
The 15-Minute

Author Income Audit

A quick, honest assessment of where your author business stands today, and where the money is hiding.

L.L. Blakeney

How This Works

This audit takes 15 minutes and covers five areas of your author business. For each question, rate yourself honestly from 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely). There are no right answers, only honest ones.

At the end, your scores will reveal exactly where your income is strong, where it's leaking, and which area deserves your attention first.

What you'll need: Your most recent royalty statements, a rough idea of your monthly income sources, and 15 minutes of honesty.

Scoring Guide

1 = Not at all 2 = Barely 3 = Somewhat 4 = Mostly 5 = Completely

Category 1: Your Foundation

How well do you understand the current state of your author business?

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I know exactly how much I earned from my books in the last 12 months. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I can name every platform and format currently generating income for me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I know what percentage of my total income comes from my single largest source. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I have reviewed my royalty statements or sales dashboard in the last 30 days. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I could explain my complete income picture to someone in under two minutes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Category 1 Subtotal:

_____ / 25

Category 2: Your Core Revenue

How fully are you monetizing the books you have already written?

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Every title in my catalog is available in at least two formats (ebook, print, audio). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. My books are distributed on more than one retail platform. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have reviewed and optimized my pricing in the last six months. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. My book descriptions, covers, and metadata are current and professionally done. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I actively promote my backlist, not just my newest release. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Category 2 Subtotal:

_____ / 25

Category 3: Your Growth Potential

How diversified are your income streams beyond standard book royalties?

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I earn income from at least two sources beyond retail book royalties. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I have explored or implemented at least one non-book income stream (teaching, speaking, licensing, etc.). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have a clear plan for which income stream I want to build or test next. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. My income would survive if one platform or retailer disappeared tomorrow. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I reinvest a portion of my earnings into growing new revenue streams. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Category 3 Subtotal:

_____ / 25

Category 4: Your Best Bets

Are you doubling down on what's already working?

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I know which strategy, series, or income stream gives me the best return on my time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I put more time and money into what's already working before chasing something new. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have cut back or paused the efforts that consistently underperform. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I'm building a direct-to-reader fandom (email list, community, or direct store) around what works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I have a plan to scale my best performer over the next 12 months. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Category 4 Subtotal:

_____ / 25

Category 5: Your Systems

How sustainable and systematized is your author business?

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I have an active email list that I send to at least once a month. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I have a consistent publishing or content rhythm that I can maintain without burning out. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have explored or managed my subsidiary rights (audio, translation, foreign, film/TV). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I have systems in place (automations, templates, schedules) that reduce my weekly workload. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. My author business could continue earning for at least 3 months if I stopped working today. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Category 5 Subtotal:

_____ / 25

Your Total Score

Category 1: Your Foundation	_____
Category 2: Your Core Revenue	_____
Category 3: Your Growth Potential	_____
Category 4: Your Best Bets	_____
Category 5: Your Systems	_____
TOTAL SCORE	_____ / 125

What Your Score Means

25 – 50: Starting Out

Your author business has significant untapped potential. You likely rely on one or two income sources and may not have a clear picture of your full financial landscape. The good news: the gap between where you are and where you could be is full of opportunity. Focus on Category 1 first. You cannot build what you cannot see.

51 – 75: Building Momentum

You have some pieces in place but major gaps remain. You probably have a sense of your income picture but haven't systematically optimized it. Your biggest win right now is in Category 2 or 3: either extracting more from what you've already built or adding your next income stream.

76 – 100: Gaining Traction

Your author business has real structure. You're earning from multiple sources and have some systems running. Your growth edge is likely in Categories 4 and 5: building direct reader relationships and creating systems that earn without your constant involvement.

101 – 125: Fully Activated

You're running a mature, diversified author business. Your focus now is optimization and sustainability: fine-tuning what works, cutting what doesn't, and building systems that compound. Look for your easiest win, the score you can lift with the least stress. That's your next unlock.

Your Easiest Win

Look at your five category scores. Where's the easiest point to gain?

Write it here:

My easiest win, category: _____

My score in that category: _____ / 25

This is your **momentum builder**. Don't start with your hardest category. Start with the score you can lift with the least stress. One finished action this week makes every harder category feel lighter.

The One Thing Exercise

Based on your easiest win, what is **one specific action** you could take in the next 7 days to improve that score by even one point?

Write it down. Put a date on it. Do it before the week is over. Small, consistent moves on your easiest wins will produce outsized results.

What comes after the audit?

This audit showed you where you stand. But knowing the gap isn't the same as closing it. I'm building a complete system of five interconnected strategies that turn these category scores into a real income plan.

If you want to know when it's ready, stay on my author list. But in the meantime, I'll share the full framework piece by piece in the weeks ahead via email.

It's the system I wish someone had handed me years ago.

If you'd like a deeper look at your audit, I provide private Zoom coaching. Simply contact me at lisa@lisalangblakeney.com to check my availability.