

Cover design is an integral part of self-publishing and it is one major component of a book – both self-published and traditional published books.

But this is also one thing that is mostly screwed up by authors especially self-published authors.

It's really a popular advice in today's self-publishing circle that book cover is very important for any book to really succeed on Amazon or any other online book store but the problem is that of how authors can get the right book cover for their books, how to find the right design and designer to design the cover, and what a cover should look like and many other questions mostly asked by authors pertaining to book cover designs.

In this episode of Authors Crib Podcast, I interviewed Derek Murphy of [The Creative Indie](#) and [DIY Book Covers](#) who is an author and a book cover design experts who has designed tons of book covers for bestselling authors like Joanna Penn of TheCreativePenn.com.

Derek shares his writing journey and started working with authors as an editor and cover designer and tons of great cover design and book marketing tips, strategies and advice as well as his best tips on how authors can build a side business as an author to augment their writing income.

Here are the tips, strategies and ideas shared by Derek:

One Mistake You Can Make That Might Cost You A Lot Of Time And Energy When You As An Author Or Creative Artist Want To Start A Business Of Your Own

Derek shares one mistake most creative authors are making with turning their passion into a business and that it selling what people doesn't want.

Derek started his writing journey by first working with authors and writers to edit their books and later designed their book covers and one secret to his success with this business is the these services are in hot demand in these days of the self-publishing goldrush and this is why he is so successful in the business that the demand for his services is even way more than what he can handle and thus have to turn down many offers to work with some authors just to focus on working with the few ones He can handle every month.

His best advice with this is offering what people need as well as a good quality service at a reasonable price and get in front of your target market before they find someone else.

In today's crazy and ever busy self-publishing world – books are published in their millions every day and with this, I asked Derek what is the trend of services and products that are in high demand in today's self-publishing reality that creative authors and artist can take advantage of to start a side business that can augment their writing and publishing income.

He attested to the fact that self-publishing is now so huge and many times, the money isn't going to the authors but rather coming from the authors to publishing house, publicist and many other service providers like this.

As a popular saying that when everyone is digging for gold, the best thing to do is to sell shovels rather than digging for gold like others, this mean services like book editing, book formatting and conversion services are in high demand now as well as book cover designing, building websites and marketing services are what many authors can't even figure out on their own and authors need to hire someone else who can do all these to handle them.

These are the trends today in the self-publishing world and any creative author or artist who can handle one or two of these can surely build a business out of doing so.

On what's the trend today with cover designs and how authors can get the right cover designs for their books.

Derek talked about one mistake most authors are making with book covers and that is thinking a book cover should be unique, artistic and different and that is not true. He said the truth is that readers aren't going to look at your book cover for long to analyze it and really think about your book cover.

All they will do is look at it for one or two seconds and if it's good enough to catch their attention and look interesting and to tell them about the genre because your cover need to tell your people what type of books it is and if it's good enough and

satisfies all these, they are going to read your descriptions and if your descriptions is good enough, then they are going to check your reviews and if that's good enough, they are going to buy your book.

Cover is really important but it's not all that important the way many authors are thinking it to be because readers won't spend much time analyzing covers before they buy a book and a cover at a glance will tell people at once if your cover is homemade or professionally designed and if it's homemade and poorly designed then it's going to scare people away from buying your book.

Your cover must look professionally designed and must fit into the genre and category of your book. For example, most bestselling thriller books have similar look, design and theme and the covers mostly are showing where the settings takes place and location of what happened in the books. Also, most romance books also have a similar pink and this "feel cool" look.

His best advice here is for authors to get a professionally designed cover for their books and should try to let people know what the book is all about with the cover and should not over think about how their book covers should look like.

Common Mistakes Authors Are Making With Their Book Covers

One common mistakes Derek shared with us that he sees fiction authors are making a lot is trying to use their covers to picture the scenes, characters and settings in their books and trying to find a picture or photography that will perfectly fit into this to use for their book covers. This he said is never going to work.

