

What a publisher does

Becoming published is much easier than becoming well-published, says **Dominique Raccah**, CEO of publisher Sourcebooks. But what does being well-published mean? Cover design, titling, and more go into marketing a romance novel to its best effect.

A conversation with Dominique Raccah

What does a publisher do?

Dominique Raccah: I think being well-published is always challenging. And the term is well-published, because it involves so much, and it's such a collaboration, right? So, and you have all these pieces again. So things that you would think are simple, titling. Oh, no, no, no, extraordinarily difficult, right? And I can give you loads and loads of examples. I had a book just recently [...] originally titled *The Weight of Bones*. Okay. So now when you—it's a YA novel. When you think of *The Weight of Bones*, right, you think it's—first of all, it's heavy. Right? It feels like it's going to be about something that's tragic in some way, it's dramatic, and it's going to be highly literary. Alright. The book, in fact, had those elements, certainly had many of those elements, but was also deeply engaging, deeply personal, and immediately grabs you. Okay? We titled *I'm Not Her*. Okay? Now the book is doing great, by the way, right, *I'm Not Her*. Totally different cover direction, right. You would expect something very different from that title. Titling is an art. It's very complicated. Similarly cover direction, cover direction which often comes from titling, right? So you get the cover wrong on a book there are really

almost no second chances. There are too many books published. There are in the traditional world something like 400,000 books published a year, 300,000, 400,000 new books published a year. So you get the book wrong I'm not really going to have a second chance to make it—to get it right. So well-published titling covers great editorial, great developmental work, really making sure that you, again, you learn from your mistakes.

[...] The whole conversation has changed. In a way there has to be an authentic, a truth-based conversation. We can't market books that actually don't reach you, don't touch you. So I now talk to our editorial people. And they're—we have now all these tools for helping our authors think about impact differently, because it's about impact.

What do you think makes the most impact in romance marketing? Cover art, titles, title blurbs, an author's blog or Twitter account, or something else entirely?

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