

# BIBLIOPHILE

News for and about publishing for our publishers.

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**PLEASE NOTE:** Biblio has a new mailing address. We are now located at **4501 Forbes Blvd.**, Lanham, MD 20706. Our fax numbers are 301-429-5745 and 301-429-5746. Our phone numbers are the same.

Happy New Year to you all! I hope everyone had a lovely holiday. We're finally caught up here with all of our e-mails and voice mails. Thank you for your patience while so many of us were out on vacation.

Of course, it is January, which means one thing in the publishing industry—returns! I'm sure all of you know about the extremely tough holiday season that the retail industry experienced across the country last year. And, for once, bookstores were hit too. As a result, we have seen a lot of returns in January—a trend we hope will subside over the next month. One way for you, the publisher, to turn the tides is to promote, promote, promote. As long as customers are in the stores looking for your books then you should see reduced returns.

Another great trend in January is the typical increase in sales of books that fall into the following categories: diet, travel, personal finance and gardening. People are still clinging to their New Year's resolutions, so how-to books usually do well if they're being promoted. Consumers are also starting to think ahead to the spring gardening months and summer vacation months.

## HOUSEKEEPING

☆☆☆ A Plea From the Biblio Staff: Please identify yourself in your e-mails to us. We have quite a few publishers now and we need you to include your name, publishing company, title and ISBN when you contact us. Not including that information will delay response to your request. ☆☆☆

Also, a reminder about stock transfer fees—a fee of .45 per book is charged whenever you ask us to move your books from our warehouse to another location. Some examples of where you might have stock transfers sent: your office, your mother's house, a seminar venue where you're speaking, a non-trade account that you sold to yourself (i.e. hobby shops, music shops, baby supply stores, etc.), a remainder supplier, or even just to be destroyed. This fee is outlined in section 9 of the Biblio contract.

## UPDATING THE SALES FORCE

If you have an update about your publicity and you want the sales reps and our buyers to know about it, please put it into our preferred publicity update format. If it comes in this format or something very similar than we can easily include it in our weekly mailing to reps and buyers. The format can be found on our website at: <http://www.bibliodistribution.com/publishers/marketing.shtml>

Please note that we strongly prefer that you not contact our reps directly. Larry Fox and I are here to make sure the right messages get through to the right people. We do our best to treat our sales reps with respect by not monopolizing the time they could otherwise be using to sell books. Thank you for understanding and honoring our policies.

E-mail your update to Theresa Thomas at [tthomas@bibliodistribution.com](mailto:tthomas@bibliodistribution.com) or fax it to her at 301-429-5745. She will make sure it goes out in the next mailing. Also, if you send us a press clipping, make sure it has your title, ISBN, author, publisher, price, format, publication name & date on it. Theresa will make copies of it to include in our mailing.

### **NOTES FROM THE FIELD—HOW TO GET NOTICED BY THE CHAINS.**

80% of books sold are sold through the two largest chains: Borders and Barnes & Noble. NO book sells itself, so here are a few tips for getting noticed by the buyers.

- 1. Produce a quality product.** If your book does not resemble a trade paperback or hardback from a major publisher, your chances of having the buyers notice your book are greatly diminished.
- 2. Price it right:** \$12.95 to \$15.95 for a trade paperback; \$17.95 to \$21.95 for a trade hardback. It doesn't really matter what you believe your book is worth; these are the price ranges established by the buyers for small press and self-published books from unrecognized authors.
- 3. Hire a book publicist** who can get you reviews, schedule book signings and help you navigate over the rough terrain of publishing. Many aspects of bookselling may seem illogical to you. You'll need someone to explain the process and keep you on track.
- 4. Create a professional marketing plan.** The two chains will not even look at your book without one. Make sure you have this done before we have to go out and sell.
- 5. DO NOT rush.** Publishing has its own timeline and seldom will it resemble yours. While you may have set a January 1 pub date in reality it may take up to six months or more to get your title established in the system. Rushing a title at this point is usually fatal. That's because you'll be out there promoting a book that isn't available yet.
- 6. Listen to your distributor**—they actually may know more than you do about this process. There were 100,000 English language books published in 2002. All of these books are your competition regardless of category, price, author or pub date. You're competing for shelf space.

