

BOOK COVER



GENIUS

Amazon Book Cover Secrets: The Complete Guide to Kindle and Print-on-Demand Book Covers

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BookCoverGenius.com

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Introduction: How to Create Amazing Book Covers (Even if You're Not a Designer)

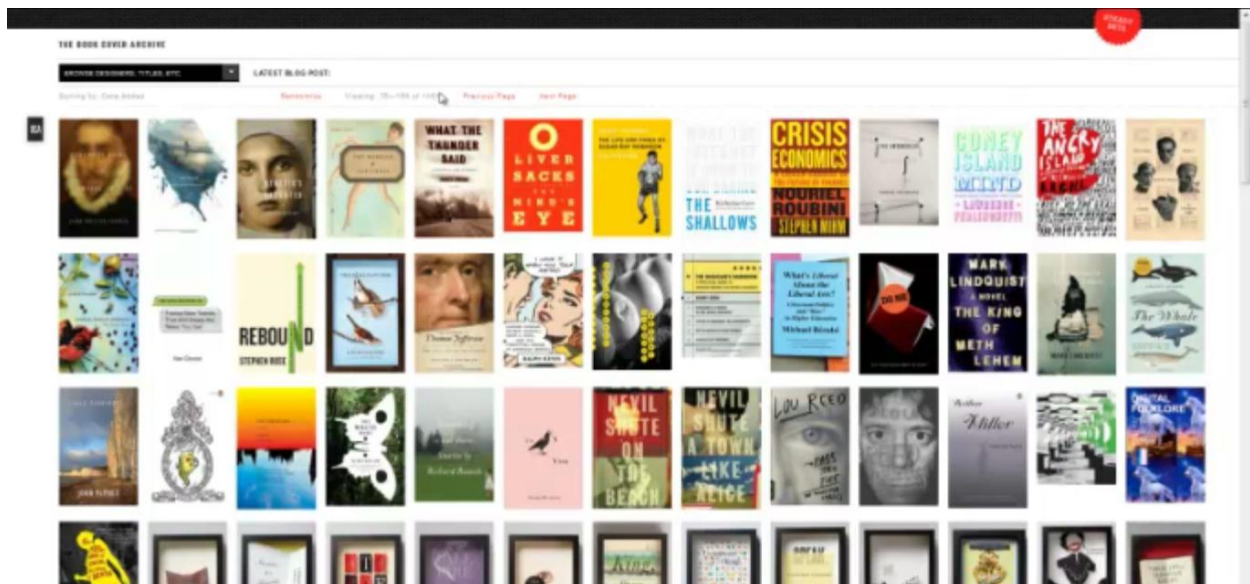


You may write the most phenomenal book, but if you cannot grab people's attention and get people to look at your book, then your book will never sell. When people browse books on Amazon, they only see a thumbnail picture of your book that is about the size of a postage stamp. So, you only have about 2 seconds to make a great first impression and get people to click on your book. That is why designing a great book cover is so important.

There are a lot of techniques available to you that allow you to design book covers, even if you are not a graphics whiz. In this lesson you will learn how to create professional quality book covers that sell. Some of the basics techniques that you will learn here include:

- How to find amazing designs
- How to find free images
- How to find original artwork inexpensively
- How create a paperback book cover using free software
- How to take your Kindle eBook cover and turn it into a paperback book cover
- How to take a paperback book cover and turn it into a Kindle eBook cover

- How to outsource all of these tasks cheaply and effectively
- Researching Your Book Cover: Start with What's Working



When you start the task of having a book cover created for your book, you will essentially have two choices: design the book cover for yourself or outsourcing the assignment to someone else. Now, if you're not a creative person, both of these options can be equally troubling because even when you outsource the job you will have to describe to the person that you are outsourcing to exactly what you want.

So, what do you do to find the inspiration for your book cover? That is easy. Go to Amazon and find out what is already selling. Amazon is the #1 book seller in the world, and it is an amazing resource that is always at your fingertips.

When you find a book that is on the best-seller list on Amazon, you can be sure that the author or designer has done something right with their book cover. You don't have to start from scratch. By modeling after one of these book covers, you can almost be assured that your book will sell well before you even publish it. Plus, you can simply send a picture of the book cover you want to model after to the designer that you are outsourcing to and give them a better idea of what you are looking for.

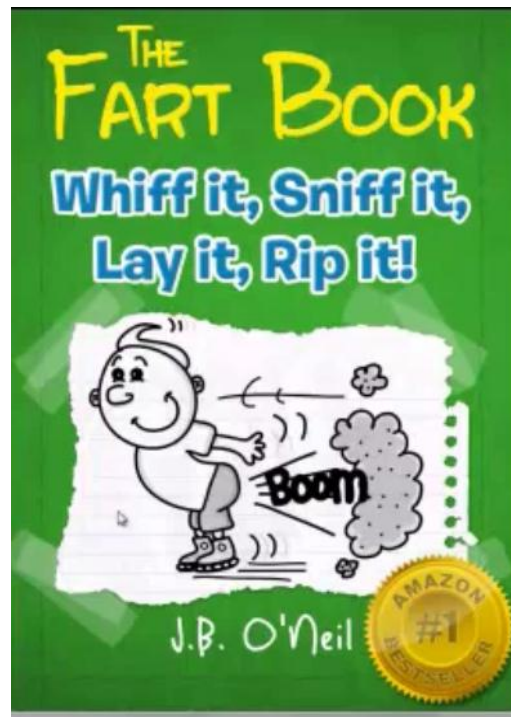
There are a number of different categories and sub-categories that you can search through. The more best-seller's that you look at, the better ideas you are going to come up with. When you are searching through books, find at least three book covers that catch your eye. If a book cover catches your eye, it is likely it will catch the attention of other people as well.

