

SUSTAINING THE MIDLIST BOOK:  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ONLINE MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR  
*TRADING IN MEMORIES*

*by*

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## A B S T R A C T

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The book market has grown less profitable for the publishers of midlist books. At least part of the problem is the expensive practice of co-op advertising—the payment of subsidies by publishers to retailers to offset part of the in-store advertising expenses—which has raised costs above the marketing budgets typically allocated to most midlist books by small and mid-sized publishers in Canada. In contrast, the bestsellers (and those titles that are expected to become bestsellers) typically have the budgets to buy the best in-store positioning which is perceived to contribute to higher sales. To reverse the shrinking sales of midlist books, a number of publishers are looking to the web with its growing online book vendors and developing social networking applications for a more competitive environment in which to promote and sell their midlist books.

**Keywords:** Midlist books; Trade publishing; Online marketing; Niche products; The Long Tail

**Subject words:** Midlist books; Online marketing; Niche products; Trade publishing

## A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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### **Blog**

A blog or web log is a website that features entries in the form of a journal. Entries to the blog are usually personal or commentaries on matters of public interest. While originally text-based, the modern blog typically incorporates images (usually photographs), as well as video (vlogs) and audio (podcasts) content.

### **Blogger**

A blogger is the creator or author of a blog.

### **Content Management System**

A content management system (CMS) is a program used to create the framework for the content of a website (Wikipedia, 2008). Content management systems are typically used to store and publish information. Many are available as open-source software, freely downloadable on the Web.

### **Co-op advertising**

Co-op (short for co-operative) advertising refers to a marketing practice of splitting the cost of advertising between two or more companies. In book retail, co-op advertising is made up of marketing subsidies paid by publishers to retailers as a contribution to the costs of in-store advertising expenses. The money is used to pay for the store's newspaper and magazine ads, posters, catalogs, newsletters, ad-cards, and prominent in-store placement.

### **Headline impression**

A headline impression indicates the number of times someone views a web page on which a headline or abstract from a web page is republished on another website. Headline impressions are

used by online publishers to measure the number of times their content is republished around the web. It is a useful tool to measure the number of times a message is broadcast.

### **Litblog**

A Litblog is a literary blog that focuses on the topic of literature.

### **Midlist**

Midlist is a term used in trade publishing to refer to books that are not expected to become bestsellers but have enough economic and artistic merits to justify their publication.

### **Rich Site Summary (RSS)**

RSS is a collection of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated content on websites. The content can be news headlines, a blog or podcast series.

### **Podcast**

A podcast is a collection of digital files distributed over the Internet. The files are usually audio, and can be syndicated.

### **Social media**

Social media is a collective term for activities that gather and connect information in a manner that enables people to discover and build shared meaning. The term is often used for media technologies that seek to employ the “wisdom of the crowds” to help individuals reach a conclusion.

### **The Long Tail**

The Long Tail is a term coined by Chris Anderson in 2004 referring to the targeting of niche

markets as a business strategy. The strategy is based on a power law of distribution arising from the presence of a combination of factors: availability of choice, large population of consumers, and relatively low costs of stocking and distribution.

### **Web 2.0**

Web 2.0 refers to a trend in the use of the Internet as a platform to facilitate the sharing of information and collaboration among users (Wikipedia, 2008). In this context, new web-based communities have developed around social-networking sites, wikis and blogs, transforming those elements of the web into powerful media forms.

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

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When measured by sales performance, the book market can be divided into two segments. The first segment is made up of the bestsellers; the second segment is made up of books referred to as the midlist. Collectively the midlist books make up the majority of the books in the market, and the revenues they generate are essential to the survival of all trade publishers.

However, the most recent report on midlist books<sup>1</sup> concludes that they are increasingly difficult to market. Consolidation in the book retail sector has allowed a small number of retailers to raise the costs of co-op advertising to a level that jeopardizes the modest profits that publishers can make on midlist books. Also, newspapers are losing subscribers at a rapid rate, depriving publishers of established means of publicity for their books.

In order to sustain their midlist books, publishers are turning to the Internet, and devising new marketing strategies that make the best use of this powerful platform for communications and commerce. One such is publisher D&M Publishers Inc. This report discusses the impetus for D&M Publishers Inc. and other publishers to embrace online marketing. It also presents a case study of an online marketing campaign by D&M Publishers Inc. to promote a midlist book in the fall of 2007.

### **D & M P U B L I S H E R S I N C .**

D&M Publishers Inc. was co-founded by Jim Douglas and Scott McIntyre in 1971. The company includes the publishing imprints Douglas & McIntyre, Greystone Books, and New Society Publishers. The company is also the Canadian distributor for New York publisher Farrar, Straus

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1 Independent New York journalist David Kirkpatrick was commissioned the Authors Guild, the Authors Guild Foundation, and the Open Society Institute to research and report on the challenges facing midlist books and their authors in the United States. His report, titled *Report to the Authors Guild Midlist Books Study Committee*, was published in 2000. Kirkpatrick's report is the most comprehensive analysis of midlist publishing available to date.

& Giroux. The Douglas & McIntyre imprint publishes approximately 35 books a year, focusing on art and architecture, First Nations culture, food and wine, and Canadian culture. Among its notable authors are Emily Carr, Robert Bringhurst, Will Ferguson and Douglas Coupland (D&M Publishers Inc., 2009). Greystone Books has been operating since 1993 and publishes approximately 30 titles every year. The imprint focuses on nature and the environment, travel books, guidebooks, and books about sports, popular culture and current affairs (ibid). New Society Publishers produces books that contribute to building an ecologically sustainable and just society (ibid).

## THE PROJECT

In 2007, D&M Publishers Inc. commissioned Monique Trottier of Boxcar Marketing<sup>2</sup>, an Internet marketing consultancy, to design and execute an online marketing campaign for *Trading in Memories*, a midlist novel by Barbara Hodgson. This report presents data generated during that campaign.

### The report

The first chapter presents an overview of midlist publishing. It begins with a definition of the midlist book before moving on to a discussion about the value of midlist books in publishing. This is followed by an examination of the marketing challenges that publishers now face when promoting midlist books. The chapter concludes with the acknowledgement that the Internet offers the best chance of overcoming those marketing challenges.

The second chapter describes the potential of the Internet as a platform for marketing. It begins with an overview of online bookselling in Canada. Chris Anderson's Long Tail theory (2006) suggests that midlist books might fare better in the online market than in the traditional retail outlets. Professor Anita Elberse's critique of the Long Tail theory (2008) is included to emphasize

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2 At the time of the project, Boxcar Marketing was known as Work Industries.

the critical role that marketing will play if midlist books are to thrive online. The chapter concludes by presenting some data on what publishers have achieved by experimenting with online marketing so far.

The third chapter describes a two-week online marketing campaign for *Trading in Memories* that was conducted by Boxcar Marketing in 2007 on behalf of D&M Publishers Inc. It explains the motivations, targets, and challenges for the campaign. Also outlined are the goals of the campaign, chief of which was to create a template for online marketing that the company would use in the future. The data presented thereafter indicate that the campaign was effective in creating publicity for the book. An analysis of the campaign suggests that not all books are equally suited to online marketing. However when it is appropriate, publishers can gain a wealth of data from the process that will inform their marketing choices going forward.

The conclusion presents a review of the material covered in the preceding chapters. The reader is reminded that midlist books, though less profitable than bestsellers, are valuable. However, that value cannot be exploited if midlist books cannot be marketed effectively. Rising co-op costs exceed the typical marketing budget for a midlist book. In order to counter this and other threatening developments, publishers are urged to continue to experiment with online marketing for midlist books. The continuing growth of the Internet as a platform for commerce and communication will continue to provide publishers with plenty of tools and opportunities to try different marketing models. The data they reap from the process will provide valuable insights into the evolution of the book market. The paper closes with an example of how D&M Publishers has been able to build on the experiences of the online marketing campaign.

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a definition of the midlist book and a presentation of the value that midlist books have for trade publishers of all sizes. This is followed by an examination of the challenges that publishers face when trying to market their midlist books in the traditional retail outlets. To overcome these challenges, publishers have embraced online book retail and the Internet as a means of promoting their midlist books.

## DEFINING THE MIDLIST BOOK

Among trade publishers, the term “midlist” refers to a title that has, or is expected to have average sales when compared to other titles in the market. It is a term that has been known to cause offence, principally because midlist books are often identified by what they are not—bestsellers.

The comparison with bestsellers is hard to make without implying a sort of mediocrity for midlist books, and it is no wonder that many authors, literary agents and even some publishers are averse to the term. Still, whenever titles must be ranked and evaluated based on sales, academics and industry analysts alike have found it useful to have a term for those titles that are not bestsellers. Perhaps for this reason more than any other, midlist books are often thought of as low-earners.

### Limited financial rewards

One of the earliest analyses of the midlist book is by Judith Applebaum. In 1986, Applebaum published an article in *Book Research Quarterly* (Spring, 1986, 3-4) titled “Midlist Crisis: Initial Investigations” in which she summarized the challenges and contradictions of midlist books. Applebaum’s definition of the midlist book shows that small margins have been associated with midlist books for many years:

A book is a midlist title if: (1) it doesn't promise much in the way of financial rewards, and (2) it does offer psychic rewards... (Applebaum, 1986, 3)

The idea that midlist books offer limited returns was reiterated by Andrea Fleck Clardy in the article titled "Someone Else's Crisis: Feminist Publishers and Midlist Books" that was published in the same issue of *Book Research Quarterly* (Spring, 1986, 5-9). Clardy noted that most trade publishers viewed the midlist book as neither a bestseller, nor "deadweight", and therefore both a potential asset and a potential liability (Clardy, 1986).

While it is true that midlist books usually produce modest profits, the focus on financial rewards diminishes the importance that these books have for many publishers.

## THE VALUE OF MIDLIST BOOKS

In *Report to the Authors Guild Midlist Books Study Committee* (2000)<sup>3</sup>, journalist David Kirkpatrick criticized the tendency to compare midlist books to bestsellers, arguing that it had created a caricature of midlist books that exaggerated the modesty of the profits that they earn for publishers, thereby undervaluing them. He argued that midlist books are a different kind of investment from bestsellers, but not an inferior one. In his view, a publisher who accepts the financial limitations involved in publishing a midlist book can still use it effectively to spread his or her investments over a number of titles, thereby reducing the company's exposure to risk.

Kirkpatrick defended his argument by examining the profits that a publisher could expect to make on a midlist book. He estimated that approximately 50% of the cover price of a hardcover midlist book goes to wholesalers and retailers (*ibid*). Printing costs account for another 10%,

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3 David Kirkpatrick is an independent journalist who was commissioned by the Authors Guild, the Authors Guild Foundation, and the Open Society Institute to research and report on the challenges facing midlist books and their authors in the United States. Kirkpatrick's report is the most comprehensive analysis of midlist publishing available to date.



and distribution costs can take up as much as 8% of the cover price if a publisher out-sources distribution and fulfillment<sup>4</sup> (ibid). The author can expect to receive roughly 10% of the book's price in royalties<sup>5</sup> (ibid). Altogether, these unavoidable costs total 78% of the cover price, leaving the publisher with approximately 22% of the book's cover price. That means the publisher can earn up to about \$6 for every copy of a \$30 hardcover title that is sold (ibid). Therefore a midlist book that sells 2500 copies will earn a publisher \$15,000. This profit, Kirkpatrick pointed out, is quite handsome and does not include revenue from paperback sales (which he estimated to be about 7% of the paperback cover price), nor does it include payments on foreign, book club, and other subsidiary rights (ibid).

### **The Canadian context**

Kirkpatrick's estimates were based on the American book market, where midlist books typically sell 5000 copies. In Canada, 5000 copies sold would be closer to the sales of a bestseller; a midlist book usually has a print run of 2000 to 3000 copies. It is therefore necessary to compare the costs that Kirkpatrick quotes in his report against those taken from the Canadian book industry in order to determine whether the midlist book is a profitable investment for Canadian publishers as well.

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4 Printing and distribution costs vary depending on the size of the print run. Kirkpatrick estimated that printing costs for the average midlist book would range between \$2.00 and \$2.50, and distribution costs between 50 cents and \$2.50 a copy depending on whether a publisher used an outside distributor or managed the process with in-house staff (Kirkpatrick, 16). The figures provided in this report correspond with Kirkpatrick's higher estimates for both print and distribution.

5 In most author-publisher contracts the percentage of royalties paid to an author will increase as the sales of the book go up. Small presses and university presses sometimes pay royalties based on net income from sales instead of retail price, which lowers the payments to the author but boosts the publisher's take.

The Canadian data is taken from a recent industry study by Turner-Riggs into the book retail sector in Canada titled *The Book Retail Sector in Canada* (2007).<sup>6</sup> Table 1 presents a comparison between Kirkpatrick's figures and those provided in the Turner-Riggs report.

