

Culture and Commerce: Corporate Publishing at ECW Press

by

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Abstract

This report analyzes the corporate publishing practices at ECW Press, a Canadian independent publisher in Toronto, Ontario. The first section of this report describes ECW's history in corporate publishing, something the company has been involved with since it began in 1974. It also looks at how the growing popularity of content marketing could lead to more opportunities for ECW to leverage the authority of print. The second section explores how ECW finds these corporate projects, delves into the services the company offers, and examines the financial considerations and arrangements that guide them. The third section uses a corporate project completed by ECW as a case study, demonstrating how following a standard set of simple processes can radically benefit both the publisher and the client. The final section of the report looks at the profitability of ECW's corporate projects and suggests possible refinements to the publishing process.

Keywords: publishing; corporate projects; content marketing; ECW Press

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1 Introduction

In 1974, Jack David and Robert Lecker began a journal of literary criticism called *Essays on Canadian Writing*. In 1977, the two started ECW (an initialism for Essays on Canadian Writing) Press and began publishing academic books and bibliographies of Canadian authors, relying heavily on the library market. In the 1980s, they began publishing original Canadian fiction and poetry, although these genres were secondary to the scholarly titles that they had proven success in. However, when scholarly titles were no longer profitable due to public library budget cuts in the early nineties, the company adapted quickly and branched out from its CanLit roots, letting the acquiring editors' interests and passions lead the way. In 1992, the Press added books about popular culture and sports to its roster — books with larger trade markets and a higher potential for revenue — and they changed the ECW initialism to stand for Entertainment-Culture-Writing; it has remained that way since.

Today, the Toronto-based ECW is one of the last-standing independent Canadian-owned book publishers. The Press is committed to publishing the very best in a variety of genres: poetry and fiction, pop-culture and pop-science, political analysis, sports books, and biographies. Even though the owners have changed — David bought Lecker out of the company in 2002, and in 2014, David sold the company to David Caron, who has been with the company since 2004; the two are now co-publishers — the Press's mandate has remained the same since the early nineties: publish a mix of commercial and literary works that strive to bring readers the best authors and the finest writing in Canadian publishing. From its beginnings, ECW Press has engaged in corporate publishing to support those endeavours.

Starting in 1974, when it was just a scholarly journal based out of York University, David and Lecker published books for a professor in exchange for office space. David soon learned this was a profitable way of sustaining a business and the company continued to provide services to individuals who wanted to publish. Since then, ECW has profited

from both individuals and corporations wanting to create a book to celebrate a history or anniversary, as part of marketing or publicity campaigns, and as a sales tool. These projects usually came to the Press through word of mouth or referrals. However, in the last few years, ECW has begun to actively search for these opportunities. In light of the growing popularity of content marketing, it is in ECW's best interests to find companies that would benefit from the practice of setting themselves apart from competitors. To help support that, ECW strives to prove to clients that a high-quality book — in both content and presentation — will undoubtedly grab consumers' attention and build an abiding trust.

I have worked as an assistant editor with ECW Press since August 2013. In that time, I have seen corporate projects through every stage of the process, from the writing of a proposal to the delivery of finished books. Although the corporate publishing process shares a few similarities with the process of producing books for the trade market, how the two projects are handled is actually quite different; this report provides insight into the corporate publishing program at ECW. The report begins by delving into what corporate publishing is and its history within ECW Press. It then explores how ECW finds these corporate projects and examines the financial considerations and arrangements that guide them. Then, using a project ECW completed for Trent University's fiftieth anniversary as a case study, the report demonstrates how clients benefit from the (relatively) standard set of processes that ECW has in place to produce corporate projects. Finally, the report looks at the profitability of ECW's corporate projects and suggests possible refinements to the publishing process.

2 Corporate Publishing at ECW Press

2.1 ECW's Beginnings in Corporate Publishing

In the 1920s, when Gaston Gallimard, founder and publisher of Librairie Gallimard, was asked how he could dare publish books that “were part of a genre, an ethic, and a conception of literature diametrically opposed to the principles adopted by the founding father of the NRF [La Nouvelle Revue Française]” (Assouline 1988, 89), as opposed to the quality literature his press was accustomed to publishing, his response was simple:

I am as deeply attached as you to everything that has made the reputation of our company, the quality of the books we have brought out. But it is precisely to be able to maintain that quality in the future, to go on bringing out young authors and publishing difficult works, that I have now resolved to make certain concessions...We will have to compensate for the commercially disastrous titles, or those that pay off only in the very long run, by bringing out some that are profitable. (Assouline 1988, 89)

Gaston Gallimard was devoted to publishing the best literature in France, but he also realized that publishing books aimed at a wider, and potentially more profitable, market would undoubtedly be beneficial to his publishing house. At that point, according to Pierre Assouline, Gallimard “decided, against the opinion of all the others, upon a course of publishing in which the support of the best of literature was tied in with the commercial imperatives of a fully developing company” (Assouline 1988, 90).

In the early 1990s, Jack David, co-publisher and then-co-owner of ECW Press, used this excerpt as an introduction in a paper entitled, “The Right Hand of Commerce: The Left Hand of Culture.” The paper was written to satisfy the requirements of an academic job application and he circulated it among interested colleagues at ECW Press. The paper’s purpose was to “examine the difficult task of publishing poetry and how-to books, literary fiction and cookbooks, to create a profitable mix of the commercial and the cultural” (David, “The Right Hand of Commerce: The Left Hand of Culture”).

The paper was written just around the time that ECW was beginning to diversify its list, a change that was necessary to ensure the company's survival. Starting in 1992, the Ontario public library system cut its budgets (Rao 2012, 15), weakening a huge market for ECW's bibliographies and academic titles. As Caron, co-publisher and now owner of ECW Press, explains in *ECW: 40*, a festschrift put together in 2014 to celebrate ECW's fortieth anniversary, in the early 1990s, the recession had "caused the federal and provincial governments to look for places to slash, and libraries were frequent targets. Since these bastions of culture were ECW's major source of revenue, it was staring at a shrinking market" (Caron 2014, 160).

Reacting to changing market conditions, in 1992, ECW began to publish books about popular culture and sports, tapping into different markets and reaching different audiences. The first title published under the new strategy was *k.d. lang: Carrying the Torch* by William Robertson — this was also the first book in ECW's Canadian Biography Series that covered a non-writer (David interview 2015). It's a model ECW has "worked on over the years: diversify your revenue, never again be reliant on a single market. The books on k.d. lang and Jerry Seinfeld opened the doors to publishing books internationally, and ECW soon had U.S. and U.K. distributors" (Caron 2014, 160).

But even though the company was expanding its list to appeal to larger markets, David was very aware of the effects "Blockbuster mentality" has on small presses:

The urge to publish a blockbuster is not limited to the multinational companies; small publishers, too, figure that their way out of financial distress is a chocolate chip recipe book, but these same publishers don't have enough capital to create the market demand or to develop the market distribution that the huge companies can. As a result, the chocolate chip recipe book simply drives the smaller company into even more financial distress. They'd be better off buying lottery tickets. (David, "The Right Hand of Commerce: The Left Hand of Culture").

Publishing cookbooks and celebrity biographies with large potential markets didn't, and won't, necessarily work for small presses, and ECW's successive publishers have always kept that in mind, using title profit and loss statements as guides and trying not to spend beyond their means. Even today, as a medium-sized publisher, this philosophy is paramount at ECW Press. Its leaders know that "conservatism is essential. Any book has

the potential to break out of the pack and be a bestseller. Few actually do” (Woll 2010, 117).

In addition to ensuring survival through a diversified list that satisfied editorial passions while meeting market demands, ECW was also open to supporting its main publishing goals by using its staff’s skills and experience to earn additional revenue through corporate publishing. This is an avenue the Press had pursued since its beginnings, when the company provided their publishing services to York University professors, who wanted to publish a book for a course they taught, in exchange for office space on campus, where the Press could run its journal.