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You should concentrate, mainly in your niche, however. Your book's subject has a big effect on what your book cover's design should include. In other words, if you have written a fantasy book, you will want to find out what books are selling well in the fantasy category at Amazon. Covers that work for one type of book will not work for another type. Take a little time look at the similarities between the different book covers in your niche. This will give you a better understanding of what elements should be included in your design.

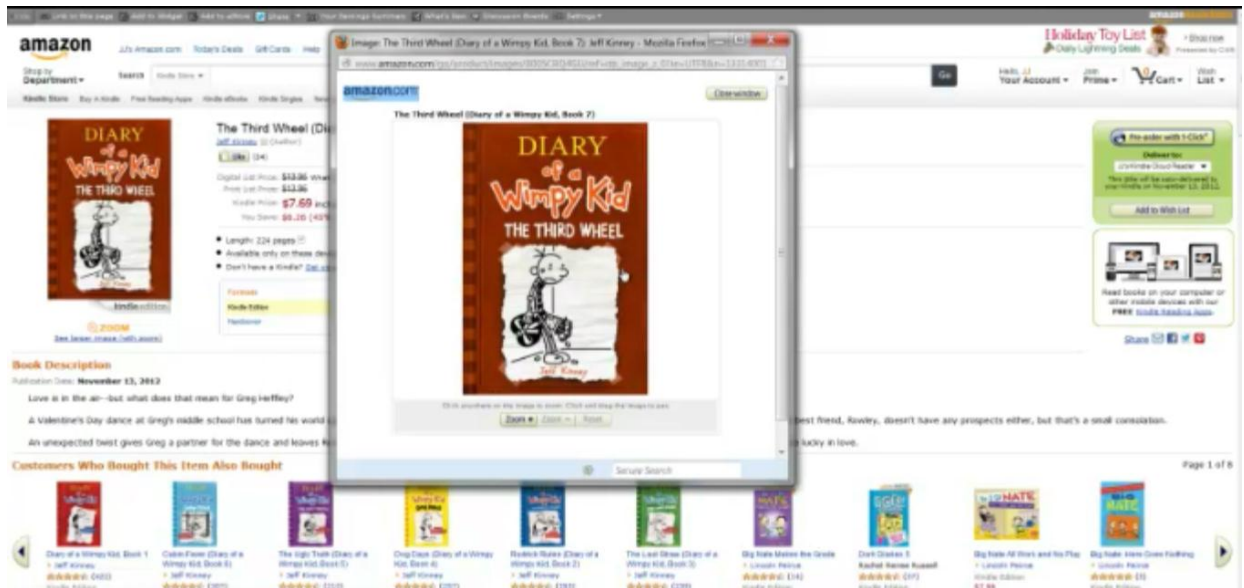
Another website which can help you to come with ideas is BookCoverArchive.com. This is a large collection of book covers from all over the world. You cannot categorize your search by niche like you can on Amazon, but once you understand the basic structure that you looking for, this can be an invaluable resource for book cover ideas. Many of the book covers on this website are the best-selling and the most powerful designs on the market.