*Table 1: A comparison of the the distribution of each dollar earned when a book is sold in Canada and the United States.*<sup>7</sup>

<b>Allocation</b>	<b>Kirkpatrick (United States)</b>	<b>Turner-Riggs (Canada)</b>
Wholesalers and retailers	50 cents	48 cents
Distributor	8 cents	15 cents
Printing costs	10 cents	8 cents
Author	10 cents	10 cents
Sales commission	-	10 cents
Publisher	22 cents	9 cents
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 cents/1dollar</b>	<b>100 cents/1 dollar</b>

The figures in the table show that in Canada the distribution costs are much higher than in the United States (15% compared to 8%). Also, the inclusion of the sales commission in the costs listed

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6 The report was commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage and was published in September 2007. Turner-Riggs is a Vancouver-based strategy marketing and communications firm that has published numerous reports on the Canadian book and magazine markets. All the figures quoted from this report are in Canadian dollars.

7 Differences in the currencies between the American and Canadian dollar should not affect the readers' interpretation of this data. This is a comparison of the percentage distribution of revenues rather than of purchasing power.

in the Turner-Riggs report brings the publisher's profits into greater focus.<sup>8</sup> Yet even when these costs are accounted for, the Canadian midlist book can still earn a profit of 9% or \$2.70 on the sale of every copy of a \$30 hardcover midlist book. If the publisher is able to sell 2500 copies, the book can earn \$6,750.

#### A low-risk low-return investment

The figures in table 1 support Kirkpatrick's argument that midlist books can be solid investments. They also suggest that, more than bestsellers, it is vital to keep the costs of publishing midlist books as low as possible. Whereas with bestsellers high sales can offset the costs of large author advances and expensive marketing campaigns, midlist books must generate a profit from a smaller volume of sales. Therefore, publishers cannot afford to spend as much on author advances and marketing costs for midlist books as they do with bestsellers. The risks must be minimal because the rewards are likely to be so as well.

#### Flexibility and security

Given the most publishers can only afford to finance a few (potential) bestsellers in a season, if any at all, the option to enter the market with minimal exposure to the risks of failure can be extremely useful. The relatively low advances paid to midlist authors leave publishers with the funds to acquire more books, thereby spreading their risk over a number of titles while simultaneously introducing more voices to the public. This is far more difficult to do when signing bestselling authors. The higher advances and expensive marketing budgets that a publisher must commit

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<sup>8</sup> Kirkpatrick did not include the sales commissions, administrative, marketing, editorial, and other pre-production costs in his review of the costs of publishing a midlist book, arguing that those costs are usually distributed evenly among all the titles that a house produces (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 19). While it is true that no one book accounts for the entire overhead costs at a publishing house, each book does contribute a percentage of its profits to a pool of funds that are then used to cover those costs. It therefore makes sense to account for that percentage in this analysis so as to paint a more realistic picture of the profits a publisher can expect to earn.

to bestsellers place a limit the number of titles that the publisher can afford to finance in a single season.

Midlist books are therefore valuable assets to publishers. However, they can difficult to promote. The following section presents the factors that are making it ever more challenging for publishers to market their midlist books effectively.

## **MARKETING CHALLENGES**

In *Publishing for Profit: Successful Bottom-Line Management for Book Publishers* (2002), Thomas Woll sets out a model for marketing in the publishing industry. He advises publishers to create a marketing plan that defines the strategic goals of a marketing campaign. The plan should consist of a marketing budget, sales goals, specific marketing targets, a marketing strategy, and a publicity strategy (Woll, 2002, 201-203). The publicity strategy is a critical part of the marketing plan because it is the process by which publishers generate awareness and interest in their titles. It involves a variety of tasks, such as sending out bound galleys and review copies, creating press releases, planning launch parties, preparing author tours, interviews, and questionnaires, as well as in-store promotions and placement (ibid).

All of these tasks have associated costs, and it is important that those costs be kept as low as possible so as to maximize the profits that the book can generate. Woll estimates that marketing costs should be 13% to 16% of net sales (Woll, 2002, 202). Although this advice is sound, publishers of midlist books face a tremendous challenge in creating an effective marketing campaign that fits within Woll's recommended marketing model.

### **Small marketing budgets**

According to Woll's estimate, a \$30 midlist book in Canada, with expected net sales of 2500 copies, would have a marketing budget ranging from \$9,750 to \$12,000, while a bestseller listed at the same price with estimated net sales of 5000 copies would have a marketing budget twice as

large. Accordingly, by virtue of the expectation that it will sell more copies, a potential bestseller is granted the marketing budget necessary to support a sustained promotional campaign and cover the expenses associated with extensive book tours and media appearances for the author. In contrast, a midlist book has a similar approach to marketing, but with a smaller budget.

This disparity in the marketing resources allocated to midlist books and bestsellers contributes to the perception that midlist books to have shorter marketing campaigns than bestsellers. It is certainly a source of discontent for midlist authors, many of who lament the marketing process, or lack thereof:

With anguish and outrage in their voices, [the authors will] recall that their books were contracted for, edited, copyedited, designed, produced, and then, unaccountably, abandoned. The marketing stage of the publishing process almost didn't exist. No ads. Virtually no publicity (Applebaum, 1986, 3).

This is not merely perception or melodrama. The publishers do not seem to believe that they can effectively promote titles with small marketing budgets:

Editors and others from large, old-line, East Coast trade houses aren't likely to dispute the picture authors paint. It's all too true, they'll tell you, that non-blockbuster books, which have minuscule budgets, aren't—indeed, can't be—effectively marketed (ibid).

When the problem is presented thus, the solution seems obvious: increase the marketing budgets for midlist books. This approach though, would undermine the very thing that makes midlist books attractive investments to publishers: they cost less than bestsellers to produce, and by keeping the costs low, publishers have a better chance of making a profit on midlist books.

Increasing the marketing budgets for midlist books also assumes that more marketing resources will mean more sales. That is an association that should not be taken for granted. Marketing may generate awareness and interest, which in turn generates sales, but it has its limits. It would be unwise to spend a great deal of money to evangelize a book that is unlikely to become popular anyway. And, as Kirkpatrick acknowledged in his report, most midlist books are not likely to have a broad appeal:

We are not defining midlist as necessarily low selling or unprofitable, although of course few literary or serious projects become bestsellers or generate quick windfalls (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 2).

So, it is not simply that publishers choose to arbitrarily limit the market a midlist book is likely to reach; they must make a judgment on the potential market appeal of a given title and allocate resources accordingly. Unfortunately, this often means that publishers must accomplish the same marketing tasks for midlist books as they do for bestsellers with smaller marketing budgets.

#### A crowded market

Another major concern for publishers of midlist books is that the supply of adult trade books in North America is growing much faster than consumer demand (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 27). In Canada the number of new titles published between 1998 and 2004 grew by 40% while the combined sales volume during that same period increased by only 11% (ibid).<sup>9</sup>

In the United States, the total number of sales for hardcover trade books grew by only 28% between 1986 and 1996, and by the year 2000 the rate of growth had fallen to less than one percent a year (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 9). “The net effect is that a growing number of books are contending for the attention of roughly the same number of book buyers” (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 27).

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<sup>9</sup> These figures were adjusted for inflation in the Turner-Riggs report.

The crowded market favors bestsellers because they typically have bigger marketing budgets than midlist books. The size of a marketing budget is important when it comes to promoting a book in a crowded market because it enables the publisher to arrange extensive author tours and appearances, pay for favorable placement in bookstores, and to purchase advertising. The high costs associated with these marketing activities are such that only bestsellers are able to compete favorably for consumer attention in a crowded market; since midlist books do not have the budgets necessary to aggressively court consumers, they inevitably fall behind in sales.

#### Changes in book retail

With so many titles to choose from, it is important to understand how consumers become aware of the books that they choose to buy. In 1996, the Association of Canadian Publishers commissioned market researcher Roger Barnes and publishing scholar Rowland Lorimer to conduct a study on book purchasing (Lorimer & Barnes, 2005).<sup>10</sup> The Lorimer and Barnes study revealed that the bookstore was a key point of awareness for book buyers:

...63 percent of purchasing decisions were made in the store, and 39 percent of those interviewed had purchased books during their visit to the bookstore that they had never heard of previously (Lorimer & Barnes, 2005, 228).

The study also found that two-thirds of the purchases made were of books that were displayed with the covers facing outward, rather than by the spine (ibid). Collectively, up to 82 percent of the book purchases were influenced by recommendations, previous knowledge of the author, and bookstore placement and promotions (Lorimer & Barnes, 2005, 236). In contrast, only 17 percent

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10 The study included a survey of 304 book purchases who were questioned about their purchase habits as they left bookstores in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax (Lorimer & Barnes, 2005, 227).

of the buyers felt their purchase decision was influenced by the marketing and publicity activities carried out by publishers (ibid).

Publishers can (rightly) argue that much of what they do is to promote the author and the book, not their own brand. For this reason, their successes are often credited to other sources of influence. However, this argument does not change the advantage that the public's perception gives to the bookstores when they negotiate their terms of trade with publishers. Bookstores can claim to be in a powerful position to influence the commercial success of a title. The recent dominance of the national chains, non-traditional retailers, and online stores over the independent bookstores in North America now means that this power is concentrated among a few retailers.

In the United States, David Kirkpatrick reported that independent bookstores and small chains in the United States have seen their market share of adult trade book sales shrink from what was a position of complete dominance in the 1950s to less than 42% in 1996 (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 37). He attributed the steep decline in the market share of the independent bookstores and small chains to the increased participation of the non-traditional retailers in book selling. He reported that between 1991 and 1996, book clubs, general merchandise discount stores and warehouse clubs increased their market share of the adult trade book market by 6% (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 37).

Kirkpatrick argued that the general merchandise discount stores and warehouse clubs, as well as food and drug stores, are collectively taking bestseller sales from the chains. In response to greater competition from these non-traditional retailers, the chains closed their mall stores and opened more superstores. The superstores try to attract consumers by stocking a wide variety of books. This strategy takes business away from the independent bookstores, many of which cannot match the variety offered by the superstores (ibid). Between 1995 and 2000, Barnes & Noble and Borders opened a total of 740 stores in the United States while independent stores have gone from 5,100 in 1993 to less than 3,500 in 2000 (ibid).

Similarly, the Canadian book retail sector has also witnessed a market shift away from independent stores to a single national chain and powerful regional chains in Quebec (Turner-



Riggs, 2007, 2). In 1995, national chains SmithBooks/LibrarieSmith and Coles were acquired and merged, along with The Book Company and Classics, to form a new chain known as Chapters (ibid, 30).<sup>11</sup> Indigo and Chapters merged to form Indigo Books & Music Inc. in 2001, which became the leading national bookstore chain in English Canada.<sup>12</sup> Quebec has two regional chains in Archambault and Renaud-Bray. Also of note are the mass-market retail chains led by Costco Wholesale. There is also a collection of independent retail outlets for which bookselling represents the bulk of their revenues (ibid, 7).

The Indigo bookstores feature inventories of up to 100,000 titles, as well as music CDs and movie DVDs (ibid). Offering a wide selection of titles along with other consumer entertainment goods has enabled the Indigo chain to draw customers away from independent bookstores, which have traditionally offered a narrower selection of titles. As a result of losing their customers, many independent bookstores have gone out of business over the past ten years. A 2001 study commissioned by the Association of Canadian Publishers revealed that between 1995 and 1999 alone, the number of independent stores in Ottawa dropped by 19% and in Calgary by 42%. In the same period, Indigo increased its retail square footage by 50% in Toronto, Ottawa, and Calgary, and by 44% in Vancouver (ibid, 39-40). By 2006, Indigo accounted for 44% of the domestic book sales compared to 20% for independents (ibid, 3).

The loss of so many independent bookstores allowed a small number of booksellers to dominate bookselling in both Canada and the United States with worrying consequences. Publishers now rely heavily on those dominant retailers in order to reach the market. Those dominant retailers have used their clout in the supply chain to alter merchandising policies in two important ways:

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11 It is worth noting that the interests behind this merger defended it against its critics by claiming that the Chapters chain stores would account for only a minority of the entire Canadian book trade market (Siegler, 2000).

12 At the time of writing, Indigo Books & Music Inc. is Canada's largest book retailer. The national chain operates the Indigo, Coles, Chapters, and World's Biggest Bookstore (Indigo, 2009).

### **Aggressive consumer discounting**

The dominant retailers now demand bigger trade discounts from the publishers, which they then pass on to the readers. A trade discount, a reduction of the book's cover price, is essentially the margin for a wholesale or retail account on each copy sold (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 31). While in the past these discounts have been roughly 50% for wholesale and around 40% for retail, they are now in the 44-48% range for the retail chains (ibid).

