



The Newsletter of National Book Network  
*David Breier, Editor*                      *Miriam Bass, Founding Editor*

**SPRING 2007**

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## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

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Ah, spring in the book industry when publishers begin racking up frequent flyer miles on the amazing race of London Book Fair, Bologna Children's Book Fair, Sales Conference, BEA, and ALA – all within the span of eight weeks! Take a deep breath (maybe print this to read on a plane) and let the fun begin!

Many thanks to all the NBN publishers who provided feedback after our last issue. Also, special thanks to Peter Burford and Deborah Robson for letting us run pieces they wrote. Deborah tackled a subject – publisher accounting software – I've been asked about, but knew nothing about.

I'm always glad to hear the newsletter is useful and even happier when I receive questions or comments that lead to future articles. Please feel free to drop me a line at [dbreier@bibliodistribution.com](mailto:dbreier@bibliodistribution.com). I'll be seeing or meeting many of you at BEA and PMA-U (more details below), so until then keep writing, publishing, and selling books!

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## MELVILLE HOUSE WINS MIRIAM BASS AWARD

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Dennis Loy Johnson and Valerie Merians, Co-Publishers of Melville House Publishing, recently won the 2007 Miriam Bass Award for Creativity in Independent Publishing. The award was presented at the Association of American Publishers Annual Meeting for Small and Independent Publishers in March.

This annual award, which carries a cash prize of \$5,000, was created in memory of Miriam Bass to honor her many contributions to the book publishing community, and is co-sponsored by AAP, Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, and National Book Network (NBN).

Check out the "Picture of the Day"!:

<http://www.publishersweekly.com/eNewsletter/CA6426151/2286.html>

More information about the award and the winners:

<http://www.publishers.org/press/releases.cfm?PressReleaseArticleID=366>

<http://www.mhpbooks.com/>

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## BEA 2007

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This will be the last issue before Book Expo America 2007, which is being held in New York June 1-3. If you are able to attend, it is an excellent opportunity to sell rights, network with media, learn more about the eccentric world of publishing, and possibly meet book buyers. For questions about BEA and to learn more about the event please visit the BEA website: <http://www.bookexpoamerica.com>. If you are interested in exhibiting with NBN, we still have a few spaces available. Please contact Jess ([jkennedy@nbnbooks.com](mailto:jkennedy@nbnbooks.com)) for more details.

If you are attending, here are a few tips:

- If this is your first time attending BEA you will be amazed at the size of the exhibition, unless of course you have been to Frankfurt which is even larger. Try to arrive a little early and take a look around before you jump into business. There are more than 2000 exhibits covering over 300,000 square feet, so it is easy to become overwhelmed.

- If you find yourself looking in vain for the NBN Pavilion, the easiest thing to do is look up for the lighted circular NBN sign, which hovers above.
- You are probably going to be talking a lot, so you may want to have bottle of water and some breath mints or lozenges on hand.
- No matter what else, wear comfortable shoes! I can't stress that one enough. Also, don't bring anything you don't think you will definitely need – you'll likely leave 20 pounds heavier with hard to resist galleys and freebies.
- If you are naturally gregarious and outgoing, you'll have no problem talking to strangers about your books. If you are a little more reserved, you'll want to try and channel your inner social butterfly for the event. If that doesn't come naturally I find a hearty dose of caffeine usually does the trick.
- Plan what you are going to say in advance. You'll only have a matter of seconds to pitch your book(s). First, whom are you pitching your book to? – Assess your audience, individual by individual, and make sure your approach is appropriate. If it is a bookseller you are talking to, you'll want to pitch them differently than you would a foreign rights agent.
- When you arrive at the hall begin to take note of the different badges, which are color-coded, identifying everyone from authors to exhibitors to buyers. However, be careful not to fixate on badges and remember to make eye contact, greet and introduce yourself.
- Pay attention to the little things – badges should include where a bookstore is located. If your murder mystery is set on Cape Cod and you see a bookseller from Provincetown, make the connection. Regional titles have some of the highest sell-through in local stores.
- Put your website and/or e-mail address on your business cards or flyers.
- Ask for business cards. A few leads and friendly follow-up after the show may offer promising results. Make a note on the back of received business card to remind yourself of the interest expressed or how you should follow-up. A small notebook will prove invaluable when you return home trying to remember all the details.
- Bring a camera. You can have your photo taken at our booth for use in your publicity kit. And you might meet one of your favorite authors at the show.
- One last tip. BEA can be exhausting – take your time and fight being overwhelmed by reviewing the layout of the convention center ahead of time, prioritize in advance by deciding who you want to meet and the booths you want to visit, and if needed, take a break and regroup during the day.

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## **BOOK EVENTS AROUND THE GLOBE**

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### **2007 International Trade Shows**

London Book Fair, April 16-18, 2007 (England)

<http://www.lbf-virtual.com>

Bologna Children's Book Fair, April 24-27, 2007 (Italy)

<http://www.bookfair.bolognafiere.it>

Book Expo America, June 1-3, 2007 (New York)

<http://www.bookexpoamerica.com>

Book Expo Canada, June 8-11, 2007 (Toronto)

<http://www.reedexpo.ca/bookexpo/>

American Library Association (ALA) Conference, June 21-27, 2007 (Washington, DC)

<http://www.ala.org/annual>

Beijing International Book Fair, Aug. 30-Sept. 3, 2007 (China)

<http://www.bibf.net/bibf/index.jsp>

Frankfurt Book Fair, Oct. 10-14, 2007 (Germany)

<http://www.book-fair.com>

### **2007 Regional Trade Shows:**

Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association (PNBA), Sept. 19-21, 2007 (Bellevue, WA)