It's so true that it bears repeating, no book sells itself. How will you make your title rise out of this mob? Please consider the above six suggestions. My experience shows they work.

--Larry Fox, Sales Director

### ***BOOKSENSE CHANGES***

Carl Lennertz at *BookSense* has requested that we thank all of those who have participated in the Advance Access and White Box Mailing programs. I think we've all noticed how successful *BookSense* has become and they're aware that it couldn't have worked without your support.

He'd also like us to inform you of a few changes to the Advance Access program:

- 1) Include ISBN, price and format in () after the title, author and publisher. Some stores are checking stock based on the e-mail posting alone and this information will make it easier for them.
- 2) Make sure to keep copy short and formatted in the all-in-one-running-info-in-one-paragraph format with title, author, publisher (ISBN, price, format) first.
- 3) End with " \_\_\_# of galleys available. [youremailaddress@publisher.com](mailto:youremailaddress@publisher.com) (NO period)

While these may seem like nit-picky items, it will save the booksellers and *BookSense* staff a lot of time and make it easier for them to respond.

If you have any questions about *BookSense*, please e-mail Mark Nichols at [mark@booksense.com](mailto:mark@booksense.com) and be sure to identify yourself as a Biblio publisher. Biblio/NBN is a *BookSense* Partner.

### **ONLINE REPORTS: RECEIVING REPORT**

The receiving report is an exception report. It lists any of your titles for which we have received inventory during the current month. Monthly receiving reports are also kept on line for a minimum of 13 months in the monthly section of the reports.

The report is an excellent source for you to check to see if a shipment you have arranged has arrived in the warehouse. Our procedure is to receive any title we get into inventory within 24 hours of receipt. The information is then posted to the reports that night and you see the receipt the next day. Factors which can delay receipt of your title include:

- (1) Failure to use the green labels on each carton if you are sending in product any way but truck. These shipments get mixed in with other titles and do not get to the receiving area for processing in a timely manner.
- (2) No packing list included. We will not receive a shipment without outside verification of the quantity sent. We contact you for a packing slip if one is not received.
- (3) Product mixed between cartons, rather than combined in the same carton, will mean receiving must unpack and sort out each carton, again delaying receipt.
- (4) Product without a US price or scannable EAN bar code. This information must be added to your title before it is shippable to the accounts.

-**ISBN** is the isbn without dashes

-**Title** is the title of the books.

-The format of the book is shown in **FMT**. Common format abbreviations include BTP for paper, BTC for cloth, PPK for prepack, BC for book & CD, CAL for calendar and OOO for miscellaneous (not already defined in our codes).

-**Unit Pr** is the current list price for the title.

The current status of the title is shown in the field titles **St**. Common statuses are AV (active in print), NF (not yet published), RP (out of print, in the 6 months returns period), OP (out of print, no returns accepted), DS (indefinitely out of stock) and CX (cancelled, never published).

- PD** is a flag for imprints that we own.
- Rcpt Dt** is the date the receipt was processed in the warehouse. The receipt will show in the reports on the next calendar day.
- Acct Dt** is the accounting period we are in. The date shown is the last day of the current month.
- Whs** shows the warehouse where your title was received. In your case, this will always be NBN.
- Type of receipt is shown as **T**. This is a system setting of R.
- Each receipt has a receiving number for tracking. This is shown under the column **Recv Nbr**.
- Qty Rec** is the quantity of books received that day.
- Comments** is an open field where we put notes. We will make a note if we see some visible damage with the shipment, if the quantity received is greater or less than shown on the packing list, or if dust jackets are received.