Kindle eBook Cover Case Study: Don't Re-Invent the Wheel

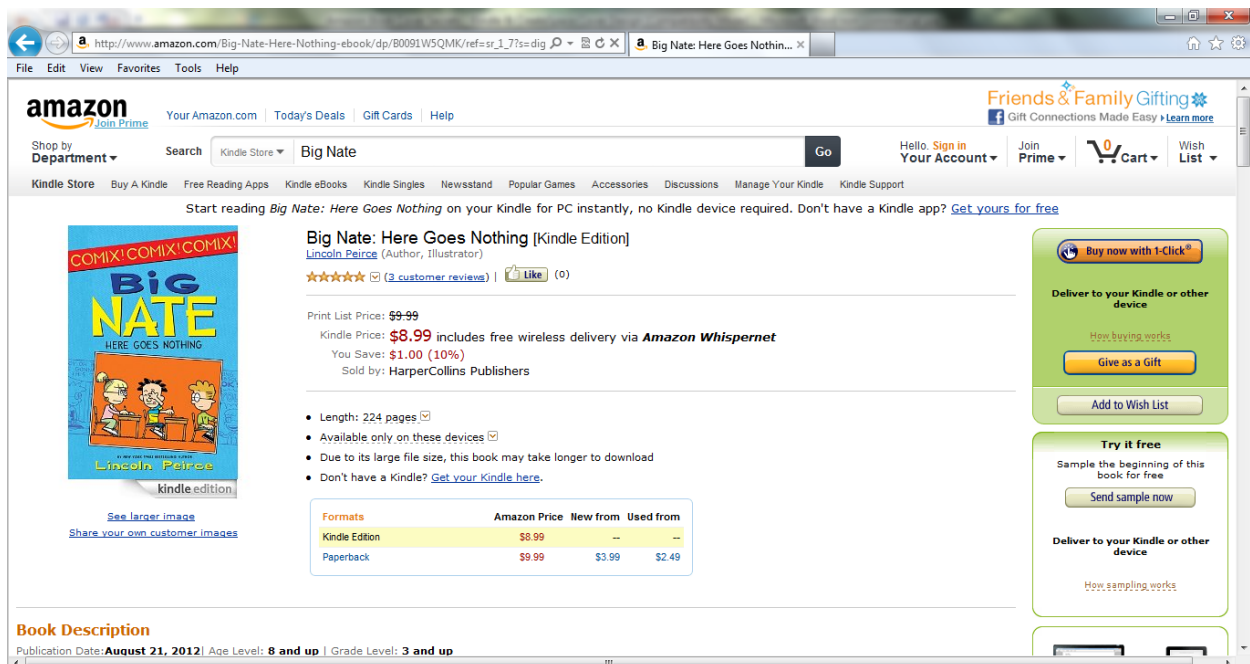


The Fart Book: Whiff it, Sniff it, Lay it, Rip it! was written by Jay Boyer and his son Joe. Jay knew that if he and his son could laugh about it, other children would find it funny too. This book has turned out to be a big success. In fact, it brings in over \$1,000 in royalties from Amazon every month.

The success that this book has had is largely due to its cover, which was wisely designed. Before creating the cover, Jay began browsing some of the Kindle eBook categories. One of the categories that he started with was Children: Ages 9-12. One of the books that he found which was similar to his was from the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. This is one of the most successful children's book franchises in the world today.



All of the books in these contain the same basic features in the cover. They all have a simple design, with a nearly solid colored background, and an image of torn notebook paper with a cartoonish image that looks like something an 8-year-old boy would draw. There are, in fact, several different successful books which use the same type of design formula. Some examples include the *Big Nate* series and *Super Zombie Juice Mega Bomb*.



By looking at the cover of *The Fart Book*, you can see that Jay chose a similar look as well, and it worked for him. In other words, he did not try to guess what kind of design people were attracted to, he already knew because he paid attention to what people were buying. Jay did not design this himself, instead he outsourced the work.

Jay sent a designer that he hired a link to one of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* to use as an example of what he wanted. Then he specified that he wanted the background to be a solid green, with big, bold, high-contrast lettering, in a font that kids would be attracted to. He also added that he wanted it to be 1,000 pixels tall to 600 pixels wide, which seems to be the dimensions of many of the successful books on Amazon.

In addition, Jay told the designer that he wanted an image of torn notebook paper to look like it was taped onto the front of the book. On the notebook paper should be a particular image which looked like a doodle an 8-year-old boy would draw out in his notebook at school. Jay had already had the image made by another outsourcer for only five dollars.

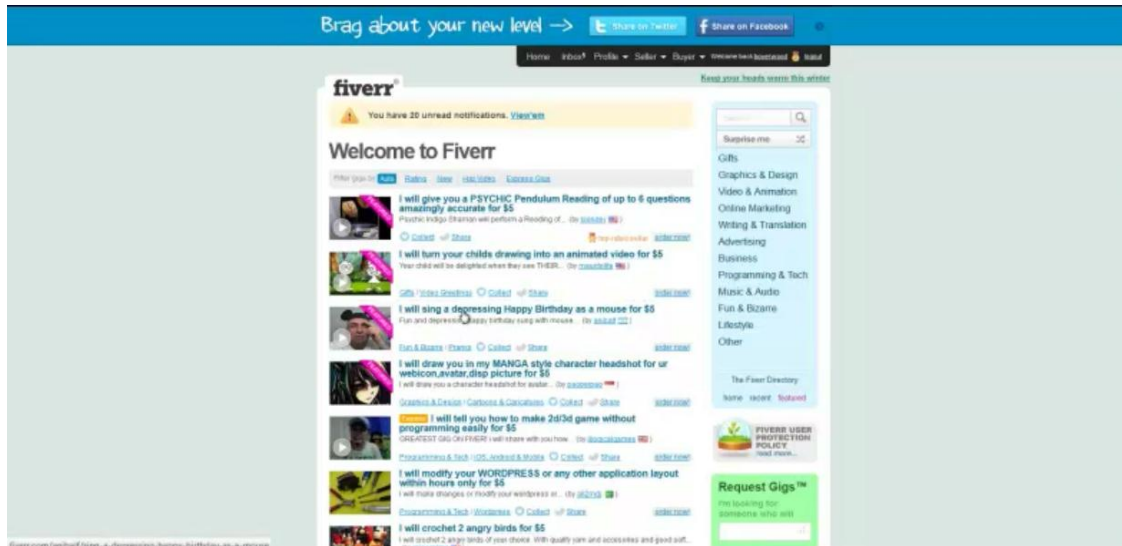
You don't have to re-invent the wheel. By searching through books on Amazon that were successful and similar to his book's subject matter, Jay found inspiration for his own book cover design. He knew by mimicking the style of a bestseller, his book would also become a success. Best of all, other than researching and getting an idea of what he wanted, Jay put little work into this and he got his cover done at a very low price. You can do this too.

