DCI 175: Innovations in Publishing

Class Innovation Report

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# Self-Publishing

By Emily Cleveland

Self-publishing is certainly not a new practice, though with new, increasingly accessible technologies such as eBook software and the internet, it is experiencing a renaissance which threatens traditional publishing methods. Recently there has been a greater incentive to self-publish, as authors signed with established publishers are making less money than ever before—30% less in 2015 than in 2009 (Neary 2015). But only recently has technology made self-publishing a viable, realistic option for authors. Authors who could not find support from publishing houses were unlikely to succeed in publishing books because traditional print publishing requires so many resources that typically only large publishing houses offer: credibility, editorial guidance, and assistance with sales and marketing. Furthermore, even after the introduction of print-on-demand services in the nineties, which allowed anyone to create print books for a low cost (Stauss), there remained a stigma surrounding self-publishing. For instance, vanity presses, which used to be one of the primary channels for publishing without the support of a traditional publishing house and charge authors a fee to produce a book have been associated with poor writing: “Self-published authors were considered not good enough to get a real publishing contract. They had to pay to see their book in print” (Neary 2012).

In recent years the stigma surrounding self-publishing has begun to diminish and self-published authors have begun seeing success traditionally only associated with authors working for large publishing houses. For instance, Andy Weir’s *The Martian*, a self-published book initially posted as a free series of chapters on his own website before being released to Amazon for 99 cents, immediately rose to the top of Amazon’s bestselling list of science fiction and debuted as number twelve on the New York Times hardcover fiction bestseller list (Dickerson). Weir’s success story is one of many recent ones which all demonstrate the viability of self-publishing in this digital age: any author can theoretically reach millions of readers on their own by putting out eBooks on the internet.

One caveat to consider as self-publishing expands is a lack of quality control in the industry. Large publishing companies and editors traditionally weeded out plagiarism, pornography, poor writing, and problematic language. For instance, “erotica is 25 times more prevalent in self-publishing than in traditional publishing” (Tobar) and now, authors can self-publish essentially anything they wish. It will be up to self-publishing authors in the future to control the future of the publishing industry.

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# Small Publishing Presses

By Curtis Mitchell

Despite advantages of large publishing companies such as strong distribution networks or brand names, small publishing presses have remained an essential part of the publishing industry and will continue to do so for many years to come. Because of their personal investment in each work, their myriad of publishing options, and their risk-taking ability to pursue innovations and create new trends, small publishing presses will continue to revolutionize the industry and allow tons of authors and artists to publish their works and make a name for themselves.

Small publishing presses are presses that publish approximately ten to fifteen books per year and have average annual sales around $50 million. These presses make up approximately 21% of the publishing industry, which makes up a significant portion of the industry considering mid-size takes up 28% and the “Top Ten” publishers make up 26% (Statista: Types of Publishing Houses Used in 2018). Small publishing companies are very important for writers because they provide personalized service and work very closely with the authors to finalize the author’s work. They also provide a wide array of publishing options and services such as greater formatting freedom or unconventional marketing techniques (Standout Books: What You Need to Know About Publishing with a Small Press). Many authors and readers also appreciate small publishing presses’ role in influencing art, as these presses foster a robust environment that pursues more opportunities and pushes new literary and artistic limits that bigger publishers would not consider. Small publishing presses are also of great importance to the publishing industry as a whole as they often introduce the hottest trends of the most influential innovations. For instance, small publishers helped the steampunk genre rise in popularity and played a big role in the development of audiobooks (TCK Publishing: Complete Guide to Small Press Publishing: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly of Small Presses for Writers).

Today, many small publishing presses continue to succeed and retain their role in the publishing industry. Some of the most popular small publishers include the Graywolf Press, the Coffee House Press, and Forest Avenue Press. Many of these presses establish themselves through their groundbreaking innovations or their specialization of certain genres and topics. For instance, Graywolf Press is a leading independent publisher that focuses on contemporary American and international literature and takes risks on publishing controversial and unusual works (Powell’s Books: 24 of Our Favorite Small Presses). However, despite their successes, this sector still faces many difficulties and headwinds. One of the greatest difficulties is trying to retain business as self-publishing increases in popularity with the rise of digital publishing and technologies. These publishers are also threatened by tighter margins and changing consumer tastes and preferences. Despite these difficulties and issues, small publishers’ competitive advantages, such as individualized service, and ability to innovate and revolutionize the publishing industry will allow them to retain their position in the industry as they have for the past 100 years.

