

Write Publish Market.Ep 126_mixdown

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Welcome to the right publish market podcast. If you're an entrepreneur considering writing a book to serve your business, you're in the right place. Or maybe you've already decided that's even better. I'm your host, Jodi Brandon, book publishing partner for entrepreneurs and 20 year veteran of the book publishing industry on the right publish market podcast. In addition to learning from me, you'll meet entrepreneurs just like you and hear about their experiences as we explore all facets of Writing, Publishing, and marketing a book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even have dreamed of yet. Welcome, thank you so much for being here. I really appreciate it.

00:41

Thank you for having me.

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I love talking book design, especially with people who know what they're doing, because it's definitely not my cup of tea. But I think it's one of those sort of underappreciated elements of book publishing. Because if you notice the design, usually that means there's a problem.

01:02

Yes, exactly. And also, everyone notices the book cover, and I'm always opening show me the interior when people are talking about the book and no, opens the book.

01:16

Yes, it's very under appreciated, for sure. For sure. So let's, I mean, I have a ton of questions for you. Let's start there, then like the cover with the interior? Do you recommend that people have the same person do the cover is the interior? I know not all designers do both. But how do they work to? How should the cover and the interior work together? It's probably a better question.

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Yes. So it's very important that they, they work together in the sense that you want them to be a unit, the cover of the book and the interior fold match. And it's like any other product, right? If you have packaging for something, what's inside the content should match the packaging?

02:00

So that's a great analogy.

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Yes. So it's important that if you hire someone who is doing both that you make sure that they have the skills to do both designs, because cover design is one type of work. And then book formatting is another type of work and interesting and requires different skills also.

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Okay, so it's like different kinds of editing. I didn't, I never thought about it, like, that's really interesting. The cover should get done first, then yes,

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yes, it will be better than the cover is done first. So you have a style for the book. Okay, you'll have fonts, for the title and the title or the author name. And you can see if it's a book cover that's more moody or more clean. So then you can base your interior design on the book design and make everything much and create that sense of unity. Yeah,

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that sense of unity is such an interesting like way to phrase it. I never like really thought about it like that before, just that they should be, you know, complimentary, but that's a great, that takes it even a step further. If I'm a business owner writing a book, and I'm hiring a book designer, what are the things that I should be thinking about? An asking that I probably don't even realize I should be asking other than I mean, I noticed, say, you know, show me some books that you've done. But like, what else should I be thinking about?

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Yes. So think about your book, and then maybe ask them or look on the portfolio? Do they have books that match the book I want to write, if it's something that's very structured, with different sections that need different designs, if they only have in their portfolio, fiction or narrative, maybe it's not the best fits, you want someone who can work on a book that can have different sections, and, and also making sure if you want something really custom, ask them, what's your work process? What, what do you use to format a book, because a lot of people will use templates. And that's great, and it can get the book done really quickly. But then if you want specific sections in your book with a template, there's so much you can do. Right,

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right. I imagine I mean, it's similar to working with editors, and that everybody's process is going to be a little bit different. Can you talk about just, I mean, obviously, this is just your process, but sort of what it looks like. I mean, are there rounds of revision do you send them? Do you do the whole layout before they see it? Or do they get a chance to you know, look at it and say, Oh, I like this versus this or it just kind of walk us through the what it looks Like a little bit.