How to Get Original Artwork for Your Cover for Peanuts



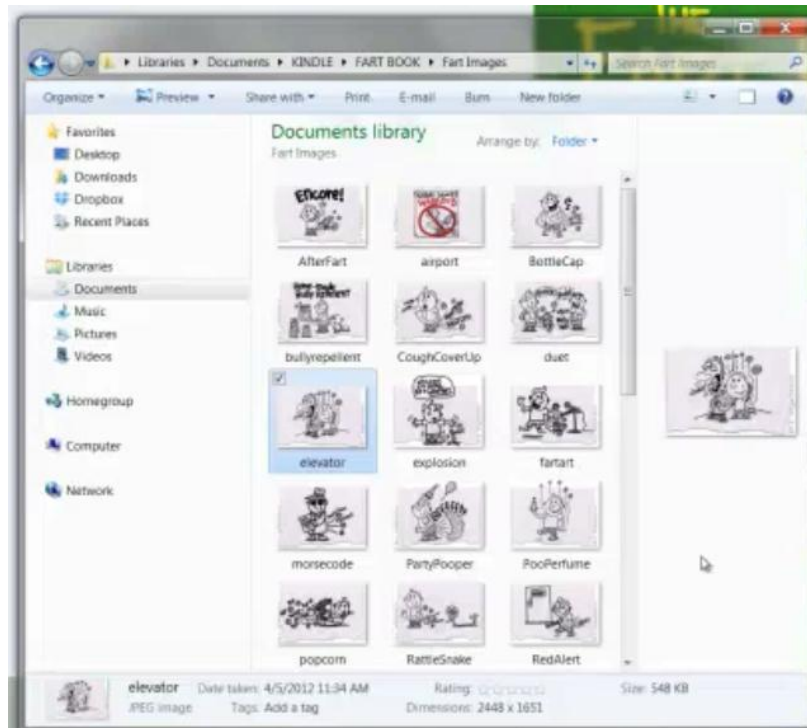
One cool image can make your book cover. Now it would not take a genius to make the image on the book cover found on the front of *The Fart Book*, and if you have the ability to create the right image for the front of your book then you should. However, if you don't have the time or you don't feel you have the right talent for this task, it can be easily outsourced.

Jay knew he needed an image similar to that of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, so he headed over to one of his favorite sites: Fiverr.com. At Fiverr.com, you have access to an abundance of people who are willing to do simple tasks for only five dollars. If you have never been to Fiverr.com, you should visit the website just to see what's being offered. You can find some very talented people on Fiverr.com. You can get just about any kind of task done here, and it is really surprising to see the quality of work that is being offered for just five dollars a task.



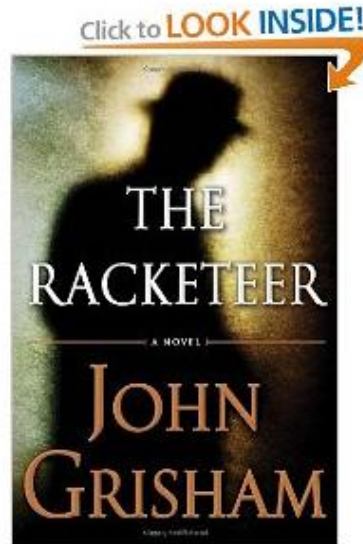
When Jay got to Fiverr.com, he simply entered 'Illustrations' into the search window. This brought up about 2,000 people who were willing to create an image for five dollars. Now, it takes some time to find the right artist. It is helpful that the artists found here are rated, so you can tell right from the start if they are able to provide good quality work and if they can deliver the work in a significant amount of time. As you are scrolling through these artists, you will want to find an artist that can match the style of drawing that you are looking for. Jay, for example, searched for an artist who he felt could create doodles similar to those found in *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Jay was able to find an artist who was willing to create a couple of dozen drawings, overlaid on the torn notebook paper, for only five dollars apiece. That means he was able to get the illustrations for what was to become a bestselling book for under \$200. That is amazing. In addition, finding someone who could devote the time to the illustrations and could match the style that was needed was part of what made *The Fart Book* a success.



Jay wrote a children's book, so it needed a lot of illustrations. It is likely that you will only need one really good illustration for your book's cover. This means that by finding an illustrator on Fiverr.com it should only cost you about five dollars to get this part of your book cover design made. So, not only can you get this done for a low price, but it is likely to turn out to be high-quality and attractive artwork as well.

Where to Find Free High-Quality Images for Your eBook Cover



If you will notice, most of the best book covers are nothing more than just text overlaid over a photograph. Most professional book cover designers will tell you that simple book covers such as this are very attractive since they are very clean and to the point. This means that you can create a book cover with very little effort and for a very low price.

