



s e n s e™  
*Independent Bookstores  
for Independent Minds*

**“Just *Book* Sense”**

**2005**

**Book Sense  
Information**

For **biblio**  
DISTRIBUTION Publishers!



# “JUST BOOK SENSE”

Congratulations to Book Sense on celebrating its fifth anniversary this year! Over the last six months, the American Booksellers Association (ABA) has had many of its Publisher Partners visit their Tarrytown, NY offices to discuss the program overall, how it's done so far, and where they're going in the future. It's clear to everyone that this program has been a huge success and the opportunities for progress are endless.

The NBN sales force agrees that participating in Book Sense is a perfect way for a publisher to reach out to the huge network of independent bookstores. It's relatively easy and definitely worthwhile.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT IS BOOK SENSE?

Book Sense is a major marketing campaign launched in 1999 by the ABA and participating bookstores in order to increase the visibility and marketing clout of independent bookstores. On both a national and local level, this campaign is an overall branding of independents AND a multi-level marketing effort. Book Sense is a well-known effort thanks to initiatives like Book Sense door decals, national advertising, national gift cards, the monthly *Book Sense Picks* List (formerly the bi-monthly *Book Sense 76*), the Book Sense Bestseller List, Advance Access and BookSense.com.

### WHO ARE THE BOOK SENSE MEMBERS?

There are 1,200+ independent bookstore members in the Book Sense program; 450+ of these stores report to the Book Sense Bestseller List on a regular basis and ALL stores are eligible to nominate books for the Book Sense Picks List and other Specialty Lists.

### WHAT IS THE *BOOK SENSE PICKS* LIST (FORMERLY THE 76)?

Hundreds of independent booksellers nominate both their favorite new and/or backlist titles and from those submissions, an eclectic and diverse list of books is chosen each month. Each month, the top 20 bookseller nominated books are listed in a printed flyer – a quantity of which gets mailed to each participating bookstore for use in displays and to make available to customers. This monthly flyer has a total circulation of over 400,000 copies. A second group of 20 titles is line-listed on the flyer, posted on the ABA website ([www.bookweb.org](http://www.bookweb.org)) for booksellers and BookSense.com for consumers. The books on the list become eligible for in-store promotions with special placement and signage, at the discretion of each store, taking into account their customer base and market focus.

### HOW DO I GET MY BOOK ON THE *BOOK SENSE PICKS* LIST?

First you must get your book in the hands of the booksellers. There are two ways to do this—the Advanced Access Program and the Book Sense Monthly box mailings to stores. After that, it's up to the booksellers to nominate your book to Dan Cullen, Editor-in-Chief, Book Sense Picks,

for the list. The final *Book Sense Picks* selections are based on the quantity of nominations as well as quality of the nomination (i.e. how passionate the bookseller is about the book).

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF MY BOOK GETS ON THE *BOOK SENSE PICKS* LIST?**

Making the list opens up your book to all kinds of marketing possibilities, from in-store promotions to national advertising. Your book will end up on Book Sense tables and in window displays at independents across the country. You'll be given the opportunity to be in Book Sense national ads in publications like *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. You will be given the option of using the Book Sense logo on reprints of the title or in your catalogs or to create shelf-talkers. And, if all goes well, this promotion will catapult you onto the Book Sense National or Regional Bestseller Lists!

Initially, when your book makes the list, you are committed to an amount of marketing dollars to be mutually determined. This money covers the cost of all the marketing materials that Book Sense has to create and send to the stores to highlight your book as a *Book Sense Pick* and to help cover the production and mailing of the consumer fliers to all stores.

### **WHAT IS THE BOOK SENSE BESTSELLER LIST?**

450+ member bookstores report their weekly sales to Book Sense and these sales make up both the national and various regional Book Sense Bestseller lists. You do not have to be on the *Book Sense Picks* list to make the Bestseller list, BUT being on the *Book Sense Picks* list gives you a better chance at increasing sales in these stores and, consequently, a better chance at making either the National or one or more of the Regional Bestseller lists.