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# Major Corporate Publishers

By Jonathan Huth

Today, the publishing industry is controlled by five major corporations: Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, Hachette, and Macmillan. Together these five giants control about 80% of the market share, making it difficult for smaller companies to break through and be successful. However, some companies such as Amazon now provide platforms for authors to self-publish their work as ebooks, rather than going through one of the larger companies.

Penguin Random House, which was once two separate companies, Penguin and Random House, merged in 2013 to become the market leader with approximately 37% of the market today. Penguin was owned by Pearson, a public company, while Random House was owned by Bertelsmann, a private German company. Merging the companies initially caused a decline in revenue as the two companies went through the merging process, but now they are more efficient and continue to dominate the market. HarperCollins, the second larger publishing company with a market share of about 17.5%, is a subsidiary of New Corp, owned by Rupert Murdoch. According to their website, HarperCollins publishers about 10,000 new books a year. Simon & Schuster, owned by CBS, controls 11.7% of the publishing market. Annually, S&S publishes over 2,000 new titles. Hachette Book Group, the third largest publisher in the world with a share of 9%, is a smaller part of Hachette Livre, a French publishing company. Annually, Hachette publishes about 1400 titles. Finally, Macmillan, a private business owned by German company Georg von Holtzbrinck GmbH & Co., releases little financial information, so their exact market share is not known, but it is estimated to be about 5%.

Today, self-publishing platforms like Amazon are challenging the Big Five by allowing authors to publish their own works for free. They are then sold by Amazon, and the authors receive royalties. The self-publishing industry is growing every year as the process is much easier than hiring an agent and attempting to gain the attention of one of the traditional publishing companies.

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# Amazon’s Interference in The Publishing Industry

By Hal Fant

For many centuries, printed books have been a crucial part of our everyday lives, whether someone needed a book to study a subject matter or simply for leisure. Printed books serve many purposes and have always been the go-to source for seeking new knowledge, that is until Amazon released its very own electronic book, known as the kindle, to the public, allowing anyone to be able to download books to their very own device in seconds, saving time and money.

Since Amazon’s release of the Kindle in 2007, they have sold tens of millions of these devices, and just after four years of being on the market, more eBooks were sold than were printed books. With a sudden rise of eBook popularity beginning in 2007, many people predicted that printed books would become obsolete, however, it turns out that the demand for printed books has increased too. Given that publishing books is an iterative market, with technology driving new changes frequently, Amazon faces challenges such as having the ability to continue to create personalized reading choices tailored to each customer, as well as trying to innovate their e-readers while maintaining the peace and simplicity that each Kindle comes with.

So what makes print books different? Is it the experience that a reader has from start to finish, being able to physically touch the pages and be able to fold the top right corner of a page to mark a spot? I think it’s a combination of these qualities, as well as the fact that print-books have been around for so long and have become a part of global culture- many parent’s read bedtime stories to their kids and teachers read books to their students too. Print books will always be relevant in our culture, and will not become obsolete for a long time, if not ever.

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# Children’s Book Publishing

By Coleman Lucas

With an abundance of colorful illustrations and stories centered around morals, children’s books are highly unique (A Short Guide to the Different Types of Publishing) For this reason and many more, the children’s book industry is currently thriving. In fact, Publishers Weekly reported that in 2017, the kids’ book market had seen more growth than the overall prints book market, and this growth is not expected to stop any time soon because parents will always want to buy for their children, even if economic hardships force them to stop buying for themselves (Kantor). However, it is important to not only look at the thriving industry, but also the unique challenges that publishers and authors face when trying to penetrate this industry.

To begin with, graphics are extremely important when it comes to children’s books, so having a skillful illustrator is absolutely necessary (Top 5 Facts About Self-Publishing a Children’s Book). Parents rely heavily on reviews when buying books for their children because they want to know if others enjoyed it (How to Publish a Children’s Book). Therefore, a book with bad illustrations will most likely garner bad reviews. Children need engaging images that truly bring the book alive, so without a qualified illustrator, children may be uninterested, and the book will not do as well.

Another challenge unique to the children’s book industry is marketing. Children’s books are not marketed to their target audience, children, but are instead to adults or parents of the children (Top 5 Facts About Self-Publishing a Children’s Book). This creates difficulty because children’s books must appeal to two audiences: they must fascinate the children reading them but also be approved of by parents and relatives who buy and give to children (Top 5 Facts About Self-Publishing a Children’s Book). This need to intrigue two very different target markets is one large challenge people face when trying to infiltrate the children’s book industry.

