

TOP 10 TIPS

for SPOTTING A
SELF-DESIGNED
BOOK

- 1. A too-tiny title on front cover.** You probably want your book to stand out on Amazon.com. If your title is too small, no one will be able to read it on the postage-sized stamp image as seen online.
- 2. Overly-Verbose.** Avoid the use of a too-wordy title or subtitle on your cover. Be succinct. Yes, I know you LOVE your words — you are a writer — but too many words do not serve to attract the attention of a potential reader.
- 3. Cramped Covers.** Don't try to tell your whole story on the cover. Too much info or too-busy of a graphic will deflect potential readers.
- 4. Fuzzy Photos or Stock Photos.** No, you cannot enlarge a 72dpi photo taken with your phone to fit a 6x9" book cover. Use a professional camera or hire someone to take an original photo. Avoid the use of stock photography. Nothing worse than seeing your book come up on Amazon.com right next to a different author using the same cover photo purchased from a cheap royalty-free online source.
- 5. Fonts Gone Wild.** Don't get too creative with your font selections — on the cover as well as inside the book. Granted, there are some very creative fonts available, but if you can't read the words, no one will buy your book.
- 6. Line Spacing or Leading.** The readability of any book is determined first by font selection, then by spacing. Don't try to save money by cramming lots of tiny words onto pages so you can use fewer pages. Keep your text legible, airy and easy to read.
- 7. Chapters Starts.** Traditional publishing companies start chapters on the right-hand side of the gutter. Which leads to . . .
- 8. Too Short of a Chapter.** If you have short, 3-page chapters, you'll end up with a lot of blank left-hand pages. Consider working with your editor to combine some of your chapters, making your book an "easier read."
- 9. No Running Heads.** Running heads help the reader navigate your book; the chapter title reminds them of the topic at hand.
- 10. No Page Numbers.** Page numbers also help the reader keep track of where they are in a book. Book Clubs LOVE page numbers — to help them during discussions. Everyone wants his or her book to be chosen by a book club, right?

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