

HOW PUBLISHERS CAN DO MARKETING BETTER

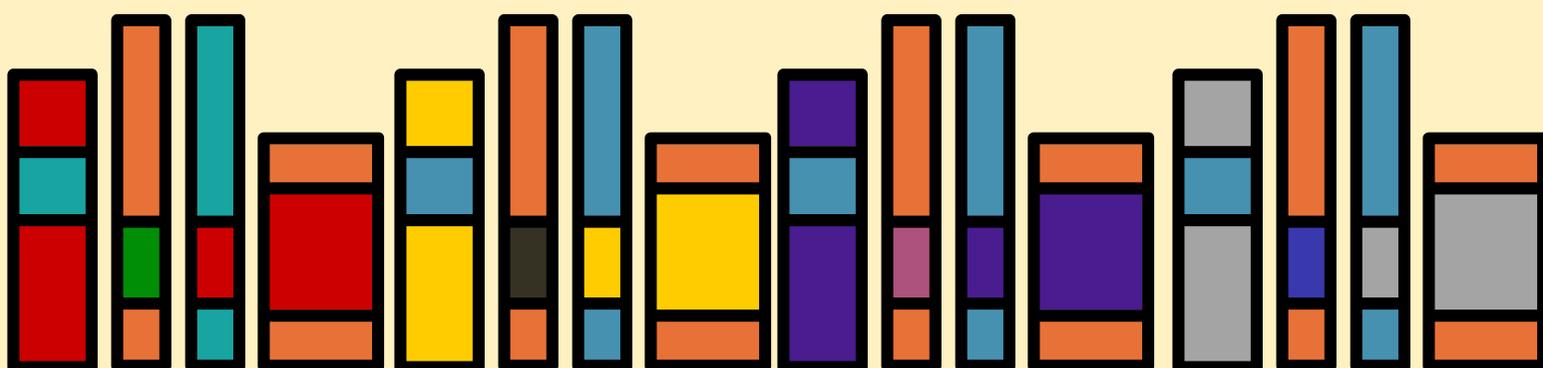
By Ribbonfish



12 experts on how publishers can do marketing better

Marketing is about reaching the right audience, and giving them what they want. Sometimes it's about giving them something they didn't know they wanted. Effective marketing often takes time, common sense, and a little budget - but the boundless opportunity of digital makes it hard to know where to start. Publishers are inherently in tune with their audiences, but how can they reach them when marketing themselves as a business, their books and products, and their authors?

In this guide, we speak to twelve experts, who have unique insight into how best to market books, authors, and publishing houses.



David Vallance

David Vallance is a Copywriter and Digital Strategist at Glasgow-based agency, Digital Impact.

"Unless you know the right people, getting a novel reviewed in a newspaper is tough work. However, when you compare the effort required to get reviewed against the falling circulation of most papers, it's rarely worth the effort. Thankfully, there is an alternative: online influencers.

Search on Google book review blogs and you'll get a huge list of websites devoted to reviewing books. Yes, they lack the gravitas of broadsheets but they have sizeable audiences and are way more accessible. Compile a list of all websites that pop up and fire them out an email, offering a copy of a book to review. If you work with 50 high-profile sites, you can easily generate similar reach to a review in a large newspaper."

