TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHEAT SHEET

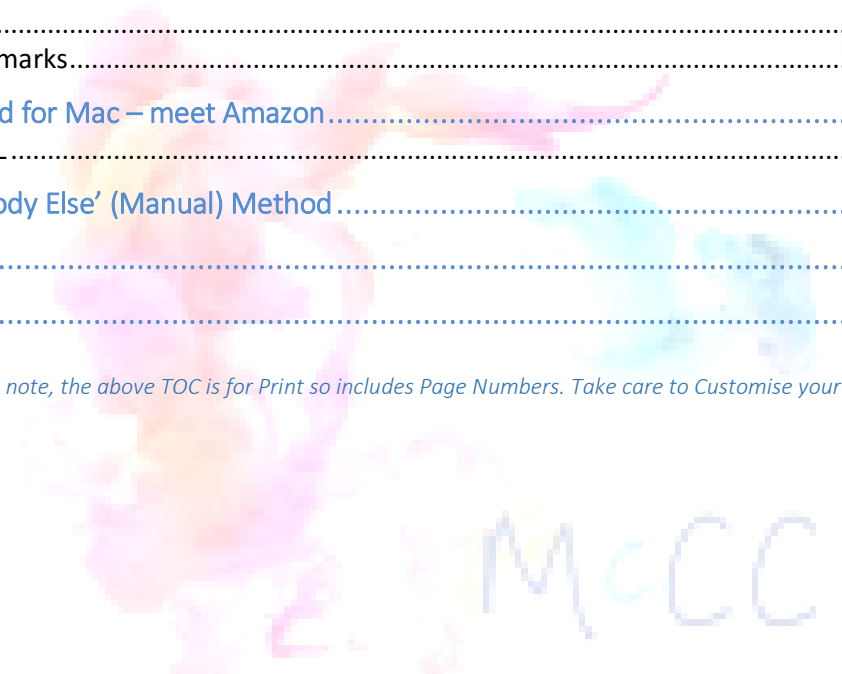## Table of Contents

Please note, the above TOC is for Print so includes Page Numbers. Take care to Customise your TOC for ebook.

Table of Contents

I've created a section dedicated to the Table of Contents (TOC) because it can throw up unforeseen challenges when you are uploading to your chosen ebook platform.

There are a couple of ways to create a TOC, but the method you chose is dependent on the retailer/platform you are uploading to. There is the Amazon Method and then the 'Everybody Else' Method.

Introduction

It's wise to have a TOC at the beginning of your book regardless of whether you are writing Fiction or Non-fiction, primarily because your audience will appreciate it. It improves, usability, improves the user experience and it provides a useful overview of what's actually included in your ebook. It's also good for you as the author because you can include a link to your Bio or a link in the TOC to other books you have written.

So – we're in agreement, TOC's are good to have.

Now, there are two ways you can create the TOC. One is specific for the Amazon Kindle, and the other is an all-encompassing method that will work at any retailer.

Amazon - Kindle

This method relies on using the **Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3,** settings in **Word** using the **References tab** and the Inserting TOC feature.

I'm assuming you have your Word file open in front of you.