<http://www.pnba.org>

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (formerly SEBA), Sept. 28-30, 2007 (Atlanta, GA)

<http://www.sibaweb.com>

New England Independent Booksellers Association, Sept. 28-30, 2007, (Providence, RI)

<http://www.newenglandbooks.org>

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association, Sept. 28-30, 2007 (Denver, CO)

<http://www.mountainsplains.org>

Great Lakes Booksellers Association, Sept. 28-30, 2007 (Schaumburg, IL)

<http://www.books-glba.org>

Midwest Booksellers Association, Oct. 5-7, 2007 (Minneapolis, MN)

<http://www.abookaday.com>

Northern California Independent Booksellers Association, Oct. 5-7, 2007 (Oakland, CA)

<http://www.nciba.com/>

Southern California Booksellers Association, Oct. 20, 2007 (Los Angeles, CA)

<http://www.scbabooks.org/home.html>

Also view the **Shelf Awareness** website (<http://www.shelf-awareness.com/news.html>) for a long list of consumer book fairs.

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## PMA-UNIVERSITY

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Many of you will be making the trek to NYC for BEA and also PMA University, which is a 3-day educational event organized by The Independent Book Publishers Association (PMA). If you'd like to learn more about the event, please go to: <http://pma-online.org/pmau2007/1.cfm>.

If you are planning to attend, you may see a few familiar Biblio and NBN faces on the panels. Marianne Bohr has organized the "Speed-dating Your Distributor" session on Tuesday at 12:30pm (and I'll be participating as well). Then on Wednesday at 8:30am Marianne is leading a discussion on "Distributors, Wholesalers and Commissioned Reps: What's Right for You?", while just down the hall I am on a panel entitled "Profitable Books: How to Choose Winners."

NBN's Jeanne Kramer will be part of a "Book Tune-up Clinic" at 10:30am Wednesday, and then at Marianne is part of a "Q&A with Booksense, Ingram, Baker & Taylor and Regional Wholesalers" at 4pm. Finally at 8:30am on Thursday, Marianne will lead a Q&A discussion with Barnes & Noble, Borders and the Indies.

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## MYSTERIES OF THE ISBN DECODED

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We all use ISBNs constantly, but they are still a mystery to many. This is a basic primer on the International Standard Book Number (that's the first thing you want to know – what the acronym actually stands for). This means that this is a global system and publishers in Alaska are using the same system as publishers in Botswana.

### ANATOMY OF A NUMBER

There are five parts of an ISBN:

- 1) The new ISBN 13 contains the prefix 978, which will change once those numbers have been depleted.
- 2) The second part is a group or country identifier. For example, English speaking countries start with 0 or 1, French speaking areas start with 2, German speaking areas start with 3, Japan starts with 4, and so on. There is a complete list of country identifiers here: <http://www.isbn-international.org/en/identifiers/allidentifiers.html>.
- 3) The next set of numbers identifies the specific publisher who purchased the block of ISBNs.
- 4) Then comes the numbers that identifies the actual title.
- 5) Finally there is a single check digit, which validates the ISBN.

### HERE ARE ANSWERS TO SOME OF THE MOST COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS & QUESTIONS:

- If you are revising a book and there is a substantial change of text, the book should be assigned a new ISBN. A rule of thumb is that 15-20% of the text or content should change to treat the book as a new edition.
- A price change *does not* require a new ISBN.
- Reprinting without changing the text or binding *does not* require a new ISBN.
- Changing the format (i.e. audio) or binding (i.e. a new paperback edition) *does* require a new ISBN.
- Changing the title of a book *does* require a new ISBN.
- If you have run out of numbers under your identifier you can have an additional identifier assigned.

- You *cannot* reassign ISBNs for books that are out of print. It would be like identify theft of the dead.

#### **BONUS QUESTION:**

##### **Why do some ISBNs end in an "X"?**

In the case of the check digit, the last digit of the ISBN, the upper case X can appear. The method of determining the check digit for the ISBN is the modulus 11 with the weighting factors 10 to 1. The Roman numeral X is used in lieu of 10 where ten would occur as a check digit.

(cited from: <http://www.isbn.org/standards/home/isbn/us/isbnqa.asp#Q5>)

#### **A WORD ABOUT ISSUES RELATED TO OUT-OF PRINT ISBNs**

All of the database information used by our national accounts is driven by the ISBN. Because the ISBN represents the DNA of each individual title, the use and reuse of ISBN's must be carefully managed. This is particularly true when it involves titles being declared out of print. Many retailers are also involved in selling used books, so while you may declare books out of print, the titles and ISBN's can remain active in the marketplace long after you have stopped printing the current edition.

#### **Before declaring a title OP consider the following scenarios:**

- If you are planning to let an active title run out of stock but **may** be considering doing a reprint – without editorial changes – we recommend declaring the title **out-of-stock indefinitely**. Using this designation will allow us to resuscitate a title in account systems if/when you decide to reprint.
- If you want to re-activate an OP title with even minor editorial updates, a price change, or a new cover **you will have to issue a new ISBN**. This will ensure that the title is not confused with older editions that may still be in the marketplace. (Note: price changes on in-print titles do not necessitate new ISBNs.)
- If you have announced a title and ISBN to NBN, this information has appeared in a catalog, and you subsequently canceled the title, **do not reuse the ISBN for a new title**. Once the ISBN is loaded into account systems it is permanently identified with one title, description etc.