Yet, despite the difficulties discussed, this industry is continually growing. The unique market offered by children is thriving because, as mentioned earlier, parents will always buy for their children, and they see the content offered by these books as valuable.

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# Children’s Book Publishing

By Evans Copeland

The industry behind publishing children’s books is one of the most consistent in the publishing industry as a whole because of every parent’s want for their children to learn from a young age. Currently in 2019, the industry revenue has reached two billion dollars, but the number of businesses has decreased by 149 companies (IBIS). The industry has slowly been declining since a massive surge in industry revenue in 2015. Currently the two companies with the largest market shares are Scholastic Inc. and Penguin Random House (IBIS). Scholastic Inc. release approximately 600 every year in the United States and has book clubs in more than 80% of children’s classrooms in the United States (Scholastic). Penguin Random House currently publishes nearly 70,000 digital and 15,000 print titles every year, with more than 100,000 eBooks available worldwide (Penguin Random House). With the popularity of both these companies increasing it has made other smaller and less successful companies go out of business and has also made it more difficult in enter the industry. Currently children’s books are published in 4 primary formats: hardback, paperback, e-book, and board books (IBIS). I believe that as children become more invested into the internet, subscription based e-book companies will thrive in this industry. I believe this because of how the movie industry has changed over the past few years with Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, and other companies. Subscription based companies have been rising in popularity at extreme rates recently and if I were to give advice to someone entering the children book publishing industry I would advise they make their online platform extremely strong with a subscription base. All in all, I believe that the children book industry is one of the most stable in the publishing industry and will not be going anywhere in the next few years.

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# Publishing Innovations in Audiobooks

By Rob Warren

With the invention of the internet, audiobooks emerged as a significant innovation in the publishing industry. In 2008, Amazon, one of the most innovative and forward-thinking companies in history, bought then audiobook company Audible for $300 million. As a leading innovator in their industry, Amazon knew audiobooks would be a part of the future for publishing. Audiobooks have helped improve education, made books more accessible, and transformed the future of the publishing industry to a digital platform.

Audiobooks make books and stories more accessible to anyone with a smart device or computer. People now listen to books on a long drive, or with headphones on the beach. In fact, according to a Statista study, audiobook sales revenue has increased from less than $1 billion in 2009 to $2.5 billion in 2017 and growing. With technology becoming more dominant in our everyday lives, audiobooks are able to reach more and more people.

Audiobooks have not only made books more accessible to everyone but have also helped education. According to an eSchool News article last month, there are an estimated 26 million students with learning and reading disabilities, and learning from audiobooks can allow them to improve their education. There are also many reading programs, such as Project Read and Wilson Reading System, that use audiobooks as tools to aid disabled learners.

The future for audiobooks is bright, according to a Forbes article titled: “Audiobooks Are Officially the Publishing Industry’s 2018 Trend.” The article points out that in the first quarter of 2018, digital audio was up 32.1% while e-book sales actually fell 3.2% in the same quarter. Audiobooks are a strong presence in the publishing industry, and with the consistently growing revenues, could potentially drive the entire publishing industry to digital audio.

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# Digital Strategies in Music

By William Brueggeman

The internet, streaming services, and social media have transformed the music industry enormously over the past several years. Social media has allowed artists to reach their audience and interact much more easily as well as market themselves directly. Services such as YouTube and Vimeo have also been instrumental to the development of artists through music videos (Agrawal). Streaming services such as Apple Music, Spotify, and Soundcloud have made it easy for consumers to access any music they want in seconds. With streaming services taking over the music industry, a question for new aspiring artists would be how to get onto these new streaming services? Soundcloud is relatively easy to operate and new artists are able to easily put their music onto the site for anyone to listen. Are Apple Music and Spotify the same? As mentioned earlier YouTube is a way for musicians to get their work onto the Internet in a relatively easy way, as anyone with an account can post a video onto the website. In the past, iTunes was a major player, and each individual would pay for music individually. Now an individual will pay for a streaming service per month and get every song on that service. Most of the recent changes to the music industry have been positive as they have given more power to the musician and allowed them to get their music to the public more easily. In 2016, according to LANDR, digital revenues went up 50%, while physical format sales only went up 34%. In today’s new media age, the ability for music to be shared has made it much more accessible for everyone.