Scroll past your title page, your copyright, and your dedication (if you have one).
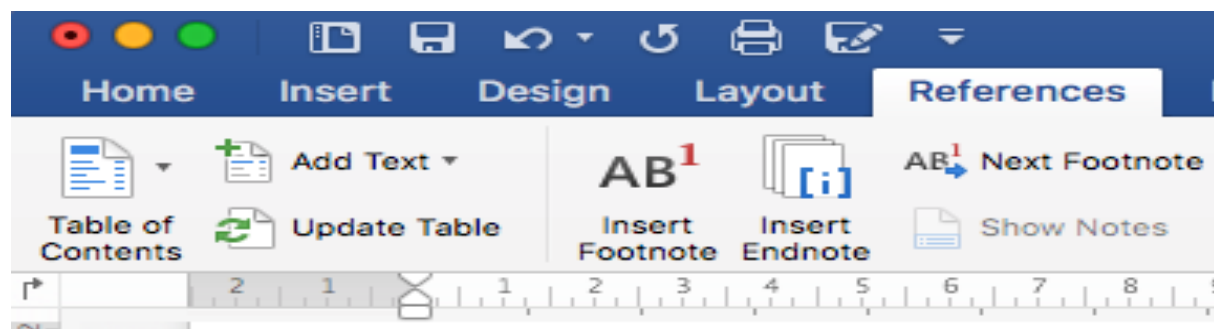Type out the words – Table of Contents
This is where your TOC will appear
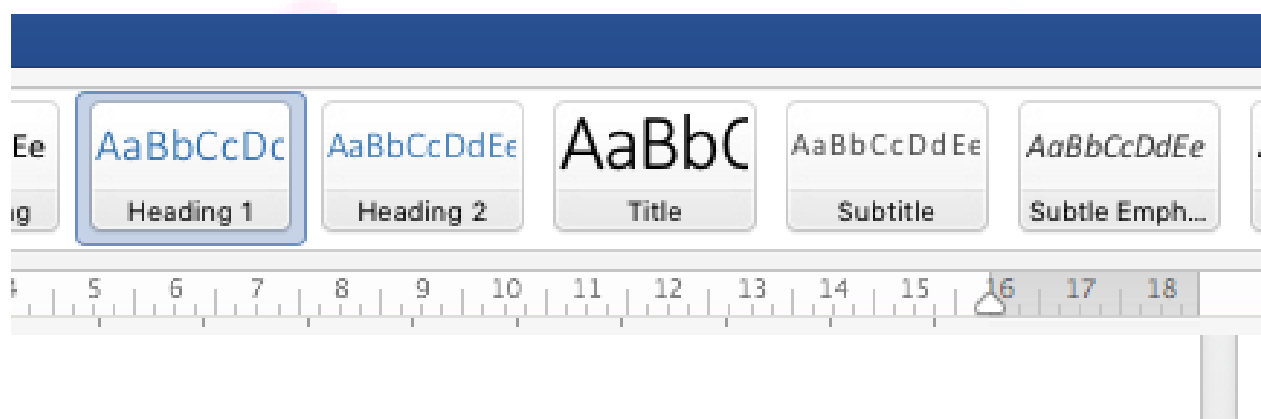Hit Enter (return)
Insert Page Break
This will ensure your TOC has its own page.

Once you have allocated a TOC page up you can now go through and Highlight your main headers/chapter heads as **Heading 1**

I am going to select **Example 1** and assign **Heading 1** status to it so you can see, and **Example 2** will be given **Heading 2** status so you can see the difference

Example 1
Example 2
Example 3

The heading levels can be modified to any font or size you want. All you have to do is 'Update to Match Selection' or 'Modify'.

Work your way through your document, assigning all your headers, chapter heads, sub heads and so on, with the level of Header 1, Header 2, or Header 3. Remember to always use the References Ribbon and not simply using text Styles.

Once you have gone through your document you are ready to insert the TOC back at the beginning of your document.

Click the paragraph return, and now use the **References tab** to Insert a TOC. Rather than select one of the TOC's already prepared for you, you can select a CUSTOM TOC (located at the bottom of the list depending on your version of Word)

Custom

Under the CUSTOM header you should **uncheck any box that says Show Page Numbers**. We do not use page numbers in ebooks – think more about your ebook in terms of computer screens rather than a traditional book.