From the 1970s to the 1990s, ECW’s corporate clients were mostly individuals who were willing to finance the project themselves: people who wanted a memoir published for their children, professors who wanted their books used as course material, or business professionals who were looking to show their expertise.

In the early 2000s, the landscape began to shift from individuals to large entities seeking to publish a book. Academic institutions were added to the corporate publishing mix when, in 2002, ECW published a book for Branksome Hall, a girls’ private school celebrating its one-hundredth anniversary. David calls this project ECW’s “tipping point” (David interview 2014). It was the first time a project didn’t just fall into the Press’s lap, but instead, the company answered a Request for Proposals (RFP), attended an interview, and won the business. It was also the first time ECW worked with a committee to publish a book and went through the taxing process of working with an institution’s board to make decisions and keep the project on schedule. And from this academic project came others.

In 2005, when Neuchâtel Junior College — a private international school in Neuchâtel, Switzerland — was looking for a publishing house to produce a book celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, they came across the Branksome Hall book, leading them to ECW (David interview 2014).

Another significant client came in 2002. GoodLife Fitness had originally published a book with Stoddart Publishing, but when Stoddart went bankrupt in 2002, and GoodLife

wanted to reprint the title, the then–editorial director at Stoddart suggested GoodLife Fitness approach ECW Press (David interview 2014). Since then, ECW has published two books, *No Sweat: Fitness for the Rest of Us* and *Living the Good Life: Your Guide to Health and Success*, and has printed more than 1.5 million copies for GoodLife Fitness. ECW has also published books for the Toronto Argonauts, Citibank, Woodbine Entertainment Group, Woods Canada, Crescent School, and Trent University, among other large organizations.

2.2 Corporate Publishing

At ECW, projects that receive financing instead of the support provided by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund, the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Book Publishing Tax Credit and the Ontario Media Development Corporation are considered corporate projects. On the other hand, trade books that have the potential to reach audiences outside the traditional trade channels could fall under a hybrid-publishing umbrella.

2.2.1 Corporate Publishing: Using Content Marketing to ECW’s Advantage

In this world of information overload in print, on the internet, and on social media, it’s becoming increasingly difficult for marketers to reach consumers. As Ebele Wybenga, author of *The Editorial Age*, wrote, magazines are smothering their readers in ads, causing the advertisements to “lose their power and appeal, sinking away among too many competing messages” (Wybenga 2013, 2). And the same thing is happening online. Banner ads are ignored, pop-ups are immediately closed, and Facebook and Instagram ads are quickly scrolled past. This form of intrusive advertising no longer seems to work.

In 2012, 684,478 pieces of content were shared on Facebook every minute. In 2014, that figure rose to 2,460,000. Over 277,000 tweets were sent per minute in 2014, up from 100,000 tweets a minute in 2012 (James 2014). It’s clear that to catch anyone’s attention, marketers need something so distinctive and so notable that it stands out from the rest of the advertising noise. They have found that alternative in content marketing.

Content marketing is defined as “a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action” (Content Marketing Institute, “What Is Content Marketing?”). It’s starting a conversation with customers without blatantly selling anything. But, as is often the case with marketing, the biggest question companies face is: How to reach the consumer?

In an article entitled “Four Ways to Break the Insanity of Content Marketing Competition,” Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute, an online platform that provides insights and advice from marketing experts, as well as the latest research, “news, information, and advances that are moving the industry” (Content Marketing Institute, “About the Content Marketing Institute”), says a way to stand out from the crowd is to use print. In a world that is primarily online, print is a way to help brands prove that they are worthy of attention. However, he isn’t referring to an ad in a print magazine or in a newspaper. Instead, marketers should take the time and effort and apply the resources necessary to create a publication that instills a love for the brand, strengthens their reputation, and ultimately improves sales. Ebele Wybenga describes this new era of advertising as the Editorial Age and argues print creates enough credibility to give brands the opportunity to position themselves as the expert (Rubens 2014).

And the idea is catching on. The Content Marketing Institute noticed a resurgence of print in content marketing in 2014. In “Four Ways to Break the Insanity of Content Marketing Competition,” Joe Pulizzi even goes on to say that “effective content marketers are seeing amazing results in both podcasts and printed books” and since “these two are not at the top of marketers’ usage list...I smell an opportunity here to get in before the rush” (Pulizzi 2014). According to the Content Marketing Institute, in 2013, 24 percent of business-to-consumer marketers used books as a marketing tactic, and in 2014 that figure jumped to 30 percent. The average increase in usage over twelve tactics used by marketers (including infographics, social media, case studies, annual reports, etc.) was roughly 2.5 percent (Content Marketing Institute, “B2C Content Marketing: 2015 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America”).

Both Wybenga and Pulizzi believe corporate publishing gives companies “an opportunity to engage on a deeper, longer-lasting level. Decent print content has longevity as reference material” (Rubens 2014). Both Caron and David agree and hope to take advantage of the potential that lies in content marketing.

ECW aims to help organizations use books to give their brand an identity. The purpose of these books is to humanize the organization, showing their rich history and the people behind it, and letting its reputation and the brand’s prestige speak for itself.

ECW pitches corporate projects to clients who would benefit from content marketing and wish “to build brand identity for [their] organization, relay [their] company’s history, celebrate an anniversary or other significant event” (ECW Press, “Corporate Publishing”) by leveraging the distinctiveness of print to claim authority and make a lasting impression on their customers.

These are projects that are funded entirely by the client. Generally, these projects don’t fit within ECW’s mandate of publishing “a heady mix of commercial and literary works that strive for a uniform standard of excellence: the best writing; the most exciting, controversial, and insightful takes on the hottest subject matter” (ECW Press, “About Us”). These books most likely wouldn’t be published unless they were paid in full by the client and are published solely to fit the client’s needs. The clients come to ECW with varying stages of material – a full manuscript, some research, or just an idea, ready to rely heavily on ECW’s expertise to create a high-quality book for their employees, shareholders, and/or customers.

A prime example of a corporate project is the book ECW produced for Woods Canada, one of the most respected outdoor apparel and equipment brands in the world based in Toronto. After an introductory meeting, the press was asked to work with Woods Canada on a book that would be used to celebrate the launch of a new product line and would also commemorate the company’s rich history outfitting Canada’s outdoorsmen. ECW agreed to work on the project when it was still in its conceptual phase, before it had been written. Woods supplied all the material, research, images, and content they wanted to include in the book, and ECW contracted one of its regular freelance writers to compile it into a manuscript. The author created a compelling narrative relaying the company’s

history and accomplishments. The book took consumers through the company's history, from outfitting lumbermen and stamperders in the late 1800s to providing the parkas worn by the first Canadians to climb Mount Everest in 1982. Woods Canada relied heavily on ECW's publishing process and experience to ensure a quality final product. Woods Canada's book was not marketed or distributed to the trade market.

2.2.2 Hybrid Publishing: Drawing a Line

If the publisher at ECW believes a book might not reach its audience through traditional trade channels alone, it might then be treated as what could be called a hybrid project. The main difference between corporate publishing and hybrid publishing is that hybrid projects are books that fall within ECW's mandate of the type of titles the Press publishes and are financed entirely by the Press, whereas corporate projects are funded entirely by the client. Where the main goal of a corporate project is to make a profit, hybrid projects share the same goal as ECW's trade books: publish a work that contributes something of value to the Canadian publishing landscape.

Although the term "hybrid publishing" has been used to describe situations in which the author pays "for some or all of their production and print costs in exchange for higher royalty rates" (Warner 2015) or is obligated to purchase a certain amount of books, that's not how the term is used at ECW. Instead, the term "hybrid project" refers to trade books that could adopt a different sales strategy than the traditional trade sales-model, taking advantage of ancillary, non-traditional sales channels. Hybrid projects don't follow the sales model of traditional trade books, where the sales come from the regular retail channels (chain bookstores, independent book stores, big-box stores, e-retailers, or directly through the Press). In addition to those outlets, ECW branches out and explores different sales avenues, often using the author's capabilities to reach markets that would be difficult for ECW to access on its own. Generally, these channels are unique to each title, and it takes a substantial amount of effort to find them and create a plan that works for all parties involved.

