

Get your First 1,000 Readers

Stan C. Smith

Step 4: Getting a Cover for your Reader Magnet and... **Coming up with a Title**

Due to the need for social distancing, we are now meeting virtually from home. That does not mean, however, that we cannot progress with our writing in general and our Reader Magnets specifically.

Remember, the goal is for everyone to end up having a finished product, published on Amazon, with edited content, a high-quality cover, and a growing collection of reviews. Then we will go through the process of putting your reader magnet to work for you as an author!

We've already talked extensively about *what* a Reader Magnet is and why it's a good idea to have one (see the previous handouts for Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3—they are available on the WoW website Resources page: <https://writersofwsbg.weebly.com/resources.html>).

We've also looked at how to *plan* your Reader Magnet, how to get it *written*, and then how to *edit* it. Now it's time to choose a high-quality *cover*!

IMPORTANT: Your Book's Cover is Extremely Important!

Why? Well, let's consider the purpose of your Reader Magnet.

1. *Your book will probably be available on **Amazon** (to get people interested in you as an author).*
On Amazon, the cover is one of the top things readers look at when they decide to take the next step (which is to go to the book's product page and read the book's description).
2. *Your book will probably be offered in **multi-author book promotions**.*
This is the one single best way to recruit your first 1,000 readers! Your book will be offered among a few dozen other books. Often, the only thing readers see first is the book covers. They have to decide which books to click on based **ONLY** on the covers.
3. *Your book will probably be available on your **website**.*
See both comments above. Readers will not bother to grab your book if they don't find the cover to be at least somewhat appealing (and consistent with the genre they like to read).

IMPORTANT: Your Book's Title is Extremely Important!

Why? Because the title is part of the cover, and... well, see the comments above.

1. *Most important, your title should be consistent with your genre!*
Be sure to look (on Amazon) at the titles of the top 100 books in your specific genre. Does your title fit in with the style of titles readers expect?

Great example that fits the genre: **Ready Player One** (genre: LitRPG)

Bad example that does *not* fit the genre: **Sleeping with Hitler's Wife** (genre: Time Travel)
(yes, this is a real book... look it up on Amazon!)

2. *Your title should be easy to read and easy to say*

Authors face enough challenges without having titles that are difficult to pronounce! I strategically violated this rule (although carefully) with my Across Horizons series

OBSOLETE THEOREM and FOREGONE CONFLICT

They are a bit of a mouthful, but this was on purpose. I still was very careful to make sure they roll off the tongue fairly easily (for example, do not have two 3-syllable words in a row)

For Book 3: I have narrowed it down to two possibilities:

AMPLIFIED SEQUENCE or HOSTILE EMERGENCE

The thing is, AMPLIFIED EMERGENCE would make the most sense, but it is harder to say because both words are 3-syllable words. So I will not use it.

Getting a Cover for your Reader Magnet

As you probably know, there are several approaches to getting a good cover for your book. I am going to focus at this time on ways to get a professional cover for under \$100. I normally pay \$400 for a custom cover for my novels, but let's assume we want to spend far less than that for a Reader Magnet. If my Reader Magnet becomes more important (if I decide to go ahead and write the series, for example), then later I will pay for a custom cover to match the series branding. For now, though, I want a less expensive cover.

BUT... it still has to be *high quality*, and it must *tempt readers to read the book!*

(NOTE: I will not consider creating my own covers because I do not have the expertise)

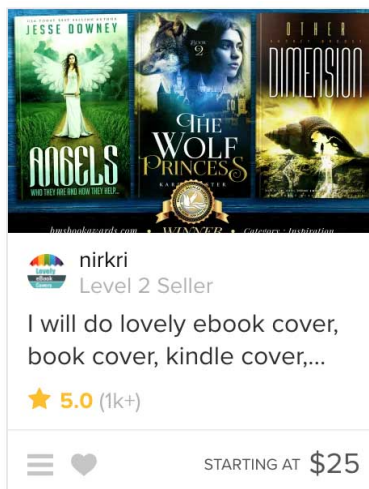
For me, there are two ways to get a good cover for under \$100:

1. *Use a cover designer who will create a custom cover for under \$100*

Yes, they do exist. A number of authors use cover designers they find on

<https://www.fiverr.com>

You can get a custom cover here for as little as \$25. Of course, they will use stock images, which may also be used by other designers on the covers of other books (if you look at a lot of sci-fi covers, you'll see the same spaceships showing up time after time). But many authors are happy with what they get from these designers.



2. *Purchase a Pre-made Cover*

I have done this three times, and I like the process and the results.

Most cover designers boost their income by creating and selling pre-made covers. They design the covers and add generic text for the author name and title. You locate a cover that (more-or-less) fits your story, then the designer will change the text to your specifications.

PROS: - I like this approach because I can see exactly what the cover image is going to look like before I buy it (with custom covers, you don't see the image until the designer has completed it).

- Inexpensive, high-quality covers.
- Often you can change the fonts

CONS: - It can take *time* to find a cover that more-or-less fits your story (time that could be spent writing your next story)

My favorite Pre-Made Cover Sites

<https://thebookcoverdesigner.com/>

This is where I got the cover from my Reader Magnet FUSED: TRAINING DAY. This site is kind of like Fiverr, but ONLY for pre-made covers. The site gives designers a safe, controlled place to sell their pre-made covers.

Prices: \$25 and up. My cover was \$45.

<https://www.goonwrite.com/>

This site has an amazing selection of pre-made covers, including entire series you can purchase all at once. I have seen posts by many authors who have used this site.

Price: All covers are \$30 each! You can buy vouchers for future purchases.

<https://selfpubbookcovers.com/>

Another site where numerous designers can sell their pre-made covers.

<https://www.dropdeaddesigns.com>

A good collection of high-quality covers, divided by genre.

Price: \$50 for eBook covers, \$70 for eBook + Print covers

And there are MANY more pre-made cover sites out there if you search for them.

What to expect when you find a pre-made cover you like

Here's what I did when I bought my Reader Magnet cover on <https://thebookcoverdesigner.com>

1. I found the cover I liked, then I added it to my shopping cart and filled out the requested information. In the Instructions box, I provided my *author name*, *title*, and *subtitle*
2. After making the purchase (\$45), I got an email from the designer. She asked if there was anything else I needed to let her know. I told her I had decided I preferred a font she had used on one of her other pre-made covers she had on the site. She was fine with that.
3. Later that same day, she emailed me the eBook cover (in the standard eBook size: 1600 x 2400 pixels). She asked if I wanted anything changed on the cover. I liked the way it looked, so I told her so, and then she marked the deal as closed.
4. Now I have my 1600 x 2400 pixel image, and I can upload it to Amazon when I add the book there, and I can upload it to Bookfunnel when I am ready to join multi-author promotions. We will look at those processes in future sessions!