Aggressive discounting has a negative effect on the exposure and sales of midlist books because retailers who rely on discounts to attract customers tend to stock a small selection of (popular) books so as to achieve the high sales that are necessary for the strategy to be profitable:

...this emphasis on a small selection of high-profile titles—often deeply discounted—concentrates a high volume of sales among a small number of titles, and has an important market-shaping effect. Consumers have come to expect discounts to apply to key frontlist titles, and know to shop for these at mass market outlets (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 64).

Consumer expectations regarding discounting cannot be popular with publishers. When booksellers demand a bigger discount on a book, publishers must transfer 4-8% of their margins over to the retailers (ibid, 31). This effectively erodes the small profit that a Canadian publisher can make on a midlist title.

### **Increasing co-op fees**

The chains and the dominant non-traditional retailers also use their influence with consumers to win a variety of marketing subsidies known as cooperative advertising or co-op (Kirkpatrick, 2004, 41). The subsidies are based on the publisher's net sales from the previous year (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 32-33). The money is used to pay for the store's newspaper and magazine ads, posters,

catalogs, newsletters, or ad-cards (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 41). The chain stores also sometimes charge publishers out of co-op accounts to place a title in stacks near the front of the store, in cardboard floor displays, in windows, on side tables at the end of the aisles, on top of bookcases, or on shelves face out.

In a submission to the Standing Committee of the Department of Canadian Heritage in March 2000 titled *The Emperor's New Clothes*, Karl Siegler noted that the use of co-op had increased as the chains became more dominant in book retail. He argued that while the independents have also been known to use the system of co-op advertising, the cost to the publishers is relatively small and generally an exception (Siegler, 2000). The reason the fees were relatively small before was likely due to the fact that no independent retailer was dominant enough to leverage their influence over consumer purchase decisions into more co-op fees. Now though, the retail sector is a thinner crowd, and the remaining players can demand more money to do what they previously did for less. Publishers are now on the back foot when negotiating co-op fees with retailers, but the impetus to pay up is clear:

...the research is unanimous in declaring that potential book buyers are greatly influenced by the way books are displayed in-store. Many impulse buys are made as a result of book displays, and impulse buys account for a large number of book purchases made. This provides the rationale for the co-op or placement fees increasingly requested of publishers by retailers (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 24).

Kirkpatrick argued that higher co-op fees are bad for midlist books because they mean that the cost of in-store placements and promotions is too expensive to be included in the budgets for most midlist books. Co-op advertising therefore concentrates consumer attention on the few books with big budgets, which are often bestsellers.

The cumulative effect

With small marketing budgets, midlist books are not able to stand out in a crowded book market. The publishers are also not able to adjust their marketing models to account for the more aggressive discounting or increased co-op fees without significantly reducing the likelihood of making a profit on midlist books. These marketing challenges have the combined effect of diverting sales away from midlist books and towards the bestsellers. The sales figures quoted in the Kirkpatrick report indicate that, in the United States, bestsellers have gradually claimed more of the overall sales in the American market:

...over the last thirty years unit sales of the 15 bestselling works in both fiction and nonfiction have grown from about 6 million in 1971 to about 8 million in 1976, to 17 million in 1986, and to 31 million in 1996. That means between 1986 and 1996, bestseller sales grew 82% (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 9).

More recent figures from Nielsen BookScan<sup>13</sup> show that in 2004, 93% of all tracked ISBNs (1.15 million titles) had combined sales of less than 1,000 units while the remaining 7% (90,000 titles) accounted for 87% of the total sales (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 44).

The sales data for the Canadian book market is not sufficient to prove a similar historical trend to that seen in the American market (ibid). Nonetheless, the data that is available indicates an uneven distribution of the sales in the book market in the favor of bestselling books. According to BookNet Canada's BNC SalesData for 2006, the top 500 books accounted for 22% of unit sales and the top 10,000 books represent 64% of the unit sales (ibid, 44).<sup>14</sup> This data shows that approximately 1.5% of all the books that are being tracked by BookNet Canada account for more

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13 Nielsen BookScan provides a continuous market measurement of the United States retail book sales based on electronic sales data analysis by connecting point-of-sale information from a variety of retailers and making the accumulated data available to the book industry (Nielsen BookScan US, 2009).

14 BookNet Canada was tracking 689,020 unique ISBNs during this period (Turner-Riggs, 44).

than 60% of the sales in the Canadian book market. For the companies that produce the other 98.5% of the books, the dominance of the bestsellers is a legitimate reason for concern.

The growing market share for bestsellers does not necessarily indicate a shift in the tastes of readers away from midlist books (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 36). However, the midlist books are falling behind in sales because it has become harder to market midlist books effectively. The consumers are simply more aware of bestsellers than they are of midlist books (ibid). The difficulty that publishers face when marketing their midlist books means that the modest profits they can hope to earn on those titles are even more uncertain.

The chains may claim to be part of the solution, but this is doubtful (Siegler, 2000). Kirkpatrick and Siegler both pointed out that although the chains stock a wide selection of books, the added exposure does not translate into more sales:

A close look at superstore sales patterns suggests that most titles they stock serve essentially as wallpaper. The superstore strategy is to become a retail destination. But in superstores people buy a narrower range of titles than they buy at independents (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 39).

Kirkpatrick concluded that superstores are proving to be a less efficient vehicle for selling midlist books than the independents they are replacing.<sup>15</sup> Though there is no data to substantiate that independent bookstores sell or promote more midlist books than the chains, still it is generally acknowledged in the industry that independent bookstores play a critical role in bringing midlist books to consumers (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 40).

But, while independents bookstores may have been a key sales channel for midlist books, those days may be coming to an end. In seeking to survive, the remaining independents operate in ways

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15 Also, Kirkpatrick's analysis is relevant to the Canadian market and his on sales distribution between bestsellers and midlist books were included to the Turner-Riggs report. See page 44 of the Tuner-Riggs report.

that are strikingly similar to the chains that displaced them in the market. Many are becoming single-site superstores and are imitating the operations of their competitors (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 46). “The more independents take advantage of publishers’ promotional subsidies for selected books, the more their patterns of marketing support will coincide with those of the chains” (ibid).

## **SECTION CONCLUSION**

Midlist books are vital to the health of the publishing industry. They allow publishers the flexibility to spread their financial risks over a number of titles while bringing new voices onto the literary landscape. However, with relatively small marketing budgets, publishers can no longer market their midlist books effectively. They are faced with an increasingly crowded book market, in which the dominance of the chains and superstores have shifted the dynamics of trade discounting and co-op fees in favor of bestsellers. Publishers cannot expand the marketing budgets for midlist books (as this would change the nature and purpose of the investment) nor can they afford to abandon midlist books altogether.

Instead, publishers are now looking more closely at the Internet as medium that they can use to overcome the marketing challenges that midlist books face in the traditional retail sector. The following chapter presents the opportunities that publishers have to create marketing models that are better suited to the limited costs of midlist publishing.

## INTRODUCTION

To counter the rising costs of promoting their midlist books in brick-and-mortar stores, publishers are turning to the Internet where consumers are already buying books in large numbers. As an added incentive, Chris Anderson's popular theory of the Long Tail suggests that online sales channels could increase the profitability of publishing for small markets. This chapter looks at the steps that publishers are taking to exploit that potential.

## ONLINE BOOK RETAIL IN CANADA

Online book retail has a brief history in Canada, and there is as yet no source of historical data on online book sales for the whole market. However, it is possible to chart the growth of the major online vendors.

Chapters Online, the Internet arm of the national chain, began operations in 1998. Two years later, Indigo Books & Music opened its own online bookstore, [indigo.ca](http://indigo.ca), in 2000. Following the 2001 merger of Chapters and Indigo, the two online bookstores were combined to create [chapters.indigo.ca](http://chapters.indigo.ca). In 2002 American online retailer Amazon launched [Amazon.ca](http://Amazon.ca).

Since the launch of [Amazon.ca](http://Amazon.ca), a number of bricks-and-mortar retailers have launched their own online stores, such as McNally Robinson Booksellers. They join existing online stores such as [Abebooks.com](http://Abebooks.com).<sup>16</sup> Others choose not to launch their own online stores, electing instead to use data aggregators like BookManager's WebStore, which combine the inventory and stock information of several retailers on websites that the public can access (*ibid*).

For the moment, Indigo, and Amazon are the leaders in online book retail sector in Canada. In May 2006, Indigo Books & Music reported that [chapters.indigo.ca](http://chapters.indigo.ca) recorded revenues of

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16 According to its website, [AbeBooks.com](http://AbeBooks.com) is the world's largest online marketplace for books, with over 110 million books and 13,500 booksellers. It was acquired by [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) in August 2008.

\$79.5 million, an increase of 23% over the year prior (ibid, 67). The following year, the company reported a 9% increase as online sales rose from \$79.5 million to \$86.7 million (ibid). According to the Turner-Riggs report on Canada's book retail sector, chapters.indigo.ca accounted for 15% of Indigo's total revenue in 2007, compared to 5% in 2002 (ibid).<sup>17</sup>

At the moment, Canada does not have a single authoritative source of information on the distribution of book sales across retail channels. For this reason, it is impossible to know what percentage of book sales are transacted online. The Turner-Riggs report estimated that online sales channels accounted for 8% of Canada's book sales in 2006 (ibid, 35). This figured was based on a sample of Canadian publishers though, and it is quite possible that many companies have higher than 8% of their sales online (ibid, 34-35).

In an effort to carve out a slice of the online market for themselves, a small number of publishers have begun to sell their books directly online. The majority, however, are still wary of competing with, and thereby upsetting their traditional retail partners. Also the extra work and expenses involved in creating and maintaining their own branded e-commerce sites is daunting. Publishers such as D&M Publishers Inc. and Whitecap Books in Vancouver prefer to build links into their corporate websites that guide would-be buyers to an online retailer where they can make the purchase. Consequently, retailers and online aggregators collectively account for the majority of books sold online in Canada.

#### Marketing through online retailers

Some publishers may be tempted to rely on online retailers to help them push the demand for their books in the same way that they do with the brick-and-mortar stores. That approach is not likely to bring the best results. Online retailers make the Long Tail possible; they do not drive the

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17 According to the same report, Amazon does not report its Canadian sales publicly, but stated that sales through Amazon.ca have doubled since 2002 (Turner-Riggs, 2007, 67).



demand within it. Publishers should not expect the online retailers' recommendations and filtering tools make their individual books a success (Kirkpatrick, 2000, 48).

There are also troubling signs that some online retailers would like to imitate the in-store marketing policies that are used by the brick-and-mortar bookstores. In 1999 for example, Amazon.com was reported to charge publishers up to \$12,500 for special placement on its site and in its newsletters. The online retailer was forced to revise its cooperative advertising policy after book publishers complained about its lack of transparency (Carvajal, 1999). In March 2003, Amazon.ca was in the news in Canada for running an ad in the *Globe and Mail* offering discounts on the titles that appeared in that newspaper's bestseller list (Weller, 1999).

These reports suggest that Amazon and other powerful online retailers will imitate the marketing policies used by the brick-and-mortar stores if these policies can increase profits, and they will do so in spite of the damage that these policies may do to the exposure and sales of the midlist books sold through those channels.

The dynamics of online book retail are still evolving, but already there is a vigorous debate about whether online retail can transform the dynamics of consumer demand and usher in a new era of prosperity for producers who serve small markets. A notable theorist in this debate is Chris Anderson, whose Long Tail theory has raised hopes that online retail is a more favorable sales channel for niche goods than the brick-and-mortar stores. The following section presents Chris Anderson's Long Tail Theory and discusses the significance it has for midlist publishing.

## **THE LONG TAIL THEORY**

In October 2004, Wired magazine editor Chris Anderson wrote an article in which he observed that our culture and economy is shifting from a focus on blockbuster products towards the niche products in the market (Anderson, 2006). Based on this observation, Anderson argued that the future of business lay more in serving niche markets than in mass market blockbuster products.

In his article, Anderson presented the standard demand curve as one in which the bestselling items in the market account for the concentration of sales is at the head. The tail is typically made up of products with low sales. The products in the tail of the demand curve are unattractive to brick-and-mortar retailers because the revenues they generate are too low to balance out the inventory and distribution costs associated with stocking those products. Drawing his conclusions from the sales and inventory data of online retailers like Amazon.com and Netflix, Anderson argued that, in the absence of distribution bottlenecks and the limitations of physical display spaces, the products in the tail become as economically viable as the bestsellers at the head of the demand curve.

In a book titled *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More* (2006), Anderson expounded his theory by focusing on two key points. First, that the variety of goods available in online retail stores is far greater than in brick-and-mortar stores, where limited shelf and inventory space constrains the available selection of products (Anderson, 2006). Anderson referred to those constraints as bottlenecks, arguing that they place artificial filters on consumer choice by limiting consumer awareness of the variety of products available in the market. The bottlenecks function as funnels, pushing consumers towards mainstream products, which tend to be the ones with the marketing budgets to attract and sustain consumer interest and loyalty. In the absence of such constraints, online retailers are able to stock niche products that would not be profitable in brick-and-mortar stores. This tail end of the market grows longer as the distribution costs fall, revealing previously untapped opportunities in the market (Elberse, 2008).