One great place to go for stock images is Fotolia.com. So, once you have an idea of the type of image that you are looking for, head over to Fotolia.com and search for an image that best communicates the subject of your book. Again, it is best to model after books that have already had success in the Kindle market place.

On this website you can find images for as low as \$0.75. On average, a picture which is already proportioned for a book title will only cost about five dollars. Spend some time searching through these images and pay attention to the ones which stick out to you personally. Searching through these images will likely give you ideas for future books as well.

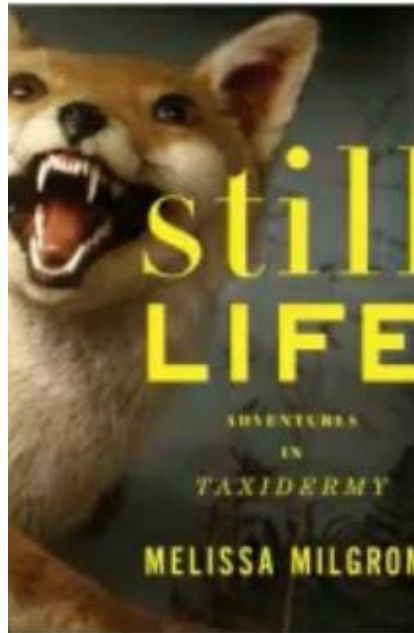
Another great website which contains a wealth of stock photos available for a low price is DreamsTime.com. This website is used by many book cover designers, and for good reason. In both of the former websites you can find high quality and professional photos which are either royalty free or can be purchased for your use. Upon finding the photo that you like and want to use, you can either use a template to design your cover yourself, or you can outsource the project to someone else for a very low price.

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If you don't want to pour any money into the creation of your book cover at all, you certainly don't have to. You can find free images at Stock.Xchng (sxc.hu). Just be careful to check the 'usage' of a photograph to ensure that the photo is royalty-free. This is easy to do. You simply click on the photo on the website to view it, and a new page will open up. On the right hand side of this page, you will see a column labeled "Photo Details". In this column, look under 'Usage' and the website will tell you if it is royalty free. You will also have the option to read more on the usage options for this photo.

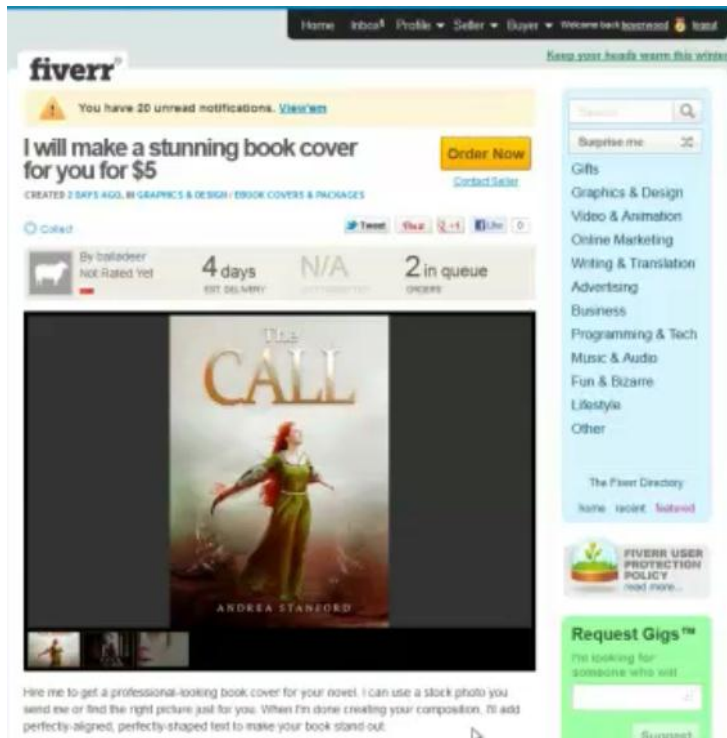
It is wise to check all three websites before choosing the image for your book. You should spend some time finding images that best communicate the subject of your book and fit the right style for your book. Remember that simple but striking images really work the best.

How to Outsource Image-Based eBook Covers



To begin creating your image-based eBook cover, search the bestselling books in your genre and find a successful book with an image-based book cover that you can model after. Next, go to Stock-Xchng, or one of the other websites that were presented earlier, to find the image that you will want to use. Finding a picture that has a 6-10 ratio is what you should shoot for, proportions of about 1000 pixels by about 600 wide generally works best for eBook covers. If you see one that is not proportioned right for your book, you can always crop the photo in a photo-editing program like Snagit.

After your photo is proportioned correctly, you can go ahead and add the text yourself, or you can outsource the work. Fiverr.com is a great place to go when you need an image-based cover created. It is hard to find a book cover designer to do this from scratch, but there are plenty of people here that are willing to do this simple editing for your book cover for just five dollars.



So, head over to Fiverr.com, and on the left-hand column there is a category for 'Graphics & Design', simply hover the mouse over this. This will open up to show some subcategories, one of which is 'eBook Covers and Packages'. When you click on this subcategory, a list of people that are willing to do this sort of work will pop up. Many times, if you click on these links, you can see samples and reviews of the person's past work. Look over this information to ensure they are the right person for the job before hiring them.

