

A good cover

According to designer [Kim Killion](#), book buyers do judge books by their covers—or, at least, by their thumbnails. As more and more people browse Amazon and other online shops for their next read, cover designers have to make sure their covers catch eyes, whether they're 6.75 inches high or one inch. Killion shares the importance of typography, taglines, and more.

A conversation with Kim Killion

Can you judge a book by its cover?

Kim Killion: It's worth the investment to have a good cover because a book truly is, you know, they judge a book by a cover [...]

[...] I wouldn't necessarily say that it's more true in romance, I think everything is judged by its cover. When you go to Amazon, you're looking at all of the little thumbnails and whatever strikes your eyes is what you're going to click on to see bigger. Now if you're going out there to buy a particular author, I guess it wouldn't matter, but if you're a B-list author who's trying to build her audience then you've really got to put the time and energy into working with someone to get a good cover [...]

What sets the best covers apart?

Typography. It—you can't just put a picture in the background and put type on it.

There's a certain sort of—you have to have an eye for how type goes together and there's an art form to typography. There's typography, I think they call them typographers, I could have that wrong but they specialize in taking a name and making the swooshes intertwine and we do that and that's how we do a lot of our series work, you know. We'll spend a lot of time just doing the author's name and then it will stay that way on every one of their books. And it's more time consuming to do the typography than it is to put the image back there, and a lot of people don't realize that, so.

But we also do the fine print, you know, and that's something else that's on our questionnaire. I don't care who you are, if you're a *USA Today* bestseller or a *New York Times* bestseller. We want to put that small print up there. But what we're doing is we're designing covers that are an inch and a quarter tall and that's the market. That's, they're selling on Amazon, that's all the bigger they are. So it's very important that their name is big and if they have a little tagline that they made a list, you know, it's important. It's not important that you can read it at that level, but it's important that the reader can go, "They must be important because they've got that little line on there" [...]

[...] They might be an award-winning author; they might be a Golden Heart finalist, you know, people have put that on there. But the taglines that they put on are secondary type and it might say something like "He vowed to love her, but she was married to another," you know. It's got the whole—he vowed to love her, dot dot dot, but she was married to another, you know. And that's everything, that's the whole romance tying you into the emotional connection of that story [...]

[...] And because I'm a writer, I'll write it, if they don't provide it. I'll read the blurb and I'll write it and then they're like, "Well, where'd that tagline come from?" "Well, I wrote it, you know." "Oh, I forget you're a writer." So that's very beneficial to our business as well.

What draws your eye to a book? What can you make you dismiss a book

just by looking at the cover?

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