

Abstract

This dissertation thesis deals with electronic self-publishing of literary fiction, i.e. its publishing by the authors themselves, without involving publishers. Support from big technology companies led to unprecedented growth of this type of publishing in the 2010s and electronic self-publishing has in some countries become one of the standard ways of publishing. In spite of its expansion, electronic self-publishing is affected by many problems. The most prominent one is comparatively lower quality of many independently published e-books, mainly caused by limited knowledge of the publishing process from the side of the authors, many of which are not properly acquainted with publishing practices. The activities that should an independent author perform during the publishing process are the same as those performed by a publisher. Due to complicated character of some of these activities, many independent authors outsource them to other parties, or do not perform them at all. In the Czech Republic, electronic self-publishing is relatively undeveloped. It is true that there has probably been hundreds or thousands e-books published independently and that the number of downloads of these books is in hundreds of thousands copies. On the other hand, majority of this literature is offered for free or for very little prices, and in most cases, outside of major electronic bookstores. The research part of this thesis focuses on Czech self-publishing authors who publish their texts in e-book form; the primary research goal is to analyze attitudes of Czech independent authors towards electronic self-publishing and propagation of their e-books. The research is qualitative in its nature and the research method is a semi-structured interview. Based on the authors' statements it is clear that the primary motive for self-publishing is rejection by the publishers; e-book is preferred over print book because it is cheaper and easier to create. Authors express their intentions to publish print books with publishers in the future and their feelings about publishers are rather positive. Authors' knowledge about publishing process is rather low and they do not engage in much activities; exceptions are proofreading and reviewing of text, for which the authors turn to other people, most often to family members or friends. Authors are aware of many problems accompanying self-publishing: from potentially lower quality of self-published e-books to technical issues, gaps in their knowledge of publishing process and some other issues.