Second, Anderson suggests that as consumers gain the necessary tools to sort through the overwhelming variety in online stores, they will gravitate away from the bestselling products and towards niche products that are more aligned to their particular tastes (Anderson, 2006). The movement towards the niche products amounts to a gradual shift in the demand curve towards the tail (Elberse, 2008).

## Critiques of the Long Tail Theory

Anderson's theory has run into vigorous opposition from researchers who claim that current market data show that mainstream products are gaining rather than losing market share in the online sales channels. One of the most compelling arguments against the Long Tail was presented by Anita Elberse in an article titled "Should You Invest in the Long Tail?," published in *Harvard Business Review* (July-August 2008, 88-96). Elberse analyzed sales data from Nielsen VideoScan, Nielsen SoundScan, Quickflix, and Rhapsody<sup>18</sup> and concluded that sales are increasingly concentrated among fewer products.

Elberse looked at a random sample of 5,500 titles which had weekly sales reported by Nielsen VideoScan between January 2000 and August 2005. The data revealed two notable trends. First, that there is indeed a shift in sales into the tail. The number of titles with only a few sales in a week doubled between 2000 and 2005 (Elberse, 2008, 92). However, the data also showed that the number of titles without any sales at all in a week also increased four fold (ibid).

Second, for the same period, the number of titles in the top 10% of the weekly sales fell by half, creating what Elberse called "an increase in concentration that is common in winner-take-all markets" (Elberse, 2008, 92). Those figures, Elberse argued, prove that while there may be a slight shift towards the tail of the market, the importance of bestsellers is also growing in online markets.

Elberse challenged the notion that many consumers would eventually gravitate to the tail because they find niche goods more fulfilling than bestselling products. Drawing on William McPhee's theory of exposure<sup>19</sup> Elberse noted that the heavy users of Quickflix were more

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18 Nielsen VideoScan and Nielsen SoundScan monitor weekly purchases of videos and music through online and off-line retailers; Quickflix is an Australian DVD-by-mail rental service; Rhapsody is an online music service that allows subscribers to choose from a large database of songs for a fixed monthly fee (Elberse, 2008, 91).

19 McPhee argued that when a large proportion of the market is unfamiliar with an alternative product, the small percentage of consumers that are aware of the product are unlikely to be enthusiastic about it (Elberse, 2008, 93).

likely than the occasional customer to explore the company's inventory (ibid, 93). As such, she concluded that the tail was not where the profit was to be made in digital channels:

...the tail is likely to be extremely flat and populated by titles that are mostly a diversion for consumers whose appetite for true blockbusters continues to grow. It is therefore highly disputable that much money can be made in the tail (Elberse, 2008, 96).

Elberse made four recommendations to producers based on her interpretation of the data: to maintain their resource allocations for bestselling products; to keep the costs of niche goods low; to strengthen their presence in online retail channels through the promotion of their bestselling products; and to leverage their scale to improve online exposure and demand for all their products.

Anderson responded to Anita Elberse's critiques in a blog post on HarvardBusiness.org titled *Debating the Long Tail*. Anderson proposed that, when looking at sales data, different definitions of "head" and "tail" had led to differing conclusions about what was happening in the market. He defined the head and tail as follows:

"Head" is the selection available in the largest bricks-and-mortar retailer in the market (that would be Wal-Mart in this case). "Tail" is everything else, most of which is only available online, where there is unlimited shelf space (Anderson, 2008).

To illustrate the ways in which their interpretations of the head and tail of the market differed, Anderson focused on Elberse's analysis of the Rhapsody data (in which Elberse found that the top 1% of titles accounted for 32% of the plays) pointing out that since Rhapsody's inventory was

vastly larger than any brick-and-mortar store, 1% of the titles in Rhapsody are equivalent to the entire inventory in a typical Wal-Mart store (Anderson, 2008). Therefore, he argued, Elberse's data showed that the head accounts for 32% of all plays while the tail represents 68% (Anderson, 2008).

Elberse countered that Anderson's definitions of the head and tail are arbitrary. In the blog post titled *The Long Tail Debate: A Response to Chris Anderson* also published on HarvardBusiness.org, Elberse asserted that marketing managers should be guided by data and not by arbitrary notions:

I believe it is crucial that managerial decisions are grounded not in romantic notions of the impact of technology, but are based on empirical evidence of what is actually taking place (Elberse, 2008, b).

Elberse's research establishes that bestsellers can be just as dominant in online retail channels as they are in brick-and-mortar stores. The data also suggests that, even when all the conditions stipulated by Anderson are present, consumers may not voluntarily venture into the tail in large enough numbers to cause a significant shift of the demand curve.

#### A role for marketing in the Long Tail Theory

Elberse cautioned producers against the expectation that their niche goods will prosper online. She reasoned that while there is doubt about the viability of the tail, producers should continue to focus on their bestselling products while keeping the costs of their niche goods low.

Elberse's advice is prudent, but it is possible to come to a less conservative conclusion. There is no data to show how consumers shopping in online retail channels respond to targeted promotions for niche goods. Neither Elberse nor Anderson conducts an extensive examination regarding the influence of promotion on the sales figures presented. For his part, Anderson acknowledges that connecting supply and demand is important, but suggests that the availability of powerful search and filtering technologies will allow the consumers to become their own best

guides (Anderson, 2006, 55-57). Elberse challenges Anderson by providing data to show that consumers may prefer the products in the head of the market anyway, even when they have the tools that allow them to find the products in the tail. But without any definitive research regarding how producers promote their niche goods, we cannot come to any conclusions about whether or not consumers truly prefer the products in the head of the demand curve to those in the tail, or whether they are simply acting under the influence of existing marketing campaigns meant to promote bestselling products.

This debate has a great deal of relevance for publishers. They are doing more business online and their midlist books make up the tail of the online book market. If publishers follow Elberse's advice, they will concentrate their marketing efforts on their bestsellers. However, doing so will only continue to concentrate sales around a few titles, thereby perpetuating the status quo. A more distributed demand curve increases the probability of profiting from midlist books, but it is unlikely to occur if producers do not take an active part in encouraging consumers to consider their more obscure titles.

#### Reaching niche markets

The formula for a successful promotional campaign to boost midlist book sales is still unclear, but the matter is already generating creative and potentially revolutionary ideas on marketing in the industry.

A notable example is the approach proposed by publishing consultant Mike Shatzkin. On January 22, 2008, Shatzkin made a bold presentation titled *The End of General Trade Publishing Houses* at Random House's Digital Day. Shatzkin told his audience that general trade publishing houses were not aligned with the media entities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Shatzkin, 2008). His argument goes as follows: The Internet has brought about the age of fragmented media, in which we shall see few distinctions between the producers and consumers of media as audiences self-organize into communities of specialized interests around the content that feeds their curiosities. These

communities will compete successfully against the 20<sup>th</sup> century broadcast media (television, radio, and newspapers), which will see falling audience numbers (ibid).

Shatzkin predicted that as the traditional media grow more expensive and less effective, broadcast media will only be relevant for marketing bestsellers (ibid). The smaller communities that self-organize over the Internet will produce their own voices, their own experts, their own authors, and their own brands (ibid). These communities are the manifestations of niche markets, and they will embrace messages that are customized to reflect or serve their values.

At least part of Shatzkin's predictions are already apparent. Print media and television audiences have seen significant reductions in revenue as the web has developed into a viable platform for the dissemination of print, video and audio content. Newspapers in particular have suffered heavily from the loss of classified advertising revenues because advertisers have followed readers online. The dire situation in the newspaper industry was summed up in *The Economist* in August 2006, which stated that for newspapers "the business of selling words to readers, and readers to advertisers, which has sustained their role in society, is falling apart" (Economist, 2006).

Newspapers are responding to the crisis by following the readers (and advertisers) online. They are also limiting their editorial content to information that is likely to appeal to the broadest of demographics (ibid). Bloggers, citizen journalists and smaller web publishers are claiming what remains of the tail, reporting on more specialized events and topics, and thereby controlling access to those smaller audiences. Newspapers may yet survive, but their capacity to reach readers far and wide will be diminished, as will be their value to trade publishers.

The Internet is now a dominant platform for generating publicity. Although most publishers are unwilling to invest precious capital in uncertain online ventures, a growing number now feel that they can no longer afford to ignore the medium or wait for its role in marketing in the publishing industry to become clear. The following section looks at the means that publishers in Canada are using to promote their books, and their brands, online.

## ONLINE MARKETING

Nearly all of Canada's notable publishers maintain a website of some sort today. For the majority of those, the website is a little more than an online catalogue of their books. Those websites were designed with book distributors, literary agents, aspiring authors and booksellers in mind. Readers are an afterthought; known for their interest in authors rather than publishers, the readers are expected to get their information from the media. However, there are some publishers who are experimenting with social media as a means of engaging directly with readers.

### Social media

"Social media" is an amorphous term that covers a wide variety of web applications that allow users to sort and share information on the web. These applications are possible because the Internet, on which the web is based, is essentially a network of interconnected computers. Using this network as a platform, web users are able to send and receive information in a variety of ways, ranging from email to online chat and file sharing.

The Internet is now arguably the most inexpensive and democratic broadcasting system ever built. For little less beyond the cost of a computer and a Internet connection, users are able to create ad hoc networks around whatever information they perceive to be of value. In the early years of the Internet, its use was limited to those who could navigate its esoteric terminals. Now though, social media applications are making it easier for users to get past the technology and at the content and the people behind it. Users gather and collaborate on content and events all over the world, often because they heard about it on one or more social media applications. Some common examples of social media applications are blogs, micro-blogs, social networking applications, and wikis. For publishers, these applications are the foundation for the digital word-of-mouth, allowing users to evangelize their favourite books, new and old alike.



Raincoast Books was one of the first Canadian publishers to make use of social media when the company launched a blog on October 24, 2005.<sup>20</sup> Since then, the company has used its blog to promote new books and author events, as well as to reflect on the state of the industry. In 2008, Whitecap Books, a publishing house based in North Vancouver, also launched a blog with its redesigned website. Quill & Quire (the Canadian book industry magazine) also publishes the Quillblog, a source of news and commentary about the publishing industry.

There are also a number of independent bloggers who focus on literature, such as Seen Reading, BookLust, The Book Mine Set, Bookninja, Scribbling Woman, and SoMisguided.com. Some of the literary bloggers are authors (Bookninja's George Murray and Seen Reading's Julie Wilson), some are illustrators (Booklust's Patricia Storms), some are industry consultants (Somisguided's Monique Trottier), some are academics (Scribbling Woman's Mariam Jones), while others are book readers who use their blogs to engage with similar minded individuals as one might in a book club.

Raincoast Books was also the first publishing company in Canada to create a literary podcast series to promote its titles. Launched in November 2005, the first Raincoast podcast focused on American author Jim Lynch's novel *The Highest Tide* and was downloaded over 1,000 times during its first week (Macfarlane, 2005). The company went on to produce 10 episodes of its podcast in 2006. The episodes were distributed as free downloads on Apple's iTunes music store and syndicated by RSS. One other notable podcast producer among Canada's publishers is HarperCollins Canada, which also launched a website featuring a series of literary podcasts in July 2006. The most recent entry on the website was posted on November 28<sup>th</sup> 2008.

Creating blogs and podcasts can be prohibitively expensive for publishers. Considerable skills are required to create original content that informs and entertains. When the skills cannot be

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<sup>20</sup> Blogs are websites that feature regular journal-styled entries listed in reverse chronological order. Depending on the preference of the author, readers are sometimes able to comment on the entries, thereby engaging with the writer and contributing to the discussion. Micro-blogs limit the size or length of the entries by file size or the number of characters used.

found or spared in-house, publishers must outsource the work to creative agencies that can be trusted with their brand. That is an expense that most publishers simply cannot afford. Raincoast's podcast series, for example, was produced by At Large Media, at the cost of approximately \$2000 per podcast (Trottier, 2009). The high costs Raincoast incurred to produce the podcasts eventually forced the company to discontinue its podcast series in early 2007 (ibid).

Where some publishers are stepping back, older media are stepping up by producing or repackaging their content for book readers. For instance, CBC Radio operates the Canada Reads website, where the company combines blogs and podcasts to bring interviews and book recommendations to the public. Where publishers are not able to produce blogs or podcasts in-house, it makes more sense to point book readers to relevant links on sites like Canada Reads.

