

Enthusiasm is Contagious:

Viral Marketing and the Future of Publishing

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Abstract

This work will identify the issues surrounding the advent of viral marketing within the publishing industry with a particular focus on the growing popularity of book videos and reader-generated content. A careful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of book videos as marketing tools, an examination of the rise of viral marketing in both the publishing industry and non-related fields, and an examination of the importance of book tours in a digital age will all work toward creating a cohesive plan for the digital future of the publishing industry. Along with a literature review and a consumer awareness survey, a number of relevant industry members were interviewed to ascertain how publishers are adapting to a newly-digital and increasingly interactive society with regard to author tours, reader participation, and word-of-mouth reviews. From this research, conclusions were drawn about the future of marketing books. It became clear that while book videos appear capable of revolutionising the marketing departments of UK publishing houses, they are underpublicised and the majority of the public is unaware of their existence. Book videos will soon become essential supplementary marketing techniques for publishers and it is certain that as the industry becomes more niche-focused, marketing will be more strongly directed toward fans and subcultures as opposed to society as a whole.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own
work and all sources have been acknowledged.

Diana Copeland, 2010

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context

The new century has brought a flood of innovation in the form of Internet marketing and increased user-interactivity to many industries, and viral marketing has become a buzz word within advertising circles. With the advent of book videos and a willingness to market books in new and innovative ways, it appears that the publishing industry is beginning to embrace the digital era.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this paper is to identify, then compare and contrast the issues surrounding viral marketing within the publishing industry. Special attention will be paid to finding out which genres most benefit from book videos, what defines a successful book video, and how well publishers, authors, and readers are adapting to the changes within the industry.

The objective of the work is to present solid evidence in favour of book videos as an essential part of every publishing house's marketing plan. Publishers too often look to tradition instead of the future, something that too often hinders the industry and represents books as backwards and behind the times, with an unwillingness to embrace technological trends that could help introduce a new generation to the entertainment pleasures of reading. But, with book videos and an embrace of social media sites by publishing houses, it appears that publishers are willing to try new marketing tactics in order to strengthen ties between authors, publishers, and fans.

It is the objective of this work to provide a plan for the future of the publishing industry as niche-focused, with direct marketing evolving into a precise targeting of

potential fans that showcases the growing importance of online fan sites.

This work will analyse the past, present, and future of marketing books and examine new arenas for which books, and the communities that develop around them, can flourish through recent technological advances.

1.3 Methodology and Acknowledgments

By structuring the work on the major themes of viral marketing, book videos, and interactivity, the research will act as supplementary support and will be based on the findings of a number of sources. The research will offer insight into the current state of the publishing industry as well as provide contextual support through a literature review of news articles, blog postings, and academic journals. Most of the literature was obtained through online sources instead of through books because of the current and ever-evolving nature of the topic.

Along with a thorough analysis of the subject through the written word, a great number of book videos were viewed in order to ascertain the qualities that make for an effective marketing campaign, with particular emphasis on which genres benefitted the greatest from a book video treatment. All videos mentioned can be found and viewed on the webpage for this dissertation, www.bookvideos.tumblr.com. Screenshots of the videos are placed throughout the paper but the viewing of each will help the reader understand the importance of the multimedia marketing of books and it is highly recommended that the dissertation webpage is visited while reading the paper.

Another method employed for this work was a consumer awareness survey. As publishers spend great deals of money on book videos, it became essential to find out whether or not the general public were aware of their existence. The data analysis site SurveyMonkey.com was utilised and 100 people were questioned, representing a

wide range of ages and reading backgrounds. Though the conclusions drawn from this survey cannot be used to make concrete conclusions about the effectiveness of book videos, reasonable assumptions can be made based on the questions asked.

Interviews provided the final method utilised in this work. By sending out e-mail questionnaires to a variety of pertinent sources, opinions and thoughts were collected from all areas of the publishing industry, from the marketing departments behind book videos and innovative social media sites, the production teams that physically create the book videos, the authors who often feature in the videos, and the fans and committed readers that have taken book videos and revolutionised word-of-mouth marketing through their own devotion.

Careful research into the topic of book videos and viral marketing yielded a wealth of interesting interviewees. Publishers offer a gamut of industry perspectives on marketing everything from non-fiction, fiction, children's books, and cookbooks and their help and support was essential for the success of this paper. Louisa Combs of Octopus Publishing Group and Eleanor Muir of Laurence King Publishing grant insight into traditional marketing techniques as well as how leading UK publishing houses have adapted to the digital era, while a source that asked to remain anonymous from a leading UK fiction house gave thoughtful input on the potentials of viral marketing for books. Brett Cohen, Vice President of Quirk, the publishing house behind the hugely successful *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, provides an American perspective on marketing books, as well as supplying first-hand experience in regard to viral marketing and the creation of original book ideas that create buzz in the marketplace. The importance of asking publishers from a variety of backgrounds should not be underestimated, as each represented a different marketing ideology that fit most perfectly with their own publishing house's goals and objectives, showing the breadth of

voices currently promoting the successful integration of online marketing within publishing houses in the Anglo-American world.

