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# Book Proposal Guidelines

At Microsoft Press we’re always looking for great new ways to teach our customers about Microsoft products and technologies—and great new people to teach them! We publish books on everything from essential skills for Microsoft Office and Windows to technical references and advanced topics for IT professionals and software developers.

Here’s how to proceed:

**Step 1: Quick Pitch**

As a start, please send a quick pitch (a paragraph or two) for your book to 4bkideas@pearson.com. If we’d like to learn more, we’ll ask you to submit a complete proposal. (Note: If you’re new to book writing, read “Tips for first-time authors” at the end of these guidelines.)

**Step 2: Full Proposal**

If we ask you to submit a complete proposal, fill out the remainder of this document and email it to 4bkideas@pearson.com. With it, you will describe your book idea, your knowledge of the target audience, how you would organize topics, and more. Insert your answers wherever you see italicized text and other prompts. A Microsoft Press acquisitions editor will review your proposal and follow up with you.

## Résumé and contact information

*[Please insert your résumé or curriculum vitae (CV), telephone number, and email address. If there is more than one author for your book, please insert the information for each author.]*

## Suggested book title

A strong title helps to convey what is unique about your book and includes the key software or technology being covered.

*[Insert your suggested book title.]*

## One-sentence pitch

In a few words, “sell” your book to sales reps. What is the unique selling proposition for your book—why would a customer purchase this book?

*[Insert your one-sentence pitch.]*

## Suggested Series

Is there an existing book series into which your book could be published? You can find [a list of those on the MS Press website](https://www.microsoftpressstore.com/series/). It isn’t a requirement, but a series helps our sales and marketing teams.

*[Insert your suggested series and include a brief rationale.]*

## Topic/Technology Description

Explain, in plain English (using comparisons, metaphors and analogies as needed), what this technology or topic is, how is it used, and why it is important. If new version, include new features. Use language that easily translates to a sales rep.

*[Insert your details here.]*

## Summary and Approach

Clearly outline the approach to the topic. Is it a reference or a tutorial? Is it an overview or hands-on? How does the combination of topic, approach, author, timing, weaknesses of competition, etc. all come together to make this book worth publishing?

*[Insert your details here.]*

## Evaluation of competing titles

*[Include title, author, publisher, and ISBN for competing titles, along with a brief assessment of each and how your book is different.]*

## How does this book differ from the competition?

If there is no book that competes directly on the exact topic, to what can your book be compared? What other similar books might your readers already own? What other sources does the audience use to acquire technical information (for example, white papers, TechNet, or MSDN)?

*[Insert your details here.]*

*[Explain where your book fits within the existing informational landscape.]*

## Sales Features

List the 3-4 most important reasons why this book will sell. This can include key topic coverage, importance of author, market size, etc.

*[Insert your details here.]*

## Any Other Points That Reflect Why This Book Will Sell?

*[Insert your details here.]*

## Size of Market/User Base

How many people use this? Give quantitative information. For example, "According to IDC, there are 2.7 million Eclipse users in the world." Please include a source URL if available and year of reference.

*[Insert your details here.]*

## Profile of Audience

Please tell us more about who needs this book, and why:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What knowledge do you assume your intended audience has? What skills have they mastered?  | *[Insert your answer.]* |
| Job Roles: What professional positions does this audience hold? | *[Insert your answer.]* |
| What information or training does your audience need? How do they usually obtain it? | *[Insert your answer.]* |
| What websites do they use? | *[Insert your answer.]* |
| What publications (magazines, journals, newspapers) do they read? | *[Insert your answer.]* |
| What conferences do they attend? | *[Insert your answer.]* |
| To what professional organizations do they belong? | *[Insert your answer.]* |

## Table of Contents (TOC)

Please provide the following:

* Outline consisting of section/part titles and chapter titles
* Estimated page count for each chapter
* One-paragraph description of each chapter

*[Insert your TOC here.]*

## Estimated writing schedule

For each chapter (including appendices), provide:

* If you will have coauthors, identify the author of each chapter
* Estimated page count
* Date you expect to hand off each chapter to Microsoft Press

*[Insert your preliminary writing schedule here unless you included it as part of your TOC above.]*

## Author Bio

Please provide a short description of your work experience and what makes you the most qualified candidate to write this book.

*[Insert your details here.]*

## Author reach

Authors who promote their own books play an important role in building awareness and generating sales. In what ways could you help promote your book? Insert answers after each bullet.

* Do you have a website or blog? How many hits does it get a month?
* Do you have followers or other contacts through social networking such as Twitter, LinkedIn?
* Do you podcast or produce YouTube videoa? How big is your audience?
* Do you teach? Where, and to how many students per year?
* Do you speak at conferences? Which ones?
* Do you write for magazines or websites? Which ones and with what circulation?
* Do you work as a consultant?
* Any other writing, speaking, or media experience?

## Additional components

*[Describe any extra components you would like to include, such as sample files, code samples, templates, job aids, and supplementary resources.]*

Send your writing sample along with this proposal document to 4bkideas@pearson.com.

## Tips for first-time authors

* If you have never written a proposal before, you may find it helpful to refer to Michael Larsen’s *How to Write a Book Proposal: The Insider's Step-by-Step Guide to Proposals that Get You Published*, published by Writer's Digest Books (ISBN: 9781440348174).
* Consider being a contributor, coauthor, or technical reviewer before attempting an entire book.
* Gain experience by writing articles for Web sites and technical magazines.
* If you have expertise in more than one technology, let us know—we may have another project for you.
* Share your expertise by becoming a trainer or public speaker—many of our authors also participate at industry conferences and events.
* Learn more about your potential audience and share your knowledge by participating actively in the technical community. You might want to investigate the Microsoft Most Valuable Professional (MVP) program. For more information, visit <http://mvp.microsoft.com>
* Make sure you are familiar with our current publishing portfolio and send us something that is different!
* A comprehensive, beginner-to-expert, everything-you-need-to-know “big book” approach is often less useful than a smaller, focused book targeting a specific information need.

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