#### Social networks

A number of publishers are also creating their own branded social networking sites where book readers are encouraged to sign up as members. As an example, Random House Canada operates [booklounge.ca](http://booklounge.ca) where members have access to podcasts, blogs and video content as well as advance information about events. Coach House Press in Toronto has a similar, but smaller enterprise in the Coffee Lounge section of its website which contains blog entries, audio content and an image gallery. These sites have associated costs though, and not every publisher has the resources to create one. For those publishers, social networks like Myspace and Facebook are proving to be a cheap and effective means of building a community around their titles.

One of the web-based social networking services that has become very popular with publishers in Canada is Facebook. A free-access network, Facebook allows members to create groups. Membership in these groups is simply a matter of joining by clicking a link or button; there are no signup fees for the users. Also, the users can leave the group at any moment by selecting an option the group page. For this reason, user groups are remarkably easy to create and manage. Instead

of spending time on administrating the group, the creators of the groups can focus on delivering relevant information about news and upcoming events.

A number of publishers in Canada have created their own Facebook groups which they have used to varying degrees as publicity tools for their books and events. On three occasions between October 2007 and March 2008 I recorded the membership figures of 13 publisher groups on Facebook. Table 2 presents the results of my audit.

*Table 2: membership numbers for 13 Facebook publisher groups October 23, 2007 - March 27, 2008.*

<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Facebook members on October 23, 2007</b>	<b>Facebook members on December 11, 2007</b>	<b>Facebook members on March 27, 2008</b>
Arsenal Pulp Press	141	155	157
House of Anansi	444	458	473
Harper Collins Canada Reading Group	510	561	798
Anvil Press	171	178	180
The Mercury Press	338	356	355
Coach House Books	786	848	951
Brick Books	610	610	698
Insomniac Press	406	424	441
Harbour Publishing	46	44	45
Random House MysteryBooks.ca	77	75	71
Random House BookLounge.ca	497	549	575
Rocky Mountain Books	-	28	54
Penguin Canada Parties	-	250	241

The figures show that most groups had a consistent number of members on all three dates. A few groups grew significantly though. Coach House Books for instance grew by almost 200 members during the five-month period. Harbour Publishing on the other hand maintained an average membership of 45. These figures are particularly interesting when one considers the sizes of the membership groups in relation to the sizes of these publishing houses. For example, Coach House Books has the highest number of members on its group, exceeding even those of Random House, which is a much bigger publishing company. When comparing those two publishing companies, the 951 members of the Coach House Books Facebook group probably represent a higher percentage of their actual customer base than the 575 members of the Random House BookLounge.ca group or the 798 members in the HarperCollins Reading Group. For Coach House Books then, Facebook is a more efficient way of communicating with their customer base than it is for either Random House or HarperCollins.

It is hard to discern whether the members derive a real value from this service. What is clear is that these numbers represent the small segment of the market that is willing to connect directly with the publishing companies. For a long time, the publishing industry has held to the dictum that the author is the brand, but the existence of these groups is a sign that consumers are willing to associate themselves explicitly with the producers of those books that they enjoy, especially if that association brings them in contact with other people who have similar tastes.

Some publishers have also created Facebook Pages to promote their brands. Facebook Pages are branded spaces within the network where fans gather to show their support for a particular business. Some of the Canadian publishers with Facebook Pages include House of Anansi, Nimbus Publishing, and Random House of Canada. Facebook promotes the Pages service as an opportunity for producers to engage their customers in discussion:

Users can express their support by adding themselves as a fan, writing on your Wall, uploading photos, and joining other fans in discussion groups. You can send

updates to your fans regularly—or just with special news or offers (Facebook, Inc., 2008).

But while it is clear that Facebook is exciting, it is hard to discern what effect, if any, the groups and pages are having on publishers' bottom lines. Facebook provides analytics that show how many people visit the pages but those figures are not made public. In September 2007 *Quill & Quire* published an article on Facebook's impact on publisher's marketing strategies titled "Marketing by Facebook: Web 2.0 keeps offering new ways to tout books on the cheap". The article presented some evidence that the social network allowed publishers to dabble in viral marketing with instant feedback on the effectiveness of their marketing efforts, and all at a fraction of the price that it would take to create and maintain an interactive website (Johnson, 2007). The large number of Facebook members also means that marketers can get their message out to a wider audience than was previously possible.

Social networks like Facebook are now a strong publicity tool. The social network has the demonstrated capacity to extend the reach of traditional and new media. Even bloggers are also using Facebook to connect with their audiences. One example is Bookninja, a popular Canadian Litblog with over 700 members on its Facebook group. Table 3 shows how the group's membership grew by over 10% in a five-month period and now dwarfs that of many publishers.

*Table 3: Bookninja's Facebook Group membership over a period of approximately five months.*

Facebook Group	Facebook members on October 23, 2007	Facebook members on December 11, 2007	Facebook members on March 27, 2008
Book Ninja	656	683	762

Social media and social networks clearly have the potential to change the way publishers communicate with book readers. Whether it is by downloading a podcast, watching a trailer or joining a Facebook group, consumers have demonstrated a willingness to associate, and even congregate around publisher brands. But, as impressive as these social applications are, there is still some way to go before they can be used effectively to encourage customers to buy midlist books. On Facebook for instance, publishers who produce several books across many genres can send out messages to their group members about those books, but they are not yet able to specific group members based on interest. The landscape may be coming into focus, but is still difficult to make out the details.

And, as cheap as social applications may be, they are not completely free. Facebook groups and pages require the attention of at least one staff member who can post edited updates to let the members know about upcoming events and titles. That time spent on Facebook posting updates is time spent not doing something else that could add value to the publishing company. Publishers are aware of this, and it is quite likely that online marketing is not a priority when allocating resources. As long as there is no clear way of measuring the sales generated through the promotions conducted using social media applications, the use of social media could remain a supplementary channel, subordinate to press releases, articles in newspapers and magazines, and radio interviews. In the long run, it is hard to imagine any publishing company running a lengthy online marketing campaign if the campaign is unable to generate enough sales to justify the expense.

## **SECTION CONCLUSION**

Publishers are struggling to promote their midlist books through the brick-and-mortar stores. Online, matters do not look all that different. A few online retailers dominate the market and have shown the willingness to charge high fees for favourable placement. Chris Anderson's Long Tail theory presents a promising analysis for the future of midlist publishing in online sales channels,

but Professor Anita Elberse's findings suggest that consumers may continue to gravitate towards bestsellers.

But regardless of whether publishers agree with Anderson or Elberse, the fact remains that their books are available for sale online, and most of those are midlist books. If the publishers concentrate on marketing bestsellers, they will create an online market that is concentrated around a few titles. It is in their best interests to encourage consumers to explore the titles that make up the tail of the book market.

The data presented in this chapter show that publishers have a number of tools to help them to that end and that they are beginning to use them. Early signs suggest that most publishers are being tentative in the ways that they explore the potential of these tools to help them generate publicity for their titles. A less tentative approach can help to illuminate the realities of online marketing and to help determine whether publishers can sustain their midlist books by marketing them online.

D&M Publishers Inc. attempted to do just that in 2007. The following chapter presents a case study of the online marketing campaign for *Trading in Memories*, a midlist book published by D&M Publishers Inc. in September 2007.

## INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2007, D&M Publishers Inc. commissioned Boxcar Marketing to develop an online marketing campaign for *Trading in Memories*, a non-fiction book by midlist author Barbara Hodgson.<sup>21</sup> This chapter discusses the goals of the campaign, the challenges faced by both D&M Publishers Inc. and Boxcar Marketing, and the strategies used to overcome those challenges. It also presents the results of the campaign as measured by online activity and sales and concludes with an analysis of the campaign that draws from the theories introduced in the earlier chapters.

I worked as an intern for D&M Publishers Inc. during the summer of 2007. Following the end of my internship at D&M Publishers Inc., I joined Monique Trottier at Boxcar Marketing, with whom I built and maintained the website for the campaign. Working with Monique and the marketing staff at D&M Publishers Inc. gave me the opportunity to experience the challenges of online marketing. This case study contains my observations of the marketing process during that time.

## THE BOOK

*Trading in Memories* was published in September 2007. In the book, author Barbara Hodgson narrates her approach to unconventional ways of gathering memories on one's travels as an alternative to the souvenir shops and tourist traps. In the place of hotels and museums, the reader learns about the wonders waiting to be found in crowded market stalls, gothic graveyards, and even crumbling city walls.

*Trading in Memories* is a travel book. Among the cities described are London, Brussels, Paris, Naples, Budapest, Istanbul, Damascus, Tangier, Shanghai, Los Angeles, Portland and Vancouver. It

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21 Monique Trottier, one of the principals at Boxcar Marketing, is herself a literary blogger ([www.somis-guided.com](http://www.somis-guided.com)), making her an ideal candidate to help D&M run an online marketing campaign that involved the literary blogging community.



was expected to resonate with world travelers who enjoy collecting odds and ends in the cities they visit, and particularly to those who enjoy writing journals and diaries, and photography (Boxcar Marketing, 2007).

*Trading in Memories* can also be categorized as a how-to guide for scavengers and travelers who are not satisfied with the regular city guides or tourist boutiques. Backpackers who are keen to collect memories without spending a great deal of money can learn a great deal from Hodgson. Her use of scrapbooks and other items that cost little (such as old photographs and cinema tickets) demonstrate the truism that money is not a prerequisite for collecting memories. The book is also useful for those who frequent flea markets, antique stores, garage sales, and any other place where they are likely to find their preferred odds and ends.

Regarding the author, Barbara Hodgson is an accomplished book designer and an established writer. In addition to her three novels, *The Tattooed Map*, *The Sensualist* and *Hippolyte's Island*, she is the co-author of *Paris Out of Hand*, and *Italy Out of Hand*. Her non-fiction works include *The Rat: A Perverse Miscellany*, *Opium: A Portrait of the Heavenly Demon* and *In the Arms of Morpheus: The Tragic History of Laudanum, Morphine and Patent Medicines*.

#### The campaign goals

Like other publishers, D&M Publishers Inc. was keen to develop a template for online marketing. The company was in the process of redesigning its publisher websites and identifying ways in which it could use social media and networks as part of its marketing plans. Although the company did not have a Facebook group or page or a presence in any online social network at the time, the marketing staff recognized social media such as blogs were emerging as powerful forces of publicity. They hoped that with the right project, they could learn more about how to incorporate social media and networking into their marketing plans.

The overall goal of the campaign, therefore, was to create an online marketing template that D&M Publishers Inc. could subsequently use to promote other titles. The template would include

the process by which an electronic press release could be disseminated, as well as ways of measuring the effectiveness of the publicity efforts. The process would also involve identifying influential bloggers who would be willing to work with the company to promote their books in the future.

With regards to the specific title, D&M Publishers Inc. was concerned that, for all its merits, *Trading in Memories* might be overshadowed by other best-selling travel books (such as *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer) before it had a chance to gain some exposure. D&M Publishers Inc. initially had a marketing plan for the book that would target traditional media. However, the company's marketing team felt that by focusing its limited resources on reaching a small segment of the market with a presumed predisposition to the book, they might yield better results than with the traditional marketing model. The marketing team decided on an online marketing campaign and selected Boxcar Marketing to conduct and report on the campaign.

An online marketing campaign was developed to drive sales of the book using online tools and strategies. It had five goals:

- Create a template for future online marketing plans
- Post *Trading in Memories* to the online social media web sites such as Shelfari
- Ensure that fans of Barbara Hodgson's older titles were aware of her new book
- Provide bloggers with enough information to review the book
- Provide general readers with enough information to make a buying decision

The campaign would focus on reaching out to literary bloggers, adventure travelers, scavengers, and readers of FOUND magazine<sup>22</sup> (Boxcar Marketing, 2007).

The marketing team at D&M Publishers Inc. also expressed the desire to learn about the costs of online marketing. This was not an explicit goal for the campaign but an expected by-product of the process, one that would inform D&M Publishers Inc.'s online marketing efforts in the future.

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22 FOUND is an American magazine that publishes collections of found notes and photographs. FOUND was identified by Boxcar Marketing and the marketing staff at D&M Publishers Inc. as a possible gate-keeper into the community of interest that exists around urban scavenging. Prior to this campaign, there was no existing connection between D&M Publishers Inc. and FOUND magazine.

The campaign targets

Boxcar marketing identified 57 websites and blogs that would be targeted as part of the campaign. Boxcar Marketing would also produce and distribute an online media release announcing the book and means for interested parties to gather more information.

The budget for the campaign was limited to \$2000. In order to cover its costs, the campaign needed to generate sales of 66 copies of the book. A hardcover copy of the book has a listed price \$35, though it was expected that most of the bookstores would discount the book by approximately 15%.

Limitations and concerns for the campaign

D&M Publishers Inc. faced two significant challenges in executing the online campaign. First, Barbara Hodgson did not have any exploitable online presence. She was not a blogger, nor was she interested in becoming one. This meant that she did not have a platform online on which the campaign could be built. The campaign would therefore have to involve creating an online presence for her, from which her (potential) fans could find insights into her literary motivations and books.