05:00

Okay, so with my process, we first we do we get on a call, or if you really don't want to get on a call, I send you a question. But I prefer to talk with others because while you're talking, they tell me more than just replying to questions on a questionnaire, right. But then we go through everything from what have you thought about the size of your book, the word count, we kind of estimate the number of pages, then we talk about the cover design, that shall be done already. So we'll look at that. And we'll talk a bit about ideas based on the cover, I also asked if they already have something in mind for the interior that they really want to see. We look at the structure of the book. So at this point, I already have the manuscript. So I know what sections are in the manuscript. And we talk a bit about that. And imagine at the end of each chapter, there are questions we can talk about, like if they want that to be like a separate section, just for the questions with a different type of formatting. Without all about all those details, like ideas, like if they have a vision, if they don't know, and they want my opinion. So we do that as a first call. And then I create a sample, I will create two to four samples based on the conversation we add, that they can review, usually, I don't know, maybe 610 pages, and they can see different layouts, different formatting, different fonts. And they can tell me, I like this one, or I like the elements of this one, but the page layout of the other one, right, so I can really put together something that they are happy. And when that's approved, I move on to do the entire book. Okay. Okay, that makes sense. Yeah, yeah, when the entire book is done, then I always account for like two weeks that they can review, send to a proofreader, if they want to hire someone. And then get back to me with less corrections, less small edits, maybe they found a typo that no one saw before. Or now they realize that in a manuscript, it said, look at the table below. But now that the book is formatted, the table is on the next page. Right, that kind of stuff. And when that's all done, and we have a final book file, if they wish to have it, also as an ebook, that's when I will cover the print file into an ebook format, okay, to then deliver everything.

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The print file is done first, if they're doing both, that's interesting to

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me. Yes, I know, some people, they prefer to have the book first, for marketing reasons, or they want to launch the book first. That's fine, we can also change but my main process will be to do first print, and then the book. Otherwise, every time I need to do one change, I need to do it twice on the print and the ebook. Okay, so that's double that work?

08:23

Sure. Yeah, that makes sense. That makes sense. You mentioned a couple minutes ago, when you were talking about all the book details, like the word counts, and all of that, the size of the book. And I was hoping you could speak to trim size a little bit. A lot of clients don't want to do the traditional trim sizes, because they think that's a good way to make their book stand out, like maybe do something six by six or eight by eight or something like that. Do you have any thoughts about that insight into that? Whether they should just stick with the traditional trim sizes? Does it not matter? I mean, I know obviously, the cost of getting a print book printed is different based on trim size, but I mean, are there any other considerations there design wise, they should people should think about?

09:10

Yes, I think it's more about if it's a personal project, and it's just a book for you because it was your dream or for your friends and your family. Do as you wish. It's really not a problem. But if it's a commercial project, you want to sell your book, it's it's part of your business and you want to be on the shelves. Maybe think a little bit about what other books in the market that are in the same category of yours. If they are all five by eight, maybe it will be better that yours is also five by eight right? Look at what the the big publishers are doing. They are all doing a five by eight or six by nine Maybe there's a reason and you don't want to be the only book to be square, like a square. But then of course, if your book has a really large word count, which will mean a lot of pages, which increases the printing cost, maybe then you can think, Okay, I will increase the size of my book, make it a bit bigger than the other books in the market. But this way, I will have less pages, it will cost less, and it's still acceptable. That's okay. Think about your readers. If your readers are going to be the type of person that will put the book in their bags and travel around and read on the go. Maybe it's better to think about a small size book that they can carry around and not you know, that big hardcover that looks great on the shelf. But then it's not really the best, right? It's less practical to be on a bag. Yes, yeah.

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That's interesting. Again, you're talking about the book is just like before you were talking about, you know, like the packaging of the book is like a product, I think that's a helpful way to describe it to authors is that you're thinking about, yeah, not just how it's going to look on the shelf, but how it's actually being used by my readers. That's interesting. I would imagine some of there's more forgiveness, I guess, with trim size with different kinds, like, I know you do poetry books, also designed poetry books, yes. Like those kinds of books, I think are maybe different than the people listening to this podcast are typically writing, you know, like a personal development business book where it's, you know, more expected, I guess that they'll have that traditional trim size. That's really interesting. I also wanted to ask you, I know that I don't know other designers that do this. And I know that you offer a service where you'll sort of manage the cover and proofreading process for authors, which I think is fantastic, because so many, at least business owners get into a situation where they're, they're doing this book, and there's just so many moving pieces, and they don't know what they don't know. So that's an awesome service. But can you just explain a little bit about how that works and why it would be beneficial? Yes.