What About The Do-It-Yourself Cover And Professionally Designed Cover – This is Derek's Take On This

Derek will recommend that authors should do their cover designs themselves and he said this can easily be learned but the danger with this is that authors can spend too much time working on designing their own covers as well as falling in love way more than necessary with your designed cover that the opinion of others won't even matters.

He shared his story of designing his first book covers that took him 3 months of coming up with the right cover that he thinks is the best for his book.

He recommend his [DIY Book Cover Templates](#) that can help authors design a good looking cover design for their books just by changing he fonts, the pictures and so on. With this, he said authors can get a great DIY cover.

What If You Want To Hire A Professional Cover Designer?

These are Derek's Best Tips If You Want To Hire A Book Cover Design To Handle Your Cover Designing

Derek said book cover design should not be expensive but what is really driving book cover designs prices up is the fact that the demand for good cover designer's services is pretty high and many will have too much at their hand to work with and will in return not work with some authors and those few authors they are working with will resulted in a higher price tag because they can only work with few of these authors every month.

For non-fiction authors, he recommends going to a place like Fiverr.com to get a cover designer and he said authors can get a good looking cover for just \$20 on fiverr.com.

For fiction authors especially for adult romance books whose major readers and fans love super fancy looking cover designs, getting a cover design that is that cheap might be hard but mostly, the most important part of a cover design is the picture and photograph and if fiction authors can get the right picture or photograph , then you can still get a good cover for your book.

On how you can sell your books and the best way to get your books out there as well as build your author platform.

He said the most common mistake authors are making is charging people they already know – fans, connections on social media network, friends, families etc for their books. These people according to him are your greatest fans and supported especially when you are just starting and you should not charge them for reading your book but you should focus on building your author platform instead.

But how can authors build their author platform?

With this , he said the best way to build an audience when starting is to give away books for free and he said the it's not true that KDP Select isn't working again – his might be true for established authors but if you are just starting and you have no audience, then giving books away for free through the KDP Select program is a great way authors can build their author platform, get their initial reviews and word of mouth marketing for their books.

Will this work for me as a fiction author and how can fiction authors use this strategy to sell more books?

Derek said it's still the same for fiction author – giving away books for free to get tons of downloads which might leads to reviews and books ranking higher on Amazon's book ranking chart.

He also recommends asking for reviews at the back of your book as well as readers feedback as well to help you write a better book next time.

He also mentioned asking for help anywhere your audience are gathering – Facebook groups, readers groups as a great way to get people involved in helping you promote your book and also buying it and this works better than just asking people to buy your book. You can ask for their help on what book cover will work best and people will be happier to help than just asking them to buy your book.

Lastly, he said the best marketing strategy for fiction authors is breaking their books into series. And instead of having one long book, authors can just have short books of like 10,000 words as a series and give away the first book in that series away for free and if people like that, they will be happy to buy the other books in that series.

I asked Derek about his book – How Authors Can Write, Format, Publish And Promote Your Book Without Spending Any Money and my main question is – how can authors do all of these without spending money?

He said publishing on Kindle store and Createspace is free and there are tons of other outlets where authors can use to publish their books for free.

The problem he said is that of designing books and formatting as well as editing the books but authors can still get these done for free by joining writers groups and trade services like exchange editing of your book for helping another author to review their book or design heir cover if you can do that.

For formatting books into kindle, he recommend a free Kindle conversion tool on his website The Creative Indie as well as his free DIY book cover templates for designing a book cover if you can but if you can't, you can still spend like \$20 on Fiverr.com to get a good looking cover.

He also advice authors who are just starting to stop worrying about getting a print book but rather should focus on creating a Kindle book and building their platform. It's very easy to produce Kindle books at first as a series of book than creating a single print book.

His Last Word Of Advice

It can be really overwhelming when you are just starting and it can take a couple of years to start making money and even have a platform and audience but if you keep doing this every day and producing the best content and book for your audience, then things are going to start working at the long run.

Useful Links And Resources From This Episodes

TheCreativeIndie.com – free resources and ebooks

DIYBookCovers.com –loads of free templates, instructions and guidance to help you design your book covers as well as free kindle converting software.

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