Second, although D&M Publishers Inc. has a strong rapport with the press, it did not have a strong web presence in the fall of 2007. The company owned and maintained a number of web sites, namely douglas-mcintyre.com, douglas-mcintyre.ca, greystonebooks.com and greystonebooks.ca. Those websites though were not especially popular. On average, the official company website, douglas-mcintyre.com, was receiving less than 150 unique visits a day, including the visits by the company's staff. In order to improve its online presence, the company was redeveloping its websites at the time of the campaign, which meant that they could not be used to promote *Trading In Memories* on its official website. D&M Publishers Inc. would have to find another home for its online marketing campaign. Unlike its existing websites, the new domain

would be virtually unknown outside of the company's staff and Boxcar Marketing; therefore the campaign would have to quickly establish the new domain as a legitimate source of information for the new book.

D&M Publishers Inc.'s marketing team worked with Boxcar Marketing to find suitable solutions to these challenges. First, Boxcar Marketing drafted a list of interview questions for Barbara Hodgson to answer. Hodgson's answers to those questions provided some insight into her passion for story-telling and collecting mementos of her travels, but more importantly it provided the campaign with exclusive information about Barbara Hodgson that was directly relevant to the new title. By so doing, the campaign team hoped to create a sort of first-person narrative that is common on many blogs, thereby giving Hodgson an authentic online presence.

To counter the lack of a domain on which to host the campaign, Boxcar Marketing acquired the domain [www.tradinginmemories.com](http://www.tradinginmemories.com) and began the process of building a new website dedicated to promoting *Trading in Memories* and the older books by Barbara Hodgson that had been published by D&M Publishers Inc. The following section describes the website and the role that the website played in enabling D&M Publishers Inc. to achieve the goals of its campaign.

## THE WEBSITE

The web domain [tradinginmemories.com](http://tradinginmemories.com) was purchased to be the primary source of information on *Trading in Memories* on the web. The website provided the title's bibliographic data (the format, price and dimensions), and a link to order the book, as well as a complete list of the book's table of contents, including links to two short excerpts: *On the Pierre Loti Trail* and *A Portable Arabic Typewriter*. The website also featured a webform that could be used to send a message to Barbara Hodgson. Those who sent messages were rewarded for their interest and effort with a PDF excerpt of a sample chapter of the book, sent by email.

The website also contained the transcript of an exclusive interview with Barbara Hodgson, in which she discussed her inspiration for the book, her passion for travel, and her ideas for

collecting tokens of her travels. The website also listed Hodgson's older titles that had been published by D&M Publishers Inc. and provided links to online stores selling those titles.<sup>23</sup> Bloggers and other fans were also able to request review copies of *Trading in Memories* by filling out a request form on the home page.

## THE CAMPAIGN

Over a period of 2 weeks, Boxcar Marketing identified <sup>31</sup> websites and blogs that the target audience was likely to be familiar with, such as Found Magazine and Good Reports.<sup>24</sup> The two-week campaign occurred between November 7 and November 21, 2007.

### Getting the word out

On November 7th, Boxcar Marketing created and distributed a media release for *Trading in Memories*, which announced tradinginmemories.com as the official source of information on the title. The media release was posted on PRWeb, a news and press release distribution web site.<sup>25</sup> It also appeared on Google News, Yahoo News, and the Topix Network<sup>26</sup> (M. Trottier, pers. comm., 2009).

Boxcar Marketing also contacted the bloggers by email, posted comments on literary blogs with introductory references to the book and the website, and offered review copies of the book. Boxcar Marketing also shared links to the website on Facebook, Library Thing, Shelfari, and on the popular social bookmarking applications Stumble Upon, Digg, Ma.gnolia.com and Del.icio.us.

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23 Those wishing to order the book in Canada could do so through amazon.ca, chapters.indigo.ca

24 See Appendix B for a complete list of the targeted sites

25 PRWeb posts press releases in HTML. The press releases are also included in a PDF that it sent out to subscribers. The press releases are also included in a podcast and syndicated by RSS. When other news aggregators pick up the story by RSS and display it on a website, it is recorded as a headline impression because the headline of the press release has appeared on another site (cite).

26 The Topix Network aggregates breaking news from thousands of different sources, and categorizes that news based on keywords and geographic references.

## The results

Boxcar Marketing reported that between November 7 and November 21, the media release produced 607 full-page reads and 111,604 headline impressions<sup>27</sup>, as reported on PRWeb. Over the same period, the sample chapter on the website was downloaded 60 times and the marketing team received over 30 requests for review copies.

Table 4 shows in greater detail the manner in which the 607 full-page reads for the press release were accessed over the Internet. The statistics show that eBook downloads and reading online were the most popular ways of accessing the press release. Table 5 presents the same distribution data for the 111,604 headline impressions. That table shows that RSS is a popular way of disseminating the press-release information as well.

The data presented were collected using a variety of online web applications. BlogPulse, a search engine for blogs, was used to measure the activity among bloggers while Google Analytics was used to measure the activity on tradinginmemories.com.

*Table 4: full page reads for the media release for a 28-day period beginning November 7.*

<b>Access Method</b>	<b>Number of Full Page Reads</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
Read from a PRWeb site	475	78.25
eBook Download	103	16.98
PDF Download	26	4.28
Printer Friendly Version	3	0.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>

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27 Headline impressions indicate the number of times someone views a web page on which the title and/or abstract of the press release is republished on another website.

Table 5: headline impressions for the press release for a 28-day period beginning November 7.

Access Method	Number of Impressions	Percentage of Total
RSS recorded by PRWeb	98,875	88.6
Displayed on PRWeb	12,466	11.2
Requested by Topix Network	143	0.1
Displayed on 3 <sup>rd</sup> party site	120	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>111,604</b>	<b>100</b>

The total number of full page reads and headline impressions tapered off in the weeks following the campaign. This is not unexpected. The news-worthiness of the announcement was ephemeral, and probably depreciated rapidly as the aggregators gathered fresh news content. In retrospect, it would have been more informative to learn precisely how many of the total number of full page reads and headline impressions occurred on the first day, or even in the first week of the campaign so as to determine when the media release was most effective. That information would help determine when in the 2-week period the media release was most popular. Unfortunately, this information is not available.

From the information that is available about the campaign, it is clear that, together with the media release, the 57 blogs and websites<sup>28</sup> targeted by Boxcar Marketing drove the majority of the traffic to tradinginmemories.com. 54.38% of the traffic came from referring sites, 10.14% was from search engines and 35.48% was direct traffic. The leading site reference came from D&M Publishers Inc.'s company website, www.douglas-mcintyre.com, which sent 21 visits to the site. The

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28 See Appendix B for a complete list of the blogs and websites targeted by Boxcar Marketing during the campaign.

leading blogs were somisguided.com<sup>29</sup>, storms.typepad.com and darrenbarefoot.com<sup>30</sup>. In total, the website received 258 unique visits and 697 page views during the two-week campaign, with each visit representing approximately 3 page views and nearly 3 minutes spent on the website.

The statistics collected through Google Analytics showed that between November 7 and 21, 65.5% of the visitors were new to the site, and only 40.31% immediately left the site as soon as they visited it. In total, 169 of the 258 unique visits to the site were recorded once, 38 were recorded twice, and 12 visits were recorded three times.<sup>31</sup>

Geographically, the highest interest in the site came from Canada (183 visits), United States (43 visits), and Malta (11 visits). The top urban areas were Vancouver, New Westminster, San Gwann (Malta), Weston, East York, White Rock, West Vancouver, Victoria, Seattle, and Mississauga. It is worthwhile to note that for part of this project Monique Trottier was in Malta. Her participation while in that location is the reason why Malta registered a high number of visits. If we disregard Malta, the concentration of interest is in North America.

Boxcar Marketing's reports on BlogPulse showed that peaks of online activity amongst bloggers occurred during our 2-week campaign. Google Analytics also showed activity peaks in the same time period on tradinginmemories.com.

## Sales

Over the course of the 2-week online campaign, D&M Publishers Inc. sold approximately 36 copies of *Trading in Memories* in Canada and 25 copies in the United States. Table 6 shows that the highest sales in Canada were between November 5 and 11, while sales in the United States were consistent over the course of the campaign. During the two weeks that D&M spent \$2,000 to

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29 somisguided.com is a blog by Monique Trottier, a principal at Boxcar Marketing, the online marketing firm contracted by D&M Publishers Inc. to run the campaign for *Trading in Memories*.

30 darrenbarefoot.com is a blog by Darren Barefoot, an online marketing specialist based in Vancouver and colleague of Monique Trottier, a principal at Boxcar Marketing.

31 Appendix D provides a comprehensive Google Analytics report on tradinginmemories.com



promote *Trading in Memories* online, the company reported 61 copies sold. At a cover price of \$35 per copy, the title could have generated as much as \$2,135 in revenue. The total sales of 61 copies fell short of the sales target for the 2-week period by 5 copies, but the total number of sales for the month of November were 78 copies, 12 more than the campaign target of 66 copies. It is possible that the campaign continued to drive sales even after the designated period had passed, but the inability to pin-point how sales are generated makes it difficult to judge the effectiveness of the online marketing campaign based on sales figures alone.

Table 6 presents a summary of the sales data for *Trading in Memories* in the month of the campaign. BookNet Canada’s sales data covers roughly 65% of the sell-through in Canada, including Indigo, but does not include Amazon.ca. The data from Nielsen’s BookScan, the US retail tracking program, includes sales via Amazon.com and other online retailers as well as the big box bookstores and independent booksellers.

*Table 6: Book sales for Trading in Memories between November 5 – December 1*

<b>Date Range</b>	<b>BookNet Canada Sales</b>	<b>Nielsen BookScan Sales</b>
November 5-11	18	6
November 12-18	9	9
November 19 – 25	9	8
November 26 – December 1	8	9
<b>Total sales</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>34</b>

The available sales data are too limited to conclusively prove a direct link between the online marketing campaign and the sales reported by D&M Publishers Inc. for the campaign period,

but it is interesting to note that overall, the company shipped a total of 81 copies of the book during the month of November, compared to 71 copies in October and 54 copies in December (A. Urowitz, pers. comm., 2008). These sales figures indicate that, although the relatively strong sales during that month cannot be directly attributed to the online marketing campaign, the campaign was effective in boosting the sales of the title. This is further supported by the fact that Hodgson did not tour or make any promotional appearances for *Trading in Memories* during the month of November.

## **AN ANALYSIS OF THE CAMPAIGN**

Since the end of the campaign, tradinginmemories.com has had very few updates about either the book or the author, and it is no surprise that the site has recorded a significant drop in visits since December 2007. The reduction in visits to tradinginmemories.com following the end of the marketing campaign was predictable because there were no long-term strategies. The campaign was designed to generate as much publicity as possible in a short period of time, and to provide D&M Publishers Inc. with an on-line marketing template and a list of literary bloggers to contact during future marketing campaigns. In this regard, it was successful. But in so far as it was meant to be a trial of the effectiveness of online marketing, it provides a number of points for reflection.

### Measuring the efficiencies of online marketing

The major benefit of conducting an online marketing campaign is that it allows the publisher to gather a large amount of valuable data very cheaply. That makes it possible to analyse the efficiencies of the marketing campaign, determining where changes need to be made in future marketing plans.

The data collected from the press release is particularly useful in this regard. The figures show that although the press release produced 111,604 headline impressions and 607 full page reads, there were only 258 unique visitors to the campaign website. Also, approximately 40% of those

who visited the website immediately left it, which is an indicator of disinterest. Furthermore, approximately half of the traffic to the website came from D&M Publishers Inc.'s own website and a handful of the popular blogs that were targeted during the campaign. About a third of the traffic came from search engines. These figures imply that while the press release may have done a good job of getting the word out, the interest it generated was not that high. As a tool, it was not very effective for this campaign.

The data gathered from the campaign website also showed that the sample chapter was downloaded 60 times during the campaign. This figure is remarkably close to the 61 copies of the book that D&M Publishers Inc. sold during the campaign period. A coincidence? Perhaps, but the act of downloading a sample chapter of the book is a real indicator of interest, much like pulling a book from the self of a bookstore and quickly browsing through the pages. It is also relatively cheap for the publisher since only one file need be created, provides a corresponding statistic that can be used to gauge interest in the book..

Using web statistics in this way can allow publishers to determine the strategies that yield the best results in an online environment.

#### Evaluating the costs of online marketing

There is also enough data to form an understanding of the costs of online marketing. The campaign operated on a \$2000 budget, and reached out to 607 people who read the media release and approximately 50 bloggers who were contacted during the campaign. We can disregard the headline impressions since those figures show only the number of times that the article was republished on another website, not how many times it was read. Also, to eliminate overlap, we should disregard the number of visitors to the website because it is assumed that at least some of the visitors may have seen the press release or read about the campaign on another website. With the figures that we have (607), we can deduce that the cost of reaching out to each person was approximately \$3. Assuming that D&M Publishers Inc. had opted to extend the length of the

marketing campaign, the marketing team can estimate that the company will need to spend at least \$3 to reach out to an additional person.