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# How do Celebrities Use Books as a Marketing Tool?

By Barrett Dowd

Books are often lengthy works that require research, prior knowledge, or expertise to skillfully write them. Each author has their own goal in writing a book, whether it be to educate, entertain, or inform the public on their expertise, but all authors are in a competition for readers’ attention. Books serve as a great marketing tool for celebrities, politicians, and innovators because they help cultivate a brand for the author. Authors build strong associations to their book topics and from there are able to capitalize upon that success. Just like authors who are consistently seeking readers’ attention, celebrities write books to offer a different perspective on their life, which ultimately allows them to gain attention and further their time in the limelight. Typically, celebrities already have a decent sized fan base, so their books almost immediately make it to the New York Times Best Sellers List. With the publication of their books, they aim to create readership and expand and grow their following.

Celebrities and other people in the public eye often use books as a marketing tool. Opening up to the public about personal experiences or struggles shapes how the public perceives them. These books tend to humanize them and bring them off their elevated pedestal because they portray struggles that “real, everyday” people face (Jones).

For example, the reality TV star, Kris Kardashian wrote a book about her family called *And All Things Kardashian*, in which she discusses the struggles of marriage, motherhood, relationships, and death. The Kardashians portray a strong family empire; however, Kris’s book provides honesty in a way that humanizes them and attracts more fans (Kardashian). The variety of topics she discusses attracts a wide variety of women. Another example of this is Michelle Obama’s memoir, *Becoming*. This book is deeply personal and allows readers to dive into three stages of Michelle Obama’s life: becoming herself, becoming a first lady, and becoming a mother. Books are a tremendous asset for celebrities and other famous individuals because it allows them to tell their raw and true story without it getting tainted by the press (Obama).

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# Books Used as A Marketing Tool

By Dayton Conklin

When you walk into your local bookstore, the first books that you may see are those penned by celebrities, politicians, and consultants. Many times, the notable person’s face will be on the cover in order to catch the reader’s attention. In this report I will focus specifically on how politicians use books when considering a run for office in order to help market themselves. The publishing of a book by a politician has now become a sign that they are thinking about or will soon be entering into a race for election, specifically for president. In 2015, politicians such as Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, Mike Huckabee, among many others who ran for the 2016 election, all published books to “educate readers (and potential voters) about their childhood influences and their visions for a far better tomorrow” (Heller). Through the public buying their books, the politicians are able to not only gauge public support, but also increase their name recognition, and thus, increase support. However, this trend does present some challenges. First of all, similar to PACs and Super PACs, the absence of a published book might make it harder for a politician to get their name out there, so the question is, does this make it harder for those without the resources to publish a book to succeed in a competitive race? Furthermore, the politicians also often use ghostwriters to write their books rather than writing themselves, which are often rushed in order to just get the book out there resulting in a lackluster book. In addition, these stories also do not always sell well; for example, Jeb Bush’s book published in 2015 sold fewer than 4,600 copies (Heller). Why then, is it worthwhile for publishers to waste their time on such books if they have often failed to produce best sellers? This being said, it is no doubt that publishing a book does help politicians market themselves in a way to increase support. In conclusion, this trend has mostly been seen at the presidential election level, but it is interesting to think about whether we will soon see this trickle down into more local races.

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# Books as Marketing Tools

By Richard Surdykowski

Books have been used as a source of knowledge for centuries. Whether it be for records of history, market professionals sharing their expert opinion, or just for pleasure, books are one of the most effective ways to convey information in a simplistic and effective method. In today’s world, the digitization of information has made the access to books more universal than ever, and politicians and market leaders can use this universality to rocket launch their careers.

Not long ago, running for a political position was a relatively simple process. In today’s political climate, however, political efforts require big budgets, a campaign team, and now: a book. Books for political hopefuls have become an indicator of their seriousness, and they can also use their own personal experiences to explain their visions for the future. “The media universe has become much more fractured than it used to be,” says presidential historian Michael Beschloss (Heller). To a candidate “who wants to reach a potentially significant audience in his or her exact words,” writing a book “may seem appealing” (Heller). While these books don’t always shine in the eyes of the public, they do help politicians show themselves as real people, when the media can do anything but that.

Politicians are not the only ones using their public image and personal experiences to profit through books. Some successful life coaches and marketers use books to build and develop a cult-like following for their work. Russell Brunson, a successful digital marketer, actually uses books as bait to get email addresses, gain social following, and in the long run, earn him more money (Russell Brunson Biography).

