

# Crowdsourcing: A Platform for Crowd Engagement in the Publishing Industry

Siti Ezaleila Mustafa<sup>1</sup> · Hamed Mohd Adnan<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** Publishers will usually make decisions based on their experience and knowledge in book publishing. However, there are risks of losses as markets can be unpredictable. Now, with the availability of various online social platforms, “crowdsourcing” is being used by publishers and authors to gather new ideas and innovations. This article will analyze how the crowdsourcing platform is used by industry players to attract active participation from the public, especially in the title development process. Publishers or authors also need to understand which platform is appropriate and how to use the platforms as a marketing communication tool. The netnography approach will be used to gather and analyze the data related to the specific subject area of the study, including literature review and online observation. Based on our observations, platforms such Wattpad and Ilham Karangkraf are popular among Malaysian authors and publishers, and had been used to get crowd engagement as well as to communicate with readers. With it, sometimes a work that has many readers or followers will be published.

**Keywords** Social media · Crowdsourcing · Crowdfunded · Online collaboration · Open innovation

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✉ Siti Ezaleila Mustafa  
ezaleila@um.edu.my

Hamed Mohd Adnan  
hamed@um.edu.my

<sup>1</sup> Department of Media Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

## Introduction

The adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) grows year by year, especially with the emergence of Web 2.0, also known as social media. This technology facilitates social online interactivity and public participation as well as collaboration. Besides the increasing use by individuals, the uses of Web 2.0 by organizations constantly increase as well. In businesses, Web 2.0 and its products have been used by many companies such as blogging, microblogging, photo and video sharing, and real-time feeds because they are effective in the creation of crowd engagement and strengthening of the relationship between companies and consumers.

The use of social media has created a new communication landscape [37] by utilizing public interaction and user-generated content. These media platforms allow users to publish opinions, connect, build community, and produce as well as share content. Besides that, they easily allow social influence marketing to be used, and enable users to be social influencers who express their experiences and views about an organization and its products. This has challenged the traditional way companies communicate with their customer since now these media channels enable the former to talk directly and freely to the latter [27]. Therefore, it has been widely used as marketing communications tool by many businesses.

Companies or organizations are beginning to involve consumers in their activities, seeking their support for marketing activities. Marketing managers are interested in attaining more involvement of consumers or the public ever since new technology, especially Internet-based technology, has been accepted as a communication tool [11, 15]. Crowdsourcing is becoming popular with the increasing use of new technology which leads to open opportunities to the public to participate collaboratively, including in open innovation as well as problem-solving activities. This also can be seen as a new way of collaboration and innovation that can be used as a new work model on the Internet [23]. The popularity of social media is one of the important drivers to a quick-paced increase in the current existing crowdsourcing approach [21].

In the publishing industry, crowdsourcing can be seen as a model from the self-publishing movement [16]. This approach can increase collaboration and learning from others [21]. Authors can use it as an open forum to utilize readers as a filter for quality and for market testing, while publishers are using these platforms to empower readers and authors. This new business model has been used in creating valuable reading experiences by fostering communities in finding and promoting the best contributed content. For instance, Swoon Reads through its platform accepts manuscripts from unpublished authors and allows its community of readers to vote for their favourites, and Storybird has been used by authors to build a fan base and develop their careers.

Furthermore, authors can crowdfund their book through fundraising platforms that help authors connect with audiences or full-service book publishers that use crowdfunding. According to Nawotka [31], the crowdsourcing phenomenon has evolved, from companies offering a platform for authors and illustrators to collaborate on children's books, to efforts to crowdfund the purchase of book rights making specific titles available in digital perpetuity. For Kaye [24], this approach

will bring passionate readers along for the publishing ride and create more invested fans and stronger advocates—and (ideally) grow the overall number of books sold. Usually, crowdfunding is used to cover the printing costs of a book.

The aim of this article is to understand the use of the crowdsourcing approach in book publishing. Therefore, this article will analyze the crowdsourcing platforms used by industry players to attract active participation of the public by using the netnography approach, namely literature review to gain an overview of crowdsourcing, as well as web analysis or observation to gain more knowledge and identify crowdsourcing platforms related to publishing.

## What is “Crowdsourcing”?

Traditionally, the innovation process, such as product development has predominantly relied on efforts inside an organization. In the publishing industry, publishers will make decisions based on their experience and knowledge in publishing a book. Therefore, not all manuscripts will be accepted for publication. However, there exists the risk for losses because the market can be unpredictable. Now, with the availability of various online social platforms, the industry has entered a new frontier, crowdsourced publishing [41]. “Crowdsourcing” is used by publishers and authors to reach larger crowds, more competent crowds, or crowds with more extensive and varied knowledge in order to gather new ideas and innovations.