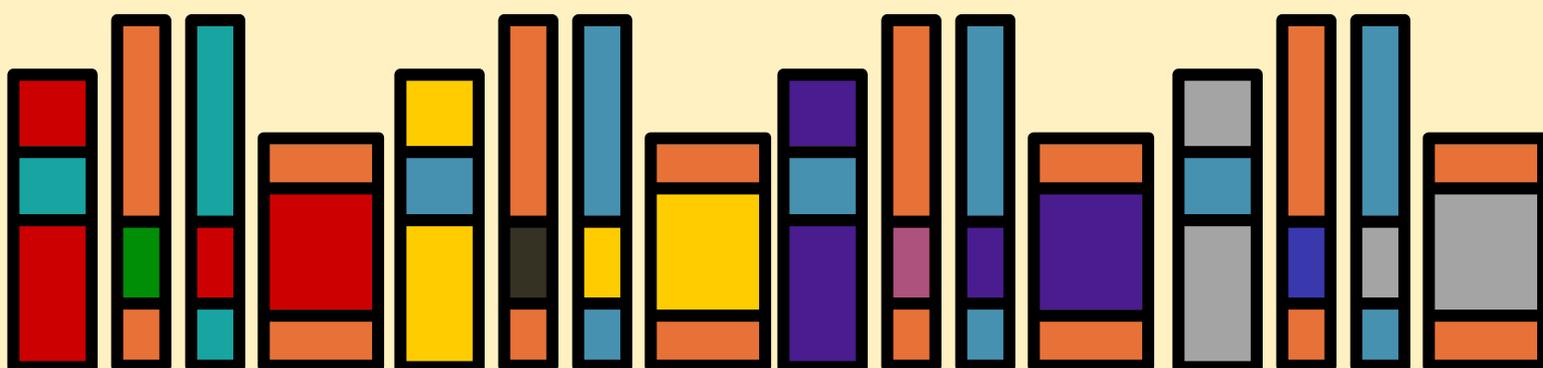


Eric Wroolie

Eric Wroolie is owner of Overpass Apps, an Oxfordshire-based app publishing company specialising in language learning games and interactive eBooks. He has had over four million downloads worldwide.

"At Overpass we make interactive books and games for the mobile market. If you know anything about marketing an app, you know that it is very difficult in this crowded market. We've tried lots of different ways to get our company and our apps noticed. But video seems to be the sure winner among all our efforts. We started creating videos on YouTube over two years ago and have had nearly a half a million views to our channel. We have over 1200 subscribers (it's growing every day) who regularly comment and watch our new vides. I wish I had started doing this from the beginning.

The biggest obstacle was getting in front of the camera. I didn't want to be "that guy". And my first videos were terrible. But I committed to release one a week. I've been doing that for nearly two years now. I'm more comfortable doing it now than ever before. I have a nice audience and many people in the app community trust me. I suggest this to business I talk to ("You need to create videos!") but most people are too shy or embarrassed (even the extroverts) to get started. The blogs get a small amount of traffic, but the videos get much more and are much easier to rank for."



Matt Goolding

Matt Goolding is Head of Digital Marketing at Ribbonfish, a London-based tech company that creates enterprise apps and business systems for publishers in the UK and USA.

"Publishers must locate and understand the communities that already exist among their audience, and go out there to offer something genuinely useful and inspiring. Publishers can tap into a number of different angles for their works; the communities that enjoy their author, the topics and themes of their publication, plus their existing customer base, and many more.

Sometimes publishers don't go granular enough to pick out sections of their audience that are likely purchasers. Digital not only increases reach, but offers an opportunity to get into niche readerships by leveraging the audience of existing influencers."