It is worth noting that these figures could be more accurate. If the marketing team knew the number of visitors for each of the targeted blogs and websites, they would have a better sense of the size of the campaign's target audience, and with that a more accurate sense of the costs involved in reaching out to that audience.<sup>32</sup> But any additional data will only increase the number of people that the campaign reached, thereby bringing the costs down. The data offer a sense of the high mark.

Whether or not the additional expense of \$3 a worthwhile expense depends on the audience that is being acquired for that money. If a particular website is very popular and brings a new audience of hundreds or thousands of readers, then certainly the additional \$3 spent to reach out to that audience through the blogger is well-spent. On the other hand a blogger with an audience that consists of 20 people is not nearly as justifiable.

Could this budget have bought more publicity for this book offline? It is hard to say, but offline marketing models such as the one Woll put forward<sup>33</sup> offer a clearer sense of where the money goes. For instance, prominent placement in Chapters stores can cost as much as \$1500 for a period of 6 to 8 weeks (M. Trottier, pers. comm., 2009). A one-third page ad in a major national newspaper might cost another \$1800 (ibid). A freelance radio campaign could also cost another \$2000 (ibid). And an author tour to a major city like Toronto for just one night might cost up to \$1500, including the ticket, accommodations, and media escort (ibid).

However, the online marketing model brings more data, and with that a more precise sense of how much publicity is being created. The 600-odd full-page reads reported by Boxcar Marketing

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32 Websites and blogs that discuss similar topics will inevitably share visitors. With a great deal of transparency between the bloggers and websites it might be possible to identify the overlap and accurately quantify the size of the audience, but an estimation of the overlap would be more expedient, not to mention more realistic.

33 Woll's model for marketing in publishing is summarized in Chapter 2 of this report, page 9.

for the press release will not impress when viewed alongside the circulation of a major newspaper or magazine, but that figure represents more accurately the number of people who saw the information. Radio, television, and the print media will be hard-pressed to provide audience data at so granular a level, and so cheap a cost. The data collected during this campaign illustrate that when publishers spend money on online marketing, they are not simply buying publicity, they are obtaining information about the market as well.

At the moment that information comes at a very low cost, but this may not always be the case. In time, the literary bloggers may become aware of their ability to generate publicity for the publishers and chose to put a price on their audiences the way other bloggers have done.<sup>34</sup> But this is not currently the case, so publishers can continue to explore the marketing opportunities in a medium where the costs are still lower than those charged by radio, television, and print media.

#### Selecting books and authors for online marketing

The results of this campaign also raise questions about the sorts of books that are suitable for online marketing. The preceding chapters discussed the imperative for marketing midlist books online, but not all midlist books may be suited to the medium. The content and the author's activity online both make a difference. Timely or controversial material is more likely to generate interest. Also, authors who a following online on blogs or other social media have an enhanced capacity to generate publicity for their work. In the case of this campaign for *Trading in Memories*, the marketing staff was immediately confronted with the challenges of marketing a book that was neither timely or controversial, nor written by an author with an established audience online. In order to meet those challenges, a great deal of time had to be devoted to trying to locate the target

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34 An example of a monetized group of bloggers is The Deck, an advertising network of web development and design bloggers that targeting web and design professionals. Launched in 2005, the network now has 33 members and sells 25 slots per month. The Deck quotes the reputation of the members rather than their audience figures as the basis for the rates. In March 2009, the rate for an ad on this network is USD \$6,900 per month.

audience online. While Boxcar Marketing had some success in that regard, it may not have been enough to justify the costs.

In cases such as this one, publishers may find themselves between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, midlist books such as *Trading in Memories* may not have the necessary funds to run a sustained publicity campaign through radio, television, or print, or buy the lucrative placement in the bookstores. And on the other hand, the Internet may not be the best medium to reach out to the book's intended market. It is impossible to estimate the percentage of books in the market that will fall into that category, but one hopes that it is not so large as to cause grave concern.

## **SECTION CONCLUSION**

In the two weeks between November 7 and November 21, 2007, Boxcar Marketing run an online marketing campaign on behalf of D&M Publishers Inc. to promote *Trading in Memories*, a new book by Barbara Hodgson. The author was not a blogger, and did not have an online following. The book presented unconventional ways of gathering memories on one's travels as an alternative to the souvenir shops and tourist traps. Operating with a budget of \$2000, Boxcar Marketing created a campaign website, produced and distributed an electronic press release, and promoted the book on literary blogs and social networking websites. During the same two weeks that the campaign was conducted, D&M Publishers Inc. sold 61 copies of the book. In the month of November, the company shipped 81 copies of the book, 10 more than in October and 27 more than in December (A. Urowitz, pers. comm., 2008).

The sales figures cited in this chapter suggest that the campaign had an impact on the sales of the book, but the key success for D&M Publishers Inc. was developing a template for future online marketing campaigns. The ability to measure the corresponding online traffic and sales figures also allows for valuable insights into the process of promoting books online. By using the available free tools such as Google Analytics, Google Alerts, and BlogPulse, publishers can monitor the progress of their online marketing plans far cheaply and effectively than ever before.

## C O N C L U S I O N

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This report began with a definition of midlist books, and a discussion of the value that they have in publishing. I explained that midlist books have become synonymous with limited financial rewards because they sell fewer copies and therefore earn smaller profits than bestselling titles. For this reason, they are often overlooked and their sales are sometimes regarded as mediocre. That assessment undermines the value of midlist books in publishing. Although midlist books have fewer sales than bestsellers, they also cost less to finance, leaving publishers with the resources to acquire more books, thereby spreading their risks across more titles. Consumers also benefit from this because it means that publishers can afford to bring a variety of new voices into the book market.

In recent years though, midlist books have grown more difficult to market effectively. The typical marketing approach in publishing consist of a variety of tasks, such as sending out bound galleys and review copies, creating press releases, planning launch parties, preparing author tours, interviews, and questionnaires, as well as arranging for in-store promotions and placement (Woll, 2002, 201-203). However, the costs of in-store placement and promotion cost more today than they did in the past. The consolidation in the retail sector that has allowed a small number of retailers to dominate the market, which has enabled those retailers to institute aggressive discounting practices, and to increase the co-op fees charged for favorable in-store placement above the budgets of most midlist books.

These developments favor the bestsellers, which have the larger marketing budgets to cope with the rising marketing costs. Midlist books though, are in trouble. Publishers cannot simply increase the marketing budgets for midlist books to match the rising costs of promoting books because that would decrease the already small margins that they can expect from those titles. They must continue to get the best marketing results out of their limited budgets if midlist books are to remain viable.

The development of online bookselling has not improved matters much so far. While online retailers stock a great deal more titles than the brick-and-mortar bookstores, Amazon for instance has demonstrated a willingness to charge high co-op fees as well. Still, there is some reason to be optimistic. Chris Anderson's Long Tail theory suggests that with enhanced search tools, the goods produced for niche markets could flourish in the online retail channels, shifting demand away from the bestselling titles in the market and towards the more obscure products. This theory applies to midlist publishing because midlist books make up the tail end of the book market. Though, Professor Anita Elberse's research into consumer habits online shows that consumers will not simply embrace what is in the tail (2008), publishers have an added incentive to look for ways of marketing their midlist books effectively. The Internet has emerged as the medium that the best opportunities for this. With social media and networking, publishers are exploring emerging means of generating publicity at very little to no costs. The case study presented in this report demonstrates even further the benefits and risks that online marketing will bring.

Based on the results of the *Trading in Memories* campaign, publishers are advised to select books for online marketing that are either written by authors who have developed an audience online, or failing that, books that are timely and relevant to even those members of the public who have not heard of the author. Doing so will greatly reduce the challenges of generating publicity in a medium in which trends are remarkably ephemeral.

Publishers should design marketing plans that include as a rule a means of gathering and measuring the data that result from the process. It is by doing so that the plan can be comprehensively evaluated for success. D&M Publishers Inc. was able to gather data on the number of people who responded to the campaign, and compare it with sales data for the book during the period of the campaign. That ability allowed the marketing staff to determine what risks they should take with online marketing models in the future.

There are many challenges to marketing midlist books today. Publishers should respond to these challenges with ingenuity, and ingenuity requires experimentation. D&M Publishers Inc. has



demonstrated a willingness to try something new to sustain its midlist books, and it is building on what it has learnt. In March 2009, the company launched another online marketing campaign for the Greystone Books title *Tar Sands: Dirty Oil and the Future of a Continent*, by Andrew Nikiforuk. For one week (March 16 - 20), the entire book was available as a free PDF download on the company's website. That campaign will undoubtedly contribute to the company's growing expertise in online marketing. The book industry needs more of the same.

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## A P P E N D I C E S

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### APPENDIX A: THE MARKETING PLAN FOR *TRADING IN MEMORIES*

**Source:** Boxcar marketing

**Date:** September 27, 2007

#### 1. Purpose of campaign

The purpose of the Trading in Memories campaign is to:

- Introduce Barbara Hodgson's Trading in Memories to the online marketplace.
- Ensure the target audience is aware that the book exists.
- Provide online media with enough information to review the book or request a review copy.
- Provide general readers with enough information to make a buying decision.
- Increase online awareness for Barbara Hodgson's Trading in Memories.

#### 2. How we'll achieve the purpose

We will:

- Create an online marketing plan that works in conjunction with DOUGLAS & MCINTYRE's existing marketing and publicity for the book.
- Use social networks and web 2.0 tools to create virtual introductions to the author and her works within target online communities.
- Ensure the book is discoverable in major directories and search engines.
- Create press releases and other promotional materials that are sent to targeted online media.

- Let key online media know that review copies are available.
- Provide links and affiliate links to booksellers.
- Create a meme that will be distributed through social media networks.

### 3. The target online audience (or audiences)

- Existing fans of Barbara Hodgson
- Travellers: adventure, alternative, armchair
- Fans of illustrated novels, literary non-fiction
- Women's Book clubs
- Readers of Found magazine
- Literary bloggers
- Designers and illustrator bloggers
- Scavengers of "objets", Antiques Road Show
- Gift book buyers

### 4. Our Marketing Weapons.

#### General:

- marketing plan
- niche/positioning
- meme/theme
- business card? (single story element--\$500)
- word-of-mouth
- community involvement
- free sample
- electronic brochure of Barbara's stuff
- contest

- online marketing
- follow-up
- articles in publications
- testimonials (ask Patricia to post testimonial about barbara)
- enthusiasm

**Specific Deliverables:**

- Electronic Media Release
- Online Media & Blogger Outreach: Work Industries will offer a story idea and a review copy to targeted online media.
- Gift-away File. An excerpt from the book, which will be made available in limited quantity
- Discussion Group Postings and Blog Comment Postings.
- Online Bookstores. When appropriate Work Industries will encourage blog reviewers to also post Reader Reviews on Amazon.com, Amazon.ca, Powells.com and Indigo.ca, or on a retail site of their choice.
- Connector Publicity: Stories and links from Work Industries' personal networks, including SoMisguided.com and iworkindustries.com
- www.tradinginmemories.com: Landing page promoting Barbara Hodgson, Trading in Memories and her backlist titles.

5. Our niche in the market.

We will position the landing page as the prime source for online media and bloggers seeking info on Barbara Hodgson and her new book Trading in Memories. We will ensure one-on-one interaction with visitors to the site during the promotional period.

6. Our campaign identity.



Our identity will be a blend of professionalism, high quality design that matches Barbara's books, personal attention, and warm, human regard for visitors to the site and fans of her work.

#### 7. Marketing budget.

Cost of book is \$29.95

Cost of promotion is \$2000

Break even point is 66 copies

Our goal is to drive sales of the book using online tools and strategies. Like traditional publicity, it is difficult to track the correlations between a specific campaign and sales. We can measure online sales, however, Canadians in particular are wary of credit card fraud and make few online purchases.

It is difficult to track offline sales that result from online promotion.

We will measure and report on:

- Acquisition: traffic to the landing page and other electronic materials, such as the press release
- Conversion: visitors who click on "buy the book" links, "download excerpt" or other calls to action that display interest in the title or a move towards an offline purchase.
- Retention: Although the site will be active during the promotional period, the focus is not on generating repeat traffic to the site. We will however measure and report on returning visitors to the site as this shows increased interest and engagement in the promotion.

## APPENDIX B: SITES TARGETED BY BOXCAR MARKETING DURING THE CAMPAIGN

**Source:** Boxcar Marketing

These target sites have active audiences who are participating in forums, discussion boards or are commenting on articles. They are high traffic sites within their areas of interest: travel, literature, art, books.