Crowdsourcing is a term presented by Jeff Howe in *Wired* magazine in 2006 to describe content creation or co-content through user activities. According to Howe [18], “crowdsourcing isn’t a single strategy. It’s an umbrella term for a highly varied group of approaches that share one obvious attribute in common: they all depend on some contribution from the crowd.” This conception is almost the same as the interpretation made by [14] based on their studies on 40 different definitions of crowdsourcing: “a type of participative online activity in which an individual, an institution, a non-profit organization, or company proposes to a group of individuals of varying knowledge, heterogeneity, and number, via a flexible open call, the voluntary undertaking of a task.”

This term relates to several other terms such as “customer made”, “user-generated content” [15], and “open innovation” [9, 28]. Based on [17], to make open innovation happen, it needs user-driven innovation, co-creation, and crowdsourcing. As a type of open innovation, crowdsourcing is “an effort to leverage the expertise of a global pool of individuals and organizations, generally enabled by the web to as quickly and cost-effectively as possible develop and implement creative solutions to innovation challenges” [28].

Although sometimes user-generated content can be considered an interchangeable contribution to crowdsourcing [1] because it reflects participative online activities in marketing strategies and brand related content [22], both terms also significantly differ from each other. These two terms make a difference in content activities depending on whether they are generated voluntarily or from determining a specific task [14]. External crowds among online communities produce content and diversity of views which fuel crowdsourcing in products and services [6, 7]. Generally, crowdsourcing means outsourcing to the crowd.

One can argue that successful crowdsourcing activities exist in the forms of Wikipedia by creation of incredible resources via community action as well as Duolingo, which improve language resources with crowdsourced translations. However, according to [7], Wikipedia is not considered crowdsourcing but it is more to what [5] calls “commons-based production”. The reason for this is that no one at Wikipedia issues specific tasks to the online community there. According to [7], “crowdsourcing blends an open creative process with traditional, top-down managed process.” Furthermore, it depends on the Internet as a platform to “elevate the quality, quality, amount, and pace of cooperation, coordination, and idea generation to a point that warrants its own classification” [7].

## Types of Crowdsourcing

Papadopoulou and Giaoutzi [32] see crowdsourcing as a process that evolved through the following steps: the online release of a problem, the generation of alternative solutions by a crowd (participants), the evaluation of the proposed solutions, the selection of the best provided solution, and the exploitation of the selected solution by the company or institution that initially posted the problem online. Waze and Facebook are examples of applications that had been developed with the support of crowdsourced information. Based on online collaboration via the crowdsourcing approach, several types of web platforms have emerged such as the research and development platform, marketing, idea and design platform, collective intelligence and prediction platform, open innovation software platform, creative co-creation platform, corporate platform, and public crowdsourcing platform.

Based on literature, there are different classifications of crowdsourcing based on various activities such as, according to [7], knowledge discovery and management, broadcast search, distributed human intelligence tasking, and peer-vetted creative production while [18] stated the primary type of crowdsourcing as crowd wisdom, crowd creation, crowd voting, and crowdfunding. In addition, based on Schenk and Guittard [36], it can be classified based on the type of tasks sourced (simple, complex, or creative) and the nature of crowdsourcing process (selective or integrative) while Vukovic [41] categorized crowdsourcing by its function (spanning the different parts of product life cycle) and mode (the request is a tender or a competition). On top of these classifications, Jussila, Karkkainen, and Multasuo [21] divide crowdsourcing into two, based on the nature of compensation: monetary or material compensation and non-monetary or non-material compensation.

To redefine the crowdsourcing industry taxonomy, Crowdsourcing.org has gathered a team of industry practitioners and experts and proposes seven categories that represent the different functional applications of crowdsourcing, namely open innovation, community building, collective creativity, civic engagement, collective knowledge, crowdfunding, and cloud labour [13]. Research by Dowson and Byngal [11] suggests 22 categories of crowdsourcing services and eight business model that differ in value creation and monetization aspects, but all of them utilize crowdsourcing as a mechanism for ensuring value creation: media and data, marketplaces, platforms, crowd services, crowd ventures, crowd processes, content

and product market, and non-profit. Based on those types, generally Howe's types of crowdsourcing are acceptable and widely used.