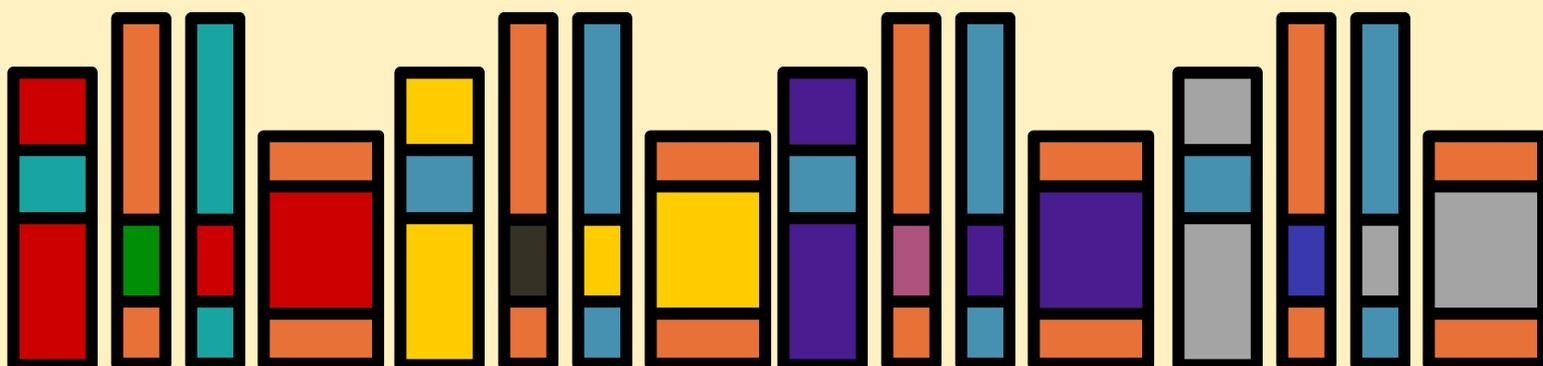
Chris McVeigh

Chris McVeigh is Owner of Fahrenheit Books publishing house and Founder of publishing consultants Four Fifty One, specialising in visibility marketing for authors and publishers.

"Publishers need to figure out the difference between marketing and promotion. As things stand 90% of 'Marketing Directors' in publishing fundamentally misunderstand their own job titles.

Marketing is pro-active. It starts with the product and the customer. Marketing is data lead, it's trackable, it's evolutionary. Good marketing tests, tracks, measures and amends as it goes. Marketing fine tunes campaigns, tailoring them precisely through empirical testing to meet the desires of the prospective customer. Effective marketing targets a specific audience and introduces them to new products. In short, marketing builds markets.

Promotion on the other hand is an amplification tool. Good promotion shares many of the characteristics of good marketing but it is in essence reactive. The promotional roulette wheel resets every time it's spun. Promotion is difficult to track, difficult to scale across product groups and crucially, difficult to replicate from product to product. The over-reliance of publishers on promotion at the expense of marketing condemns 100,000s of books to obscurity ever single year."



Karen Inglis

Karen Inglis is a self-published children's author based in London with approaching 10,000 sales. She writes mainly for middle grade and regularly goes into schools. Her latest book *Walter Brown and the Magician's Hat* (for ages 7-9) is due out on 10 May 2016.

"If you're self-published, the tips below assume that your book is as good as it possibly can be. This means testing with children, teachers and/or librarians and using a specialist children's book editor and professional illustrator/cover designer.

Start local. Find a quiet time and approach local bookshops with a copy of your (perfect) book and offer it on consignment. If they host events, offer to do a reading/signing – do the same at your library. Place flyers or bookmarks in cafes/newsagents/libraries/ playgroups frequented by parents – say what age the book is for and where they can buy it locally and online. Let local parenting blogs/FB groups know about your new book if the rules permit, but don't over promote. Contact local schools and offer readings/workshops with the chance for children to buy signed books. Contact local press and magazines by phone and with a follow-up press release and cover image. 'Sell' your local author story. Highlight any local inspiration for your book and say where it's stocked locally. Mention any planned school events or book signings. Do the same in the town where you grew up."