The reason a trade project would be called a hybrid project is because, sometimes, relying on traditional retail channels alone simply isn't enough to ensure the book reaches its readers. Although there are many reasons why a book might not reach its

potential audience through regular retail channels, industry trends give two main explanations: decreased book orders from brick-and-mortar bookstores and the digital browsing landscape.

Indigo controls nearly half of the book retailing business in Canada and publishers across Canada rely heavily on the sales it provides (Strauss 2011). So in 2011, when Indigo began diversifying its product mix and reducing the amount of space reserved for books, publishers were rightfully concerned about what this meant for their business (Williams 2012). This decision had almost immediate effects on ECW. In a 2012 *Publishers Weekly* article assessing the Canadian publishing industry, Caron commented on the effect this change had on ECW's publishing activities: "There are smaller orders and fewer titles...the hardest part is that [Indigo will] pass on a title entirely...Indigo used to try to make most Canadian authors' books available, at least on a limited basis, but that is not the case anymore" (Williams 2012). According to market share reports compiled through BookNet Canada, in 2011, right before Indigo began its transformation to create the "world's first cultural department store" (Toller 2014), 65 percent of the books ECW sold that year were sold through Indigo (BookNet Canada Salesdata, 2011 Market Share Report). In 2012, that figure dropped to 40 percent (BookNet Canada Salesdata, 2012 Market Share Report). To make up for lost sales, the Press took on a bigger role selling books to consumers, and books sold directly through ECW increased from 11 percent in 2011 to 25 percent in 2012 (BookNet Canada Salesdata, 2012 Market Share Report). These figures have remained roughly the same since, as a market share report pulled for 2014 indicates that 41 percent of ECW's books sold that year were sold through Indigo and 25 percent were sold directly through the Press (BookNet Canada Salesdata, 2014 Market Share Report).

With continuously diminishing space for books in Indigo stores, especially books by first-time authors in niche genres, ECW cannot count on its books being displayed prominently or being found in Indigo stores at all, making in-store discoverability even more uncertain than it was in the past.

According to a 2012 BookNet Canada study, nearly 18 percent of books were discovered through an in-store display or on a shelf or spinning rack (BookNet Canada 52). And by 2014, that figure dropped to 11 percent (Genner 2014). With fewer and fewer books in-

store, people are turning to the online world to discover new titles. Unfortunately, that too has its challenges for publishers and readers.

The online space that tracks search behaviour and book purchases has replaced the knowledgeable bookseller and the aisles that consumers used to browse (Lorimer 2012, 233). Just as in-store discoverability decreased between 2012 and 2014, online discoverability increased from 31 percent (BookNet Canada 52) to 40 percent (Genner 2014) and of that 40 percent, online browsing accounted for 8 percent of the books that were discovered in 2014, more than any other online discovery channel. Unfortunately, in-store browsing and online browsing differ dramatically. As the Authors Guild points out, “A reader browsing the shelves and tables of a bookstore is often hoping to discover something unexpected. Virtual bookstores, on the other hand, are optimized for search — browsing isn’t the attraction” (The Author’s Guild, “The Justice Department’s E-Book Proposal Needlessly Imperils Bookstores; How to Weigh In”).

This is reinforced by impulse buying in chain bookstores versus online. A 2012 study by BookNet Canada compared impulse versus planned purchases by channel and placed purchases in four categories: planned purchase; title-planned, timing-impulsive; timing-planned, title-impulsive; and purely impulsive. In chain bookstores, approximately 20 percent were impulse purchases and roughly 30 percent were timing-planned, title-impulsive. Online, approximately 10 percent of purchases were impulse purchases and roughly 10 percent were timing-planned, title-impulsive (BookNet Canada 58). It’s clear that online, consumers tend to know what book they want to buy before they make the purchase; however, in bookstores, the book they purchase is left to chance.

A person can walk through a bookstore, casually pass the business section, and something that interests them might stand out. They might purchase that book, having had no intention to purchase a business book. Alternatively, to buy a business book online, they would most likely have to type a particular set of keywords into the search engine (that is, unless the book appears in a top 100 bestseller list or through another one of the recommendation lists the retailer provides) (McCray 2011). Even then, there are algorithms that take myriad factors into account, like title and subtitle, keywords, bestseller lists, the number of external links to the book, and sales rank, among others (Digital Publishing 101, “Beating Amazon’s Algorithms”).

It's therefore unwise to assume that a reader will search through hundreds of pages and discover a particular book. They'll trust the data-driven results and assume that the first few recommendations are the best choices for them. Even though an online bookseller can stock almost infinite titles, fewer titles get attention and online promotion.

Given the realities of the current market, ECW must sometimes look outside traditional retail channels to ensure a book reaches its audience. Since a hybrid book will be distributed to the trade market, an acquiring editor evaluates the title based on the same criteria as any trade book, and each title goes through the standard editorial and production processes. Hybrid projects are submitted to ECW just as any trade book is: through agents or foreign publishers, as unsolicited manuscripts, or through a call for submissions. The acquiring editor first evaluates the subject and writing, and then does comparable research to see if there is anything too similar in the market. If the book has passed those stages, then the editor prepares a profit and loss statement (P&L).

In assembling a P&L, the acquiring editor looks at the specs and sales figures of comparable titles, identifies the audience for the book and assesses whether they have the capabilities to reach that audience, and calculates the production costs of a book based on projects with a similar format. Since it occurs before the book is signed up, the editor ensures that the figures used are conservative and realistic, as inflating the figures would create a false sense of potential profitability. However, those figures are always speculative and deciding to publish a book still involves financial risk, even when the most conservative numbers and projections are used.

Also considered are the grants and contributions that the project will be eligible for, both provincially and federally, and the P&L statement takes into consideration how much funding can be applied to the project through the Canada Book Fund, Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Media Development Corporation, and the Ontario Book Publishing Tax Credit.

Although the P&L statements determine, at times, if a book is published or not, if the publisher believes a book is innovative and enlightening enough, contributes to the Canadian publishing landscape, and truly deserves to be published, the book will be published, even though the P&L may not support the project. Therefore, to ensure that

the book has its best chance of reaching its audiences and being profitable for both the Press and the author, ECW will consider additional channels; those often come through author sales, taking into consideration the author's willingness to promote and sell the book, or bulk sales.

Author

In ECW's experience, business and science authors tend to know who their audiences are and have the capabilities to reach markets that ECW would have difficulty accessing. When this is the case, ECW encourages the author to act as a seller, ensuring the title reaches its intended audience. An author selling directly at list price can make at least a 50 percent profit (since they purchased the book at least 50 percent off the cover price) plus the contractual 10 (or plus) percent royalty (of net revenue) per book.

It is often the case that an author uses the book as a sort of business card, and in addition to their credentials, the book demonstrates their expertise in their field. If the author is also a public speaker, a book can open more doors and can help the author, and the book, reach a larger audience than originally anticipated. The marketing and publicity team at ECW will help the author plan and promote these events and appearances and will do their best to make sure the author, and the event, gets the exposure needed to ensure it is worth the time and effort.

These projects are different than commissioned corporate projects in that the project is financed entirely by ECW and the author is never obligated to purchase a certain amount of copies. Since grants like the Canada Council for the Arts: Emerging Publisher Grant doesn't support author-subsidized titles,¹ ECW ensures that only projects that the company would publish regardless of the author's potential sales fall under the hybrid

¹ As it states in its guidelines and application form, ineligible titles include "books to which the author has contributed financially toward the publication costs (this includes an author's obligation to purchase a given number of copies of his or her book as a condition of publication)" (Canada Council for the Arts, "Emerging Publisher Grant 2015— Guidelines and Application Form").

publishing umbrella. If the title is not the kind that ECW would publish without the author's possible sales, then it becomes a corporate project and must be funded entirely by the author or by a corporate sponsor.