### **HOW DO I GET MY BOOK ON THE BOOK SENSE BESTSELLER LIST?**

NBN feels that the first step is getting your book on the *Book Sense Picks* list is by getting the book or a galley of the book in the hands of the booksellers. AND it helps to include a personal note just to those independents asking them to consider it for nomination to the *Picks* list. Booksellers, especially those in independent bookstores, do a lot of hand selling to customers. You want them to read your book and remember it, because that's the only way they will hand-sell it!

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BOOK SENSE PUBLISHER PARTNER?**

As a Book Sense Publisher Partner, NBN and its publishers can take advantage of monthly White Box and Red Box mailings to all the stores; we have special ad rates on the ABA's Bookselling This Week electronic newsletter; we have access to Book Sense mailing lists (a \$500 value), and Book Sense will recognize us as supporters of independent booksellers. In return, we have made a commitment to Book Sense to participate in their mailings, maintain a presence on their website, and participate in any other opportunities that come our way.

We made this commitment because ALL of our sales reps have told us how important this program is to their accounts and that it will have a positive affect on your sales. We, in turn, need your support to make this effort a success.

### **WHAT IS BOOKSENSE.COM?**

A traffic-aggregating site AND hundreds of individual store sites (including TatteredCover.com, Keplers.com, BooksandBooks.com and many more), all sharing a 2 million title database, state-of-the-art transaction and fulfillment processes, and sophisticated content management tools. Customers use Booksense.com to search for their closest independent bookstore as well as see the latest Book Sense Picks and Bestsellers.

We ask that any publisher who lists sources for ordering on their website (i.e. B&N.com, Amazon.com, other bookstores) also include a link to Booksense.com.

# The White Box Mailing

Participating in the White Box Mailing accomplishes two goals—receiving exposure to the Independents for a book that otherwise might not be noticed, and giving your book an opportunity to be nominated as a Book Sense Pick.

Every month a white box measuring 18 ½” x 18 ½” x 4” is mailed to each of the 900+ active Book Sense member stores filled with assorted promotional items, like these (followed by the typical cost for inclusion in all 900+ boxes):

- Advanced Reading Copies (ARCs) or Galleys (.90-1.50 each)
- Pack of 25 Bookmarks (\$350)
- Standard Postcard (\$75)
- Oversize Postcard (\$100)
- Pre-Folded Posters (\$250-\$350)
- Sell-sheets/Flyers (\$125)
- Shelf-talker (\$50)
- Easel-back signs (\$350-\$500)
- Catalogs; and assorted other promotional goodies! (ask for pricing)

Only Book Sense Publisher Partners are allowed to participate. The minimum quantity for any piece provided is 450 (down from the 600 pieces previously required). There is no fee for inclusion, however, the publisher must pay their share of shipping and provide the materials, of course.

Some publishers want to know if they can be sure that their 450 copies go to 450 reporting stores. It's a logical question, however, it's important to remember that most of the reporting stores are the larger ones that actually get visited by reps who take care of handing them a galley. It's the smaller, hard-to-reach stores that need the White Box. And many of them are quite responsive in terms of Book Sense Picks nominations, even if their store isn't equipped with a POS system capable of reporting sales.

Specifying regional distribution of materials in the White Box mailing is possible—so if, for example, the publisher has a title of interest in the Southeast, they could request that the Book Sense staff make sure the galleys go primarily to Southeast member stores.

Finally, Book Sense is imposing some new guidelines on their member stores to ensure active participation. Any store that wants to continue receiving the White Box mailings must do two out of four of the following: report to the bestseller list at least 3 weeks each month, send in at least one Book Sense Picks nomination each quarter, establish and maintain a permanent Book Sense display area in the store, or actively participate in the Book Sense gift card program. So, while there are 1,200+ member stores, the White Box mailing is only sent to those stores that meet the established participation criteria.