#### **ONE LAST NOTE ABOUT THE ISBN 13 CONVERTER**

We've been touting the ISBN 13 converter for some time, but did you know it can also convert ISBN 13s to ISBN 10s? Despite everyone's best efforts to have the ISBN 13 standard by 2007, there are still many people using the ISBN 10, so if you need to use both numbers this is a handy tool:

<http://www.isbn.org/converterpub.asp>

Further Reading:

<http://isbn-international.org/en/userman/faq.html>

EAN Bookland Barcodes FAQ:

<http://isbn.org/standards/home/isbn/us/barcodeFAQ.asp>

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## NEWS YOU CAN USE – PUBLISHING TRENDS

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According to Publishers Weekly (Calvin Reid, PW Daily, 2/23/2007), “There were about 2,800 book format comics published in 2006, up 12% from 2005. Out of that total, 1,200 are manga titles and 965 are American genre comics. Manga sales continue to sell very well and represented about \$170 million-\$200 million of total sales. Griep reported that general bookstores sell the most graphic novels and continue to show the fastest growth. General bookstores were responsible for about \$220 million in sales and the comics shop market reported about \$110 million in sales. Manga growth did slow a bit, and Griep blamed the Musicland bankruptcy for contributing to the slowdown.

Griep reported that sales of graphic novels passed comics periodicals as ‘the most popular format,’ in 2006. He reported that 2006 sales of comics periodicals was about \$310 million.”

<http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6419034.html?display=breaking>

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## NEW TOOLS ON THE NBN WEBSITE

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Nothing can be more important to the success of your titles than the timely communication of specific actionable publicity activities to our sales representatives and accounts. To help facilitate that process NBN has created a convenient on-line publicity update form. This account-friendly form will allow us to quickly communicate title-by-title publicity activities in a format that has been requested by many accounts. Information on these forms will be sent directly to our "publicity update e-mail box", compiled and distributed each evening. \* Major \*breaking news will continue to be transmitted during the day.

Instructions:

- \* Go to our website: [www.nbnbooks.com](http://www.nbnbooks.com)
- \* Click on "NBN Publishers"
- \* In the left-hand column click on "Publicity Update Form"
- \* Follow instructions

A few notes:

1. Please make certain that the person preparing and submitting the information completes the publisher contact information. This will allow us to follow-up if we have any questions.
2. Please be as specific as possible including city/state information. Not only will this information be helpful for the local rep, but it will allow our national account reps to identify regional opportunities
3. If the preparer does not have access to the NBN stock availability that information can be left blank and we will complete in the office.
4. Each form allows you to submit 6 media/events per title. If you have more than 6 per title, please submit the first six. Prepare a second submission for the remaining activities.
5. \*Do not make repeat submissions of the same information\*. Unless there has been a significant change of date/time, you should only make one submission per activity.

Our goal is to make the communication of publicity activities as quick and efficient as possible. If you have any questions about the use of the on-line form or submission of materials please contact Kennetta Wainwright at 301.459.3366 ext 5530 or [kwainwright@nbnbooks.com](mailto:kwainwright@nbnbooks.com). She will be available to walk you through the process.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. We know that the timely communication of your marketing efforts is one of the keys to the success of your publishing programs. The use of this form will help us maximize the sales potential.

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## **ARE YOU AN AWARD WINNER?**

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We'd like to encourage the NBN Children's publishers to send Shana Logan information on any awards they've won for their children's titles. This information will be posted in the NBN Kids section: <http://www.nbnbooks.com/NBNkids/AwardWinningPublishers.shtml>

She is also starting to accept information on awards won on non-children's titles over the past year that will also be soon posted on the web. Please contact her at: [slogan@nbnbooks.com](mailto:slogan@nbnbooks.com).

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## **REP ROUNDTABLE: THREE NO-COST WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR BOOKS ON AMAZON** *by Jason Brockwell, NBN National Accounts Manager*

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In recent weeks, many of you have received an email from me or your account manager on Amazon.com's automatic merchandising program. One of the great things about Amazon's merchandising system is that small publishers can give their books the same placement on the site as the big New York houses, though the prices for certain individual promotions, even with our small publisher discount, can be daunting to be sure.

So in this rep roundtable, I wanted to write about a few things you can do to give your books more attention and visibility on the Amazon site that don't cost – these are all free programs -- but can add considerably to the customer experience and help drive more sales for your books.

### **Search Inside the Book (SITB)**

This program is one of Amazon's most powerful merchandising tools. It helps Amazon customers do more effective searches and actually look for key terms and words inside participating books. This empowers customers to discover titles that may never have surfaced otherwise with the standard author, title and keyword searches. It also allows customers to look at some pages inside the book and duplicate that wonderful bookstore experience of browsing a shelf and thumbing through a few pages of a book to make sure it is really the one they want.

If you haven't already signed-up for the program, you can go to [www.amazon.com/sitb](http://www.amazon.com/sitb) to get more information. We have also set-up a central account for our publishers where you can submit your titles to the program electronically. You can email me directly ([jbrockwell@nbnbooks.com](mailto:jbrockwell@nbnbooks.com)) for more information on this.

### **Enhanced Content**

By adding enhanced content to the Amazon product page of your title, you can create an engaging virtual shelf-talker that can make a strong pitch about the reasons a customer should buy your book. Beyond the basic description of the title, many publishers put up extended descriptions, endorsements, author bios, forewords and introductions, sample chapters, table of contents, inside-flap copy, and fair-use citations from reviews (up to 20 words per review) and anything else that may be useful for the consumer.

There are two basic ways you can submit enhanced content to Amazon:

First, you can go to NBN's website [www.nbnbooks.com](http://www.nbnbooks.com) and go to the NBN Publishers section, click on the title update button and that will take you to a page where you can click on a button to submit enhanced content. We will then submit the data to Amazon and any other online retailer that accepts enhanced content.