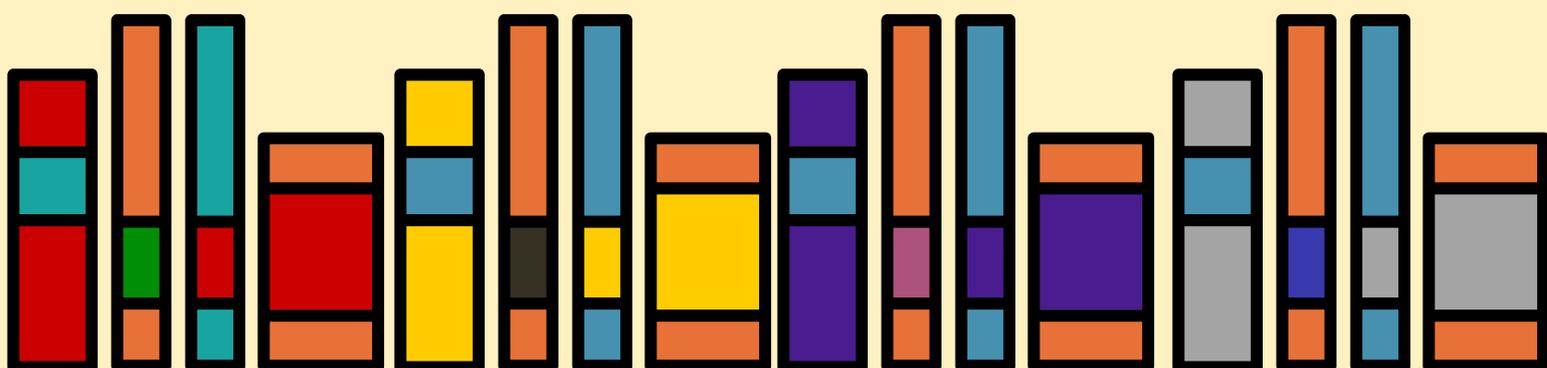


Jonny Pryn

Jonny Pryn is co-founder of One Third Stories, an independent publisher specialising in language learning materials for children. Their books start in one language, and end in another.

"Selling a book doesn't mean you can't share the story for free. With more and more content available to consumers at no cost, it pays to give them a taster and demonstrate that your product is of a quality worth paying for.

That means getting creative and finding new mediums of telling your story. We've been playing with puppets to promote our fairy tales that introduce another language, and have found that people who watch one of the videos are far more likely to download an audiobook even though it's the same content. When your audience feel like they're getting value from your marketing alone, they're much more likely to become customers."



Will Craig

Will Craig is Founder and Creative Director at Digital Impact, a Glasgow-based digital agency.

"If there's one thing I've noticed working in digital, it's that people want something for nothing. Whether it's a free trial, complementary resources or pro bono consultation, there seems to be an expectation of freebies.

I'm not suggesting you give away a full novel for free because that massively devalues your skill, time and effort. Instead, tempt readers with one or two sample chapters. Don't simply release PDFs either. Upload your work to a digital publishing platform like Issuu, Scribd or Yumpu and allow your readers to experience an authentic reading experience, albeit one on a digital device. By providing that experience, you are far more likely to engage users and get them involved in your narrative."



Col Skinner

Col Skinner is an independent Digital Marketing Consultant and Owner of Profoundry consultancy. He works with startups, SMEs, brands and agencies offering strategic digital support services.

"Digital marketing gives publishers the greatest chance to market directly to their target audience in a controllable cost effect way.

Remarketing lets publishers essentially follow those who have shown interest in them, around the web. Once a user completes a specific action they are added to a list and marketed to using display adverts or text ads through Google's Display Network (a collection of partner sites who host Google adverts). This can be a great way for book publishers to turn warm leads into sales on a cost per click basis.

Twitter Advertising lets publishers promote video adverts or audio adverts to a tightly thought through demographic audience. They can target those following the author or authors of similar books. They can market to those with an interest in a related area. They can market to those tweeting about a related event or those who fit within a preset demographic group such as Empty Nesters. Campaigns are coated on a 'per engagement' basis so publishers will only pay when someone Follows, Clicks or Shares depending on the chosen objective."