Darren Shan, the author behind the successful Young Adult series *The Darren Shan Saga*, was interviewed in order to provide background on author tours, author-based marketing, and author-led videos. He was asked to participate through the comment section of his website and was a wonderful collaborator, offering his frank opinion on the importance of meeting fans and inspiring young people to read by his intimate involvement in the marketing plans of his own books through his numerous tours around the country.

Vicki Salemi, author of *Big Career in the Big City*, was asked to participate after her book video was featured on *The Bookseller's* website. She contributed greatly with her thoughts and experiences marketing her popular non-fiction business book.

Producers of book videos were chosen based on their prominence in the industry. Liz Dubelman, of VidLit, is an Emmy-award winning cinematographer who left Hollywood behind in order to focus entirely on the creation of book videos. Sheila English is equally devoted to book videos and was the first person in the world to create one back in 2002; she is also responsible for trademarking the term Book Trailer®, which only videos produced by her company, Circle of Seven Productions, can truly be termed.

Finally, fans, bloggers, and media representatives were interviewed in order to create a user-perspective that would have been reckless to overlook. Cameron Bowie created a book video for James A. Owen's *Here, There Be Dragons* in order to inspire other readers to become fans, while Mavis Mirovic, from the website 'Fallen for *Fallen*' represents the ultra-fan that publishing houses are starting to target as falling marketing budgets require a more niche-based approach to finding and maintaining

consumers, especially ones who are so dedicated to a book that they create and actively maintain their own fan pages. Penni Fu is a leading Strategic Planner for legendary advertising agency Wieden + Kennedy and offers an international perspective on book videos and the creative ideas of outside industries. Beth Werner is behind Kirkus Book Video Awards, an enterprise associated with Random House Kids that works to inspire young people to read while offering young filmmakers the chance to make their name in the movie industry.

Without the help of those interviewed, this dissertation would never have come together and it is the sincere wish of the author to thank those who participated.

It is intended that these methods of research will help create a cohesive argument that can be used to explain and describe the marketing potential of book videos, viral marketing through social media sites, and the growing interactivity within the publishing industry.

1.4 Potential Problems and Biases

As with any focus group sample, interview, or literature review, the results collected will not be representative of the entire book-buying public or the publishing industry as a whole. Personal biases and opinions asserted by those interviewed may be an inevitable by-product of the research methods chosen, but all effort was made in order to collect data from as wide-ranging a sample as possible in order to offer a useful and interesting overview of the present state of the publishing industry.

2 Traditional Marketing

2.1 How Do Publishers Market Books?

'No one is entirely sure what marketing is', Alison Baverstock writes in *How to Market Books*, speaking against the rhetoric and psychobabble that populates the textbooks of marketing degrees, but when you 'boil down all the seminal texts and jargon...you are left with a simple concept: marketing means effective selling'¹. And, in an industry where editors once ruled publishing houses, 'today they are run by marketers'² and a fundamental change has swept over the publishing industry. The traditional techniques utilised by marketing departments in publishing houses throughout the world are being transformed with the increasing importance of the Internet in consumers' lives, and marketers have had to reassess the way they promote books. But, before the changes marketers have had to face can be understood, the traditional styles of marketing books must be analysed.

2.2. Planning a Marketing Campaign

At its core, 'marketing is about offering: the right people the right product by saying the right things in the right way at the right time and in the right place'³. When interviewing marketing department executives from prominent UK publishing houses, it became clear that, while the books they published were very different, the way they planned a marketing campaign remarkably stayed the same.

Louisa Combs, a former UCL graduate and current Marketing Executive at Octopus Publishing Group, plans a marketing campaign by first considering the target audience.

¹ Baverstock, 2008, p. 4

² Baverstock, 2008, p.4

³ Baverstock, 2008, p. 5

She thinks about ‘who is likely to be interested in this book, what are they like, how old are they’ their ‘gender, social background’ and anything else that might help her paint a picture of the book’s perfect customer. Once all of the personal details are clearly defined, she can determine ‘the methods of marketing [to] use and the channels with which you market to them’⁴.