Overall, books can be lucrative ways to expand your network and net worth. As seen by my research into the industry of book writing and politics and the use of publications as a means of gaining notoriety in business to land more clients, books are one of the most excellent and effective ways to rapidly spread information, further aided by the advancement in today’s technologies and the rise in digital media.

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# Film Adaptations

By Emma Thai

Recently, popular books are practically bound to made into TV or movie scripts. For example, the *Harry Potter* series began as seven books and then went on to earn over $8.65 billion in theaters (Thompson). Research in the UK found that on average book adapted films earn “44% more in UK film box office revenue (and 53% more globally) (Kavanagh).” Clearly, the popularity of the books impacted the success of the films because the books automatically brought an existing fan base, and thus, made more money in the box office. This book-to-movie adaptation is not new; however, the recent popularity of these films has changed the way publishing companies and authors handle popular books that could be made into films.

Publishing companies have had to change the ways they handle licensing in order to make more money from film adaptations. The *Hollywood Reporter* reports that “Facing financial pressures from everything from the rise of self-published e-books to Amazon's move to become a publisher, Random House and another "big six" publisher, Macmillan, have set up in-house film divisions to bolster their bottom lines” (Lewis). Publishers are reestablishing their methods of conducting business in order to capitalize on this newly changing field.

Interesting this change in the publishing industry has impacted authors in the industry. According to the *New York Times,* many authors have changed the way they write based on the potential their novels being translated into screenplays (Donadio). This poses some questions about the potential downsides of this new system of film output. For example, will some novelists focus less on the literary nature of their novels in favor of plots that translate better on screen? Hopefully, this more finance-focused view of publishing won’t favor plot over good writing.

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# Novels in the Entertainment Industry

By Brendan Dugan

When it comes to the entertainment industry, books or excellent writing in general is always the source behind a successful piece of entertainment. Often studios or networks will hire writers to produce a movie or television program from scratch; however, it has become clear in recent years that many of the most successful shows and films have come from already fully established books (Liptak). There is a relatively simple explanation for this, and it involves a strategy of managing risk.

To put it simply, a fully developed book with an already established fanbase will be almost always easier to promote and gain popularity for the big screen. Some of the most highly regarded movies and television in the past ten years were taken and developed from the writing of fiction authors. *The Martian*, the *Harry Potter* series, and *Gone Girl* are all recent examples of hugely successful movies produced from a book.

The resurgence of the practice of developing completed novels has, in part, been due to the changing technologies revolving around streaming services. The instantaneous ability of people to watch shows and follow highly complex characters across multiple seasons is something that has allowed networks like HBO to flourish. Shows like *Game of Thrones*, developed from George R.R. Martin’s novels, seemingly the biggest show of all time, showcase the new ability to build and follow characters along with long, complicated stories.

No matter how one looks at it, books have been and continue to be the driving force behind the television and movie industry. A fully developed novel provides networks or streaming services with a cohesive story, developed fanbase, and a clear direction in which to proceed with the directorial process. Future television and movie providers will continue the trend of using novels to create entertainment, and rightly so.

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# Strategies and Disruption in Online Streaming

By Christian Hanna

The methods in which millennials consume content now bears little resemblance to the content consumption at the beginning of their lives, which was only about 20 years ago. Live television and movie rentals largely remained unchanged for over 30 years. Sure, television began to offer more channels and we saw the introduction of satellite TV, and we saw the introduction of DVDs in regard to movies. However, this progress is minute when compared to the digital strategies and solutions that have been implemented over the last 15 years. The introduction of online streaming services and online live television have revolutionized the entertainment and cable industries, and spells for an uncertain future concerning many traditional cable and broadcasting corporations.

All of the new technology giants that have come to dominate the 21stCentury have one thing in common: disruption. As the Harvard Business Review puts it, “digitization is enabling new, disruptive models that aggressively compete with legacy models” (Bughin et al.). This is what has allowed companies like Netflix and Hulu to grow at such an accelerated rate. In 2007, Netflix, originally an online DVD rental service, announced the introduction of a video-on-demand service. Fast forward to 2019, and Netflix is the leading streaming service, and is now producing numerous award-winning programs (Jenner 258). Netflix digitalized and disrupted the traditional video rental services, and put legacy companies, such as Blockbuster, out of business in a hurry.