Second, you can submit the information directly to Amazon by going to:  
[www.amazon.com/gp/content-form/?ie=UTF8&product=books](http://www.amazon.com/gp/content-form/?ie=UTF8&product=books)

It typically takes 2-5 business days for the info to post.

### **“AmazonConnect”**

AmazonConnect is a blog your authors' can create on the Amazon site to post messages directly to customers. The author's posts surface on customers' customized home page and the author's three most recent posts also will appear on the product pages of each of the author's titles. It can be a great tool for authors to communicate directly with customers and drive more sales.

To learn more about this program, you can go to:  
[www.amazon.com/gp/arms/role/dispatch.html/ref=cm\\_arms\\_mm\\_dis?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/arms/role/dispatch.html/ref=cm_arms_mm_dis?)

Again, none of these three programs cost anything to participate. They are open to both frontlist and backlist titles and you can do them at anytime. I believe all three can be effective in driving additional sales at Amazon. If you have any questions about any of these programs, please let me or your account manager know.

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## **THE INTERNET FORAGER: USEFUL WEBSITES FOR PUBLISHERS**

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Here you have it folks, straight from the horse's mouth, “*Things I Wish Publishers Knew About Book Selling*” from The New Atlantic Independent Booksellers Association:  
<http://www.newatlanticbooks.com/files/ThingsPublishersShouldKnow.pdf>

PMA *Independent* has a nice, succinct article on cover design in the January 2007 issue:  
<http://www.pma-online.org/scripts/shownews.cfm?id=1429>

Interested in discussing the finer points of self-publishing? You might want to check out the Yahoo Group devoted to the subject that has over 1700 members:  
<http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/Self-Publishing/?yguid=6149997>

It was only a matter of time before book-themed social networking websites sprang up. Here are a two for book lovers:  
<http://www.theyack.com/> & <http://www.shelfari.com/>

Want a little library humor? Try the online comic strip Unshelved: <http://www.overduemedia.com/>

Books On Wheels (<http://bookonwheels.com>) is a non-profit that combines exercise for the body and mind. Located in Richmond, VA, they accept donations of gently used books, especially for children and young adults, as well as bikes and bike parts. According to their mission statement, “Because both literature and transportation are liberating and both help with the well-being of people both mentally and physically. Both books and bikes are educational, and help people towards empowering themselves through literature and transportation!”

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## **SALES ADVICE – FICTION** by *David Breier, Sales & Marketing Director, Biblio*

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Based on reports from the frontlines of sales, there are two categories which are both the toughest, but at the same time can offer something of a lottery win if a book manages to breakthrough. Those two categories are fiction and children's. For children's books, it seems to me those are often the books for whom success rides on the unpredictable gut reaction of the store buyers and consumers, but that is another article for another time. Fiction can also benefit from that same gut response, but it is harder work and takes longer.

I've watched books I was sure would succeed end up floundered, as well as seen books with a very quiet appeal simply take off. If I knew what made a winner I would be playing the lottery nightly and commuting to the office in my own private plane. However, what I do know is this – for small presses publishing fiction you need to look at what the big houses are doing to promote their books and then forget about all that and go your own path. Trying to replicate their marketing, even on a small scale, isn't going to have the same effect and you are better off focusing on a few things that can truly benefit your books. According to a recent article in *Publishers Weekly* (2/26/07), the #1 reason someone buys a book is a friend's recommendation (49%). The second reason is familiarity with the author. For small presses, #2 is more of a long shot, but you can do something about #1. Work at getting a strong reader base before you try any major marketing. One person or bookseller who recommends your book can have as much effect as a huge ad. Who are your readers? Would they be willing to read a free copy and give feedback pre-publication? Would a book club be willing to read your book if you gave them copies? Consider placing a targeted ad for a free galley if you think you could build some reader support out of that audience. Retirement communities are another good place to tap into readers with leisure time to not only read your book, but perhaps even post some reviews online. Get creative finding supportive readers. And appreciate them – they can be a huge asset to any writer.

The 3rd and 4th reasons listed as to why people buy books are “description on jacket”(32%) and “reviews” (22%). I have seen books come in with completely inscrutable jacket descriptions or worse yet, no description. These 50-100 words can easily make or break your book. If you have a major endorsement include it, especially if it highlights the plot. Authors often have trouble reducing their literary baby to just a few sentences. Instead, consider having a few readers and the book's editor come up with some jacket copy suggestions. They'll be able to convey what hooked them about the plot with a bit more perspective.

Reviews are important. They can get your book additional media, stocked in libraries, and are basically “free” publicity. Don't just throw money at your marketing plan, spend time researching which periodicals, websites, newsletters, and newspapers would be receptive to reviewing your book. Review their criteria and put together a decent media kit when you send in your book. Weigh if the cost of having galleys made will increase your chance for a review or if you'll be able to manage with finished copies. Spend time soliciting and following up with the reviewers. A bland form letter might get ignored, but one sent that hooks the reviewer's interest...well, that added attention to detail can pay off.

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## **TURNING A LIFESTYLE INTO A PUBLISHING PROGRAM** *by* *Peter Burford, [Burford Books](#)*

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*The following is transcript of a speech made by Peter Burford (Burford Books), an NBN publisher, at the Association of American Publishers 2007 Smaller and Independent Publishers Annual Meeting in NYC in March 2007.*

When Tina Jordan asked me to speak to you today about “Turning a Lifestyle into a Publishing Program” I was very happy to accept her invitation, but as I thought about it I realized that I am coming before you today under somewhat false pretences.

While it’s true that I do a lot of things and have a pretty wide range of interests, most of which I publish books about: golf, sailing, skiing, fishing, cooking, and so forth. But in all candor, I’m not very good at any of these things and I wouldn’t describe myself as following a “lifestyle” attached to any of them.