Establishing a target audience enables the second part of the planning process to commence: the creation of the budget. For Eleanor Muir, Marketing Coordinator at Laurence King Publishing, the budget is ‘allocated according to a title’s position in the marketplace’, with ‘key consumer titles’ warranting ‘a higher budget for in-store promotions... while academic titles will all have a very similar, static budget’⁵. Laurence King Publishing is a medium-sized press that specialises in the creative arts with a frontlist that is split evenly between trade and academic books, yet the budgeting concerns for a major trade publishing house are the same. Louisa Combs judges the sales expectations for a book and determines how much marketing ‘is likely to increase the sales – will it be a guaranteed seller even if we do nothing, or will it really benefit from a large campaign?’⁶. With overheads to be considered and future sales unpredictable, every publishing house must carefully consider its marketing plans so as not to have unnecessary expenditures roughing up the bottom-line.

2.3 Are Marketing Campaigns Effective?

It should come as no surprise to those in other media-based industries that when publishing houses need to tighten their belts during economic downturns, marketing department budgets are often the first to get slashed. But, if books need to be marketed

⁴ Louisa Combs Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.A

⁵ Eleanor Muir Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.C

⁶ Louisa Combs Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.A

in order to make sales, it can seem off-base to industry outsiders to have the means to increase consumer knowledge of a book squashed because of budget constraints. It can be reasoned that by taking away any chance for the book to find an audience because of a miniscule budget, the company will actually never have a chance to make money off the book, no matter how tight the marketing budget has become. This is a real Catch-22 if ever there was one.

However, the simple rationale for this somewhat backwards practice within publishing houses is explained by Louisa Combs as ‘Essentially, it is very, very hard to measure marketing effectiveness for books’⁷. This sentiment is backed up by Eleanor Muir who said that it is ‘almost impossible to accurately measure effectiveness’ in a marketing campaign⁸. When the financial directors look down at their decreasing spending ability during hard times, it is no wonder that the department that cannot prove its worth is the first to go.

Because of the difficulty of measuring sales attributed to particular marketing campaigns, Alison Baverstock concedes that even pouring a great deal of money into a marketing budget ‘won’t produce enormous sales the next day. Effective understanding of markets and products takes detailed study and hence time’⁹. Publishers have to be able to take the long-view with their marketing campaigns in order to see results, a difficult luxury when costs associated with the publication of a book need to be paid.

With the struggles marketing departments face within their own publishing houses, it is no wonder that their image is likewise tarnished in the eye of the public – but for drastically different reasons than perceived effectiveness. ‘Marketing often suffers from an image problem; it can be viewed as forcing unwanted goods on the

⁷ Louisa Combs interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.C

⁸ Eleanor Muir Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.C

unwilling'¹⁰, no doubt lessening the effectiveness of any campaign. In truth, however, today's marketing departments are much more self-conscious about offending the public because of the increasing use of the information found through psychological studies and data accumulated over years and years of surveys, polls, and interviews. Couple this with technological innovations involving the computer and the rise of social networking on the Internet, it becomes increasingly easier to market directly and at less cost to an intended audience than ever before.

2.4 Direct Marketing

Of particular interest to the future of marketing in the publishing industry will be the evolution of direct marketing. Alison Baverstock states that 'direct marketing means selling or promoting straight to the customer, without the intervention of an intermediary such as a retailer, wholesaler or sales agent' and can be divided up into 'direct response' and 'direct promotion' marketing¹¹. Direct promotion marketing is focused on getting information about the product out to the consumer while direct response marketing constitutes the flyers and lettering campaigns that reach mailboxes with contests and prize offers that require a response to win or buy, i.e., through an enclosed return envelope. And even though 'it's really hard to pinpoint one method as having proven ROI (return on investment)' in terms of money spent on a campaign, Louisa Combs believes that 'having a great competition prize... has proven effectiveness', as does collaborating with a third party in order to 'double your strength – and your audience'¹².

⁹ Baverstock, 2008, p. 5

¹⁰ Baverstock, 2008, p.5

¹¹ Baverstock, 2008, p.93

¹² Louisa Combs Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.A

Indeed, 'if it is done well, direct marketing to your customers is the nearest you get to the rep's visit: a personal communication about your product direct to the person most likely to buy it'¹³. With the creation of digital avenues through the Internet, it would appear that revamped and digitised direct marketing campaigns have the greatest potential to foster word of mouth promotion. When a marketing department can win over the heart of one customer through an innovative product promoted on the Internet, that person will essentially become a member of the marketing team as they pass their love for a new product, and its accompanying advertisement, on to each and every one of their friends, who will in turn pass it on to their friends, more than doubling the strength and effectiveness of a campaign with each person it reaches. This form of marketing is an effective way to harness the love of the public for your product and is called 'viral marketing', a term that will be discussed in regard to the publishing industry in the next chapter.