Bulk Sales

ECW asks that all manuscript submissions include a brief biography of the author and suggested marketing ideas (ECW Press, "Submissions"). Sometimes it's discovered that an author has a personal connection to a third party that would be interested in the book. When this happens, ECW asks the author to approach those organizations about bulk purchases, and, for a variety of reasons, the organization might decide to purchase a number of copies. ECW does its best to secure these bulk sales upon the signing of the contract, as guaranteed sales undoubtedly affect the profit and loss statement and might even affect future decisions such as print run and specifications, format, etc.

An example of a hybrid project is *The Art of Medicine: Healing and the Limits of Technology*, by Dr. Herbert Ho Ping Kong, a senior consulting physician at the University Health Network and a professor of medicine at the University of Toronto. The book came to ECW in 2013 through an agent, and it went through the same acquisition process as any trade book would. Although ECW decided that this was a project that they wanted to publish, since the book looks at the idea of using a holistic form of healthcare working in tandem with technological innovations that hasn't been explored before, they wanted to ensure that, somehow, the book stood out from hundreds of books already published on medical care and reached its audience.

ECW found a direct path to the book's audience through Dr. Ho Ping Kong's connections with the University of Toronto and the Centre for Excellence in Education and Practice. Since Dr. Ho Ping Kong is so respected in the medical community, ECW was able to secure bulk purchases from these organizations, who planned to provide each graduate at the University of Toronto Medical School with a copy of the book. The marketing team at ECW hopes that if one of the top medical schools in Canada believes so highly in the teachings of this book that they will give one copy to each future doctor, others, both

fellow medical practitioners and readers interested in medical practices, will take notice and will also turn to *The Art of Medicine* when searching for their next read.

3 From First Encounter to Published Work

3.1 Winning Corporate Business

The typical medium-sized publisher acquires titles through different channels: through agent submissions, unsolicited manuscripts, purchased rights, or internally generated ideas. Hybrid projects are also procured through these sources. Corporate projects, however, are not acquired; instead, the business is won.

Whereas acquiring books for the trade can sometimes be a passive process (waiting for the manuscript to arrive at the publishing house), and although some corporate projects are brought to ECW through referrals or through the Press's website (where the company promotes its publishing services), procuring corporate projects at ECW is generally speaking a very active process.

Requests for proposals (RFPs) are one of the ways that ECW works to get corporate projects. RFPs can be issued by any industry and at any time, so ECW is always on the lookout. To do that, ECW monitors dedicated websites like Merx, where ECW can bid on tenders from the Canadian public sector, and websites that are more specific, such as the Alberta Purchasing Connection, which focuses solely on the businesses in both the private and public sectors in Alberta. ECW uses these websites to find organizations that are looking for publishing services.

The RFPs usually require ECW to provide a history of the company and its corporate experience; a proposed methodology and work plan, outlining specific plans for the project; a breakdown of all project-related costs; a work schedule mapping out standard production lead times and identifying all the steps and processes related to the project; a list of the team members who will be associated with the project; references for similar projects; and recent work samples. A considerable amount of time goes into each RFP, as each tender has different specifications — timelines will vary, as will the design and

production specifications (hardcover or paperback, colour or black and white, trim size, indexing, page count, etc.). Following the RFP, sometimes ECW's personnel will be asked to attend an interview with members of the organization who will be working on the book.

The companies who bid on these types of RFPs, however, aren't just publishers. After a recent RFP for an anniversary book, ECW was the only publishing house out of the seven organizations that bid on the project: one company was a marketing firm, four companies were design firms, and the last company was a historical research firm. A design firm ended up winning the project with a bid of roughly \$20,000 — ECW's bid was approximately \$40,000 (ECW Press, "Alberta Purchasing Connection Opportunity Notice"). Although ECW might have more publishing experience, it's possible that the design firm has a smaller overhead and can offer a cheaper quote. Unfortunately, the results of RFPs are quite unpredictable; it's very hard to know what the client weighs most heavily: experience, quality, or cost.

Knowing that books are not always an obvious voice as promotional tools, ECW has recently begun approaching corporations who have not previously expressed any interest in publishing a book. In spring 2014, ECW sent out letters to organizations in various fields, including country clubs, law firms, tourist attractions, college football teams, and golf clubs, among others ECW felt valued their reputation and would have a suitable marketing budget. These letters informed the organizations of ECW's experience publishing for corporations and urged them to get in touch if they wanted to discuss a potential project. The information package sent to each organization varied depending on the potential ECW saw in a project. Most were only sent a letter; however, some, such as the Alabama University and Auburn University football teams, were sent a letter, a sample mock-up design of what the book could look like, a magazine article about the two teams (suggesting the writer as the author for each book), and a copy of one of ECW's books. David and ECW see a lot of value in approaching companies and organizations about publishing a book. "How many corporations are there that you can sell to?...How many schools? How many government divisions are there? It's endless" (David interview 2014).

ECW decided to send out 800 letters to organizations in a variety of industries and sectors. One of the purposes of this exercise was to find out what types of organizations are most responsive. From these letters, ECW received approximately a dozen replies. Although there wasn't a particular type of organization that was most responsive (for example, responses included a public golf course, a humane society, a national bank, and a private girls' school), the majority of those who responded did so because their organization had an anniversary coming up, had something to celebrate, or were already toying with a book idea but hadn't yet had the opportunity to flesh that idea out.

Although ECW has already begun using important events to entice corporations to publish a book — significant anniversaries of prominent organizations, new product lines, or mergers — if ECW performs this type of outreach again, it would be beneficial to target companies that have an anniversary forthcoming or are celebrating a newsworthy event, since those were types of organizations that wanted to learn more about ECW and its publishing processes.

The next step in the process was to set up a meeting and present a proposal to these organizations. If the company didn't yet have an idea as to what should be included in the book, ECW did some research into the company and presented angles that might be of interest to their customers. Researching a public golf club in Ontario, for example, ECW learned that a board of directors comprised of seven sisters governs the course. ECW saw this as a unique story worth telling, especially in a predominantly male sport. When a company responded and *did* know what they wanted their book to be about, ECW would highlight how they could present the material and optimize revenue without sacrificing quality.

ECW also provides suggestions of where the client could receive additional funding for the project to offset production costs. For example, ECW has suggested in the past to pursue sponsorships within the client's existing corporate network; in return, the sponsor could have their company logo appear somewhere in the book. Alternatively, if the client was celebrating an anniversary, the companies could write a letter congratulating the client on reaching the milestone that would appear in the front matter.

3.2 The Publishing Process

Hybrid and trade publishing projects go through the same editorial and production processes:

- The manuscript is critiqued and evaluated by an editorial committee (based on quality of writing, its contribution to Canadian publishing, profit and loss statement, etc.).
- Through negotiations, ECW and the author agree to an advance, a royalty percentage, and who holds what rights (North American, English-language, world, etc.).
- The manuscript is assigned a publication date by ECW.
- A cover and interior design is proposed for the book (ideally, the author will agree with the proposed designs and ECW will provide revisions if the author requests them; however, it is ultimately ECW's decision what the cover and interior design look like).
- The book is listed in ECW's catalogue, as well as those of its distributors.
- The book goes through a substantive edit and copy edit. The editors and author work together to ensure all parties are happy with the proposed changes.
- ECW obtains permission, arranges the licences, and pays for any additional elements that the book requires (photographs, illustrations, etc.).
- Advance reading copies are printed and sent to potential blurbers or reviewers.
- The book is pitched to sales reps (indie bookstores, chain bookstores, big box stores, etc.).
- The book is typeset, proofread, indexed (if needed), and files delivered to the printer.
- The book is distributed to the trade market.
- The author and ECW work together to publicize and market the book.