But I have had success in publishing for the people to whom these activities do constitute something of a lifestyle. Let’s define the term “lifestyle” for starters: an activity or hobby that consumes an unusually large amount of time, thought, energy, and resources, and which extends into much of not all of the 24-hour daily existence of its practitioner.

In other words, your ideal customer for books.

I’ve often observed how much people self-identify with certain particularly addictive activities. You don’t just fish: you are a fisherman. You don’t play golf: you are a golfer. As I just noted, I don’t claim expert status in any of the areas in which I’ve published. But I have found it helpful to know something about a lot of different things.

You can’t go far wrong publishing what you know. And there are at least two important benefits: it’s profitable, and it’s more fun. Success in lifestyle publishing is ultimately rewarding on a very personal level. Your books help the people you care about: golfers, fishermen, whatever. Often they even help you!

A case in point: when you fish the surf you often need to add what’s called a “teaser” to your line—this is a small lure or fly that goes just ahead of your larger lure. To add this you need to tie a dropper loop in your line. My problem was I couldn’t remember, out there on the beach, just how to tie a dropper lure. What I needed was a little book on fishing knots small enough to tuck in the tackle box. So here it is. 60,000 copies and counting, editions sold in England, Germany, and Spain. All over the world, it turns out, there are people who can’t remember how to tie a dropper loop.

Of course it helps, when you’re publishing books on what you do yourself, to be a part of large demographic forces. Publishing for the baby-boom generation is always a good bet. As a card-carrying baby-boomer I know that if I look at what I’m doing, and what my friends are doing, I can be pretty sure a lot of other people are doing it, too. Which makes me very optimistic about the future of what we in this lifestyle segment publish: books for people with leisure time. Take a look around you and what you’ll see is a tidal wave of people who are looking forward to taking time off and doing all the things they’ve wanted to do but were too busy to do before. They’re going to fish, garden, do woodworking projects and renovate their 150-year-old barn, on their country property with a trout stream in back and a woodworking shop in the basement, and they’re going to buy books about it. Lots of books.

A few practical issues:

There are marketing challenges you need to remember. Sales reps and chain buyers don't know, for example, that striped bass are caught mainly from Maine to the Carolinas; you have to remember to tell them or you'll be looking at a lot of returns from stores along the Gulf of Mexico and California.

You can charge more: there is very little pricing pressure when publishing books with information people really need to have. Within reason, they'll pay several dollars more than the average book if they believe it will help them.

Publicity is easier: in an era when publicity has gotten tough to the point of impossible, publishing for a committed audience gets you attention from the publicity and marketing vehicles that also serve that market—magazines, radio, consumer shows. I know Oprah will never invite our author on to demonstrate the Dropper Loop. So be it.

The advantages of non-booktrade sales you already know: selling to accounts, such as the tackle shops for our fishing books, who cater to a dedicated group of people. They know their customers, buy books they can sell, don't return, and pay in 30 days. What a concept!

One of the things I'd offer about "turning a lifestyle into a publishing program" is this: don't make it your whole publishing program or you may end up bored with your books and hating your lifestyle. You don't have to narrow a publishing program to any one activity. There are plenty of peripheral areas that grow organically out of any one activity.

I'll close with a story from the front-lines of lifestyle publishing. A couple of years ago, with a successful line of saltwater fishing books on our list, I attending the New England Saltwater Fishing Show in Providence. I was, not surprisingly, the only publisher there. Now as a very general rule, saltwater fishermen tend not to be what you'd think of as book buyers: not big incomes, not a lot of college degrees—they're construction workers, truckers, average guys. I knew they were passionate about catching fish, but would they buy books? I really didn't know.

So I went to the show with some trepidation. As I checked into the show office the guy asks what I'm selling and when I tell him he goes, "Books! These guys can't READ!"

Onto the show floor I go. The doors open, the fishermen filter in. The first dozen people walk by me on the far side of the aisle, staring at me, or so I feel, like I have two heads. Although on the outside I kept that idiotic convention smile on my face, my inner voice kept repeating a single word: Fiasco.

Down the aisle comes a bear of a man, lurching in his rubber boots. Fish blood stains his sweatshirt. His hat pulled low over his eyes. He turns into my booth, scowls at the books, stares for 30 seconds. Then picks up a copy of *THE COMPLEAT CLAMMER*, slams it down on the table, tosses me \$15, and growls, "Ah, what the hell."

For three days they kept coming. I had my answer: these guys do read. It was publishing Nirvana: waves of people coming up, telling you they love your books, and handing you \$20 bills.

But best of all was a 12-year-old kid who comes into the booth with his father. He looks at one of the fishing books, *FISHING THE BIG FOUR*, about how to catch the four major saltwater gamefish. "Dad!" he shouts. "I want to learn how to catch more fish! Buy me a copy of *FISHING THE BIG FOUR*!"

I could have hugged that kid. I think of him often, him and all the other people who love what they do and want to learn how to do it better. It's been a great privilege to publish books that help them.

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## **PUBLISHER ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE**, by Deborah Robson, [Nomad Press & Dogtooth Books](#)

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Four years ago, I began looking for software that would handle the unique business requirements of book publishing--specifically, invoices, inventory, and royalties, as well as year-end sales reports (in copies and dollars, aggregate and by title) and tax calculations.

There are several tiers of publishing-specific software, most of which are beyond the resources of publishers who have fewer than 50 books or less than \$500K in annual sales. However, publishers smaller than that do have a number of options to choose from. The alternatives have changed slightly from 2003, but not a lot.

