

2009

HOW TO SAVE TIME AND MONEY IN PRODUCTION AND DESIGN

Design Portion—*presented by David Jenney*

PREFACE

Great design sells books. Publisher's that consistently produce visually excellent books can measure the benefits by higher sales, frequent reprints, and a longer shelf life. Great design is an invaluable and tangible commodity that is not lost on trade book buyers, and is perceived as a "value" by the book-buying public.

CONFRONTING REALITY—*it's tough out there*

Anyone in the vicinity of the publishing business, freelance designers included, know how difficult things are right now. Publishers are trying to cut costs wherever they can, and designers have a vested interest in seeing publishers succeed. So, it's a safe bet that most designers are willing to help out by making a little less.

TIME = MONEY—*speed up production time by being thorough*

To streamline the production process, the publisher/editor should make sure everything is ready to go prior to handing off to the designer. Deliver a "clean" project to the designer by doing the following:

- Manuscript is edited and formatted correctly (include hard copy)
- Photos and graphic materials are in hand and have been ID'ed to the text
- Ideas for the "look" and format of the book have been discussed and are clear
- Schedules have been discussed and are written down—deadlines are realistic

GET THE DESIGNER ONBOARD EARLY—*shorten the learning curve and improve the final book*

- The designer may have ideas from the outset to improve the book
 - Designers are smart, book-savvy people; their ideas can improve content
 - Designers may know of sources that will help the editor
- Including the designer early can streamline the production process
 - Allow the designer to give input on formatting the word document, it will save time formatting the text
 - Allowing the designer to see the visuals early (and give opinions) will improve the outcome
 - Get more accurate printing estimates by allowing the designer to give you page and photo counts at the rough manuscript stage
- Early involvement increases the Design Brew Time—get the creative juices flowing early
 - Knowing in advance what's coming up allows the designer to think about it while doing other projects. Ideas for fonts, photos, covers, and design styles are allowed to percolate. The end result will always be a better tasting design.

SAVING TIME AND MONEY—*Do's and Don'ts*

Don'ts—books hold a permanent place in our society; don't do anything today that you will regret tomorrow

- Don't skimp on design—especially the cover
- Don't use hard to read small type and less space in the margins to lower the page count
- Don't assume the designer can read your mind, steer them in the right direction, or be open to new ideas
- Don't assume that a black and white book means boring
- Don't exclude the designer at the blue-line or press proof stage

Do's—ideas to save time and money

- Series designs should save money
- Submit files electronically to printer if possible
- In the current economy, it's okay to negotiate lower design fees from freelancers
- Develop submission guidelines for digital photos and graphic files
- Buy a good digital camera and use it