.

9. Which character is your favorite and why? Now, which character is your least favorite and why?

Laura Brock is definitely my favorite character. When I created her, I imagined my wife. I wanted to portray my dream girl ☺ She's fun, smart, beautiful, charming, and she has that little bit of fearlessness and spunk that I find very attractive. It's hard to say who my least favorite character is. If I had to choose, it would probably be a character named Frank Dayhocken, one of Agent Flynt's SKP assistants. He doesn't play a major role in the story but he's just one of those people that you would work with and wish you didn't.

10. Your sequel is due to come out right before Christmas. Can you tell us a little bit about it?

Sure. It's called, *VisionII: The Black Skull*. Originally it was due on Halloween but with everything that transpired with the first book, I didn't want to make the same mistakes. I have a release date of December 10th, 2009. Just in time for Christmas.

The only thing I can say about the second book is that it's highly recommended that you read the first book prior. It basically picks up exactly where the first book ends. You can still enjoy it, but things will make a lot more sense if you read Evan's Book. There are just too many fun things in the first book to figure out before I tell about the second. I will say this though, if you think the first one was good, wait until you read the sequel!

So if you have a question for Dan Fitzpatrick, want to friend him, or find out more information regarding his books, here's where to go:

[Dan Fitzpatrick's Website](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

[Myspace Page](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Vision: Evan's Book \(Special Edition\) Blog](#)

[Author Interviews Blog](#)

[What the F?](#)