### The Uses of Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing principles can be applied in marketing activities, including marketing research, product development, and promotion in many fields including education, manufacturing, design, advertising, and others to predict the success of products and ideas based on consumer's thoughts. For Gatautis and Vitkauskaitė [15], this activity can be done internally at company level or outsourced to external partners. According to Alberts, Campbell, and Louw [2: 29], "Marketing research agencies are going to need to reassess the value that they bring to clients, in an age where brand managers can easily go directly to consumers themselves." Companies can utilize ICT as well as social media to reach a large group of audiences in getting input regarding their products or brands from potential or existing users. They can crowdsource their brand's promotion to brand supporters, outsource content creation to the crowd, and outsource innovation ideas and solutions to the public [29].

Many companies have understandably given considerable attention to crowdsourcing due to its potential business value. For instance, Intel has developed crowdsourced campaigns that ask customers for their input [3] while Threadless.com not only seeks out product design ideas for new T-shirts but also uses online participants to vote for the best ones for manufacturing [18]. Many creative activities, including advertising, are impacted by crowdsourcing. In addition, many non-profit organizations have used crowdsourcing for problem-solving. Through Planet Hunter, people help astronomers locate potential planets by examining data from the Kepler space mission, and DARPA (the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) has created a program called Fang, which aims to use crowdsourcing to design a new infantry fighting vehicle [37].

In the academic field, crowdsourcing has been used to attract a crowd [42] and in creating educational content [39]. Due to the infancy of online education technology, Weld et al. [42] believe that there are vast chances to engage "the crowd" to personalize education and scale high-quality tutoring through online commitment. For example, CrowdLearn works by applying the collaborative authoring and crowdsourcing technique to create semi-structured e-learning content. By using this approach, the content and learning process has the possibility to be personalized [39]. In addition, all parties in education institutions, including students, researchers, lecturers, and others can use crowdsourcing to gain opinions and judgements on a certain topics from a group of people as well as for creation of crowdsourced content on almost any topic or domain, which include the creation of textbooks, and other class materials [38].

This shows that crowdsourcing for innovation initiatives or creative crowdsourcing has been used as a business model which allows companies to leverage the crowd's skills and know-how through online platforms where individuals voluntarily give ideas and solutions [30] from a large pool of people from different experiences and points of view [4]. Feedback from the crowd can provide valuable insights for organizations to pick the best idea and not rely on one person or agency. Therefore, to

use crowdsourcing, they need to consider some aspects such as connection to the crowd, listening to them, acknowledgement, transparency, and empathy [15].

Crowdsourcing has been used to connect company or brands with customers. The engagement or participation in crowdsourcing involves intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Recognition among peers is one motivation. Based on Weld et al. [42], there are three main ways of assembling a crowd to accomplish a task, namely pay them (such as done by Mechanical Turk), entertain them (FoldIt), or create a community (Wikipedia and Stack Overflow). The motivation to participate in this kind of activities is driven by trust [25, 34], technology-based support by community organizers and knowledge-based support within the online community [33]. The rewards in the crowdsourcing model are not just financial, there are also benefits in reputation and ideologies [28].

## Method

This exploratory study uses the netnography approach to achieve its goal. Netnography “is a new qualitative research methodology that adapts ethnographic research techniques to the study of cultures and communities emerging through computer-mediated communications” [26]. This Internet-based research uses sources of data from Internet-mediated communications. There are three netnography phases involved in this study: the first consisted of a literature review to provide an overview of the use of crowdsourcing, especially in the marketing and content creation field. For information search, two main databases were used, namely EBSCOhost and SciendDirect, with “crowdsourcing” as main keyword. Searching and observation was applied to identify the crowdsourcing platforms that have been specialized for book publishing projects to know their services or crowdsourcing activities. Online observation and analysis of e-conversation also has been done by looking at the comments in online forum or discussion platforms such as Slate.com, the Wattpad Forum, and the Kickstarter Forum. Since Internet consider a public space, the conversion through the online forum can be used without required informed consent [10].

## Findings and Discussion

Based on searches, we found more than 20 of crowdsourcing sites that can be used by authors and as a platform for publishers to find new potential titles to publish (Table 1). There are crowdsourcing sites that can be used to gain support that is not money-driven such as a like or comment, such as Flattr, Wattpad and Inkspand. Besides that, there are several sites that have been developed to conduct writing contests and give cash prizes, as well as publishing the winner’s works as is the case in Poets & Writers, Creative Writing Now, and Be a Better Writer.