I downloaded, installed, and worked with demos for Publisher's Assistant, known in shorthand as PubAssist (<http://www.upperaccess.com/software.htm>); AnyBook (<http://www.ronwatters.com/RonSoft.htm>); Pub123, which was the precursor to, and has been replaced by, Jaya123 (<http://www.jaya123.com/>); and Myrlyn (web site currently parked, but looks like it plans to resurrect).

The challenge in this evaluation process is that the factors that will matter most to you in daily life don't show up in the demo process. As I've worked with the programs for real, the factors that have become critical *for me* have included (1) how the program handles distributor payout schedules (a matter of concern to all of us at NBN and Biblio), (2) how it calculates sales-tax-due at the intervals when I interact with the tax collectors, and (3) because I work with a few consignment arrangements (including distribution), how it tracks the location(s) of my inventory. The book industry is changing. Other factors may also come into play in future years.

I decided on AnyBook and have been very pleased with many aspects, including the support. The developer is *\*incredibly\** responsive. He has been so good about making the program work for me, by adding new functions and by creating workarounds until those new functions could be implemented in a new release.

I can't comfortably track the financial aspects of the publishing business without two pieces of bookkeeping software: one for the "regular" business aspects (checkbook, income, expenses) and one for the publishing-specific details. I know that some publishers use QuickBooks for invoicing and inventory, and calculate their royalties (painfully) in an Excel spreadsheet. I love Excel, but not that much . . . especially since my royalty structure has three breakpoints, and requires adjustments for returns!

When I started up, I also used an available copy of Microsoft Money to track the "regular business" aspects of the publishing company, in part because I run a freelance business in Quicken Home and Business and I wanted a visual reminder that this new business was a separate entity.

Money doesn't easily provide some basic business reports, like balance sheets and income statements. So over the past year, I have shifted to QuickBooks for general bookkeeping. I think I'm almost there. I have had help from two QuickBooks-savvy people at critical points; they've saved me a lot of grief.

Throughout the year, I have been running Microsoft Money and QuickBooks in tandem. This has been a real pain, but I haven't regretted either the shift or the dual bookkeeping (which gave me a lot of security during the transition). In addition to providing pushbutton balance sheets and income statements, QuickBooks also lets me track my transactions by title, which will let me do more accurate projections and title P&Ls. (I'll be making a single inventory adjustment at the end of each month, with information

derived from the publishing-specific software, to make those reports meaningful). QuickBooks made issuing 1099s a lot easier, and our state and local use tax calculations (which are apparently the most byzantine in the country) did not have me tearing my hair out. I can't quite believe that all I did for tax time was burn a CD and drop it off at the accountant's.

My plan for this year is to see if I can similarly improve the results I'm getting from the publishing-specific software. AnyBook has a few limitations for the type and size of business that Nomad Press & Dogtooth Books have become. In this instance, "type" is more important than "size." If I got most of my income through a different mix of channels, I wouldn't even consider shifting.

So 2007 will be a test. I am going to be running Publisher's Assistant and AnyBook in parallel, with the idea of finding out whether PubAssist will do a few specific tasks more efficiently than AnyBook. I did not go with PubAssist the first time because I had trouble getting started with it. I also tried to shift to it last year and dropped the test because I couldn't handle messing with BOTH primary financial-management software components simultaneously.

Why am I seriously considering a shift, even though AnyBook is terrific for most of what I do? PubAssist appears to handle distributor-based transactions more transparently, may have some benefits in complex payment entry that I'd welcome, and looks like it's better situated for some of the coming electronic data-transmission functions. One of the major challenges in making the shift is that both AnyBook and PubAssist use "old style" database engines and also they manage fundamental data differently. There's a slightly clunky feel to working in the forms. In making a change, I will need to alter my thinking habits as well as my data-entry processes. I had initially hoped to get all my historic data entered into PubAssist, but that ended up being too labor-intensive so instead I am making an end/start-of-year shift, pulling only my outstanding invoices and 12/31/06 inventory information into the new program for its trial.

I have heard nothing but raves about Jaya123 from its users, for both functionality and tech support. It is web-based, and I prefer to have my information in a stand-alone version.

The fine points of this type of software matter a whole lot, and (1) can't be easily evaluated through a demo and (2) the importance of any individual feature depends on the specific publisher's mix of business. AnyBook has a nifty Rover module that works for off-site sales: take a portable computer with only the data files you need, then come home and integrate your new sales info into your full database. It also automates several shipping functions beautifully. Those aren't functions that have been critical to my business, although I've used them. An advantage of Jaya123 is that users can access their records from anywhere they can get an internet connection--for someone who travels more than I do, this could be a deal-maker. PubAssist has several program levels that seem to have significant headroom for growth.

Testing software packages can take a lot of work and the investment of cash--even with generous demo policies, I've actually bought several programs to be able to put them through their paces, and I sure wish I hadn't had to do that! Shifting can take even more. Now that I have software in place, I will not cut over to a new program until I'm sure it's a better fit for me than the old one.

I'm glad to be over the QuickBooks hurdle, and will be even happier to feel completely comfortable that I've got the best package tracking the publishing-specific details. It may be the one I already have, but I suspect I'll be making a shift.

Then . . . NEVER AGAIN (I hope).

Here's the most thorough list of book-publishing software I've found:

<http://www.kensailtd.com/bookpublishingsoftware.htm>

It's a little out of date, because it lists Pub123 and not Jaya123, and the pricing's a bit off on several other programs. However, it covers the full range of options, from the small packages to Acumen, Advantage, Cats Pajamas, and so on.

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## **NEW YORK BOOK FESTIVAL – CALL FOR ENTRIES**

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The **New York Book Festival** honors the best books of the international publishing industry in the literary capital of the world.