Netflix signaled a massive change within the digital television landscape. It rose to the top in such a short period of time and has become a societal norm. However, how permanent is this change? Most believe that services like Netflix are the future of television. But, not long ago, DVD had a similar rise, and then was quickly defeated by Netflix. In reality, “it is impossible to gauge exactly what television will be in another decade or so” (Jenner 258). Is Netflix here to stay? Or will it simply be another fad, like DVD and Blu Ray, in this ever-changing digital society? This question also finds itself applicable in the live television industry. In recent years, we have seen the emergence of Sling TV, YouTube TV, and other online live TV subscription services. They developed as a response to the general unhappiness of consumers with their traditional cable services (Sorensen 382). Traditional cable services find themselves near a tipping a point; will they be able to respond and remain relevant? Or will online live television services follow the same path as Netflix, and disrupt and defeat legacy cable companies?

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# Video Game Publishers

By Jesse Chang

Today’s video game market is volatile: from obscure indie games to well-known, blockbuster sagas, gamers are constantly on the hunt for new games to grind. Video games, no matter the genre, require a hardworking team, in-depth knowledge of programming and software, and lots of dedicated time. All of these things require a large financial backing, and in such a hit-or-miss, or high-risk-high-reward industry, many video game developers rely on the skills (and wallets) of gaming publishers to get their game out to market. Due to the range of processes the creation of a game requires, video game publishing is usually divided into various, delegated roles.

The product manager is one of the first roles that comes to mind with the publishing aspect of the gaming industry. The product manager is the one who cracks the whip on the development team - keeping them on schedule and keeping their priorities straight. Directly connecting the development studio with the legal department of the publisher, the product manager goes over and sets milestones and doles out money to the developers when appropriate, along with working on licensing and acquiring the ESRB rating. There is some controversy on product management due to its power in choosing the game’s content, but some product managers are less invasive (Rogers).

The creative manager is less schedule-oriented than the product manager and is more involved with the design of the game itself. This can include seeing how well the game plays and if the game stays stylistically and thematically consistent. If the game has playability issues or doesn’t flow smoothly in terms of aesthetic or story, the creative manager is responsible for redirecting the development team, either by suggesting edits to better the game or by scrapping old ideas and working with something new. During the making of the game, the creative manager can also provide bits and pieces of the game to marketing teams and public relations to generate positive buzz (Rogers).

The art director is a specialized creative director. The art director, as the name implies, hones in on the game’s graphics and art. The art director can review and suggest changes to achieve a cohesive visual style for the game. Packaging designs are also included in the art director’s list of responsibilities (Rogers).

The technical director is responsible for the technological/software aspect of the videogame. With his or her programming knowledge, the technical director can provide programming tools, aid, and advice to the programmers of the development team. The technical director also determines if the programming team is capable of making the game of interest (Rogers).

The marketing team’s main goal is to get gamers to want to buy and to play the game. Thus, it is essential that the marketing team works with the other publishing departments to get potentially promotional material for the game so it can display and advertise the game in its best light. Unfortunately, marketing is not always truthful or accurate (Rogers).

Some other video game publisher departments include business development, brand management, public relations management, and quality assurance management. Business development organizes the interactions between publishers and developers and will attempt to acquire more development studios. Brandmanagementis very similar to marketing in that its focus is getting the game out into public awareness, but more specifically through setting strategies for advertisements. The public relations manager sets up press events and talks with gaming magazines and sites. The quality assurance manager is supposed to ensure that the game is functional and playable, with some degree of high standards (Rogers).

Video game publishing is more compartmentalized due to video games’ complex nature. Publishing encompasses not only marketing, but also quality checks on technical and artistic elements of the games, along with keeping development studios on time and on task. The difficulty and controversy lie in the trend of publishers controlling the content and types of games studios can produce, with many publishers choosing to push their acquired studios to complete more sequels of successful games rather to than experiment with original games (Video Game Publisher). At the same time, developers can have difficulty fighting back due to their need for funding. Only time will tell if publishers will have their powers checked, or if balance between productivity and freedom can be achieved in the video game industry.