If you have any questions about this report, please e-mail me at [kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com](mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com)  
 -Coutesy of Karen Mattscheck, Inventory Management

### **PMA PARTICIPATION**

Here are some opportunities from the recent issue of the *PMA* (Publisher's Marketing Association) *Newsletter* that I felt you might take advantage of:

"The Rest Of Us"—PMA is revising this study they did in 1999. It includes facts and figures about the independent publisher portion of the book industry. If you'd like to receive an e-mailed version of their short and simple survey, please send your e-mail address to Jan Nathan at [jan@pma-online.org](mailto:jan@pma-online.org). You do not have to be a PMA member to participate in the survey.

"Author's Road Show"—This is an excellent way to let people know about your tour schedule. You can view other author tours and register at [www.pma-online.org](http://www.pma-online.org). There is a \$15 fee per quarter.

"London Book Fair" — Being held March 16-18, 2003, this is one of the shows to license foreign rights throughout Europe and Asia—second in importance only to the Frankfurt Book Fair. The deadline for reservations was February 1, 2003, but you can probably still participate if you act quickly! Further info on this can be found at [http://www.pma-online.org/exhibits\\_pma.cfm](http://www.pma-online.org/exhibits_pma.cfm)

### **FOREIGN RIGHTS SALES**

If you cannot attend Frankfurt or London, the next best option is to find an agent to represent your company and its titles. Bob Erdman's Frankfurt/Foreign Rights Program is one of proven success and has been a source of "found money" for his clients. For a fee of \$150 per title, he will provide focused, full-service representation at the Fair being held October 8-13. If you are interested, please visit his website at [www.bob-erdmann.com](http://www.bob-erdmann.com) soon—the program is almost full for 2003.

### **CORRECTING DATABASE ERRORS**

Online database errors (Amazon.com, bn.com, etc.) have to be investigated by our MIS department in order to determine the root of the problem. Most databases in the industry "talk" to each other and bad information can be passed around. Our MIS department has created a form for you to submit to have them look into your request. You will find the form on our website at:

<http://www.bibliodistribution.com/publishers/passwordprotect/datacorrections.shtml>  
(Username: bibliopublisher ; Password: bigsales)

You can also use this form to add reviews to online retailer sites, notify inventory management of an incoming shipment or make a change to your original title template (for a \$50-per-change fee).

### **BOOK EXPO AMERICA**

Next year, BEA is in L.A. from May 31 to June 1, 2003. Biblio will have an exhibit adjacent to NBN. Information has gone out to you about arranging to have your book displayed in the Biblio booth. The cost is the same as last year (\$100/title). We have also included the opportunity to request an author badge so that you or your author might attend the show.

If you'd like to have your own exhibit at the show, you should inquire with show management about availability in the Small Press exhibit area. Please see their website to read more about BEA: [www.bookexpoamerica.com](http://www.bookexpoamerica.com)

Just a note: PMA University coincides with BEA and is money well-spent for any independent publisher. Please be sure you investigate the opportunity at their website: [www.pma-online.org](http://www.pma-online.org)

### **PUBLICIZE YOUR BOOK!: TIPS FOR BOOK SIGNINGS AND MORE**

Geared for authors but applicable to anyone involved in bookselling, *Publicize Your Book!: An Insider's Guide to Getting Your Book the Attention It Deserves* (Perigee, \$15.95), which appears in April, is a solid, entertaining, encouraging book by a delightful insider: Jacqueline Deval, a former publicist, an author (*Reckless Appetites*) and publisher of Hearst Books.

The book got its start because, Deval told *PW Daily*, she had informally "coached so many authors" and decided to write down her advice.

One of the goals of the book, she said, is to get authors "involved from the beginning. It teaches them how the publishing process works so they figure out, for example, if they should hire a publicist." The book also teaches authors not to be adversarial with publishers, which, Deval said with a laugh, "will get them nowhere fast."

Publicity has become both easier and more difficult over the years, Deval continued. "The Internet makes it easier to get involved with the media, but there's more competition and the media is more fractured. Long gone are the days when an appearance on a national morning show clinched the deal."