All you have to do from this point is send your new designer the picture that you would like to use as well as information on what you want your book title to say and send them a link to the book you are trying to model after. You can specify certain elements, such as the font, or you can leave these decisions up to your designer.

You have basically created your book cover in three easy steps:

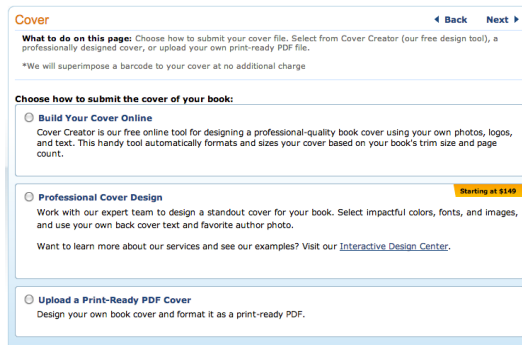
- Find Your Model
- Find an Image
- Send the Information to an Outsourcer

This process is quick, easy, and very inexpensive. By basing it off of a best-selling book, you can almost be assured that your book will be a success. Therefore, you'll be bringing in lots of profits with very little invested.

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Using CreateSpace's Cover Creator Tool

You have 3 options when it comes to uploading your cover design. You can build your cover using the CreateSpace cover creator, you can hire their design team to make you a cover, or you can upload a print-ready PDF of your cover.

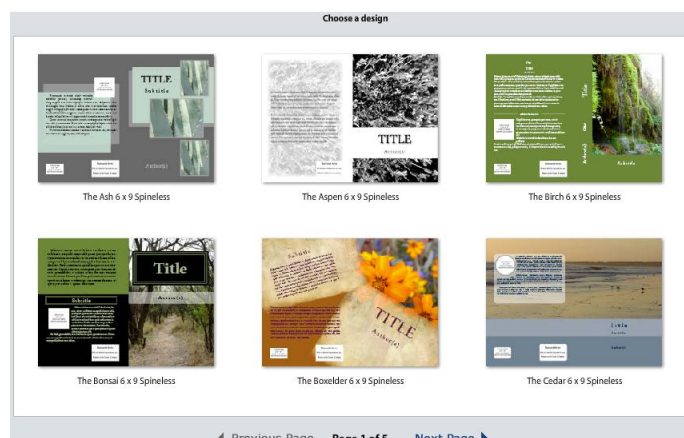


Depending upon your trim size, you may be able to download a template to use for your cover which will include the location of your spine and front and back covers.

If you have any talents at image editing or hire somebody to make your cover for you, then that is the best way to create your cover because you'll have complete control over what it looks like.

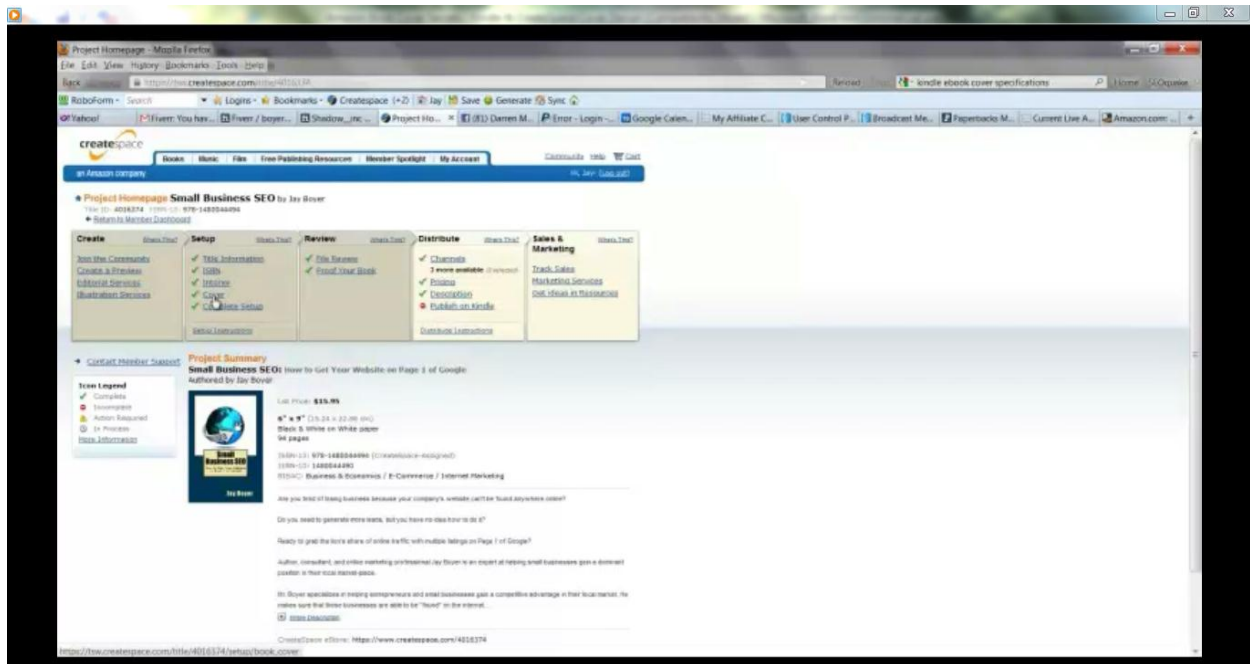
If you don't have any talent at image editing, and don't have any special needs for your cover such as a wrap-around image that includes the spine, then you can use the cover creator. If you hire the CreateSpace design services, that is basically what they will use at the cheaper price points.