Next you should select a format that fits in with the look and feel of your ebook. Underneath the Formats box you will see **Show Levels**. Make sure that reflects the number of Headers you want, or the number of Headers you have assigned in your content.
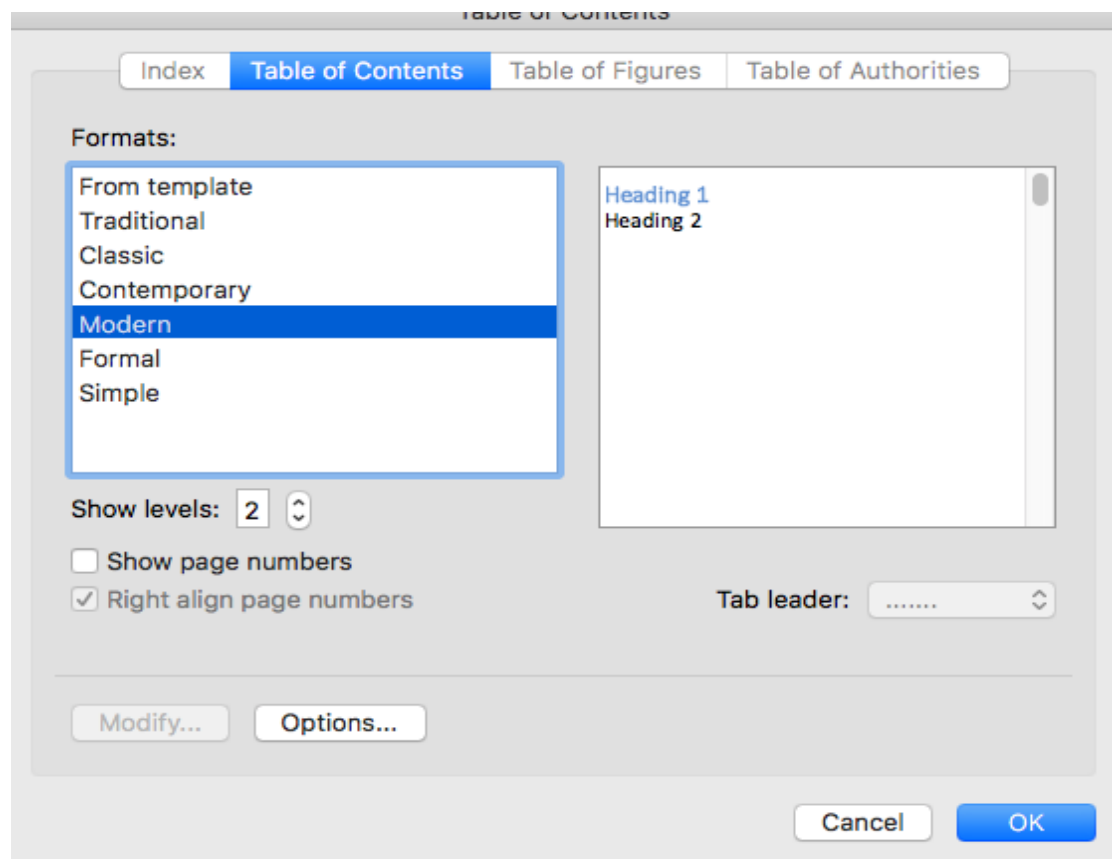

Once you have set up the look of your TOC you are now ready to click **OK**. Everything that you assigned as a Heading 1, Heading 2 and/or Heading 3 setting will appear in your TOC.

These are actually active hyperlinks. If you put your cursor over it, and for PC users, you click control and then click, you will be taken to that location.

Bookmark

It's called a **TOC bookmark**, and this will provide your Kindle readers with a menu option to go straight to your TOC no matter where they are in the ebook.

Put your cursor in front of the TOC you've typed
Click the Insert tab, and find the Bookmark tab
Type in the letters TOC in the Bookmark Name box
Click **ADD**
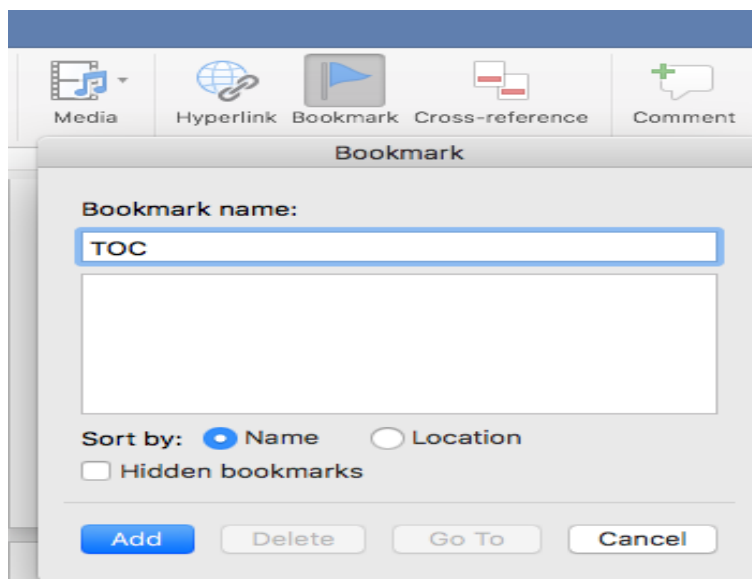
You can then go through all your chapter headers and add a bookmark linking to TOC, so that if your readers click on the headers they will automatically be taken back to the TOC.

Then Save your document

If you want to make additional changes in your copy that will affect your TOC that's absolutely fine. Perhaps you want to change the name of one of your headers or perhaps you want to change the Heading Level? Make your changes as normal then **right click and update field (or entire table).** You may also be able to use the F9 key to update, however, in Mac this doesn't seem to work.

