

Day 2: Cover Design

What makes a great cover design

An effective cover design will:

- _____ while also _____ with other books in its genre
- communicate _____
- convey the _____ readers will get from reading it
- vouch for your _____
- draw people in

These functions are the same for fiction or non-fiction, and all of this happens in under a second. People aren't even consciously aware of the thought process they're using to evaluate your book. They just feel drawn in, or they don't.

Is your cover hurting sales?

If you don't have an appealing, professional-looking book cover design, people won't even see your sales copy or your reviews. They'll just click away and go look for some other book.

But how do you know if your cover is hurting sales? Here's the process I recommend to diagnose the problem.

- Is the sales page getting _____? If not, _____ is the #1 thing to address.

- If the page is getting _____ but the book isn't selling like you'd like, _____ is the #1 thing to address.
- If the _____ is good but you're still not getting sales, the _____ is the #1 thing to address.
- If the page is getting plenty of _____ and the _____ and _____ are good, but you're still not getting sales, most likely, the problem is that your _____ and/or _____ aren't as good as you think.
- If sales are ok and you want them to be better, then I'd work on improving the _____ and _____.

Common mistakes and how to fix them

Here are the most common mistake I see authors make with cover design:

- Trying to _____
- Getting _____ to do it
- Using _____ to get a book cover design

Nothing against any of these people...

Here's the reality: Graphic design is a discipline, and book cover design has its own specialized rules and principles. Designing an effective cover takes creativity, thought, and refining. That requires more than a basic knowledge of Photoshop and \$5 worth of time (or the chance to possibly get paid if your design is chosen in a contest).

If you want your book to sell, the cover design is the most important investment you can make. Here are two of my favorite cover designers:

Damon Za: <https://damonza.com>

Ebook Launch: <https://ebooklaunch.com/>

If a custom design isn't in your budget, I recommend getting a pre-designed cover. This is a great way to get a professional design for only \$100-200. Both of the designers listed above offer them on their websites.

Check your cover design

- ☐ Is the design eye-catching?
- ☐ Does it draw you in?
- ☐ Does it look like it belongs in a bookstore?
- ☐ Does it fit the genre of the book?
- ☐ Does it capture the essence of the book?
- ☐ Is it attractive and appealing?
- ☐ Is the information presented in a hierarchy, so that the most important information (the title) stands out the most?
- ☐ Is it obvious at a glance which words are the title?
- ☐ Does the design express the hook of the book visually?
- ☐ Does the title still stand out when the cover is 150 pixels wide x 225 pixels high (the size of the thumbnails Amazon uses in their search results)?
- ☐ Does the design still work at 150 x 225 pixels?

If your book cover doesn't meet at least 8 of these points, I recommend getting it redesigned.

If you really *really* don't want to do that, I recommend thinking about what your goals are for this book and whether sales are actually important to you. They may not be, and that's ok. Just make the decision consciously.