Several platforms offer crowdsourced funding, the practice of funding a project by raising money from the Internet community, while other platforms such as Unbound, Inkshares, Pentian, and Publishizer publish books as well. These platforms usually perform all the usual publishing functions when the pledged

**Table 1** List of crowdsourcing sites

No	Sites	Type	Focus
1.	Kickstarter	Paid	Crowdfunding
2.	Pubslush/PubLaunch	Paid	Crowdfunding, publishing services
3.	Authr	Paid	Crowdfunding, pre-sell
4.	Pentian	Paid	Crowdfunding, profit sharing
5.	Unglue-it	Paid	Crowdfunding
6.	Inkspand	Paid	Crowd wisdom (Book review)
7.	Indiegogo	Paid	Crowdfunding/fundraising
8.	Wattpad	Free	Crowd wisdom
9.	Authonomy	n/a	Crowd wisdom (Closed)
10.	Unbound	Paid	Crowdfunding
11.	Patreon	Paid	Crowd wisdom (Built-in fanbase)
12.	Flattr	Paid	Social shares (Pay money with the likes)
13.	Book Country	Free	Crowdsourcing
14.	Be a Better Writer	Free	Crowd voting (Contest)
15.	Creative Writing Now	Free	Crowd voting (Contest)
16.	Poets & Writers	Paid	Crowd voting (Contest)
17.	Publishizer	Paid	Crowdsourcing
18.	Inkshares	Paid	Crowd wisdom, crowdfunding
19.	Widbook	Free	Crowd creation
20.	WEBook	Free	Crowd wisdom, crowd creation
21.	Booksie	Free	Crowd wisdom (Read and review)
22.	Fiction Press	Free	Crowd wisdom
23.	Figment	Free	Crowd wisdom
24.	Bibliophilia.org	Free	Crowd wisdom
25.	KindleScout	Free	Crowd voting

projects reach their funding target. Furthermore, there are several sites that do not employ straight-up crowdsourcing. Here, works get read and reviewed, but not with the purpose of getting a book deal, agent representation, and the like. This can be seen in Booksie, Fiction Press, Figment, and WritersCafe.org. These sites can be used by authors to generate some interest from the public.

As mentioned above, crowdsourcing is an alternative that can be used to publish a book. It also involves a much easier process. By using this approach, authors will not need advances from publishers, while publishers will know what the market tastes and wants are.

### Crowdsourcing Platforms

In terms of traffic and popularity, Kickstarter is the largest crowdsourcing funding sites which can be used to attract a big crowd to fund a campaign. With more than 13 million visitors per month, Kickstarter hosts various campaigns for products as well as events and are not limited to publishing products such as comics and books.

It is a paid crowdsourcing site that collects a 5% fee for every successful funded project. An alternative site, Indiegogo charges a 9% fee on funds raised and if the users reach their goal, they get 5% back from the fee. Kickstarter has funded more than 17,000 projects under “Publishing” label [35] with its strong backers ‘community. The biggest drawback for Kickstarter is that it only offers the all-or-nothing funding model. This means that if the users do not reach the funding target, they get none of the funds pledged. Furthermore, it is harder for Malaysians to use this platform because the platform requires creators to be associated with the United States or the United Kingdom.

Unbound is another example of a crowdsourced publishing start-up that harnesses the online crowd to support the publication of new authors. This platform combined crowdfunding and traditional publishing services and works in tandem with Penguin Random House. Similar to other crowdsourcing platforms, this can be seen as a new financing model for authors [43] and a platform to connect authors and readers, allowing the public to fund and influence an author’s work at the point of development. It gives the deciding power to the public to determine which idea they want to proceed with, while lesser-known authors get their book noticed alongside the services offered. The platform gives authors a chance to pitch their book ideas on the site in a bid to get financial support from readers. Unbound offers several levels of support and each level has a different reward such as to have lunch with the author. Editors in Unbound will choose a goal for each book idea to hit. When the books or ideas meet their goals, as a funding platform and publishers, Unbound will fulfill all the publishing process from editorial to design, printing, and distribution. As business entities, the net profit for each title in Unbound will be split 50/50 with the author.

Kindle Scout and Wattpad can be seen as a social reading or online writing platform, namely a place for new authors to upload their work and connect directly with readers. Kindle Scout, owned by Amazon Kindle, is a bit different from Autonomy, a platform run by HarperCollins. Touted as a reader-powered publishing channel for new or never-before published books for romance, mystery, thriller, fantasy or science fiction, Kindle Scout is a platform which offers the possibility of a publishing contract. Authors can submit an English manuscript of 50,000 words or more and the story that receives the best reviews and number of votes will be published and sold; the readers who read and evaluated the story will receive a digital version for free as an incentive.