And this is how you create a TOC specifically for your Amazon ebook. You may find this technique works on some of the other retailers but I can't guarantee it, so for simplicity think of this approach for Amazon, but a Universal approach follows.
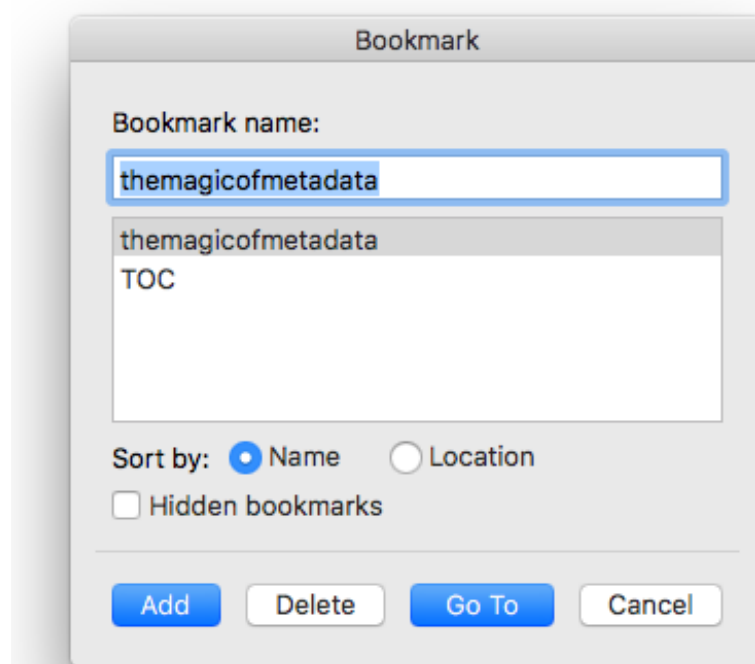
Hidden Bookmarks

One you have set all your useful Bookmarks there is one last step you must follow. I warn you upfront it's a particularly tedious task but it's one you can't get around. When you are creating Bookmarks, for some reason Word likes to add its own hidden bookmarks. The nuisance is, if you don't get rid of these hidden bookmarks before you upload your ebook to your chosen platform, they will create all sorts of merry hell for your formatting. Think of them as invisible gremlins pushing your lovely text to the wrong side of the page or capitalising random pieces of text. You don't want them, so here's how to spot them and get rid of them.
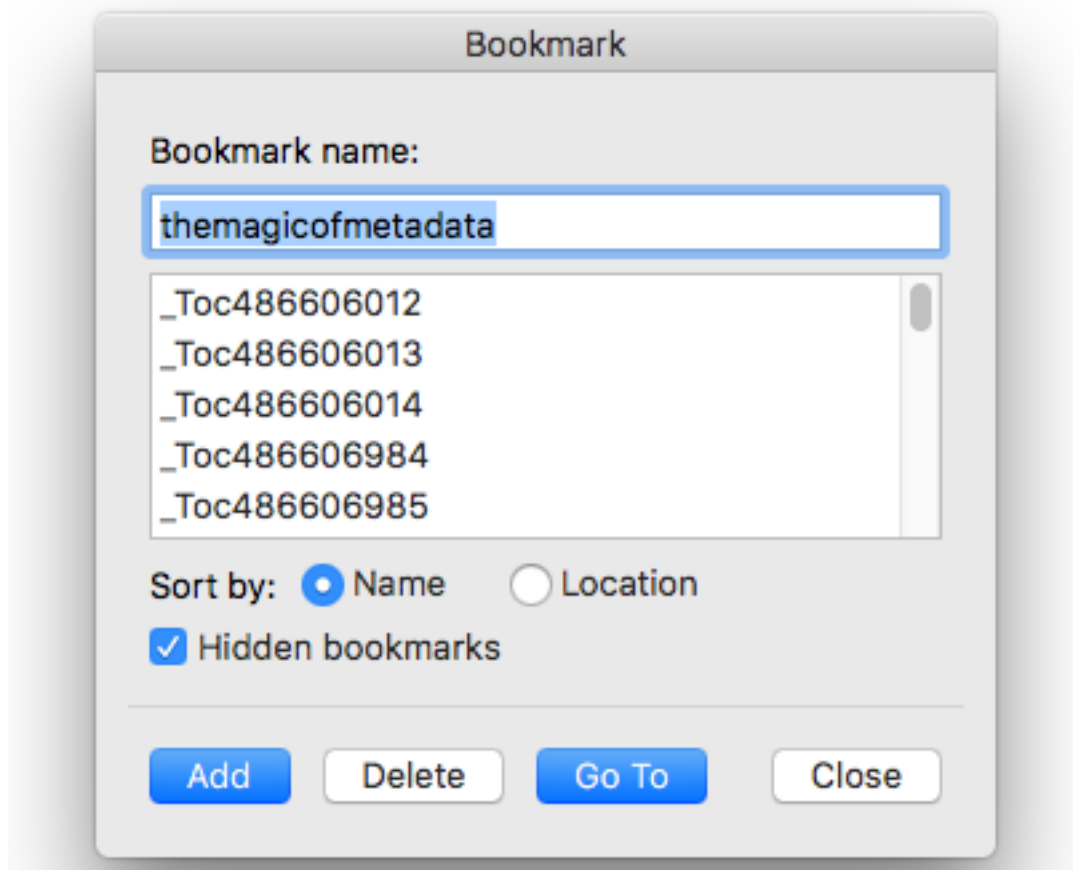
Go to Insert on your Ribbon
You'll see Hyperlink, Bookmark, Cross Reference
Select **Bookmark**