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So essentially, it's if you are really busy with your life and reading this book, and you can't imagine communicating with the book format or the cover design, the proofreader and having all that I offer the service where I can be your point of contact. So I will gather the team for you. I am the book format or myself, I have a few book designers book cover designers that work with me. So they will, one of them will do the cover. And you get to choose the one that that you prefer in terms of style. And then I also have a lot of connections with proofreaders. So I will choose one of the proofreaders that is more suited to your book content. And then I will manage this publishing team for you, and you only communicate with me. And it's just easier for everyone, I guess. Yeah, that's fantastic. Unless, unless you want to micromanage everything, and you need to be in touch with everyone, then you are your own project manager and you gathered the team and just make sure everyone is on the same page. Yeah, that if you don't have time, or it's too overwhelming, I can do that. Yeah,

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that's fantastic. Well, I mean, that's one of the that's one of the pieces that business owners really don't like about self publishing is having to be a project manager. Not necessarily that they have to be the project manager, but that they're the project manager for a process that they are doing for the first time. And don't know all of the steps and pieces. Yes. So it's like, Well, did I skip something? Did I miss something? Did I forget something? And then they get to the end, like, say, the proofreading stage. And they've forgotten something that should have been done, you know, four steps ago? Yeah. So I think that I think that's fantastic. I wish there were more, you know, publishing project managers out there. So, but I did want to just touch on that because I think that you've explained very clearly how that could be beneficial. Yes, I

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think there are a lot of I breeds, they will do a bit of everything. But then you you also need to be careful with what type of service you hire, because sometimes you're giving away some of your rights when they I think you have maybe

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a few weeks ago Yeah. About Yeah, hybrid publishing, which are I mean, they're fantastic. And like you said, Yes, taking care of a lot of this, but you have to, you know, be smart about I mean, the hybrid publisher you have you have to be obviously smarter. about whoever you hire but yeah, yes. That's, yeah, that's that's a really great piece of advice. So, okay, this was super helpful gave me a lot to think about, and I hope gave listeners a lot to think about. I don't let anybody leave this podcast without giving me a reading recommendations. So something you're reading now that you love something that you finished recently and loved.

15:22

Yeah, so I'm a big fan of Stephen King books. Okay. And not long ago, I read a crime novel he wrote recently called Billy Summers, and it's not so much or whether it's crime, we'd like big twists and very surprising things happening in the story. And, you know, I wasn't really sure I wanted to read the book, because it's about an ex marine was now hired to kill, but he only chooses to kill bad people like people that deserve. So I was a bit like hesitant, but then I saw that the plot is that as for him to go undercover. He is undercover stories, being a freelance author was working on was working on a novel. I thought that was really funny. And I started reading the book. And I was so surprised, and I really loved it. And once again, Stephen King, you know, it's just a genius with his writing. He

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is it suspense? Or? Well, it's,

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it's described as a crime novel. Okay. So yes, some suspense,

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but not like horror thriller. No, not. Okay. Okay, great, because that's what that's why I don't read Stephen King, because I'm a big chicken. But this sounds like something that I could not be scared of

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reading. So I think it will be a good one.

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Okay. I'm gonna check that out. That's so funny that he's undercovers are freelance author. Oh, I can see, I can see why you why you read it. And I will check that out. Awesome. Well, this was a super fun discussion. Thank you. So so much for your time, I really appreciate it. And we're gonna leave all of your contact information in the show notes in case people are looking for a designer, you've given them great information about what they should be looking for. So thank you, again for being here. I really appreciate it.

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Thank you so much for having me.

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Thanks for listening to today's episode of the right publish market podcast. I know just how busy your schedule is as a business owner, so I'm grateful you've taken some time out of yours to journey into the world of book publishing with me today. If you are looking for even more book writing, marketing and publishing information and support, check out my mentorship membership at the author entrepreneurs lab, where each month we take a deep dive into one element of the book world with education, a q&a session with me your book publishing expert resources, co writing times and so much more. You can learn more at the link in the show notes. I hope to see you inside the lab.