

KDP vs IngramSpark

Self-Publishing Comparison Workbook

Compare the publishing setup, compensation model, distribution approach, and control that matter for your book.

Before you start

Platform rates, print costs, and available settings change. Use your current title values when comparing.

What's inside

1. Your publishing goal	4. Distribution & control
2. How the two models differ	5. Use your own numbers
3. One platform or both?	6. Your decision matrix

This workbook does not pick a winner. It helps you compare the two routes against your own book, your own current values, and your own priorities.

Start with your publishing goal

Write down what you need before you look at either platform.

Book title

Format

☐ Paperback ☐ Hardcover ☐ Ebook ☐ Multiple formats

My biggest priority

- ☐ Amazon-direct sales
- ☐ Wider print distribution
- ☐ Bookstore/library availability
- ☐ Higher per-copy compensation
- ☐ Control over wholesale settings
- ☐ Returnability options
- ☐ Simpler setup
- ☐ Using both platforms
- ☐ Other: _____

Where I expect most sales

What matters most to me

Don't choose a platform yet. Finish the comparison pages first.

How the two models differ

KDP and IngramSpark calculate what you earn per print copy in different ways.

KDP print

Royalty model

$$\text{Royalty} = (\text{applicable royalty rate} \times \text{list price}) - \text{print cost}$$

The rate depends on the list price and marketplace. On Amazon.com, KDP applies 50% at or below \$9.98 and 60% at or above \$9.99. Check the tier that applies to your title.

Inputs to check

- Current royalty tier
- List price
- Current print cost
- Marketplace / format conditions

IngramSpark

Publisher compensation model

$$\text{Wholesale price} = \text{List price} \times (1 - \text{wholesale discount})$$

$$\text{Publisher compensation} = \text{Wholesale price} - \text{print cost}$$

Inputs to check

- List price
- Current wholesale discount
- Current print cost
- Returnability setting

Important

These are different compensation models. Do not compare them using one shared "keep rate."

Print cost depends on each title's specification (page count, trim size, ink, format) and differs between platforms. Use the current print cost each platform shows for your book — not a figure from an old table.

My notes

Distribution & control comparison

A qualitative comparison. Confirm current details in each platform's own setup.

Area	KDP	IngramSpark
Amazon-direct selling	Strong direct integration with Amazon retail.	Distributes through its network; Amazon is one of many possible retail outlets.
Wholesale discount control	No wholesale discount to set; the applicable royalty tier applies.	You choose the discount from the options shown in your title setup. Minimums can vary.
Returnability options	Check current KDP terms for your format.	Separate setting: No, Yes — Destroy, or Yes — Deliver.
Wider trade availability	KDP Expanded Distribution is an optional KDP setting.	Designed for broad print distribution availability through its network.
Print cost	Varies by title specification.	Varies by title specification.
Metadata / title setup	Set up in KDP.	Set up in IngramSpark. Title setup is currently listed as free.
ISBN options	Check the current KDP ISBN options for your format.	Check the current ISBN options for your title and market.
Using both platforms	Review the current KDP Expanded Distribution setting before distributing the same print title through both.	

Availability is not the same as stocking.

Being available to order through a distribution network does not mean a retailer or library will stock or order your book. No discount or return setting guarantees orders.

My notes

Use your own numbers

Fill in current values from each platform for the same book.

KDP print

List price \$ _____

Applicable royalty rate _____ %

Current print cost \$ _____

Estimated royalty \$ _____

(rate × list price) – print cost

IngramSpark

List price \$ _____

Current wholesale discount _____ %

Wholesale price \$ _____

Current print cost \$ _____

Estimated publisher compensation

\$ _____

Wholesale price – print cost

Returnability

☐ No ☐ Yes – Destroy

☐ Yes – Deliver

Returns note

Returnable copies can create financial exposure for the publisher. Decide returnability separately from the discount.

These figures are planning estimates using the values you enter. They are not guaranteed earnings.

Which figure fits my goals better, and why?

Should you use one or both?

Tick the statements that are true for this title. There is no universal winner.

KDP may fit this title when:

- ☐ Amazon-direct selling is central to your plan
- ☐ Its current pricing/royalty structure fits your title
- ☐ You want the KDP-specific publishing workflow

IngramSpark may fit this title when:

- ☐ Wider print-distribution availability matters
- ☐ You need control over wholesale/return settings
- ☐ Its current compensation structure fits your title

Using both may be worth reviewing when:

- ☐ You understand which platform handles which distribution role
- ☐ You have checked KDP Expanded Distribution
- ☐ Your ISBN/file/metadata setup is coordinated deliberately

Using both is a workflow decision, not automatically the best option.

If you coordinate KDP and IngramSpark for the same print title, review the current KDP Expanded Distribution setting before distributing through both. IngramSpark states a title can be in both accounts as long as KDP Expanded Distribution is not used for it.

My notes

Your decision matrix

Rate importance 1–5, then how well each platform fits (1–5).

Priority	Importance (1–5)	KDP fit	IngramSpark fit	Notes
Amazon-direct sales				
Wider print availability				
Per-copy economics				
Wholesale control				
Return settings				
Setup simplicity				
Format needs				
ISBN/imprint preferences				
Using both platforms				
Other:				

My current choice

☐ KDP
 ☐ IngramSpark
 ☐ Both
 ☐ Not decided yet

Why

Before publishing

- ☐ I checked current platform settings
- ☐ I used current print costs
- ☐ I checked the applicable KDP royalty tier
- ☐ I used my current IngramSpark wholesale setting
- ☐ I considered returns separately
- ☐ I reviewed Expanded Distribution if using both
- ☐ I understand availability does not guarantee stocking
- ☐ I understand these are planning estimates