The cover creator includes 30 predesigned covers which allow you to just enter your title and author information and choose from between a few different color schemes. Some also allow you to upload your own image which will fit right into the theme, rather than having to create the entire cover and back page yourself. Different templates will have different options for what can and can't be edited.



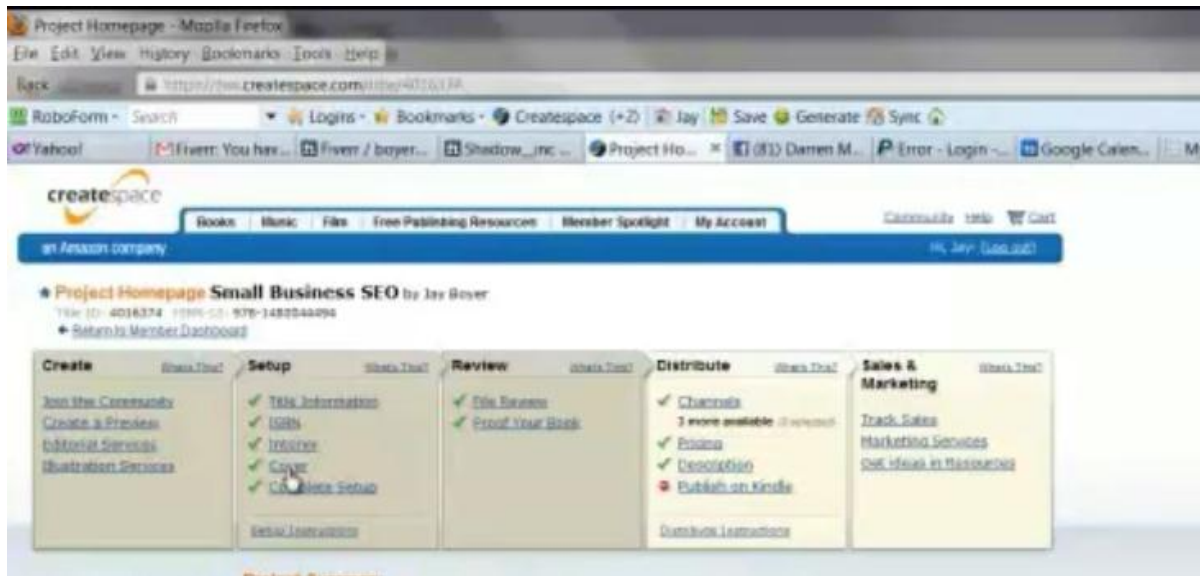
You *can* upload just the front and back page (or even the full wrap-around cover) using the Palm or Pine templates from page 4. If you do use one of these options, or upload your own cover PDF and skip the cover creator, then make sure that you remember to include the title and primary author or they will not approve the cover for you. If your book has a spine, you should also include the title and author on the spine as well.