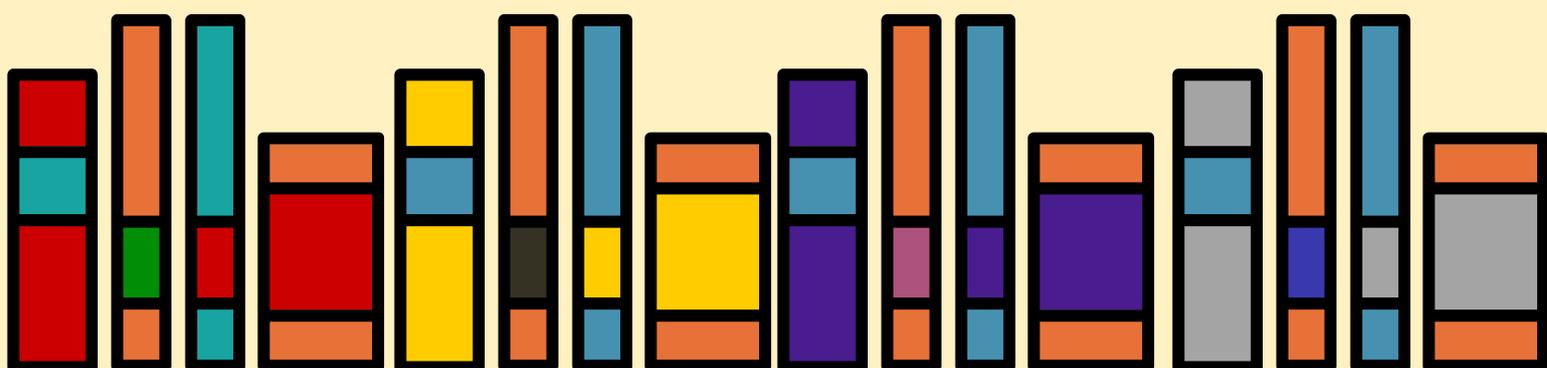


Thomas Brown

Thomas is a Content Marketing Executive at Zest, where he is responsible for creating engaging client copy. His passion for writing also extends to fiction. His stories have been published by a number of independent presses and in 2014 his novel LYNNWOOD was a finalist for The People's Book Prize.

"When writing for your social media followers, be honest. My posts about book promotions receive x likes - my posts written at 2 a.m. about the strangeness of drafting, elusive words, or that weird way in which heartache inspires the chapter you've been struggling to shape for two months receive exponentially more.

It's easy to forget that your followers are also people, and writing social posts for them is no different from writing fiction. People don't connect with adverts and promotions; they connect with stories and emotions. Share yours for marketing success."

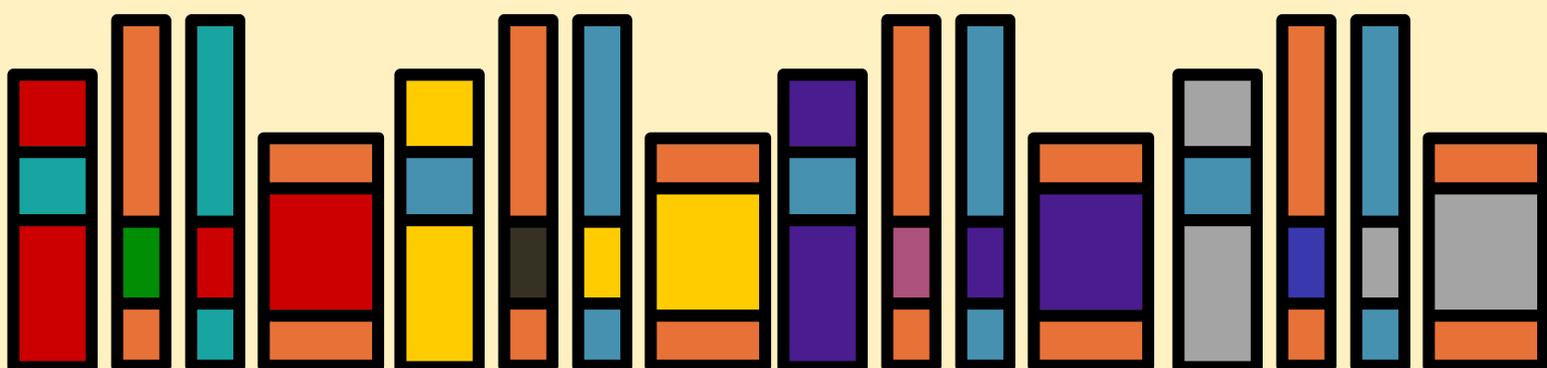


James Erskine

James is Strategy Director at The Big Shot and Marketing Director at Social Circle. He works with key clients to shape content strategy, from creative concept, production through to placement, distribution, media partnerships, audience mobilisation and monetisation of content.