As a writer herself, Deval is appreciative of the challenges facing authors. "The first big commitment is writing the book," she said. "But there has to be a second big commitment: to marketing the book. Authors need to figure out who the audience for their book is and how to talk to them." This marketing ability helps sell the book inhouse, too, she noted.

"It takes a certain amount of resolve and energy because it's jolly hard work," she said. "But it can happen."

Concerning a successful booksigning event, booksellers might want to take tips and remind authors of the following points (especially the parts about treating customers and booksellers well!):

### **THE 13 RULES FOR AN EFFECTIVE BOOK SIGNING**

(From *Publicize Your Book!: An Insider's Guide to Getting Your Book the Attention It Deserves*):

1. If you are appearing on interviews that will air before your bookstore event, remember to mention the signing's date, place, and time. Alternately, before you start your interview, ask the host to mention the event.
2. Engage people who walk by your signing table by talking about your book or just being friendly.
3. Most bookstores will post signage about your appearance, but often these signs are placed around the store and not at the signing table. A simple blow up of your book jacket mounted on an easel board will help create a point of interest at your table. If your publisher doesn't make one of these for you, make one yourself. A color photocopy enlarged roughly to the size of a legal sheet of paper works just fine and, when you go on the road, it is easily portable in your suitcase.
4. Make lasting contacts of the bookstore staff by being memorable and polite. Make them into effective handsellers of your book by talking to them about the book and by taking an interest in them.
5. Practice your reading or talk ahead of time. Keep it short. Remember your job is to entertain and interest people in your book: A long speech will tire them and squelch any yearning to read the book, let alone spend money on it.
6. Cue your audience twice during your presentation that you will be happy to answer their questions at the end. Prearrange for a shill to ask a question if no one steps forward to ask the first question. Or break the ice by telling the audience that "people often ask me..." and asking the first question yourself. Another way of engaging with the audience is to plant your talk with some tantalizing points of interest that you don't explain in detail. Inevitably someone in the audience will ask you to elaborate. For example, you might say that it was essential that you publish this book before you turned forty, and then leave the somewhat mysterious comment hanging unexplained. You will most certainly be asked about why you had to publish with such urgency. You've led your audience into dialogue with you.
7. Be gracious to all customers who approach you, even if they only want directions to the bathroom.
8. Collect names and addresses of members of the audience, or better yet collect e-mail addresses for your database. If you have a seated audience, circulate a sign-up sheet, or place a collection bowl at your table for business cards to build your mailing list.
9. Thank the staff and the audience. Send thank-you notes to the staff. Or take pictures of yourself with the bookstore clerks and send the photos along with your thank-you notes.

10. With a smile on your face and a relaxed attitude, you will make the audience feel comfortable. If you show your anxiety, you will make the audience anxious.

11. Play to your audience's mood. If you sense restlessness, keep your talk engaging, lively, and short.

12. As people approach you to sign your book, engage them. Ask how they'd like the book personalized, or what else they like to read, or how they heard about the event (to learn what publicity is working). Creating a memorable event is one way to keep people talking about you. Keep the conversations brief if you happen to have a long line of people waiting for signed copies.

13. Ask the staff if you can sign any unsold copies, which will be stickered and displayed up front.

--Courtesy of John Mutter, *PW Daily* 2-3-03 (To subscribe, see [www.publishersweekly.com](http://www.publishersweekly.com))

Here are a couple of ideas for getting all-important industry information and for networking opportunities:

**Subscribe to *Publishers Weekly*:** [www.publishersweekly.com](http://www.publishersweekly.com)

**JOIN PMA:** <https://pma-online.org/membappl.cfm>

**SUBSCRIBE TO THE *SPAN NEWSLETTER*:** email [Lurina@SPANnet.org](mailto:Lurina@SPANnet.org) and type in "SUBSCRIBE."

**Attention Publishers:** If there is anything you would like to read about in an upcoming issue of *Bibliophile*, please e-mail your idea to me at [info@bibliodistribution.com](mailto:info@bibliodistribution.com). I will do my best to include it.  
Thank you! -Jen

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