1. 18th Century Reading Room: blog on 18th century artefacts
2. Adam and Meg, Travellerspoint: travel blog
3. Alcuin Society: Antiquarian + design blog
4. Another 52 Books: book blog
5. Artful Musings of Kathy LaRocco: art + book blog
6. BC Writers' Events newsletter
7. BiblioHistoria: book blog
8. Blog de Livre by Janice Brown: book + art blog
9. BookLust: art + book blog
10. Books of My Numberless Dreams: book blog
11. Bryght.com: Drupal developers group
12. Cool Things in Random Places: travel + photography blog
13. Creative Spin, smart-arts blogs: arts news blog
14. Darren Barefoot: travel + curiosities blog
15. del.icio.us: social bookmarking site
16. Digg: popular news ranking site
17. Dogmatika: books + culture blog

18. EAC Vancouver branch newsletter
19. Federation of BC Writers newsletter
20. Fernham by Anne, friend of Edrants.com: blog on books, food, Virginia Woolf
21. Found Magazine: user-submitted found art
22. Glass Petal Smoke: memory, senses blog
23. Gloss Magazine: culture section
24. Good Reports: book review journal
25. Hometown Invasion: travel blog
26. Instant Coffee: Weekly Arts Mailing
27. James McCann: BC author
28. Komodokomputer.ca: Canadian author, traveler, connected to Gourmet Safari
29. Kris Krug: photo, fashion, travel blog
30. LaurenCarter.ca: Canadian travel + literature blog, writes for The Writer magazine
31. Let Your Memory Be Your Travel Bag: travel + photography blog
32. LibraryThing.com: virtual shared bookshelves
33. Literary Traveler: travel blog
34. Ma.gnolia.com: social bookmarking site
35. Magpie & Cake: design blog
36. Miss 604: Vancouver blog
37. My Body of Work: art blog
38. Nicholas V: Yahoo 360 travel blog
39. Rabble.ca: Canadian political blog
40. Randomness to Nothingness: travel blog
41. Shebeen Club, Writing.Wise: local writing and publishing event blog
42. Shelfari.com: virtual shared bookshelves
43. Somerset Studio: craft & design magazine

44. SoMisguided.com: book blog
45. Square Space by Rosa Murillo: found art blog
46. StumbleUpon.com: social bookmarking and peer site
47. TellTenFriends.com, Drupal developers group: social media advocate
48. The Green Man: book review journal
49. Travel Betty: women travel blog
50. Travel Literature: travel writing blog
51. Unvarnished: journalism, media blog
52. Upcoming.org: social event listings
53. Virginia Quarterly Review: literary journal
54. Wikipedia: user-generated encyclopedia
55. WorldHum.com: travel journal
56. Written Road: travel writing blog
57. YouTube.com: social media video site

## APPENDIX C: GOOGLE ANALYTICS REPORTS FOR TRADINGINMEMORIES.COM

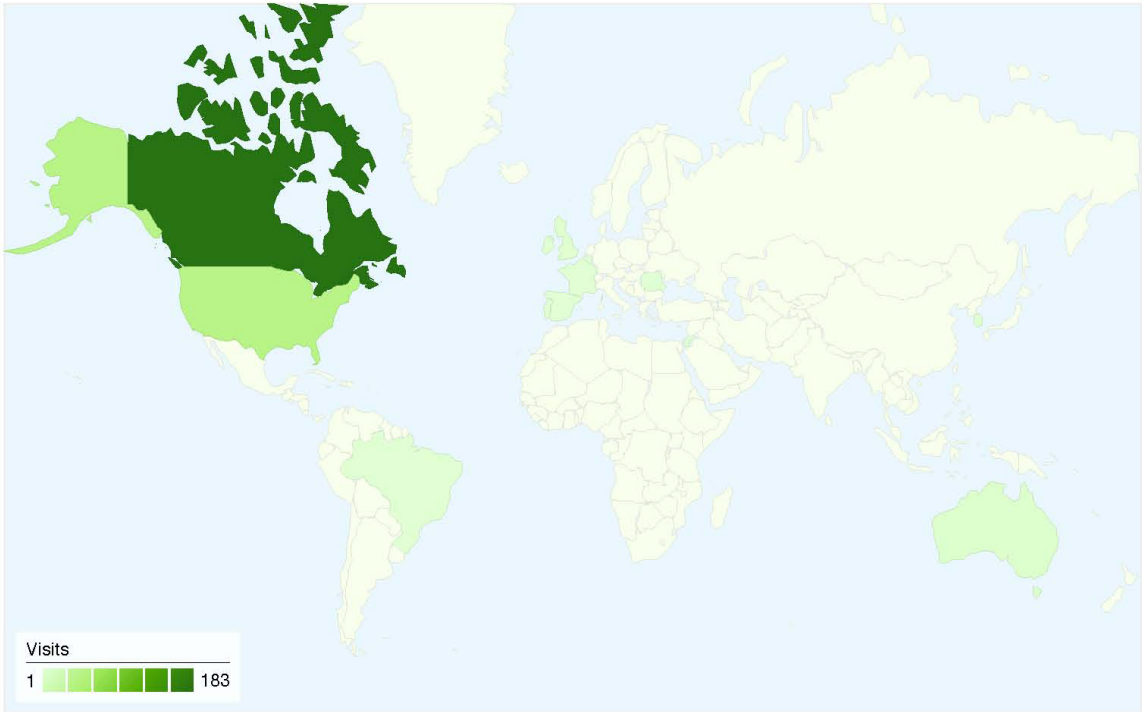
**Source:** D&M Publishers Inc.

Contained in this appendix are Google analytics reports for [www.tradinginmemories.com](http://www.tradinginmemories.com). The appendix includes:

- Map overlays
- Traffic sources overviews
- Visitor loyalty reports
- Visitor overview reports

The reports show data collected for two periods:

- November 7 - 28, 2007
- September 29 2007 - March 25, 2008



**258 visits came from 16 countries/territories**

Site Usage						
Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate		
<b>258</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>00:02:58</b>	<b>65.50%</b>	<b>40.31%</b>		
% of Site Total: 100.00%	Site Avg: 3.22 (0.00%)	Site Avg: 00:02:58 (0.00%)	Site Avg: 65.50% (0.00%)	Site Avg: 40.31% (0.00%)		
Country/Territory	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate	
Canada	183	3.31	00:03:19	58.47%	39.34%	
United States	43	2.77	00:01:50	93.02%	41.86%	
Malta	11	1.45	00:01:09	18.18%	81.82%	
Australia	5	6.20	00:07:19	100.00%	0.00%	
United Kingdom	3	1.67	00:01:27	100.00%	66.67%	
Brazil	2	1.00	00:00:00	50.00%	100.00%	
Jordan	2	2.00	00:01:04	100.00%	0.00%	
Ireland	1	5.00	00:01:30	100.00%	0.00%	
Spain	1	2.00	00:00:41	100.00%	0.00%	
France	1	3.00	00:00:35	100.00%	0.00%	




**Most people visited: 1 times**

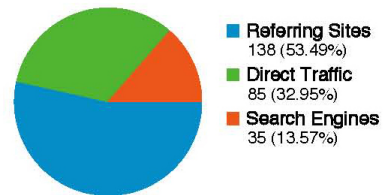
Number of Visits	Visits	Percentage of all visitors
1 times	169	65.50%
2 times	38	14.73%
3 times	12	4.65%
4 times	8	3.10%
5 times	7	2.71%
6 times	3	1.16%
7 times	4	1.55%
8 times	4	1.55%
9-14 times	7	2.71%
15-25 times	5	1.94%
51-100 times	1	0.39%

Tradinginmemories.com  
**Traffic Sources Overview**



All traffic sources sent a total of 258 visits

-  32.95% Direct Traffic
-  53.49% Referring Sites
-  13.57% Search Engines



**Top Traffic Sources**

Sources	Visits	% visits	Keywords	Visits	% visits
(direct) ((none))	85	32.95%	trading in memories	7	20.00%
google (organic)	32	12.40%	barbarahodgson	3	8.57%
douglas-mcintyre.com (referral)	23	8.91%	"barbara hodgson"	2	5.71%
storms.typepad.com (referral)	22	8.53%	"heavenly monkey" book	2	5.71%
alcuinsociety.com (referral)	14	5.43%	"trading in memories"	2	5.71%



**175 people visited this site**

-  **258** Visits
-  **175** Absolute Unique Visitors
-  **831** Pageviews
-  **3.22** Average Pageviews
-  **00:02:58** Time on Site
-  **40.31%** Bounce Rate
-  **65.50%** New Visits

**Technical Profile**

Browser	Visits	% visits	Connection Speed	Visits	% visits
Firefox	106	41.09%	Cable	126	48.84%
Internet Explorer	96	37.21%	DSL	63	24.42%
Safari	46	17.83%	Unknown	45	17.44%
Netscape	4	1.55%	T1	16	6.20%
Camino	2	0.78%	Dialup	7	2.71%








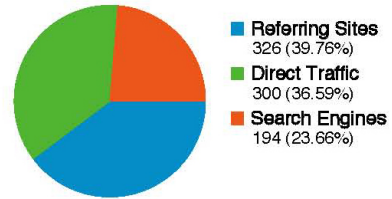
**821 visits came from 226 cities**

Site Usage						
Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate		
<b>821</b>	<b>2.97</b>	<b>00:02:55</b>	<b>67.11%</b>	<b>46.29%</b>		
% of Site Total: 100.00%	Site Avg: 2.97 (0.00%)	Site Avg: 00:02:55 (0.00%)	Site Avg: 66.99% (0.18%)	Site Avg: 46.29% (0.00%)		
City	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate	
Vancouver	264	2.29	00:02:04	54.55%	56.06%	
(not set)	40	1.15	00:00:33	10.00%	92.50%	
New Westminster	39	2.72	00:05:11	56.41%	35.90%	
Surrey	37	3.57	00:03:16	43.24%	43.24%	
Seattle	16	4.44	00:05:03	50.00%	18.75%	
Melbourne	15	5.07	00:07:44	86.67%	40.00%	
Weston	15	6.07	00:08:08	53.33%	6.67%	
East York	15	3.60	00:02:47	60.00%	33.33%	
San Gwann	14	1.36	00:00:54	28.57%	85.71%	
Sydney	13	5.38	00:02:56	100.00%	23.08%	



All traffic sources sent a total of 820 visits

-  36.59% Direct Traffic
-  39.76% Referring Sites
-  23.66% Search Engines



## Top Traffic Sources













Sources	Visits	% visits	Keywords	Visits	% visits
(direct) ((none))	300	36.59%	trading in memories	38	19.59%
google (organic)	174	21.22%	barbara hodgson	30	15.46%
gadling.com (referral)	41	5.00%	in memories	7	3.61%
alcuinsociety.com (referral)	37	4.51%	"barbara hodgson"	5	2.58%
douglas-mcintyre.com (referral)	34	4.15%	barbara hodgson trading in	5	2.58%



**821 visits came from 6 continents**








Site Usage						
Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate		
<b>821</b> % of Site Total: 100.00%	<b>2.97</b> Site Avg: 2.97 (0.00%)	<b>00:02:55</b> Site Avg: 00:02:55 (0.00%)	<b>67.11%</b> Site Avg: 66.99% (0.18%)	<b>46.29%</b> Site Avg: 46.29% (0.00%)		
Continent	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate	
Americas	710	2.89	00:02:53	63.94%	46.34%	
Europe	51	2.24	00:02:41	76.47%	56.86%	
Oceania	43	5.28	00:04:25	95.35%	30.23%	
Asia	14	3.14	00:01:24	100.00%	57.14%	
Africa	2	1.50	00:01:06	100.00%	50.00%	
(not set)	1	2.00	00:00:14	100.00%	0.00%	
						1 - 6 of 6

**Most people visited: 1 times**

Number of Visits	Visits	Percentage of all visitors
1 times	551	 67.11%
2 times	92	 11.21%
3 times	40	 4.87%
4 times	27	 3.29%
5 times	22	 2.68%
6 times	14	 1.71%
7 times	10	 1.22%
8 times	9	 1.10%
9-14 times	22	 2.68%
15-25 times	19	 2.31%
26-50 times	14	 1.71%
51-100 times	1	 0.12%



**550 people visited this site**

-  **821** Visits
-  **550** Absolute Unique Visitors
-  **2,440** Pageviews
-  **2.97** Average Pageviews
-  **00:02:55** Time on Site
-  **46.29%** Bounce Rate
-  **67.11%** New Visits

**Technical Profile**

Browser	Visits	% visits	Connection Speed	Visits	% visits
Internet Explorer	296	36.05%	Cable	330	40.19%
Firefox	270	32.89%	Unknown	208	25.33%
Safari	206	25.09%	DSL	208	25.33%
Mozilla Compatible Agent	24	2.92%	T1	54	6.58%
Opera	9	1.10%	Dialup	18	2.19%