CAREERS IN EDITING AND PUBLISHING

- Types of publishers
- Types of jobs
- Publishing resources
- Education programs

TYPES OF PUBLISHERS

Seattle is not exactly a publishing hub... so job openings are very limited and most local presses are small and specialized. If you are hoping to work in a large publishing house, you will need to relocate to one of the larger publishing centers (e.g., New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco). In any location, those seeking jobs in editing and publishing far exceed the number of jobs available; competition is very vigorous. If you are interested in working in publishing and/or editing, you should consider pursuing an internship with any of the following types of publishers. (This blog post on How to Intern at a Publishing House also offers some good advice.)

TRADE PUBLISHERS are commercial publishers of fiction and non-fiction books and magazines aimed at a wide audience and circulated through bookstores, libraries, etc.

Some local examples:
- Sasquatch Books
- Mountaineers Books
- Fantagraphics Books
- becker&mayer!
- Adventure Books
- Coffeetown Press

PROFESSIONAL AND SCHOLARLY PUBLISHERS produce books and journals aimed at professionals in a variety of industries: law, business, medicine, technology, etc.

Some local examples:
- Marquand Books
- Ouroboros Press
- DiversityCentral

UNIVERSITY PRESSES are affiliated nonprofit publishing houses specializing in academic books and journals.

Some local examples:
- University of Washington Press
- Washington State University Press

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHERS produce textbooks, workbooks, software, etc. designed to be used at all educational levels, from elementary schools to universities.

Some local examples:
- Parenting Press
- Bilingual Books

INDEPENDENT PRESSES come in all shapes and sizes and represent an alternative to mainstream presses,
often specializing in experimental or innovative publications.

Some local Examples:

- Wave Books
- Copper Canyon Press
- Dock Street Press
- Educare Press
- Minor Arcana Press
- Parkside Publications
- Ruby Throat Press

ALTERNATIVE MEDIA are often produced by publishing companies as supplements to conventional print materials, but some presses specialize in them.

Some local examples:

- Corbis
- ArtSquad Graphics
- Cedar House Audio Productions
- 911 Seattle Media Arts

MAGAZINE PUBLISHING is a different arena from book publishing. There are a number of local magazines that accept interns.

Some local examples:

- Seattle Magazine
- Open Spaces Magazine
- Seattle Bride Magazine
- City Arts Magazine
- Seattle Metropolitan Magazine
- Washington Business Magazine
- City Dog Magazine
- Yes! Magazine
- Paradigm Communications (publisher of the in-flight magazines for Alaska and Horizon Air)
- Outdoors NW Magazine

WEB PUBLISHING: Probably the largest arena in terms of job availability in editing and publishing is through commercial, governmental, and non profit websites. All types of organizations need to produce and edit web content, from large companies to government agencies to small non profit organizations. Many companies and organizations also publish newsletters or feature articles on their websites.

TYPES OF JOBS

There are many different kinds of jobs within the field of publishing, and depending on your skills and interests you may find yourself working on either the editorial side or the marketing side, or a combination of the two.

EDITORIAL

An editor acquires and develops book projects for publication. Editorial assistants work for a specific editor or editorial group, and daily duties might include:

- Evaluating submitted manuscripts
- Working with authors
- Preparing acquisitions for transmittal to the production department
- Performing general administrative duties
- Participating in editorial, design, and marketing meetings

PROMOTIONS

Promotions departments are responsible for overseeing the creation of all catalogs and promotional/sales...
materials. Department responsibilities include:

- Copywriting, design, and production of catalogs and sales materials
- Reviewing effectiveness of the materials produced in the department
- Helping to determine the overall publishing plan for every book on the list

PUBLICITY

Publicists promote individual titles and authors through mass mailings, author tours (radio, television, and public readings/signings), and book parties. Daily activities for the department include:

- Developing media contacts and issuing press releases
- Work with social media platforms
- Scheduling interviews for broadcast and print media
- Mailing pre-publication materials for review
- Planning bookstore appearances and special events

SALES

Publishing sales departments call upon traditional bookstores, retail accounts, libraries, academic institutions, book clubs, online vendors, and additional special markets. Daily activities include:

- Working with customer service on shipping, credit, and returns issues
- Establishing promotional plans at the retail accounts
- Attending book fairs and other industry events
- Managing author appearance set-up, and the creation of in-store marketing plans

SUBSIDIARY RIGHTS

This department finds additional sources of profit for a title, including serials, book clubs, and paperback, audio, and e-book rights. Activities include:

- Writing submission letters
- Sending manuscripts, proposals, and books to audio houses, paperback publishers, and foreign publishing companies
- Working with book clubs and attending book fairs

MAGAZINE ROLES

If you are working for a magazine, you might find yourself in one of the following roles:

MAGAZINE EDITOR: Magazine editors manage the content of the magazine. While some editors do more writing, others are more heavily involved with assigning stories and editing them.

COPY EDITOR: This person edits magazine articles for grammar and usage. If you’re a stickler for detail, a job as a copy editor could be perfect for you.

FACT CHECKER: Magazines rely on fact checkers to ensure that quotes and all factual information included in an article are accurate.

PUBLISHING RESOURCES

- Association of American Publishers (AAP)
- American Booksellers Association (ABA)
- Bookjobs.com
- Inside Book Publishing
- Magazine Publishers of America
- Northwest Independent Editors Guild
- PublishingCrossing.com
- Publishing Careers at Blogspot
- Washington Newspaper Publishers Association (WNPA)
- Media in Seattle from Wikipedia
- Washington Occupational Information System (WOIS) - at this site, you can research various professions and
gain valuable information about typical job tasks and qualifications, employment outlooks, salary information, career development, and more.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Beyond your bachelor's degree, special training is not required in this field. The most important qualifications will be your demonstrated skills, your experience, and the contacts you've made in this industry. An internship is a great way to gain experience and to network with professionals. This article on How to Intern at a Publishing House offers some good advice. There are also some campus opportunities through which you can gain experience, such as becoming involved with the UW Daily, the campus newspaper; with Bricolage, the undergraduate literary arts journal; with AU, the UW's speculative fiction journal; with the Comparative History of Ideas journal, intersections; with the Seattle Review; and with other campus publications.

There are some short-term publishing programs (usually four to eight weeks) that, along with training courses, provide opportunities to network and often assist with placement in jobs or internships. Some examples are the Denver Publishing Institute, the Columbia Publishing Course, and the NYU Summer Publishing Institute. There are also a number of master's programs in publishing and related fields, some of which are listed at bookjobs.com. The UW Professional and Continuing Education offers a certificate program in editing as well as other certificate programs in public relations, marketing, new media, etc.