"At The Big Shot, we work with the modest budgets publishers often have to drive sales of books. We recommend two thoughts when thinking how best to market a book. Firstly, what content do I have to use? (what in the content you have at your disposal differentiates you from other releases?), and secondly; how are you distributing that content?"

We fuse multiple media and distribution techniques to maximise the reach and ensure the bullseye target audience have multiple touch points to engage with the content. We think it is the combination of traditional advertising, advertorial media partnerships, social placements and influencer marketing (using our Social Circle tool) that generates the best, most cost effective results."

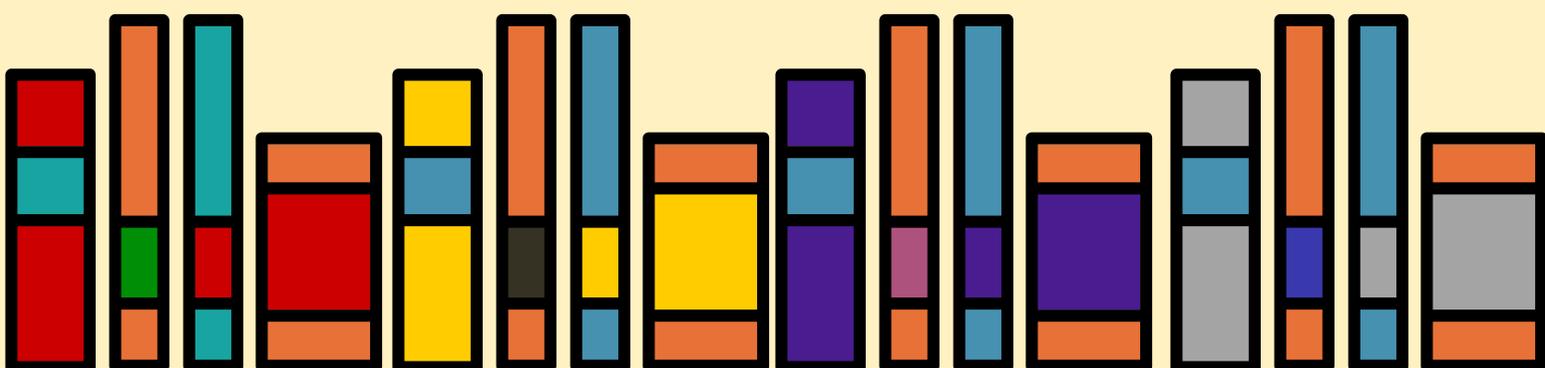


Dane Cobain

Dane Cobain is a Social Media Specialist at fst, a creative marketing agency based in Marlow. By night, he writes books, including a supernatural thriller called *No Rest for the Wicked* and a book of poetry called *Eyes Like Lighthouses When the Boats Come Home*.

"First off, there are two different approaches that should be working in tandem towards the same goal. The publishing house should be carrying out its own activity, promoting both the publisher and its authors. The authors should also be marketing their work on their end, indirectly promoting the publisher in terms of sales, etc.

