An Alex Burke Review of

Make Your Book:

The Author's and Writer's Workbook

Written by

Alexis Aronis

As a bestselling ghostwriter of both fiction and non-fiction, I'm always interested in finding tools that will not only help in my writing, but also will help my clients in their publishing journey. After reading *Make Your Book: The Author's and Writer's Workbook,* by Alexis Aronis, I was delighted to find it extremely helpful. The book served as a cogent and concise refresher course for me and made me aware of things I didn't know.

Aronis discusses the difficult formatting issues that arise and makes recommendations about navigating the CreateSpace format. I know my clients have been baffled about making the right choices when it comes to trim size, fonts and even the templates involved in getting their books published. While I can discuss with them the ins and outs of the process, I think Aronis' book will serve as a valuable reference and demystify the parameters within self-publishing.

Often a writer can be overwhelmed by choices, especially first-time authors. Online resources can be quite technical for the newbie author. Fortunately, Aronis has broken down the key elements and explains not only how to do things, but just as important, why they should be done.

From comparing bestselling books, their trim sizes and the font, and font size choices, Aronis makes the case for what works and what doesn't. The excitement of getting a book published can often be overshadowed by the details of getting the book into print or electronic format. This book alleviates the doubt and assists the reader with simple, clear steps that will make their own book shine.

Aronis instructs us about what will be covered, and then he covers it, recapping at the end of the chapter. At first, it might seem tedious to the reader, but I found that his technique actually helped me to augment my understanding of the book's concepts.

It was a pleasant surprise to find that Aronis covered things within MS Word, things that most of us tend to overlook because they can be too difficult. Therefore, we're not working up to our potential. We are given a Master Class in MS Word and its abilities to transform our manuscripts into books that will exhibit quality and professionalism.

I was grateful for Aronis' discussion about how the trim size can cause problems with mobile media. We might not be aware that trim size doesn't always translate well into mobile devices. Although we're aware of the need to have electronic versions, our familiarity with the requirements might fall short. Aronis lays out the choices we have and how our books will look in electronic versions. We are shown the differences and outcomes resulting from our choices for

trim size. Links are also supplied so that we can verify that our choice will be compatible with electronic media. This will cut down on problems down the road.

Websites are critical for any author, but we have to make sure that that information on the website is also able to be shown perfectly on mobile devices. Webpage sizes are also discussed because they can have compatibility problems with those devices.

Editing can also be a sticking point for writers and we don't necessarily have a grasp on all of the editing functions within MS Word. By using Aronis' workbook, we can go through the stages of editing by exploring the comments and editing side of MS Word. In the long run, if we use Aronis' helpful guidelines, we can save time during the editorial phase and not lose our work.

Once we're finished with the editorial process we can then move into the design of the book cover and the book interior. The design is just as important as the words on the page. Color is pivotal to the overall look of our books and we're given examples of how the right color selection will make the book standout. This is particularly crucial to capture a potential reader's interest.

Some editorial lessons seemed quite technical at first, but Aronis' simplified the procedures to the extent that any trepidation was diminished. Most of us have experienced a disaster or two when trying to format, edit or in adding headers and footers. The step-by-step lessons used in the workbook, however, will make any writer more competent and professional. Even seasoned writers will find a great deal of useful advice.

Once the book is finished, our work is far from done, as Aronis points out. It's on to the review stage and the critical number of reviews that must be obtained, and not from friends or family. This was a great addition to the workbook. I'd like to see another book from Aronis that details more about the work an author has to do once the book is finished.

Overall, I think this workbook will aid any writer who wants to take his or her work to the next level. From the practical aspects of formatting, trim sizes, fonts, to the tutorials on editing and design, this book is a wonderful reference tool that can assist the writer from a book's inception to its publication and beyond. In simplified, precise examples, Aronis has given us a reference book that cuts through the technical labyrinth and leads us to a perfect end result.

Whether or not you're just starting out or have a long list of books you've written, there is a wealth of knowledge in Aronis workbook. I will recommend it to my clients.

Alex Burke is the bestselling ghostwriter of fiction and non-fiction, as well as a screenwriter. Burke has worked as a senior editor on both sides of the desk in publishing.