Founded in 2006, Wattpad stories are serialized and the community participates in the storytelling process through comments, messages, and multimedia. Wattpad offers stories in over 50 languages, and works on mobile and the web. Similar to some online writing communities, authors and readers collaborate on a work in Wattpad where authors will upload a story, chapter by chapter, and readers will view, vote as well as comment on that chapter. They can provide encouragement to the author and actually indicate where they want the story to go. This creates a type of engagement that would have been impossible in an offline context. Based on a report by Ingram [20], young authors who get many views from their work in Wattpad have being contacted by traditional publishers and content companies.

With more than three million registered users, Wattpad features 200 million original stories uploaded in 25 languages. This platform has an average 45 million



monthly visitors over the past year (wattpad.com). With such engagement, it presents an opportunity for advertising content on the platform. Previously, brands such as Target, hosted a writing contest #OnceUponNow on the platform whereby participants need to write a story about modern life and readers can vote up to 25 favourite stories. The editors of Gallery Book will select a top ten list as an anthology to be sold in Target stores [8]. Malaysian authors use Wattpad to share their work and attract audiences or followers to their works. Publishers such as Karyaseni, Fixi and Lejen also have accounts in Wattpad with the aim to find new stories for them to publish.

The same concept has been used by Karangraf Media Group, one of the biggest publishers in Malaysia (in Malay language publications) with the launch of the Ilham portal in 2013. It allowed authors to upload their works while online readers can read these works for free then vote for their favourite works. Karangraf used the crowdsourcing concept by showing a series of stories for free on the portal then observed the reaction of the readers. Popular, high-quality works deemed best by the majority will be published in printed form such as *Adam dan Hawa*, *Rakus*, *Di manakah Penanda Kubur Anira*, and *Bayangan Gurauan*. So far, this platform has received submissions from more than 4000 authors. This approach gives access to any author to change and improve their works based on opinions and discussions with their readers.

### Participants Opinion

The use of crowdsourcing will attract a crowd because people enjoy the feeling of knowing they helped a creative person complete their work. Therefore, they need to be completely open and honest about the project. Since this approach involves crowd engagement, the element of trust plays a vital role in determining its success [25]. This element will lead to collaborative activities among online communities, including the reader community, which involves online exchange and knowledge-sharing intentions.

According to Seth Godin, an author who used Kickstarter to attract attention from the publisher of *Icarus Deception* to launch a major retail campaign, “it is easier than ever to spread a book ... and let publishers know loud and clear that it is a book that is going to get talked about” through this platform ([www.kickstarters.com](http://www.kickstarters.com)). To use these crowdsourcing platforms, authors need to listen to their backers and “respond in a timely manner, with real information” (LeatherDiceBags). Therefore, engagement with the crowd, namely the online community who supports the project is important. This needs hard work and some participants or users acknowledged it in the Kickstarter Forum as follows:

Kickstarter is marketing, sales, promotion and branding all wrapped in one. And that’s just one of the reasons why it’s hard. It’s also an investment, worth making.

- inflexionUSA

Get your social media straight and start building momentum! Start contacting possible backers. Let them review your website, telling them to leave a feedback on it. Telling them your story and how you plan to overcome it! We

are going by these principles, since our campaign is launching soon. As a matter fact, if you can please leave us your feedback! This would mean a lot to us, to see where we can get better. We would love to hear from you.

- doublesapphires

I've learnt that preparation is key. Interacting with influencers and potential backers is a must too.

-hyperstarter

With this kind of approach, it cannot be denied that not all books are good because not all works will be handled by professionals. Therefore, there are some negative comments such as:

I agree... is filled with horribly written garbage that should never see the light of publication. It's a public slush pile, and some of this slush is particularly rank.

- Keith Deininger ([www.slate.com](http://www.slate.com))

Chosen manuscripts hit the digital shelves as-is, sans editing, proofing, or guidance on artwork.

- Katy Waldman ([www.slate.com](http://www.slate.com))

But it all depends on the crowd as social influencers to let their voice be heard by others. They have the power to influence others to support a work that they like and want to get published. This can be seen from their comments in Slate.com.

The public is not as stupid as some writers believe.

- new\_reader

... if people think they are bad, they won't get published. And if people want to read them - despite some literary-minded people thinking they are bad - then what's wrong with publishing them?

