How to Create and format a PDF E-book

This method is efficient and somewhat motivating in that once you have the skeleton of the book you can go through and start to fill in little chunks at a time. Before you know it, you have a completed e-book.

STEP 1 – Grab any serious printed book you have handy. Don't use coffee table type books, or little skinny, crappy, self-published books.

STEP 2 – Open a Microsoft Word document or whatever word processing program you use.

STEP 3 – In the Word doc start duplicating the sections of the printed book into separate pages of the Word Document. Here are typical sections:

Title page (This can be a full page of the e-book cover)

Copyright page

Dedication (Optional)

Acknowledgements (Optional)

About the Author

Foreword (Optional)

Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapters 1-??

Conclusion

Resources

Your products and ads

You can add or delete sections as you see fit.

Note: Each section should have its own page break. In Microsoft Word you put your curser where you want the new section to start. Then you hold down the "ctrl" key and tap the "enter" key.

STEP 4 – Start filling in the sections

Formatting

Font: Use 14 or 16 point Times New Roman for the body. 20 – 24 point Arial for the subheadings and as large as you want for the Chapters.

Note: Do NOT put the Words "Chapter One" or any of the chapters on a page by itself. People get mad if they print out the e-book and waste an entire page for just a few words.

Underlines: Do not underline text on a webpage or an e-book. Underlining means you should be able to click on the text. When it doesn't go anywhere, people will think something is wrong with your website or e-book. We don't want them thinking that.

Italics: Avoid italics. Computer screens are made up of horizontal and vertical dots. When you use italics, they start cutting through these dots at an angle which makes them look a little fuzzy instead of nice and crisp. Now if you use large italics in graphics with nice smooth edges, that's OK.

Spacing: Single spaced lines of text. Double space between paragraphs.

Indents: None needed

Footer: Put a footer on every page with your contact information and absolutely the page number. If someone prints out your e-book and accidentally drops it, they will have a hard time putting the pages back together if you don't have page numbers on each page.

Margins: 1 – 1.25 inches on the sides. At least .5 top and bottom so most printers can print it without cutting off anything.

Paragraph Length: Try to keep paragraphs fairly short when writing for an e-book or a website. People get eye strain and headaches reading on screen. Leave plenty of white space. Also, long paragraphs fill up the entire screen on cell phones and make the reader feel that your content is just too hard to read.

Clickable Links: One big mistake people make in PDF ebook is they don't put clickable links leading to their products and services and also to affiliate products and services. As long as the link isn't humongous or weird looking, you should use the entire https://www format and then your link. Example: https://www.ScrewTheCommute.com/resources If you have a really long weird looking affiliate link you may want to use a link shortening service like bit.ly

Use of color: Color is free in an e-book, but very expensive in printed books. You should use color judiciously in your e- book. It will make the production value better and make the e-book more pleasing to read.

Chapter titles, subtitles, highlighted and colored text are all routine in e-books

Table of Contents: In a PDF e-book the Table of Contents should be clickable to the respective entries in the document. I don't use the automatic Table of Contents feature in Microsoft Word because I could never figure it out and make it work.

I use the "Bookmark" feature. First, I go to the place in the document I want to end up at. Let's say I want to be able to click from Chapter 1 in the Table of Contents and end up at Chapter 1 in the book. I place my cursor there and click "Insert" and then I click "Bookmark". I name the bookmark. It can't have any spaces in it.

Then I go to the Table of Contents and highlight the words "Chapter 1". Then I click "Insert" and then I click "Hyperlink". In the hyperlink dialogue box, I click "Bookmark" and I pick the bookmark I just made in the first step.

Now I can click from the hyperlink in the Table of Contents directly to Chapter 1 in the e-book. Then you go to the next item of the Table of Contents and repeat the procedure.

Check off each item of this list prior to submitting the document to me for a review.

These are in no particular order. Use this as a checklist to see if you are making these mistakes.