With well over 400,000 books being released each year in the U.S. and U.K. markets, many worthy titles are overlooked. The **New York Book Festival** seeks to bring greater attention to worthy works of literature and grow their cultural impact beyond the grassroots.

The **2007 New York Book Festival** will consider published, self-published and independent publisher non-fiction, fiction, children's books, teenage, how-to, audio/spoken word, comics, e-books, wild card (anything goes!), science fiction, romance and biography/autobiography works.

A panel of judges will determine the winners based on the following criteria:

- 1) The story-telling ability of the author;
- 2) The potential of the work to win wider recognition.

All entries must be in English, Spanish, French or Italian. Our grand prize for the **2007 New York Book Festival Book of the Year** is \$1500.

For more information:

<http://newyorkbookfestival.com/>

[http://newyorkbookfestival.com/entry\\_book/?category\\_id=54&event\\_id=9](http://newyorkbookfestival.com/entry_book/?category_id=54&event_id=9)

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## **NBN CATALOG PRODUCTION GUIDELINES**

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NBN's production department is now completely automated. Detailed instructions for providing catalog copy, space reservations, tipsheets and color art can be found at [www.nbnbooks.com](http://www.nbnbooks.com) or specifically at this link: [http://www.nbnbooks.com/production/catalog\\_production/index.shtml](http://www.nbnbooks.com/production/catalog_production/index.shtml)

These instructions are a result of years of feedback from NBN Sales Reps and the Accounts.

**In a nutshell we require the following:**

1. A space reservation form that tells us how much space to allocate, per title, to your frontlist titles.
2. Catalog copy via online form. (see link above)
3. Tipsheets via online form. (see link above)
4. Color covers (e-mailed to [nbnart@nbnbooks.com](mailto:nbnart@nbnbooks.com). Art should be saved at full size, at least 300 dpi, RGB.)

Again, complete instructions for providing information can be found at the website, however if you would like to speak to someone in person, please contact Liz Moffit (x 5515).

**The deadlines for the Winter 2008 catalog are as follows:**

Copy and Space Reservations: June 11th

Tipsheets and Color Art: July 11th

**For those of you thinking ahead, the deadlines for the Spring 2008 catalog are as follows:**

Copy and Space Reservations: September 6th

Tipsheets and Color Art: October 2nd

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**TRANSITION TO ISBN 13**, *by Karen Mattscheck, Publisher Services*

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**The book industry is changing over to a 13 digit ISBN starting January 1, 2007.**

Key points to remember:

--There is no change to the bar code itself.

--Prior to January 1, 2007, the 10 digit isbn MUST appear on the back of the book above the bar code and on the copyright page.

--After January 1, 2007, all new print runs MUST have the 13 digit isbn on the back of the book above the bar code and on the copyright page.

--You can put both the 10 and 13 digit isbns on top of your bar code and on the copyright page, effective immediately.

Samples of each format are shown below.

**Before January 1, 2007**

Printing only the ISBN-10 above the bar code is recommended for titles published before January 1, 2007.

ISBN: 1-4028-9462-7



**After January 1, 2007**

Printing only the ISBN-13 above the bar code is recommended for titles published after January 1, 2007.

ISBN: 978-1-4028-9462-6



**Transition: Both ISBN-10 and ISBN-13 Above Bar Code**

ISBN-13: 978-1-4028-9462-6

ISBN-10: 1-4028-9462-7



## WHAT HAPPENS TO BOOKS ALREADY IN THE WAREHOUSE COME JANUARY 2007?

Books currently in stock will not need to be restickered with the change in the item number. The new isbn is contained within the bar code itself and written underneath it. The accounts have agreed to work with that bar code to determine the new isbn. All new books shipped as of January 1, 2007, however, must have the 13 digit isbn on top of the bar code in a human readable format.

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## HOW TO READ YOUR ONLINE REPORTS *Courtesy of Karen Mattscheck, Publisher Services*

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Reports supplied to Biblio client publishers on-line show a wide range of information for the publishers' daily use. Information provided includes information on sales, inventory, receipts and low stock.

Reports are in two formats – Microsoft Excel for any calculations the publisher might need to do with the numbers, and Monarch, which is the information formatted in an easy to use report. Monarch can potentially be used on MACs using a couple of short cuts. If you have a MAC and are interested, please contact Karen Mattscheck at [kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com](mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com).

We will be explaining a report in each issue of this newsletter.

### Receiving Report (INVRCV)

The receiving report 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.

How to read the report:

-**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 000 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 titled **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 **Rcv 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 any of your online reports, please contact Karen Mattscheck in Inventory Management at [kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com](mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com).

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## YOUR MONTHLY ACCOUNTING STATEMENT

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Each month our Accounting department generates and mails a statement of account activity to each publisher. While this statement can be very difficult to understand, it is an important document for you to use to run your business. You will receive an explanation along with your contract and W9, but we thought we would help breakdown some of the mystery behind your accounting report.

Here are some hints on understanding the different columns (left to right) on the “**Aged AP-Until Due-Detail-Publishers**” document:

**Vendor Ref Nbr:** Our vendor reference number. This is for NBN's purpose only.

**Name Inv Nbr:** This column under your publishing company name is a description of what transaction is being accounted for in that particular row, and what month/year the transaction occurred.

**Returns:** Since returns are always deducted in the month they occur, if it says “04/05 Returns” then the deduction will be taken by 4/30/05. (See “InvDate” below.)

**A/R Stmt:** This is the total of all miscellaneous charges, usually for marketing programs like Book Expo or advertising, and is always deducted in the month they occur. Individual invoices for these are printed and mailed throughout the month and should be received by the publisher to reconcile with the end-of-

month statement. (These are the things you get that say “invoice” on top and “not an invoice” on the bottom. Do not pay them.)