To participate, e-mail Meg Smith at [meg@booksense.com](mailto:meg@booksense.com) and tell her what you would like to send, what month, and any other specifics you have in mind. Also, make sure Ginger Miller ([gmliller@nbnbooks.com](mailto:gmliller@nbnbooks.com)) knows of any costs you have agreed to since billing is done through NBN.

# The Red Box Mailing

Book Sense now offers publishers a new and faster way to get time-sensitive materials into the hands of all 1,200+ participating Book Sense stores—the “Red Box Mailing.”

Designed to serve as a monthly In-Store Marketing Action Kit, the Red Box contains a quantity of the latest Book Sense Picks flyers, any scheduled Top Ten List pads, as well as any other timely news and information from the ABA and Book Sense.

Publishers are invited to provide whatever materials they wish including but not limited to:

- Shelftalkers, easelbacks, bookmarks, posters, or other point-of-purchase materials to tie into those titles chosen by booksellers as Book Sense Picks or other recent releases
- Sell sheets and/or catalog copy for any off-the-list titles
- Special offers with specific deadlines
- Any other late-breaking news about titles, authors, tours, confirmed media appearances, etc.

**BOOK SENSE GUARANTEES THAT THESE BOXES WILL ARRIVE IN ALL BOOK SENSE STORES NO LATER THAN THE 15<sup>TH</sup> OF EACH MONTH.**

The cost to participate in this program is slightly higher than that of the White Box, but still, all in all, cheaper than if publishers were to do it themselves.

To participate, e-mail Meg Smith at [meg@booksense.com](mailto:meg@booksense.com) and tell her what you would like to send, what month, and any other specifics you have in mind. Also, make sure Davida Breier ([dbreier@bibliodistribution.com](mailto:dbreier@bibliodistribution.com)) knows of any costs you have agreed to since billing is done through Biblio.

## How To Participate #3

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# Advance Access Program

Every second Monday, Book Sense e-mails their member stores with news of galleys and ARCs available from publishers. The stores contact the publishers directly to request a copy to read and decide whether or not they will carry it in the store. Most participants get 25-50 requests, so publishers should be prepared with at least 50 copies.

This is an excellent way to get galleys and ARCs into the hands of the booksellers who are truly interested, rather than the random sampling achieved by the White Box. (However, the White Box does put the book in their hands to see a brilliant cover or read an unexpected blurb when they might not otherwise be motivated to request a copy based on an e-mail description alone.)

E-mail Meg Smith at Book Sense ([meg@booksense.com](mailto:meg@booksense.com)) to offer your books/galleys to the booksellers. Send her one short paragraph including title, author, ISBN, price, format, publisher, pub date, subject category, 2-sentence max (50 word) description, the # of copies you have to offer, and your e-mail address. DO NOT include the words "Title, Author, Subject, etc", web links, jackets or publicity info. It should be one brief, reader-friendly paragraph that she can cut & paste.

**EXAMPLE:**

*Games You Can't Lose: A Guide for Suckers* by Harry Anderson and Turk Pipkin (Burford Books, 0123456789, \$12.95, paper, January 2001, Games/Hobbies). Before starring in "Night Court" on TV, Harry Anderson was a performing con man. Here in this wicked book he unveils the tricks behind cons, swindles, and wagers that separate fools and their money in streets, bars, carnivals, casinos, and racetracks everyday. 100 copies available. Please e-mail Peter Burford at [peter@burford.com](mailto:peter@burford.com).

Please note that it may take 2-4 weeks before your e-mail is sent out.

You should include a short personal note with each book/galley that you send, urging stores to order copies and, if they love the book, nominate it for the Book Sense Picks list by emailing their nomination to Dan Cullen at [dan@booksense.com](mailto:dan@booksense.com)

This is free! You only have to pay for the production of galleys (or books) and shipping costs to interested booksellers. Just remember to tell Meg that you're a Biblio represented publisher.