At the bottom of this box you can see an unchecked box beside Hidden bookmarks.

Tick/Check the Hidden bookmarks box … and you will see a long list of bookmarks you did not create. These are the hidden gremlins in your formatting.

Unfortunately, there is no quick or painless way to get rid of these. You will have to go through and individually select each one and delete them until they are all gone (leaving the ones you have created).

TOC on Word for Mac – meet Amazon

If you go to the Kindle support page on Amazon, you will see many threads about getting a clickable TOC to work on Amazon – so let me save you the trouble of trawling through these pages.

If you are using Word for Mac you will find when you create a TOC that the elements are not live/or clickable. Therefore, you need to do this manually.

So either (a) type out all of your chapter headers or subleaders under the words Table of Contents (at the start of your ebook as we have already discussed) or (b) go through and assign Header levels as you would in the Amazon method. Either way, you want to end up with a list of headers at the front of your ebook.

Now go through the contents of your ebook and Highlight Chapter 1 and assign **Heading 1** to it (from the Home Style Pane), Chapter 2 (Heading 1) and so on. Assign the Heading level according to the level you want in your TOC.

When inserting your Hyperlink make sure you have selected 'This Document' so you can see Headings or Bookmarks
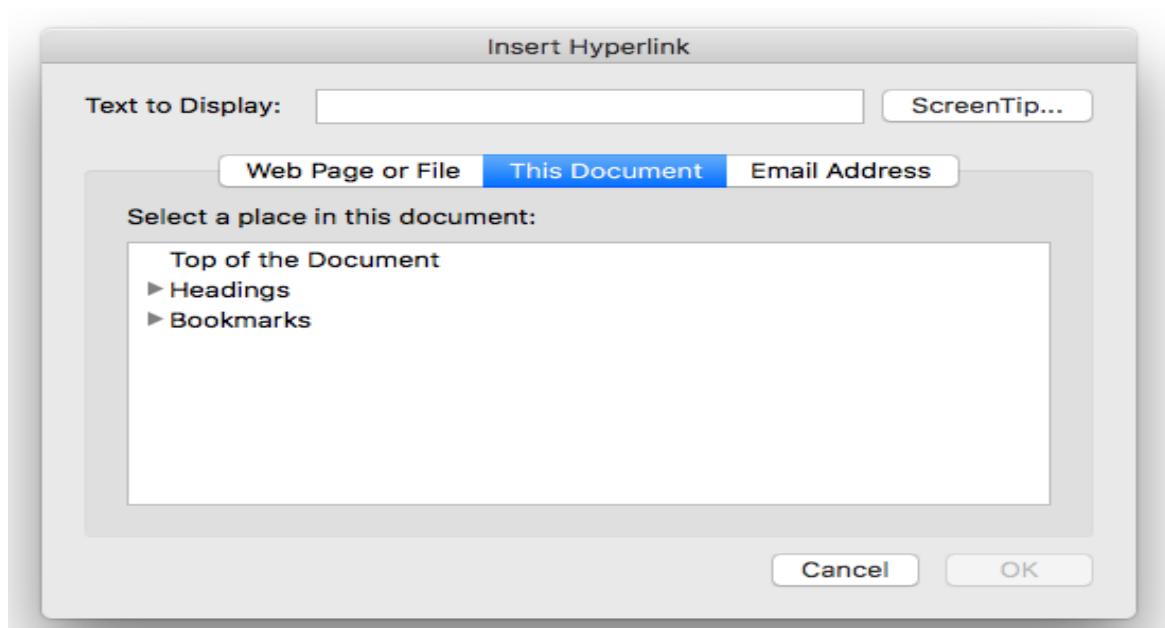
Open up Headings and you will see the headings you have already created.
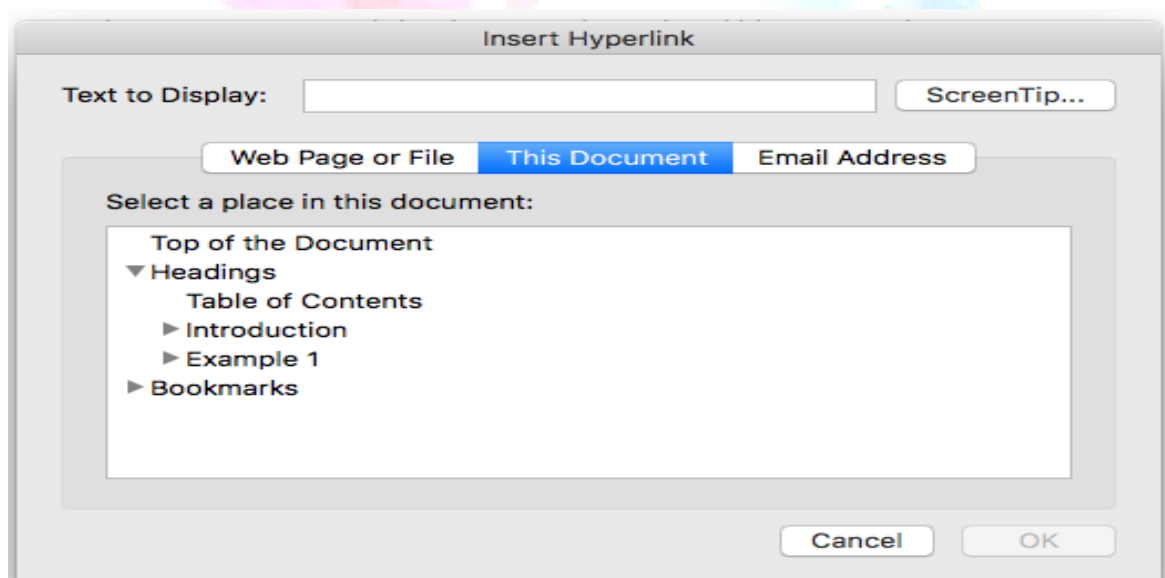
Now once you have gone through all your copy, go back to your TOC page and select each chapter head, then add Hyperlink

Save to HTML
You then need to save as HTML –
Save as Web page (htm)

This is the file that can be saved to Kindle – Amazon Kindle will convert the htm to a MOBI clickable format

Et voila!

The 'Everybody Else' (Manual) Method

I also want to explain another method of creating a TOC, and I call it the 'everybody else' (manual) method because it works at **every major retailer**.

In order for your TOC to work across other retailers you will have to:

- Manually type out the titles of your chapter headers under your TOC heading at the beginning of your book. (So no hyperlinks will appear when you hover over the text)

- Then you will go into the body of your ebook content, to the desired headers, and **Insert a bookmark** (as we did in the Bookmark method on Amazon). So if your chapter header is called **'The Magic of Metadata'** you need to type **themagicofmetadata** (without spaces) in the Bookmark box which appears after you **Insert Bookmark**. If you must include 'spaces' use a dash or an underscore as follows: the_magic_of_metadata / the-magic-of-meta-data.