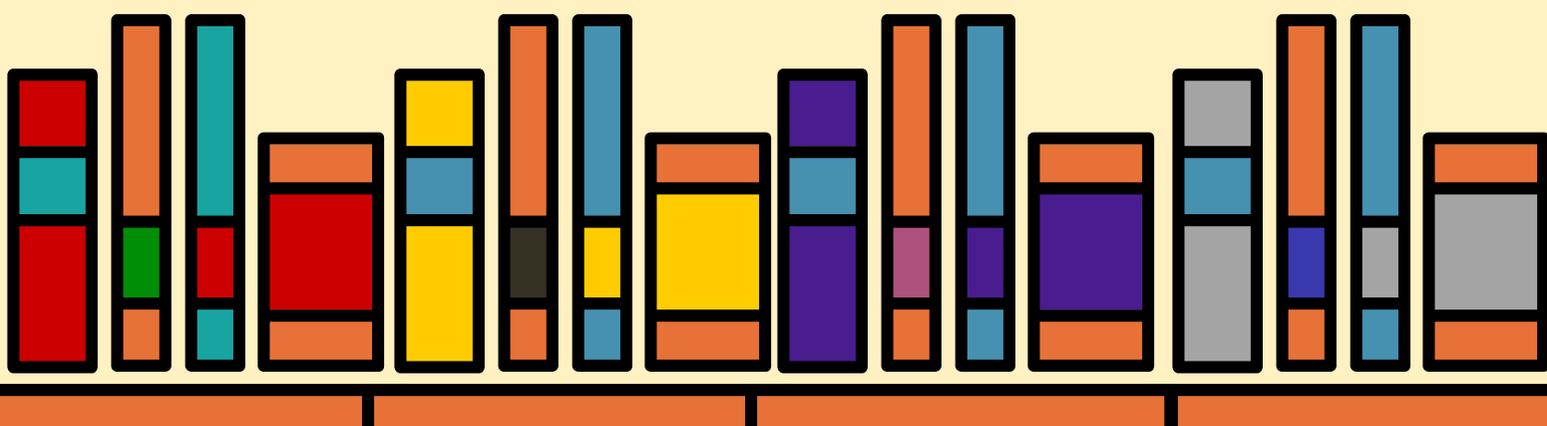
The publishing house itself has a whole host of tools at its disposal, and the ideal approach to marketing would be an integrated campaign including a mix of different elements that all integrate together. For example, they should attend trade shows, send out e-mails before and after the shows, post to social media sites whilst they're there and then wrap it all up afterwards with a blog post and on-going communications with any new leads that they make at the show...



Continued...

They'll also need to think about their target audiences, and to provide content (such as blog posts, videos, etc.) to suit their needs and interests. The typical writer just has one – the consumer, the readers who buy their books. That said, clever publishing houses offer tools and training to their writers, so that their writers know exactly how to go about marketing their books to full effect. Even with an international publishing house, you can offer this through online training, video material, how-to blogs and the like.

My work is published by a community-based publisher called Booktrope, which has a unique approach to marketing (and publishing in general). Aside from a small staff in Seattle to deal with layout, listings and all of the admin and finances, all of the creative work is done by members of the Booktrope community."



Marc Defosse

Marc Defosse is Owner and Managing Director of Ribbonfish, a London-based tech company that creates enterprise apps and business systems for publishers in the UK and USA.

"A mobile-first approach is essential for publishers in the modern era. Whether it's an e-commerce store for selling products, or merely an informative website for reference and brand awareness, the mobile audience is becoming more key every single year. Consider this in marketing material as well as basic website functionality. Content should be mobile-optimised and available to those seeking it on mobiles and tablets, not just on their laptops or desktops.

This should also be considered for internal business systems that streamline the publishing process. Enterprise users expect a slick user experience identical to what they feel on consumer-facing tools, so it's important to take this approach throughout the organisation."



About Ribbonfish:

We specialise in enterprise technology for organisations in the publishing and media industries. Using our vast experience in this area, we tie specific business needs to the right technology. It's simple; businesses need problems solved, and we help to solve them. Our technologies improve productivity, efficiency, and business processes. We tackle CRM, production, rights and permissions, sales and marketing, title management, and much more.

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