Depending on what stage the manuscript is in when it is acquired, this process can take anywhere between six months and two years.

Corporate projects and trade books go through different publishing processes, reflecting the fact ECW is providing services to a paying client. The client acts as the decision maker and essentially dictates the timeline, although ECW advises on what is feasible in both the timeline and the budget. The client decides the format, size, and extent of the book, approves the design and layout of the interior, has the final say on the book's content, determines the number of copies to be printed, and where to deliver the finished books.

The steps that a corporate project goes through, however, vary depending on the services that the Press is hired to do. Services offered by ECW include:

Project Management: This is a service that comes with every corporate project. ECW does not have a separate team who works on corporate projects. Therefore, the projects are handled like trade books, and the editorial, production, and marketing departments integrate them into their regular workflow. Since corporate projects generally demand more management hours than an average trade book, the project will not be assigned to the managing editor, and instead will be assigned to one of ECW's editors whom will act as project manager. The task of the project manager is to know the status of the project at all times, keep it on schedule, and act as the liaison between ECW and the client.

Content Development: If the organization comes to ECW with just an idea, then ECW can pair that organization with a writer who will suit their needs. For example, if the book will be based on personal accounts, they will suggest a writer who is familiar with interviewing subjects; if it is based on historical accounts, ECW will suggest a qualified writer who can conduct the appropriate research and find the historical information required by the project. If the organization prefers to have the book written in-house, then the project manager can work with the designated writer developing the manuscript.

Editorial: This includes copyediting and proofreading. This is where ECW can ensure the book is a polished, professional product that both companies are proud to put their

name on. However, it is ultimately up to the client which suggestions or recommendations made by the Press they choose to use and which they choose to ignore.

Permission Arrangements: Generally, the client is responsible for submitting the images and gathering the appropriate permissions from within their organization. However, sometimes the project requires additional material that the client doesn't own. Since the editors at ECW are well experienced in finding the most suitable accompanying images, ECW can take on the responsibility of finding the appropriate images from third-party sources and securing the proper permissions and licences. Any accompanying fees are passed on to the client.

Design: This includes cover and interior design, as well as layout and typesetting. The client will provide direction and the designer, contracted by ECW, will execute meeting the client's brief. The project manager will work with the client on image placement within the text and will pass that information on to the designer.

Production and Printing: Taking into account budget, timelines, and production features, an in-house production manager will get quotes from qualified printers and selects one that best suits the project's needs. From typesetting to image-quality control to pre-press file management, the production manager oversees all the technical aspects of the book's production.

Value-Added Services: These services include sales and marketing; warehouse fulfillment, inventory, and distribution (if the client believes having the book in certain trade channels might be valuable, terms around revenue are outlined in the client agreement); and ebook production and distribution.

3.3 Financial Considerations and Arrangements

After ECW has presented the various forms the book could take and the range of content that could be included the book, the next step is to provide the client with a quote of what the book will cost, taking into account how the client visualizes the book (hard cover vs. paperback, full colour vs. black and white, images vs. text), who will write the book (in-house vs. freelance writer), and estimated costs for project management,

typesetting, design, scanning images, permissions, editing, proofing, and making corrections, as well as the paper, binding, packaging, and shipping costs (which are dependent on the print run). These estimates are based on terms agreed on during the initial meeting and what was outlined in the RFP. The estimate provides the client with a lump sum cost; however, sometimes the client asks for a breakdown of hourly rates and the estimated hours of work for each step of the process.

To ensure that the project is a profitable venture for ECW, the company uses a corporate quote sheet (CQS) instead of a profit and loss statement. The CQS is different than a P&L statement, because not only does it help ECW estimate how much the project will cost, it also builds a margin into that estimate. ECW can't count on any government contributions for corporate projects, and if the client doesn't want ECW to distribute their book to the trade market, ECW can't count on any trade sales or subsidiary rights sales, either. Therefore, the Press must build a margin into its estimate to account for the loss of these revenue streams and to ensure that ECW does not just break even on the project, but that it makes a profit. For example, in a profit and loss statement for a trade book, a project that requires medium editing will be expensed at \$18 per page. For a corporate project, a book that ECW estimates will require medium editing might be expensed at roughly \$27 per page. This margin also covers the potential for work that isn't anticipated.

Several factors influence the margin that ECW builds into the quote for a corporate book, including the client's marketing budget, how long the project may take, and how much project management may be required. According to David, "[The margin] could be anything. But it's got to be enough so that there's a buffer." David continues:

Sometimes it's real clear: they want more copies, so we have to bill them more money. There are more pages than we estimated: we're going to have to charge them more. It's going to be colour, not black and white: we're going to charge them more...But when they're a real pain in the ass...you have to cover yourself. You can't say, "You're being a real pain in the ass and costing us all these hours." (David interview 2014)

This is why ECW ensures a comfortable profit margin is built into the quote. "We've lost corporate projects because we bid too much...if [the book] was going to be lots of trouble, then we didn't want it" (David interview 2014).

A project that comes to ECW with a completed manuscript and a firm launch date will most likely have a smaller margin built in than a project that comes to ECW as a concept and no real deadline. A project at the concept stage is more likely to take longer than originally projected. Also taken into account is the author — a manuscript that is written in-house (by the client) will have a larger profit margin built in than a manuscript written by a professional writer, because ECW anticipates the editorial work will be much more taxing. ECW also evaluates the client's approval process. If a committee is responsible for overseeing the project, the Press may allow for a smaller profit margin than when the book approvals must go through various levels of the organization, as it's more likely that the project will be stuck somewhere in the approval chain or that structural changes may be requested later on the process (when someone new in the approval chain is seeing it for the first time). A committee, however, is involved in the project from beginning to end and is aware of what is happening during every step of the process. Very rarely is someone who is not on the committee asked to contribute to the project.

After ECW decides on an appropriate profit margin — taking into account the client's approval processes, the format of the book, the authorship, and the services ECW is providing (editorial, production, printing, distribution etc.) — and the client and ECW agree on a cost, a contract and payment schedule is sent to the client. The payment schedule is usually broken up into four installments. The schedule can vary, but generally the first payment is due on signing the agreement, the second payment is due when the client sends approved copy-edited pages to ECW, the third installment is due when the client approves final pages, and the final payment is due on delivery of printed books (ECW Press, Sample Contract). The client must always pay ECW before the next phase of the project begins, so that in the event that the client abandons the project, ECW would have already been paid in advance for the work completed to date (unless the client fails to pay after the book has been printed). It also means that the client doesn't have to pay for the next stage of the project until the previous stage has been completed and approved.

3.4 Corporate Publishing Outside of ECW

Currently, it's difficult to know what independent Canadian trade publishing houses also work on corporate projects, as it's generally not advertised. To have a thriving corporate publishing division requires available resources as well as the time and effort to find those projects. Like a lot of publishing houses, Mike O'Connor, publisher at Insomniac Press, had "thought about doing it in a serious way at Insomniac, but felt [he] didn't have the resources to really start that kind of business" (O'Connor interview 2015). Very often the same editors, coordinators, and designers work on trade books and corporate projects, so it's necessary that the publishing house working on corporate projects have a large enough staff to accommodate the extra work and the time it takes to manage those projects.

