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Publishing Trends: Traditional vs ePublishing

By Lisa Hood

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Publishing Trends: Traditional vs ePublishing

You've done what most people only talk about. You've written a book, spent countless hours agonizing for just the right words only to delete many of them in the painful editing process. After many months, or perhaps, many years, you have a manuscript ready for submission. You've heard all about the struggles for new authors: slush piles, solicited queries only, scam artists and cons, but you know luck or fate or sheer talent will eventually deliver your precious manuscript into the right hands at the right time. I can't say that isn't so. After all, JK Rowling, Stephen King, Danielle Steel, Nora Roberts, Tom Clancy and every other bestselling author were once unpublished and unknown. I can tell you that the odds of receiving a lucrative contract with a traditional publisher as an unpublished author are not in your favor.

According to Associations of American Publishers (Press Release, 2003) " U.S. book sales totaled \$26,874,100,000 in 2002, a 5.5 percent increase over 2001..." While these numbers are encouraging, it is important to note that 75% (Curtis, 1995, p. 5) of books on the bestsellers lists, were written by authors with proven bestselling titles. Why is this? Well, as a reader, you are more likely to invest \$15, \$20, or \$30 if you have some familiarity with the author's work. Not only are readers more likely to choose known authors, so are publishers, motivated by bottom line, dollars and cents. Considering a small publisher will receive 5000 unsolicited queries a month, a junior editor earning \$25,000 a year may be able to read four or five a day. You can see that the cost to evaluate some 60,000 queries can be \$125,000 a year. (Curtis, 1995) If only 1% of unsolicited queries are sent to senior editors, who in turn accept 1%, the publisher has invested nearly \$50,000, before any contracts are signed, any printing is done, or any marketing undertaken.

What of eBook sales? According to Jim McClellan (2004), "Open eBook Forum (OeBF) estimated overall sales for the year (of eBooks) at around \$10m." This is a small but growing percentage of the total market. "In the third quarter of 2003, e-book sales were up 37% over the same quarter in 2002, according to a new sales report from the Open eBook Forum (OeBF)...In that quarter, 2,159 new titles were published by the 30 largest publishing houses, and sales added up to \$2,591,465. It was good

enough to spur sales of the millionth e–book for the year by September." (Fluckinger, 2003). Because eBook publishers incur less expense (no printing, distribution costs) royalty payments to authors is usually 40% of wholesale price versus 15% of traditional publishing. Readers also benefit from reduced production costs, saving 30%–40% per title. Therefore, previously unknown authors are more likely to be noticed.

Regardless of which path you travel, ultimately quality will count. The competition is staggering and it will take exhaustive self promotion to draw readers, but if it isn't well written, no amount of marketing fluff will capture their attention for long. If you offer a quality product and meet or exceed your reader's expectation, word of mouth could set you apart from the pack.

Resources

Curtis, R. (1995).

How to be Your Own Literary Agent. Houghton Mifflin Company, NY.

Fluckinger, D. (2003). E–book sales hit the million mark for 2003. Retrieved March 10, 2004 from PDFzone.com

Lisa Hood is the author of "Shades of Betrayal" and "Shades of Revenge". She has been writing for over 10 years and is presently working on her third suspense novel, "Shades of Jealousy." She is also the Talent Liaison @ BOOKJOBBER.com. Other articles by Lisa Hood can be downloaded from <http://www.bookjobber.com/articles.asp> or mailto:lisa_j@bookjobber.com

Variety...even children need it

By Jennifer LB Leese

Books and children should go hand in hand. There are just about as many different books as there are different children. Variety is what everyone needseven children! Here are a few fabulously written electronic children's books from authors who are sure to become favorites in your household.

FLY & I by Bonnie Covel and published by StoryPlus.com is a book that teaches children about reputations, trust, friendship, kinship, and the importance of honesty through the sport of basketball. It is full of positive messages, and fun characters. Another creative book that teaches children an important lesson is IN A PARROT'S SHOES by Mindy Wilson, published by SynergEBooks. It is a story that any child or adult can relate to. The main character does not like being like everyone else she likes being unique. When a friend from class starts to mimic (parrot) everything she does, she seeks advice from her mother. Soon the little girl opens her heart and mind and she soon begins to appreciate her friend's differences.

If your child likes to hear folktales, then STONE SOUP by Alistair Scott is the book you need. Published by StoryPlus.com, this adorably illustrated and well–written storybook for children will delight its readers. The main character is Tyler, a starving tramp (homeless man). Using his wits, he tries to

trick Farmer Skinflint, a mean old man who never gives anything to anyone, into giving him food for his stone soup!

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY BUILDS TRUST by Karen Sue Wiesner, published by Writers–Exchange EPublishing is a book aimed to provide parents with a simple and fun method of teaching their child about trust. The mascot is a raccoon named Reb he talks directly to the reader, giving them instructions on how to use the book, and adds a cool, up–to–date style to an instructive book. Planted within the book are sections that allow children to learn more about responsibility, and trust.

Do you read books to your children mainly at bedtime? Then THE EIGHTEEN STORY GINGERBREAD HOUSE by Jay Dubya (Cyberread.com) would make a wonderful book to read them, as it is a collection of eighteen exceptional stories in a wide range of subjects. Some involve magic, others include human–like animals, and some are just plain 'ole fun. These stories are diverse, entertaining, intriguing, and out of this world. They include culture, daily–life experiences, history and much more. I CAN GROW by Mrs. Mouse, published by Writers–Exchange EPublishing, makes for a fast read. It is a charming story about a little rock determined to grow and change into something spectacular just like the flowers, rain, leaves, worms, and grass around him. Written for children, this adorable book is perfect for anyone who enjoys dreams and life.

Remember, just because some books are electronic (e–book) books, doesnt mean they arent fantastic! Open up an electronic book today and get to know some talented new authors.

Off the Top of my Headtalented childrens authors to check out:

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)

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Janean Nusz (

)

Jennifer LB Leese is a 34–year–old mother of three from Maryland. She is a published author of several childrens fiction books, one young adult fantasy book, and a paranormal romance novel. Leese also freelances children's non–fiction books for book distribution and packaging companies.

She reviews childrens books for several online magazines, including her own It's Only Ink! Children's

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Book Reviews, as well as for Fiction Forum, Preschool Entertainment, Gotta Write Network, The Best Reviews, and Midwest Book Review. Jennifer is also a freelance copyeditor for Writers Exchange E-Publishing, as well as for individual authors and publishers. Leeses experience comes from the above as well as from her published books and articles, and from her professional book reviews and columns.

As half of JV Harlee, Leese writes gothic, fantasy novels for teenagers with published author Valerie Hardin. Their first book is "Gargoyle Tears".

Leese lives in Maryland with her three children, Nicholas, Cameron, and Jordan. She volunteers regularly at her children's school where she heads the Bester Elementary PTA as Vice President. Married fourteen years to the love of her life, Jennifer knew she would marry Thom the moment she laid eyes on him.

Variety...even children need it
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The 5 Biggest Decorating Trends Of 2006

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