Consider This Before Self-Publishing Your Book

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Making the decision to write and publish a book focused on your business — and recognizing the wealth of benefits and advantages to come from doing so — is truly admirable, and already sets you apart from a huge proportion of your competitors. But if you choose to self-publish this incredible marketing tool, there are a number of considerations to make.

For entrepreneurs, solopreneurs, mompreneurs, coaches, mentors, thought leaders, speakers — any professional, in fact —the self-publishing route is almost a given; it's said to be cost-free, provides you (the author) with complete control and negates the need to query traditional publishing houses and secure the ever-elusive traditional book deal. Nonetheless, self-publishing requires a great deal more than some well-meaning sources would have you believe, and actually goes hand-in-hand with a number of drawbacks to balance out the plus points — all of which need to be taken into account prior to taking the plunge. As such, before setting yourself on the self-publishing path, let's discuss four of the most fundamental must-haves when it comes to your lead-generating non-fiction book.

Related: Planning to Self-Publish Your First Book? Avoid These 6 Rookie Mistakes at All Costs

1. Professional Design (Both Cover and Interior)

“Just publish through Amazon. You can even design your own cover on there.”

It’s said with the very best of intentions, but the view that Amazon is the go-to platform for book-publication is lacking any real substance or validity; if the entire publishing process was as simple as some basic data entry, followed by a few simple clicks here and there, successful traditional and hybrid publishing houses wouldn’t dedicate entire departments and huge budgets to cover design, among other things.

With the odd exception, a cover designed through Amazon (or by someone on Fiverr for all the investment of a cup of coffee) screams “self-published,” and in the entrepreneurial world – where the way you do one thing is the way you do everything –this is never a good thing. If you want your ideal client to pick up your book, to get to know, like and trust you, and be directed into your funnels and onto your programs, a self-published cover simply won’t do. And with Amazon lacking any formula or even basic guidance for what works for a particular genre or calls to a specific audience, you’re left to fend for yourself and hope for the best.

This same principle applies when it comes to the book’s interior, or more specifically, the typesetting. Again, the basics are there, but are the basics enough when it comes to your lead-generating non-fiction, which is, in essence, your larger-than-life business card?

With the above in mind, the seven fundamentals of professional design include:

1. Color schemes and aesthetics that appeal to your ideal client/audience, and which are on-brand.
2. Clear title, subtitle and author name on the front cover

(Note: Never use ‘By’ [Author Name].)
3. A well-written (and well-positioned) blurb on the back cover.
4. Author image and short bio on the back cover.
5. Book title, author name and publisher monogram (where relevant) on the spine.
6. Professional typesetting throughout.
7. Contents and index-creation where necessary.

All of the above components are absolutely critical when it comes to creating your publication that calls to your ideal client. The key advantage to be garnered by incorporating each of these elements is that they help to position you as an expert while enhancing your overall authority and status in your niche, which is ultimately at the very core of a lead-generating non-fiction.

2. Copy Editing (and Lead-Generation)

Writing a book is only part of the process; copy editing and subtle lead-generation are absolutely imperative if you are to create the very best, most professional impression among your readers (who are your ideal client). Of course, the content – what you are teaching and the journey you are taking your readers on – is of utmost importance, but if your manuscript is riddled with errors, inconsistencies and/or looks scattered and unattractive, this will reflect on you as an entrepreneur and on your business as a whole.

Should you choose to self-publish without the guidance and professional skillset of a trained and experienced editor, not only is there the risk that you could actually discourage your ideal client from getting to know you beyond the pages of your book (and ultimately from investing in you and your services), but, errors aside, you might also neglect to utilize golden opportunities to turn your readers into leads – notably

through subtle lead-generation woven into your book’s content.

The seven most important copy-editing checks focus on:

1. Line-by-line edits.
2. Grammar, punctuation and flow.
3. The reader’s A–Z journey.
4. Voice consistency.
5. Subtle lead-generation.
6. Proofreading.
7. Presenting your book as a funnel.

3. Publication and Distribution

It is essential that, before deciding on the publishing route you want to take, you understand how publication and distribution will work, as these stages in the process can mean the difference between gaining huge momentum in your business (by generating thousands of leads) or, conversely, a lack of exposure and the dreaded book flop. Publication is about far more than just “getting your book out there” as quickly as you can, but rather is all about telling the world who you are, what you do, who you help, how you help them and how you can help your reader, too. Professional publication and distribution will help your business do this in the most effective and efficient ways, without compromising on quality (as self-publishing can often mean).

The business-savvy entrepreneur with high professional standards and a genuine desire to help their clients through the voicing of their message and provision of their services will recognize, as above, that how you do one thing is how you do everything (and your clients will know this, too). This means, when it comes to your book, quality is everything, and trumps everything. Your book should be reflective of you and your services in all ways.

When it comes to publication and distribution, a number of key

areas should hold the spotlight, including the standards of publication you set to achieve, the distribution channels your book will fall into, whether your distribution will allow you to launch a book funnel and how you can attract as many leads as possible.

To help direct you at this junction, the following three questions can help:

1. Would self-publishing or hybrid publishing provide the highest quality of publication/production?
2. Which publishing model would position me to achieve the widest distribution (both online and in stores)?
3. Do I feel confident that self-publishing would enable me to produce the very best version of my book?

It might feel like a spanner has been thrown in the works if you end up deciding that cover design/creation, copy editing, lead-gen incorporation, proofreading, typesetting, publication, distribution and marketing are not activities you feel comfortable completing yourself. This is where it’s paramount to focus on the bigger picture and be clear on your objectives.

4. Your Publication Goals

Besides launching an award-winning hybrid publishing house and creating highly reviewed book-writing programs, I have also travelled the road of self-publishing and, during the last 15 years, thrown myself deep into all aspects of publishing. A good approach to publication is one that offers the best of all worlds with the presence of as few drawbacks as possible, allowing you to achieve what you want without finding yourself embarrassed as the result of a failed or poorly produced book.

Decades ago, publishing required querying traditional publishers and ultimately signing off on your rights and huge percentages of your royalties, and although self-publishing

then made itself known and took the publishing industry in a whole new direction – allowing authors to benefit from complete rights to their work and higher-than-ever royalties – it remains that this approach exhibits a lack of regard for (or knowledge of) publication norms and standards, which has since become commonplace.

Nowadays, with self-publishing available to everyone (and with the acknowledgement that every business needs a book as one of its marketing approaches), entrepreneurs and business owners are rushing to write and publish their book. They're feeling intimidated and pressured by their online connections doing the same, "getting ahead of the game" and achieving "Bestselling Author" status, therefore leaving them in the dust. The perceived necessity to maintain pace and not fall behind competitors has meant a fall in the quality of output, with the need for speed prioritized over the need to put out a high-quality book to attract in ideal clients.

When deciding to publish, there is an overriding need to ask whether self-publishing ticks all the boxes, and whether or not a three-step process taking 10 minutes is sufficient when seeking to achieve your book-related business goals.

Of course, self-publishing might appear to be the quickest, easiest and most affordable approach to publication, but it also goes hand-in-hand with the risk of embarrassment in years to come if it isn't the very best version of itself and doesn't stand as testament to your standards in business.

Related: 7 Common Questions About Self-Publishing on Amazon

The final word is this: A lead-generating non-fiction book can really help to elevate your success, achieve greater recognition for you and your business and allow you to make contact with your ideal client. Accordingly, the need for it to be absolutely spot-on in all regards warrants the most professional process positioned to help your business to

thrive.

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