To have a thriving corporate publishing division means time must be spent to find those projects, which isn't always an easy task. As Susan Renouf, who worked on corporate projects while at Key Porter until the early 2000s, states, "There's not as much loose money flying around corporations as there used to be...It's not that it doesn't happen... there's not as much of it and there are more publishers going after it, so it's a tough market" (Renouf interview 2015). Carrie Gleason, editorial director at Dundurn, mirrors that sentiment in discussing Dundurn's corporate publishing practices: "We were actively seeking them out at one time, but the amount of effort that went in to [it] was not paying off. Now they usually come to us through referrals" (Gleason interview 2015). However, Jesse Finkelstein, principal at Page Two, sees the value in pursuing those connections with clients and finding corporate projects. Page Two, a publishing agency whose mandate is to "take a very customized approach to client services...[creating] a strategy that works for the company" will soon be taking a multi-pronged approach to marketing their services:

We're going to target certain market sectors and we will actively pitch them. And we'll also be doing some content marketing, where we intend to try to express to people in different market sectors what the benefit of thinking like a publisher is, what kind of benefit that could have for their particular industry and organization. (Finkelstein interview 2015)

Page Two also spends "a lot of time working upfront with potential clients. The proposal process is quite involved, because we don't have a one size that fits all, so we need to

present them with a scenario that they can see themselves in” (Finkelstein interview 2015). This is something that ECW does and would like to continue to develop, narrowing and targeting its proposals to organizations they consider will be more receptive. A way to do this is to find a niche, just as Dundurn has “had success with military organizations, since Dundurn is known for its military history titles” (Gleason interview 2015).

The principals at Page Two also make sure potential clients know just how much experience they have in the publishing industry. Although they offer services in different media, clients still perceive the book as “unique and something to be marketed, sold, and given away on its own...people still value books as something very special and something apart from everything else, and so they seem to be coming to us for that particular expertise” (Finkelstein interview 2015). The Page Two partners’ combined experience help attract clients, and it is fundamental in ensuring that the project is both successful and profitable. Without the proper provisions in place to protect the publishing house, it’s very possible the company will be exposed to take a loss on the book. As Renouf has warned, sometimes there’s just a lack of corporate will, and “you are pushing them to do it rather than them deciding they wanted it already...You’re basically at the mercy of your client, and they will be reasonable or not, but they will always change their minds. They’ll always dither” (Renouf interview 2015). Finkelstein, however, states that constant communication and managing client expectations from the beginning can help prevent that:

Early on with the client we’re very clear with what the scope is and the best way for us to manage it, and what has prevented us from going off the rails is to try to identify early on if it’s going to take longer or something is shifting the scope, and then we tell the client...most of the time we find the client is okay with it, because they understand and we’ve been transparent about the process. (Finkelstein interview 2015).

However, ECW knows that communication is only part of the key to a successful corporate project. Along with that comes a set of practices that helps guide corporate projects to completion.

4 Case Study: Trent University

4.1 The Process

In August 2013, Trent University issued an RFP on the Merx website. The RFP specified the university needed a “complete, turn-key solution regarding the layout, graphic design, publishing, and printing of our 50th Anniversary commemorative book. The goal is to produce a high-quality, attractive publication, efficiently priced to appeal to alumni, students, staff, and faculty, retirees, and community members” (Merx, “Anniversary Book – Layout, Design, Publishing and Printing”). The winning vendor would be responsible for copyediting, layout and design, typesetting the manuscript, proofreading, indexing, printing, and delivery to Trent University. The applicants were asked to provide pricing options for hardcover and paperback editions in two size options: 8.5" x 11" and 6" x 9".

ECW’s response included an overview of the company and its publishing experience, methodology for producing corporate projects, and a quote broken down into fixed (typesetting, design, copyediting, proofreading, indexing, etc.) and variable costs (print costs depending on print run, trim size, format, and page count), as well as a detailed production schedule.

Soon after the response was submitted to Trent University, ECW was asked to attend a meeting at Trent on September 26, 2013. Jack David; Athmika Punja, ECW’s operations coordinator; Tania Craan, longtime freelance designer who ECW would hire to work on the project; and the author of this report as potential project manager, attended the meeting. At the meeting, ECW learned the following about the project and the anticipated production process:

- The content will be organized in nine chapters, the manuscript length will be about 80,000 words and will be profusely illustrated, and the ideal extent of the book is set at 224 pages.

- The approval process will include the committee, university president, and some respected faculty.
- The committee will not be very receptive to deleting content.
- The committee requested a price point accessible to students.
- There are alumni events planned to celebrate the anniversary (they start next August).

(ECW Press, Trent Meeting Notes)

Four days later, ECW was awarded the project. According to D'Arcy Jenish, the author of the book, ECW's experience was a key factor:

[ECW] had done a number of other books that were very similar to the Trent project. Also, ECW had a long-established track record as a trade publisher. These facts provided a considerable amount of comfort...we were also working under fairly tight timelines so could not afford any slippage, and ECW's experience gave us confidence that our deadlines could be met. (Jenish interview 2014).

David and the designated project manager for the Trent project attended their first book committee meeting on November 1, 2013. Trent's committee consisted of fourteen members, plus David and the project manager from ECW. Members included the author, professors from various faculties, student representatives, and members of the alumni association, the external relations and advancement department, and the library/archives department. At the meeting, the committee members discussed the cover design, potential titles, and timelines. Jenish was on track to submit the manuscript in February 2014 and Trent needed finished copies by July 1, 2014, as there was a fiftieth anniversary kick-off weekend reception and book launch scheduled for August 7, 2014. At the meeting, it was also agreed that all contact would be between Trent's point person, the alumni affairs fiftieth anniversary and events coordinator, and ECW's project manager, who would then relay any messages to the respective parties. ECW's project manager would also be in direct contact with the author for the purpose of gathering materials, but all other queries and messages would be directed to the appointed Trent representative on the committee. It would be that person's job to make sure all approvals were gathered and relayed to ECW.

Even though the manuscript was still three months away from being submitted to ECW, David suggested that Jenish submit a few sample chapters (along with sample images and sidebars) so that the design process could begin. Knowing that getting a committee to agree on the design and layout of a book is a complicated and arduous task, the earlier the process is started, the better the chance that the project would stay on schedule. This would also give ECW a sense of the type and quality of the images Jenish would be selecting. If the images sent in for this early round weren't high-enough quality, ECW would have ample time to steer the author in the right direction.

After Trent decided that the format, size, binding of the book would be hardcover, full-colour, 8" x 10", a sample chapter and sample photos were sent to Tania Craan, the designer. Based on the project's scope and information gathered at the initial meeting with Trent, Craan created a design mock-up, noting the following:

1. I introduced an image on the opening chapter page. The image is for position only but Trent should really consider getting a good opening image for every chapter opening. We had talked about using something from their collection of artwork. If we go this way, getting permission is important. They may own a painting but do they have the right to reproduce it?
2. I introduced a light blue tint to the b/w images. The Trent logo is blue and green. The blue is the more appealing colour to work with.
3. There is a sample sidebar on page 10. It can be adapted for half a page to a full page.
4. I used two main fonts for the design (sans serif [Interstate] & serif [Garamond]). All a good size for aging eyes.

(Craan 2013)

Including the designer in that initial meeting was a great move on ECW's part, because the committee didn't need the extra time to agree on the interior design. They had virtually no qualms with the design that Craan had created and agreed upon it unanimously, before the final manuscript had even been submitted to ECW. By meeting the client, Craan had a great sense of who they were and the type of aesthetic they were looking for. While at the meeting, she noticed the student artwork and the artifacts that were scattered around the alumni office, and she was able to incorporate those elements

into the initial design — something she would not have been able to do had she not been there to see it. She was given the opportunity to have a good look at the campus and hear the client explain the purpose of the project, which then allowed her to create a design that she knew the committee would be receptive to.

On Monday, February 3, the final manuscript, entitled *Trent University: Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence*, came in, along with 90 accompanying photos and 14 sidebars to be placed throughout the text. Since Jenish is a professional journalist and author, ECW's project manager wasn't too worried about the state of the delivered manuscript, and she was right not to be. The manuscript did a great job relaying Trent's history, from when it was founded to what the future holds for the university. The manuscript was very clean and the content well organized, and the images were all high resolution — things that don't happen often when working on corporate projects. The photos were mostly sourced from the Trent University marketing and communications department, as well as the Trent archives, meaning it wasn't necessary to gather additional permissions or licenses. Jenish, who is familiar with the publishing process and procuring photo licenses, took on the responsibility of making sure the photos were attributed properly.