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# Apps

By Carter Govan

In the 1980s, well before the iPhone was even invented, Steve Jobs knew what the future had in store. He predicted a future where software could easily be downloaded from one device to another. Some of the earliest apps were developed by Apple for his Newton MessagePad. These apps included email, web, calendar, and address book. The first ever smartphone was later developed by IBM and was called the Simon Personal Communicator. This also included built in applications such as web and email. It wasn’t until a few years later that the first mobile game was developed by snake on the Nokia 6110 in 1997. This paved the way for the future of mobile gaming. It took another 10 years before mobile games were a commonality in the app space. In June 2007 Apple announced that third party developers could create web applications for their upcoming iPhone. One month later they released their first smartphone and forever changed how apps would be used. One year later, In July 2008 the App Store was launched by Apple with over 552 apps. It only took one week for the app store to have over 10 million downloads. It wasn’t until October of 2008 when the Android market was released, creating competition with the app store. After Android released their store, they quickly became a very popular download site for android users. Today there are around 4 million apps between both the App Store and the Google Play store.

As the internet was rapidly changing, publishers realized that some of their content was being exploited through the internet and being used for free. To change this, they realized that there is a lot of money to be made through selling their eBooks on apps in the app store. Since then, eBook apps have been popping left and right to allow for a more enjoyable eBook experience. Today there are hundreds of different eBook applications widely available for all the book readers out there.

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# Travel books and the Internet and Mobile Apps

By Zander Raul

Before the days of the majority of people carrying computers in their pocket, or having access to a computer in their household, people would turn to books for guidance on what to do or see when traveling. According to Pew Research Center, 77% of Americans own a smartphone and can access the internet at any given second (Pew Research Center 2018). The ability and ease with which people can access the internet and an infinite amount of data from blogs, apps, videos, and other sources have led to the decline for the need of travel books.

The falling of the travel book and guidebook industry was not solely from the rise of the internet and the ability to access travel information online, but also highly attributed to the financial crisis of 2008. The demand for travel books and guidebooks fell from 2005 to 2011 as sales in the US were down 40% during that time (Dickinson). The financial crisis led to the general population being more frugal and taking less extravagant vacations which led to fewer travel books being purchased. An indirect outcome of 1000s of people being laid off from the workforce from the financial crisis was people having time on their hands to travel or create their own job, per say. Many people turned to self-publishing or creating apps and blogs about travel and their experiences around the world.

The top travel book companies such as Fromers and Lonely Planet were both bought at major discounted prices just a half decade ago and the books now are sold in low quantities at a cheap selling price (Dickinson). The reason for this demise is because 81% of people in developed countries are internet users and can access travel information for free rather than pay for a physical travel book that has to be carried (Dickinson). The preference for high definition videos and images has led to more users utilizing the internet and apps over travel books - which cannot be updated or have videos (Minardi).

Apps such as Instagram and Pinterest have allowed for users to quickly visualize and be connected with travel ideas and platforms to actually travel (Minardi). An estimated 50% of millennials use apps such as Instagram or Pinterest to aid in travel decisions and ideas (Minardi).

Even though many signs point towards travel books and guide books going “extinct,” there are still desirable qualities of physical books. Some people like to have “coffee table” books, and some just have a preference for holding a book. Many travel books organizations have made innovations such as creating online issues or developing apps. Travel book giant National Geographic Travel has an online viewership of 30 million users. The travel book market has been vastly altered by the popularity of travel blogs, apps, and the internet, but guidebooks have adapted and are still desired to some extent.

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# Author’s Platform

By McLean Fonvielle

My report will be on author’s platforms and how an author’s ability to sells books relates to their ability to reach people. Just like a physical platform or stage for someone to speak to an audience an author’s platform is an initial stage that the author has consisting of people to address with their work and promote their books. This is a ready-made relationship that authors love because it can advance a book into the marketplace and help sales. The concept of author’s platform started in the 1990s when non-fiction publishers started to reject work of authors because they lacked a platform. Publishers do this because they want their authors to be in the public eye so they have the ability to spread the word of their new books easily. Publishers do not want an average person who doesn’t have any connections, but an author who is known and is seen as an expert or professional. The extent of an author’s platform can be told by questions such as, “how many people see your work?, where does your work regularly appear?, how many people see it?, and who do you influence?”. Despite the importance of an author’s platform, it actually depends what type of book you are writing if you need a platform to get published. For instance, fiction books are focused on crafting the best work possible so in turn publishers are making decisions on fiction book first based off the quality of the writing. At the same time a platform would is still be helpful to get published in the fiction book industry. Unless you are a celebrity or person that is very well known, it is hard to grow a platform and have your work published. The main thing to focus on for new authors is that a platform is built from doing great work.