Also, approximately 3- to 4-weeks after you send your materials, it is suggested that you follow up with another email to those stores who requested your materials, just to make certain that they received your mailing, and to encourage their response both to you and, if they enjoyed their read, Dan Cullen at [dan@booksense.com](mailto:dan@booksense.com) to nominate the book as a Book Sense Pick.

**NEW!** Custom Advance Access e-mails are now available to Partners. This single publisher offering must have a minimum of 5 titles and a maximum of 20. The cost is \$75, and the timing should be discussed with Meg.

# Booksense.com

The Booksense.com Co-op Reimbursement Program helps stores participating in Booksense.com to promote your book(s), and you pay those stores co-op dollars for doing so.

In order to claim co-op on a title, the booksellers are required to:

- \* Place a minimum order (you set the minimum, but five is pretty standard)
- \* Display the books in the store (on an endcap or table)
- \* Display the books online
- \* Report to the Book Sense Bestseller List.

Booksense.com then files the co-op claims for the stores, and the publisher reimburses the stores directly. The amount of the reimbursement is, of course, up to each participating publisher. Booksense.com also provides aggregate sales data figures from program participants.

Also, rather than including your titles with the larger offerings, Booksense.com can create special promotions around whatever title or theme you like. For example, for a cookbook, they can create a cooking theme with your book as the centerpiece. You can also cap the total dollars available for co-op for any given title or promotion.

There are no costs to you other than the co-op you pay to stores. Material is due at least one month in advance of when the stores will be promoting the titles. Please contact Len Vlahos for additional information at [len@booksense.com](mailto:len@booksense.com). And be sure to notify Davida Breier at Biblio of any agreement since it is likely the billing would be done through Biblio, and Davida will also notify the rep responsible for the account.

# Gift Card Sponsorship

Book Sense started their gift card program in October 2003 at 150 participating stores. \$750,000 worth of cards were sold during the holiday season —25,000 actual cards. The program was launched just prior to the holidays; so many stores postponed implementing the program until January. At present, there are five different designs and the cards can be customized for the specific store if desired. The store pays approximately \$1 per card. These cards are exactly like the gift cards you'd buy at B&N, Blockbuster or anywhere else except Book Sense gift cards never expire or lose value with time.

Publishers now have the opportunity to produce a custom co-branded limited edition Book Sense gift card for use in participating stores nationwide. For example, the Vintage and Anchor imprints of Random House are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, so they are working with Book Sense to produce a custom gift card promoting the anniversary. Details of the card distribution are still being finalized however, some quantity of cards will be given away and the balance will be made available at a reduced price to booksellers.

Normally, the cost to publishers to have custom cards made is 10,000 cards for \$10,000 (10,000 cards is the minimum). However, if a group of small publishers were willing to pool their resources, Book Sense could divide the 10,000 card print run among 5 publishers at 2,000 cards with presenters (the backer used to display the card) for \$2,000 each or between two publishers for 5,000 cards/presenters for \$5,000 each. All the publishers involved would need to agree to be on the same print and delivery schedule. Cards take 8 weeks to produce once the artwork is finalized.

For details contact Jill Perlstein at [jill@bookweb.org](mailto:jill@bookweb.org). Also, make sure Davida Breier ([dbreier@bibliodistribution.com](mailto:dbreier@bibliodistribution.com)) knows of any costs you have agreed to since billing is done through Biblio.

# *Bookselling This Week Ads*

There are several different types of opportunities at the ABA and Book Sense, focused on the trade. Ad types within the electronic *Bookselling This Week* include Front Page, Spotlight, and Classifieds.

### ***Bookselling This Week Front Page***

**Type:** Print ad in weekly e-mail flash with *Bookselling This Week* headlines. Ad will also appear when recipient elects to print out the full *BTW* edition.