The manuscript had already gone through a number of approvals before ECW received it, as Jenish recalls:

[He] had to submit each chapter as it was written to my small circle of first readers...who were all professor emeriti with long experience at Trent. Then each chapter had to be circulated to all those quoted in it. The president of the university at the time, Steven Franklin, also had to read it. Somewhere between 125 and 150 people reviewed parts of the manuscript. (Jenish interview 2014)

So to avoid having the manuscript reapproved, the edits that ECW could propose were minor. However, this also meant that there was small chance that Trent would ask to add or take away content from the manuscript, meaning the manuscript delivered to ECW was in an almost final form. The project manager worked on the first edit of the manuscript, and on photo and sidebar placement, relaying those directions to the designer.

After the copyedit had been completed and approved by the committee, the manuscript was laid out and typeset, and page proofs were sent to the committee with the instruction that all edits at this point should mostly be grammar based or small changes. Since this was a photo-heavy book, larger changes could cause major reflow issues and could result in a delay and additional work. ECW suggested that at this stage, the committee restrict the number of people who read the book; preferably, the people who do the final proofread will already have read the manuscript and are quite familiar with it. This ensured that there was a smaller chance the readers would request large structural changes, as they would have already suggested their edits earlier on in the process. As a result, Trent appointed a small group to proofread, and the revisions that came back from these readers were minor. The book was then indexed and received final approval from the committee.

Jenish and the committee faithfully adhered to the production schedule outlined in ECW's proposal. The fact that books were needed for an anniversary weekend kick-off undoubtedly helped ensure that everyone stayed on task.

Throughout the process, the committee also decided they wanted to add an ebook and 250 copies of a leather-bound limited edition signed by the author and the founding president, T.H.B. Symons. Trent had initially considered using a dust jacket in the limited edition, however, ECW convinced Trent's committee not to cover the leather case. Instead, ECW suggested that a cigar band wrapping around the back cover could be used to house a description of the book, author bio, barcode, and price. It was then the project manager's job to figure out what these additional elements would cost, and Trent was charged accordingly (additional printing and binding costs of the special edition and the cigar band, cost of design work for the cigar band, and the cost of creating an ebook).

To accommodate the leather-bound edition, it was necessary for the book to be sent to the printer one week earlier than scheduled.

It was only then that two issues arose. In the special edition, the page that listed what number out of 250 each copy was and where the founding president would sign was translucent. Unfortunately, when ECW received the printer's proofs, it was discovered that the page behind it showed through and distorted the appearance of the translucent

page. Fortunately, the easiest solution was to insert a blank page directly behind it. Also, the book was going to print right around the time that Trent University was changing presidents, and the new president requested a last-minute change to the text. This revision was requested before ECW approved the printer's proofs, so it was possible to make that change without affecting the layout or incurring any additional printing costs.

ECW outlined to the Trent committee what their distribution methods are and what it would cost Trent if ECW managed the distribution of the books. After considering their options, the committee decided to handle the distribution internally.

Finally, since Trent was handling the distribution of the book, the committee needed to know the book size, the weight of the individual book, the number of books in each carton, the number of cartons, the size of the cartons, and the number of cartons on each skid.

The finished books were delivered to Trent University on June 24, 2014.

4.2 The Postmortem

The Trent University project is what those at ECW would call a "dream project." ECW won the business through an RFP and worked seamlessly with a committee to bring the project to fruition. The committee at Trent University really respected ECW's expertise and experience and responded well to ECW's standard set of procedures. To ensure the project runs smoothly and as efficiently as possible, the following is strongly recommended to all clients.

Know the scope and vision of the project.

Trent's book committee had a very clear vision of what book they wanted, in form and content. This clear vision helped ECW create a schedule that the committee was able to follow without conflicts. When the vision or scope of the project changes, chances are so will the timeline, as elements that need to be added or deleted or drastically revised will affect production time. In order to keep the project on schedule, having that vision clear

from the beginning and making sure that vision is expertly explained to everyone involved is a priority.

Hire a professional writer.

D'Arcy Jenish had already been hired by Trent to write the book before ECW was hired. As an experienced professional writer, the materials he provided to ECW were well written, well researched, and well organized. The book only had to go through one round of editing and proofreading, which is what ECW had quoted.

ECW makes it a point to strongly recommend every client hire a professional writer; unfortunately, not every client follows this advice and instead, to save money, decides to write the book in-house. In another one of ECW's corporate projects, in which ECW joined the project before the manuscript had been written, the client used an employee to author the book. The client was confident in the chosen writer's capabilities, but the appointed employee struggled to produce a clear, cohesive, and interesting manuscript about the company's history. That text went through five complete editing rounds with ECW's project manager, Jen Knoch. Knoch worked hard to ensure that the book could be released without embarrassment to either party, but the project took noticeably much more time than ECW had initially anticipated. Unfortunately, that contract didn't specify how many editing rounds the client was entitled to, and although ECW had anticipated that the manuscript would require some work, the Press did not expect that it would require as much attention as it eventually demanded.

Although it's possible that a trade book will go through more rounds of edits than originally predicted, it can be assumed that the more the editor and author work together to improve the manuscript, the better received the book will be by the press and the public and, hopefully, the sales will reflect the effort. In the case of that corporate project, however, there was no benefit, financial or otherwise, for the extra work that was done.

Choose *one* point person.

The appointed committee contact at Trent remained the same throughout the entire process, which helped the project run smoothly. ECW asks for the client to choose a point person, and all communication between the two parties goes through the client's point person and ECW's project manager. The client's point person brings up issues to either the committee or whoever the decision makers at the organization are, and then brings their final decisions back to ECW. This prevents ECW from having to spend time coordinating with a committee or a group of people to agree. Also, the client knows exactly who to contact at ECW, as the project manager knows where the project stands at all times. ECW recommends that the point person remains the same throughout the entire process, as the transition of responsibilities will undoubtedly cause some delays as the new appointee would need time to get acquainted with the project's scope and processes.

Pick a launch date and stick with it.

A large reason the Trent project went smoothly was because the university was working towards a deadline defined by a launch party that was widely advertised on social media and on the university's website. The schedule was tight and there was no time to let things sit for too long. ECW always asks that the client choose a firm launch date and it is best to tie that date to an anniversary party or product launch, something that will motivate the client to have the book ready for that event. A clear launch date helps clients adhere to the timeline and encourages all participants to meet deadlines. If there is no firm date set, the client can lose steam, the book becomes a lower priority, and the project runs the risk of taking much longer than originally intended. Since the project can't move forward without the approval of the client, it's very easy for a project to stall. This becomes a problem, because it's difficult to know when the client may consider restarting the project, and since corporate projects are produced alongside trade projects, it's difficult to know how busy the editorial and production departments will be at that time.

One corporate project that was originally set to have books delivered in April 2013 didn't have finished books until over a year later. The client wasn't working toward a specific

date and would leave the project hanging for months on end. This meant that when the client was ready to start working again (which could be at any time), the project manager had to reacquaint herself with the project, provide the client with a new workback schedule, and make sure that everyone at ECW who was involved in the project made time for it in their schedules. Since there was no monetary penalty in the contract for missing a deadline, the client had no qualms with letting the project sit.

Include the designer.

At that initial meeting with Trent University, the designer, Tania Craan, was able to talk to the client and learn what aesthetic they were looking for and what elements were the most important. This made designing the interior and cover easier and simplified the approval process.

Getting the book looking as the client envisions it is the most taxing part of the design process and takes the most amount of time; thus ECW tries to receive as much specific direction as possible. Including the designer early in the process gives him or her a better sense of the client's vision and valuable information won't get lost as the direction is passed from the client to the project manager to the designer. The designer can learn a lot by meeting the client and discussing the project face to face, and he or she might pick up on elements that can be incorporated into the book's design that the project manager wouldn't think of mentioning.

Get approvals early.