- BAS

What matters is whether your readers enjoy it. Everyone's tastes are different.

- akabins

And if these titles are not your cup of tea - wait a month or so and there will be a new batch coming from the program.

- worldbeat99

This meant, the author who used these platforms encourage the building of a community and audience around each project along with the support that goes with it [13]. Authors will use any way to promote their work and gain crowd engagement. And trust becomes an important element to promote or share any ideas.

I welcome any of you to read a few chapters and if you like the book, nominate it. If you hate it, thanks for checking it out anyway. You can vote on my book till April 30, 2015 – about two more weeks. I have managed to get into the “Hot & Trending” category for a while, but it's hard to stay there.

- worldbeat99

My Kindle Scout book, “Royal Date,” is doing just fine on Amazon, thank you very much. And I decided to make the best business decision I could for myself and my book, and trust me, this was it. I’ve got Amazon’s marketing power behind me, and just two weeks after debuting (where I did, indeed, have professional editing provided by Amazon), I’m currently sitting in the Top 500. Me, an unknown author who has never published anything with an NY publisher.

- Sariah Salisbury Wilson

However, there are mixed opinions when it comes to crowd creation that involve fully crowdsourced novels or fiction such as “Crowd Control: Heaven Makes a Killing” by CNET readers, “Signals: Profiting from signs from the future” by John Sutherland Books, and Malaysia’s crowdsourced novel “Eglee” via Poskad.my. Among participants, some of them have pessimistic thoughts such as those stated below:

I’m a huge fan of crowdsourcing in concept but it frequently comes down to the execution as to whether it’s effective or not. I’d be curious to know if you think you got a BETTER product than you would have gotten had you written it on your own or if it was simply DIFFERENT. There are some things crowdsourcing does extremely well and others it can’t do at all. Compiling knowledge and conducting analysis is something that lends itself well to crowdsourcing, but I’m not sure that novel writing does (though editing might). I’ll have to read the final product.

- JeffMaxinDC ([www.cnet.com/news/](http://www.cnet.com/news/))

free-for-all writing just results in higgledy-piggledy patchworked stories with no coherent content or consistent voice... nothing that’s in any way marketable... so why waste time on it, other than ‘just for fun’?

- mammamaia ([www.writerdigest.com/forum/](http://www.writerdigest.com/forum/))

On the other side, there is a good comment regarding this concept that involves multiple authors with multiple possible threads of the book.

I do think, though, that having all those people involved probably created a work that is, in the end, more accessible to a broader audience than what I would have done on my own.

- ericcmack ([www.cnet.com/news/](http://www.cnet.com/news/))

Generally, this approach is a good option for unknown authors to start—compared to traditional publishing process where the decision is made by publishing houses based on many considerations. Many new authors gain benefits from the use of crowdsourcing platforms because it can also be used as a platform for sharing idea and discussion.

It’s a pretty good option for writers who have something that readers might love but wouldn’t get through the slush-piles of publishing houses looking for something they can make big money on.

- akabins ([www.slate.com](http://www.slate.com))

For most of us, we realised that the ‘Editor’s Desk’ was not the point of the site - the peer to peer real reviews and criticism was what we were there for...  
- Will Maxmillan Jones ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com))

This is what has been done by many authors, especially new budding ones. Although many of them did not get many views, diligently writing and posting a chapter regularly as well as promoting the work through social media can build up a loyal following of readers such as what has been done by Malaysian author, Bella Zamri. She keeps writing on Wattpad and had 1 million views for her third novel, “The Boy Who Lost His Sights” which is soon to be published by a local publishing company. This shows that feedback from crowds can provide valuable insights to publishers regarding the market’s demand.

## Conclusion

The emergence of crowdsourcing can be used to strengthen the traditional publishing industry. The innovation and efficiency offered by crowdsourcing and other digital tools have the power to better connect authors with the audience with their work. Furthermore, with this approach, there are many potential solutions between the traditional book and fully self-published works [19]. The platforms can be used by publishers to find new books or new authors that have the potential to be marketed.

Although crowdsourcing is a relatively new concept, the idea of using a crowd to produce value has been around for centuries. However, with the advent of Web 2.0 technologies, individuals became active contributors, not passive browsers. This has increased the possibilities used for crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing can be seen as an alternative approach for authors who sometimes feel under-served by their traditional publisher. For self-publishing authors that face painful experiences in the process to publish and promote their own work, this is a solution for them.

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