**Frequency:** Weekly (Thursday)

**Circulation:** 11,000 trade

**Copy:** Up to 50 words of text, plus link

**Cost:** \$200 for 1<sup>st</sup> position, \$175 for 2<sup>nd</sup> position, \$150 for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> positions, and \$125 for 5<sup>th</sup>

**Deadline:** Wednesday, 11am

**Sample:** <http://news.bookweb.org/graphics/sample/>

### ***Bookselling This Week Spotlight***

**Type:** Bibliographic data listing with jacket image, page on *BTW* website

**Frequency:** Weekly (Thursday)

**Circulation:** 11,000 trade

**Copy:** Spotlight order form will be sent upon request

**Cost:** \$300 for two consecutive weeks

**Deadline:** Monday, 12pm

**Sample:** <http://news.bookweb.org/services/175.html>

### ***Bookselling This Week Online Classified***

Appears as separate page on the *BTW* website. Ad will also appear when recipient elects to print out the full *BTW* issue.

All classified ads require prepayment. Frequency rates available upon request.

Classified: non-commissionable; \$20 per seven words; 25 word minimum

Blind Box Number: \$30

Sample: <http://news.bookweb.org/classifieds/>

To place an ad, or if you have any questions, please contact Meg Smith at [meg@booksense.com](mailto:meg@booksense.com). Be sure to let Davida Breier at [dbreier@bibliodistribution.com](mailto:dbreier@bibliodistribution.com) know what you have agreed to since the bill will come to her.

# BOOK SENSE *PICKS*

## 2005 DEADLINES

Book Sense member stores are responsible for submitting nominations by the deadlines in order for a book they like to be considered for a specific Picks list. If you have a book you think is appropriate for a particular Picks list, you should make that clear in the letter that accompanies your White Box galley/ARC, or when you send your follow-up note to a bookseller who requested your book via Advance Access. If you make it easy for them, they're more likely to nominate your book.

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<b>Book Sense List</b>	<b>Nomination Due Date</b>
February Picks	12-3-04
Valentine's Day Top 10	12-10-04
March Picks	12-30-04
Easter/Passover Top 10	1-7-05
April Picks	2-4-05
Poetry Top 10	2-4-05
History Channel Spring Top 10	2-11-05
Reading Group Picks	3-4-05
May Picks	3-11-05
Summer Children's List	3-25-05
Audio Books Top 10	4-1-05
June Picks	4-8-05
Summer Paperbacks	4-22-05
July Picks	5-6-05
August Picks	6-10-05
Fall Children's List	7-1-05
September Picks	7-8-05
Banned Books Top 10	7-15-05
October Picks	8-5-05
Halloween Top 10	8-12-05
History Channel Fall Top 10	8-26-05
November Picks	9-2-05
December Picks	10-7-05
Winter Children's List	10-14-05
January 2006 Picks	11-4-05
<i>February 2006 Picks</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> week in December</i>
<i>Valentine's Day Top 10</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> week in December</i>
<i>March 2006 Picks</i>	<i>End of December</i>

# BOOK SENSE 2005

## BOX MAILING SCHEDULE

<u>Month of Box</u>	<u>White Box Deadline</u>	<u>Red Box Deadline</u>
January	12/28/04	12/21/04
February	1/28/05	1/21/05
March	2/25/05	2/18/05
April	3/29/05	3/22/05
May	4/29/05	4/22/05
June	5/27/05	5/20/05
July	6/28/05	6/21/05
August	7/29/05	7/22/05
September	8/30/05	8/23/05
October	9/30/05	9/23/05
November	10/28/05	10/21/05
December	11/29/05	11/22/05

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**Send Materials To:**

Mark Nichols  
For (month) White Box  
American Booksellers Association  
828 South Broadway  
Tarrytown, NY 10591

Mark Nichols  
for (month) Red Box  
American Booksellers Association  
828 South Broadway  
Tarrytown, NY 10591