Going From a Paperback Book Cover to a Kindle Design

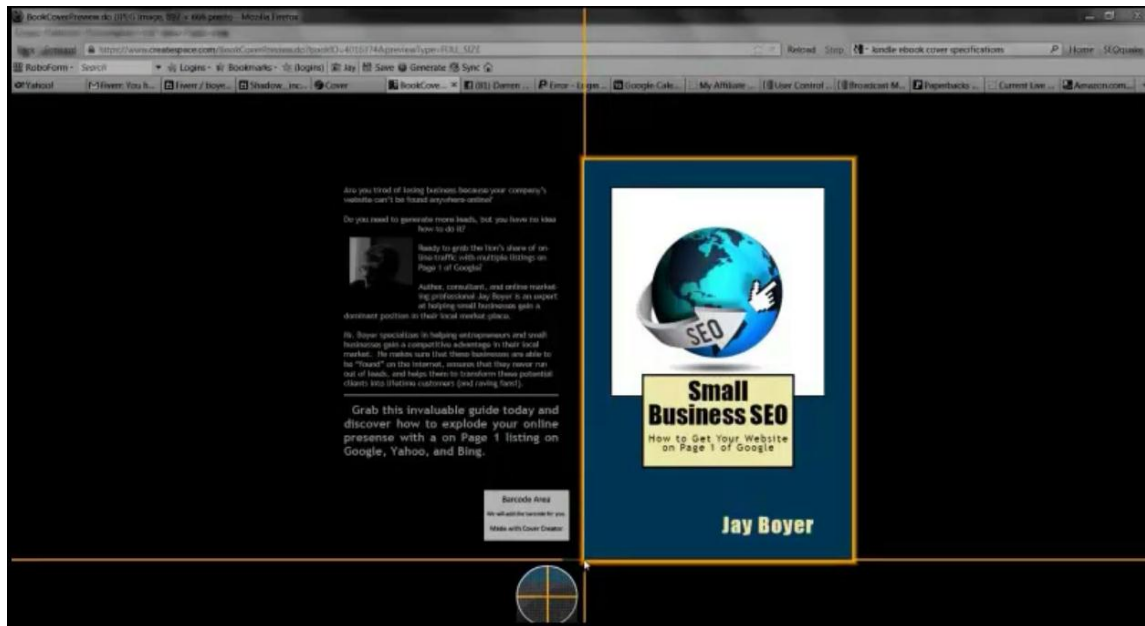


It is a great idea to take your paperback book and turn it into a Kindle eBook as well. In some cases, doing this will almost double your royalties. Now, if you decide to take on this task, you should know that there are differences between the types of covers. This means that you will have to go back and edit your cover in order to submit it for your Kindle eBook. This is not a difficult process at all, however.

The image will need to be larger for the Kindle version, which is a quark which Amazon is currently trying to work out. This is easily fixed though. Begin by going to your CreateSpace member dashboard. Next, click on the book which you want to submit to Kindle. This will take you to the Project Homepage for this particular book.

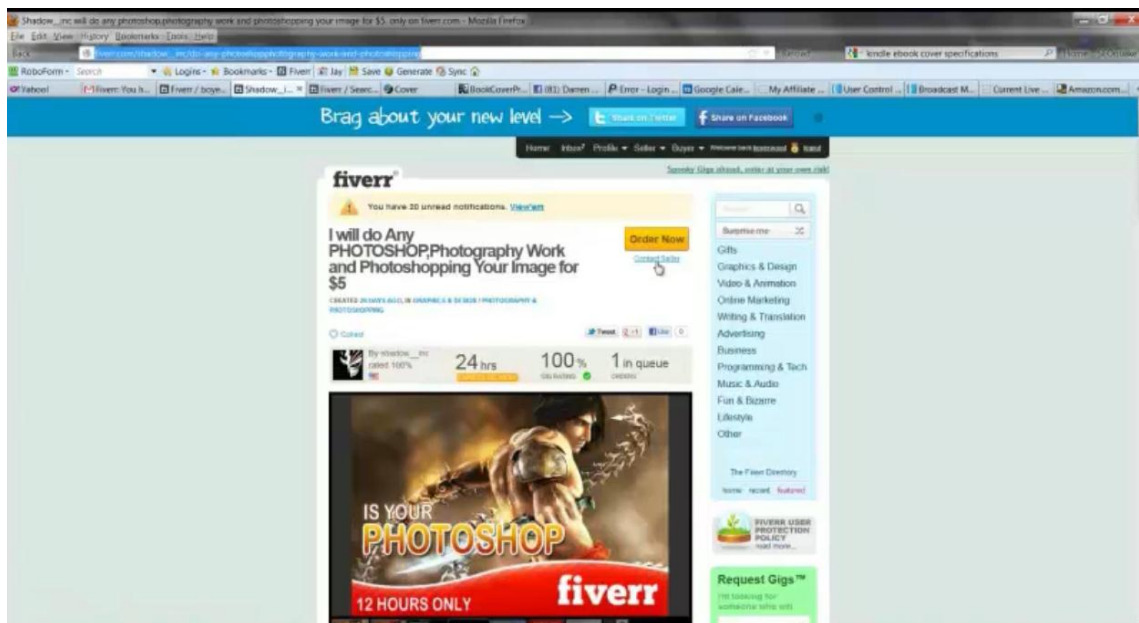


From the Project Homepage, look for the 'Set Up' module on the top of the page. One of the links below says 'Cover', click here. This will bring up a full-sized image of the cover that you have created for your book. Now, the Kindle version of the cover is not going to include the spine or the back. So, what do you do to make it only the front image?



There is a program called Snagit that you can use to grab the image that you need. There is also a free version called Jing that you can use. You can find the free version online. Using either of these programs, select the front of your book cover, and save it in your graphics editing program as a JPG file.

You will have to make the image larger before submitting it to be a Kindle cover. In Kindle, the cover must be 1,000 pixels in height at minimum for submission. Typically, an image made for a CreateSpace paperback is about 600 pixels in height. The problem is that you don't want to just stretch the image out and lose some of your resolution. If you are good at editing graphics, you can probably do this yourself. If not, just head over to Fiverr.com and find someone to do this for just five dollars.



At Fiverr.com, you should be able to find someone to do this for you fairly quickly. Simply search for someone whose expertise is in graphics that also has good ratings. Before purchasing anything, send a message to the contractor by clicking on 'Contact Seller'. In your message just state something like:

"I have a book cover image which is currently 616 pixels tall, I need it enlarged to at least 1,000 pixels tall, while maintaining the same aspect ratio. Can you do this for me within the next 24 hours?" There are Express-Gig Vendors that are able to do such tasks in less than 24 hours. You can find them through a custom search, just like you can search for people by rating.

Once you have them in agreement, upload the image that you want edited and send it to the contractor. This type of task should not take a person of expertise long to finish and should not cost you more than about five dollars. Many times the designer you hire will take it upon himself to touch up your picture in other ways as well.