- Once you have created the bookmark you need to come back to your TOC and create and highlight The Magic of Metadata, then **add a hyperlink** at the corresponding place in the document (linking it back to the bookmark you have created).
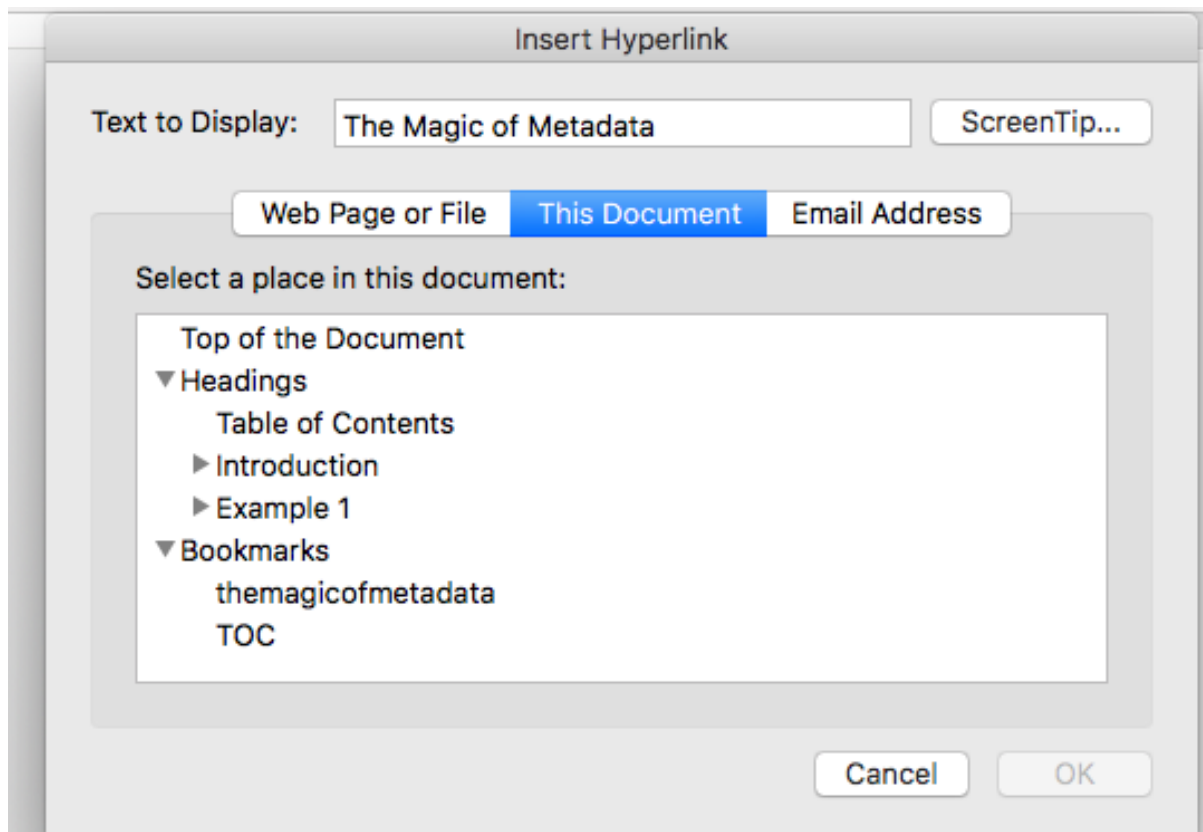
Once you have gone through creating Bookmarks and hyperlinks, your readers can now automatically go to any location they wish location.

NCX File

Further to this, if you plan to upload to Smashwords, there's something called an NCX file, which is Navigation Control.

In simple terms this is 'labelling'. The labels have to appear **exactly** as they appear in the TOC as they do anywhere else in your document. For example, say you want to Hyperlink Chapter Two using the word "two" in your TOC, then, when you go to Chapter Two in your document, you could go to Chapter Two and you could type it out as Chapter 2 as a number, and you could still make a manual hyperlink that work. (It's not best practice but it will work). However, during the conversion process for Smashwords (Navigation Control), the NCX file won't be converted properly because it won't recognise the label. So it's really important to spell these things exactly the same in the TOC as at the location in the text that you want it to go to. So at this point you've got two methods for creating a TOC, one specifically for KDP Amazon, and another for Everybody Else (Manual).

Conclusion

Once you have mastered creating your TOC in the 2 very distinct formats you should work through these with ease for your future ebooks. The most important piece of advice I can give you is to make sure you test every single hyperlink and bookmark. As I said, it can be tedious but if you want a quality ebook that your audience loves, then keep them happy with a little bit of hard work up front.

If you are still struggling with TOC's and clickable content, just send over an email and I'll see what we can do.