**Reserves:** Per the contract, we hold a certain portion of your payments for one year as a reserve to cover returns. This money is paid back to the publisher on the invoice date. (See InvcDate” below.)

**DocType:** Positive amounts (VO) are amounts owed to the publisher. Negative amounts (DB) are amounts owed to NBN.

**Vend Stat Doc Stat:** “A” means it’s an active account. “H” means the account is on hold for some reason (usually the publisher has terminated with NBN).

**InvcDate:** This is the date when the amount in that row will be in the current column.

**-Days Until Due-**

**Current:** Payments are due when the amount in this column is a positive number. This amount must be over \$500 and you have at least \$250 in your reserve account. Otherwise a partial check or no check will be issued. If you have less than \$250 in reserve the difference between what is in your reserve account and what you will be paid may be deducted from your current payment amount. That leaves us with a minimum of \$250 in reserve (per the contract). Checks due to the publisher, should reach you around the 15th of the following month. If your current amount is negative, there is NO need to make a payment to NBN, unless you are contacted directly. Negative amounts will be deducted from the payment NBN would owe the publisher.

**30 Days:** This is the approximate payment you can expect for the following month, less returns and/or any marketing or co-op charges due for that month. **Remember:** Returns are deducted immediately, so never think this “30 days” column is a sure thing.

**60 Days/90 Days/120 Days or >:** This is the approximate payment to expect in the following months, less returns and/or marketing charges due for that month. The higher the number of days at the top of the column, the further away the payment is due and the more likely it is to change.

**Balance:** This is the amount due to the publisher over a period of time as of the end of the current month. This is NOT the amount NBN owes the Publisher at this time, and it will change with every passing month.

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**INFORMATION THAT BEARS REPEATING**

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**Whom to Contact at NBN:**

Item	Staff Person	Ext.	Email
Accounting Issues	Tom Hunt	3702	<a href="mailto:thunt@nbnbooks.com">thunt@nbnbooks.com</a>
Address/Contact Changes	Cassie Copper	5525	<a href="mailto:ccopper@nbnbooks.com">ccopper@nbnbooks.com</a>
Advertising	Jessica Kennedy	3627	<a href="mailto:jkennedy@nbnbooks.com">jkennedy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Advice, General	Your Account Manager		
Backorders/Advance Estimates	Mark Cozy	5506	<a href="mailto:mcozy@nbnbooks.com">mcozy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Bookscan Access/Issues	Cassie Copper	5525	<a href="mailto:ccopper@nbnbooks.com">ccopper@nbnbooks.com</a>

Catalog Issues	Liz Moffit	5515	<a href="mailto:lmoffit@nbnbooks.com">lmoffit@nbnbooks.com</a>
Coop Approval	Shana Logan	5514	<a href="mailto:slogan@nbnbooks.com">slogan@nbnbooks.com</a>
Coop (No-Hoops)	Mark Cozy	5506	<a href="mailto:mcozy@nbnbooks.com">mcozy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Covers on the Web	Kathy Stine	3568	<a href="mailto:kstine@rowman.com">kstine@rowman.com</a>
Crash Titles	Your Account Manager		
Database Changes	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
End of Month Sales Reports	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
EOM Accounting Reports	Tom Hunt	3702	<a href="mailto:thunt@nbnbooks.com">thunt@nbnbooks.com</a>
Inventory Discrepancies	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Marketing Questions	Your Account Manager		
NBN Web Site	Cassie Copper	5525	<a href="mailto:ccopper@nbnbooks.com">ccopper@nbnbooks.com</a>
NBN International	Les Petriw	416-534-1660	<a href="mailto:lpetriw@nbnbooks.com">lpetriw@nbnbooks.com</a>
Online Reports	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Price Changes	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Print and Reprint Quantities	Mark Cozy	5506	<a href="mailto:mcozy@nbnbooks.com">mcozy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Publicity Updates	Kennetta Wainwright	5530	<a href="mailto:kwainwright@nbnbooks.com">kwainwright@nbnbooks.com</a>
Publisher Handbooks	Ginger Miller	5510	<a href="mailto:gmill@nbnbooks.com">gmiller@nbnbooks.com</a>
Rebill Invoices	Tom Hunt	3702	<a href="mailto:thunt@nbnbooks.com">thunt@nbnbooks.com</a>
Receiving Requirements	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Remainder Processing	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Reserve Stock Quantities	Mark Cozy	5506	<a href="mailto:mcozy@nbnbooks.com">mcozy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Sales Conference Questions	Jessica Kennedy	3627	<a href="mailto:jkennedy@nbnbooks.com">jkennedy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Sales Materials	Cassie Copper	5525	<a href="mailto:ccopper@nbnbooks.com">ccopper@nbnbooks.com</a>
Sales Reports	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Stickering	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Stock Receipts	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Stock Transfers	Karen Mattscheck	3513	<a href="mailto:kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com">kmattscheck@nbnbooks.com</a>
Titles on the Web	Kathy Stine	3568	<a href="mailto:kstine@rowman.com">kstine@rowman.com</a>
Trade Shows	Jessica Kennedy	3627	<a href="mailto:jkennedy@nbnbooks.com">jkennedy@nbnbooks.com</a>
Yearly Schedule Calendars	Ginger Miller	5510	<a href="mailto:gmill@nbnbooks.com">gmiller@nbnbooks.com</a>

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

Subscribe to **Publishers Weekly**: <http://www.publishersweekly.com/>

Subscribe to **Shelf Awareness**: <http://www.shelf-awareness.com/>

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