ECW received the manuscript from Jenish only after it had received all necessary approvals from Trent's committee. That gave ECW confidence that only minor changes would be recommended at the editing and proofreading stages, and they could confidently move on to the typesetting and layout stage without worrying about major changes that may affect pagination. Unfortunately, an approval process isn't always laid out on the client's side. When that is the case, if ECW gets involved too early in the process, it can be forced to accommodate major revisions at any time, as new people at the organization read the manuscript and suggest, or demand, changes. Therefore, unless ECW is working with the client on content development, the Press strongly

recommends not getting involved in editing the manuscript until all approvals on the client's side have been obtained. After that stage, only a few key people, who are familiar with the scope of the project and have been involved with the project from the beginning, monitor it as it goes through the publishing process.

Have an image? Send it over!

Jenish sent all selected photographs to ECW together with the manuscript. This gave ECW plenty of time to evaluate the quality of the files, and if a photo file wouldn't fulfill the requirements, the author had more than enough time to find a replacement.

ECW recommends that all image files that the client wants to use be submitted with the manuscript. Although this is a step that often doesn't happen until it's time to work on the layout of a trade book, in that case the substantive editor who sources the photos and decides which ones to use can exercise effective quality control. In corporate projects, however, the client dictates which photos are used. If they don't have experience working with these types of images, they might submit low-resolution images that can't be used. By requesting the images early, ECW has time to evaluate their quality and go back to the client and ask for higher-quality photos or different ones altogether. If a client submits the photos later on in the process, ECW then runs the risk of having to do some last-minute scrambling to either get a higher-quality photo or one that can replace the image entirely to make sure the objectives are achieved and the project is produced on time and on budget.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Trent University and the Profitability of Corporate Projects

Quoting for corporate projects is a delicate balance between providing a quote that the client won't refuse and covering the company in case the timeline and project scope go totally awry. The Trent University project was an anomaly — usually projects with corporate clients do not go so smoothly — and it was extremely successful in that the amount of work ECW estimated was very close to the amount of work that was done. Other times, the challenges of working with a corporate client are unforeseen and therefore the amount of time spent on the project may not be properly accounted for. For example, only taking into account project management, editing, design, and typesetting, expenses for the Trent project amounted to \$65 per page (ECW Press, Trent Postpartum). For a project with another, unnamed client, those same expenses amounted to \$170 per page² (ECW Press, Postpartum). Both projects were similar in format (text-heavy with accompanying images); however, the unnamed project required much more project management and editing work: the book was written in-house, there was more than one person coordinating the project on the client side, and the client's approval process wasn't clearly defined, leading to multiple rewrites and redesigns.

At the end, the profit from the Trent project came to roughly \$13,500 for approximately 10 months' work (ECW Press, Trent Postpartum). However, for more than two years' (on and off) worth of work, on a project that was originally scheduled to be completed in six months and took up significantly more staff time and effort, the unnamed project's profits only totalled \$33,000 (ECW Press, Postpartum). Although some of the issues that surfaced while working on the unnamed project were anticipated for and built into a

² NB — At the time of writing this report, not all expenses had yet been accounted for.

quote of roughly \$100,000, it was impossible to know just how troublesome those issues would be and the effect that it would have on the project manager's workload.

As Renouf states, "I think corporate publishing is seductive because everyone thinks it's always going to be the easy money, and it never is" (Renouf interview 2015). She goes on to say, "The downside of [it] is when they become such a time suck that really you've lost all of your profits in staff time taken up, which I think a lot of houses don't really look at" (Renouf interview 2015).

Currently, ECW's contracts don't attribute a monetary penalty for missing deadlines. Instead the solution is to push back the timeline to accommodate the client:

If ECW does not meet one of its deadlines for delivery, then the next deadline for approval by [the client] will be moved forward by the same number of days, without effect on the final ECW deadline of delivery of finished copies. At any time before each of the deadlines, [the client] can request changes to the material. At any time, if changes require an extension of the approval deadline, [the client] and ECW can negotiate an extension of all deadlines. (ECW Press, Sample Contract)

Furthermore, the contracts don't limit the amount of passes a manuscript can go through at each stage, as ECW's duties are defined as follows:

ECW will arrange for additional research, editing, any scanning or enhancement of photos necessary, clearing permissions for photos and images, any indexing if desired, design, typesetting, proofing, and pre-press of the book. ECW will arrange for the printing, binding, and shipping of the book, estimated to be [print run] copies. (ECW Press, Sample Contract).

This means that the client and the project manager can go back and forth until the client is completely satisfied. Although ECW wants to ensure that the client is happy with the final product, some provisions could be put in place to help prevent a project from going over schedule or to prevent the project manager from doing extra work.

Although it's very rare that an expected six-month project will extend to two years, ECW has been exploring various ways to alter the contract to prevent that kind of delay from happening and to ensure that the Press is compensated for any extra work. Looking for expertise on project management strategies, some members of ECW recently met with

Stephanie Moore, a senior project manager at OgilvyOne Worldwide, one of the largest multinational marketing communication companies worldwide. She recommended that ECW includes the number of revisions per deliverable that the client is entitled to and the amount of time they have to respond with their revisions, which can be phrased thus: “The project timeline assumes <one or more> revisions per deliverable during the <editing, design, etc.> phase with a maximum client response time of <10 or more> business days for deliverables requiring feedback” (ECW Press, Assumptions).

She recommended that the scope of the project be clearly defined from the beginning and that any changes to that scope result in increased costs or extensions to the timeline. For example, if ECW agrees that the Press will be responsible for copy editing a manuscript, but the delivered manuscript instead needs substantive editing or more content development, then the scope and fees of the project must change accordingly to compensate for the additional work. She also recommended to add a penalty for each late day that affects the advancement of the project and to add a fee to any change to a preapproved document. This will hopefully prevent the client from dropping the project for an extended period and will encourage the client to comply with the deadlines.

ECW is not a fee-for-service publisher and organizations come to ECW for its expertise and guidance. It is also ingrained in ECW’s mandate to publish only the best books possible, so that the company is proud to put its name on the spine. If a book needs more work, the employees at ECW will do that work, even if it’s outside the previously agreed upon scope of the project and even if there’s no monetary compensation for the extra work. ECW personnel will ensure the manuscript is professional and does the job that it was intended to do. ECW will wait until the project has received the proper approvals and has the go-ahead from the client, and more often than not, as long as it’s the best thing for the book, the Press will accede to the client’s request, even if it’s outside the scope of the project and means more work for the project manager and the rest of ECW’s employees. However, including the provisions in the contract will help protect ECW if a project gets completely derailed and the profit margin the Press had originally included in its quote turns out to be an insufficient buffer.

The question then becomes whether or not the profits gained from corporate projects is worth the time devoted to them and away from trade projects. In the end, based on what

the Trent committee thought they could sell, roughly 3,000 books were printed and sent to Trent University. Looking at one of ECW's recent trade projects that is similar to the Trent project in print run (3,000), subject matter (local history), format (text and images), and approximately the expenses for editing, design, project management, and typesetting (\$42 per page compared to Trent's \$65), and taking into account the grant contributions awarded to the trade project and the advance and royalties paid to the author, the book only made a profit of about \$1,000 through trade sales (ECW Press, *Postpartum 2*). Although some trade projects do better than others and produce larger profits than others, it's always a gamble, and it's virtually impossible to know how many copies a particular title will sell.

One of the biggest benefits of working on corporate projects is that cash flow is dependable and timely. When compared to publishing for the trade market, where revenue is uncertain and is scheduled to arrive months after the publication date, knowing that a project will produce a certain amount of profit is a very appealing motivation. As Tom Woll states, "The majority of books must be profitable enough to offset those that will inevitably achieve less-than-anticipated results" (Woll 2010, 156). And the profits procured from corporate projects undoubtedly help support ECW and allow the acquiring editors at the Press to pursue the projects they're passionate about, so they can publish a retrospective book about *Twin Peaks* or the book of post-apocalyptic poems, which might never become bestsellers, but deserve to be published nonetheless.

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