It is clear that by revaluating and reviving traditional methods of marketing, marketing departments may be able to increase the effectiveness of their work within their publishing houses, as well as cultivate a closer relationship with their target audience while increasing knowledge of their markets for future campaigns.

2.5 The Future of Marketing

Technology may well be the saviour of the modern publishing industry. From innovative new ways to read books – iPads and Kindles and handheld devices springing out of the minds of pacesetters almost monthly – to creative ways to advertise online, publishers may soon be able to chart their marketing effectiveness through the creation of websites, book videos, and increased consumer interaction. As the world becomes a

¹³ Baverstock, 2008, p. 95

smaller place through the Internet, publishers will need to adapt to the closeness and familiarity desired by their customers by reaching out and becoming directly involved in their readers' daily lives. Even now direct marketing is stepping away from its paper-based past and going digital. Louisa Combs explains the changes she has witnessed while marketing for Octopus Publishing Group over the past few years:

Increasingly the demand for point of sale (e.g. dumpbins and counterpacks) is diminishing, and this used to be a large part of marketing. Similarly, we hardly ever spend money on advertising in magazines – they're too disposable, too easily overlooked, to be worth spending budget on. And equally, mailshots used to be very popular and we would never use them now. The postage and print production costs are astronomical, and why would you waste that money when you can send an e-newsletter for free?¹⁴

Along with the obvious cost advantages the Internet provides, Octopus Publishing Group's switch to e-newsletters and other online marketing techniques reflects a fundamental shift in a society that now requires all information to be easily available over the Net. Alison Baverstock reasons that 'today there is a much wider understanding that online customers are time-pressured, of short attention span, searching for convenience, and want to interact with those whose sites they visit rather than simply seeking to absorb information'¹⁵. Laurence King Publishing's Marketing Coordinator Eleanor Muir goes further by claiming that 'all titles are now considered in terms of – what could we do with this on Facebook?'¹⁶, indicating the true importance of the transition into the digital age.

¹⁴ Louisa Combs Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.A

¹⁵ Baverstock, *How to Market Books*, 2008, p.153

¹⁶ Eleanor Muir Interview, 2010, Appendix A.1.B

3 Viral Marketing

3.1 Word-of-Mouth

The world has turned and threatens to leave much of the publishing world behind, especially in terms of advertising. Traditional marketing techniques have become outdated and the old-standbys of blockbuster spending on magazine and newspaper ads no longer carry weight, and they cannot be replaced by their equivalent online manifestations. American economist Eric Clemons agrees, believing that ‘the traditional advertising model simply cannot be carried over to the Internet, replacing full-page ads on the back of the *New York Times* or 30-second spots on the Super Bowl broadcast with pop-ups, banners and click-throughs on side bars’¹⁷. The Internet has changed society and advertisers have scrambled to make sense of the new world order. And, so far, the strongest contender to the modern marketing throne, viral marketing, is really just a reincarnation of the most dependable and effective of marketing methods, ‘that old elixir of publishing’¹⁸: word-of-mouth.

The Bookseller’s Francesca Ronai interviewed ‘Mathew Riley, group account director at Tangent One, a digital agency that specialises in working with publishing companies’, who explained that ‘viral marketing is simply word-of-mouth – you start at one place and spread it out accordingly. The model is usually who you know will spread it for you, if they like what you’re doing’¹⁹. Officially known as ‘network-based marketing’, viral marketing also carries the monikers ‘diffusion of innovation’, ‘buzz marketing’ and, of course, ‘word-of-mouth marketing’²⁰, while recreating ‘the credibility

¹⁷ Clemons, 2009, p. 16

¹⁸ Mathias, 2007, ‘Viral, It Might Just Catch On’

¹⁹ Ronai, 2009, ‘Digital Focus: Word of Mouth’

²⁰ Hill, 2006, p. 256

and importance of interpersonal communication'²¹. And, although word-of-mouth, or WOM, has always been known to be a valuable marketing tool, it is only now that advertisers can engage 'in proactive WOM-generation marketing campaigns...whose objective is to induce adopters to "spread the word" about a product and, thus, to multiply product awareness and interest above and beyond what can be achieved through traditional marketing'²². Plus, as Hyperion president and publisher Ellen Archer recently wrote in a *Publishers Weekly* op-ed, 'social networking online has given [publishers] an unprecedented opportunity to experiment and to extend'²³ word-of-mouth tactics to the online realm.

3.2 Viral Power

Word-of-mouth advertising relies on the fact that people tell their friends about what is new in their lives, be it the tasty new Italian restaurant down the road to the great new book they just read. A personal recommendation from a friend has more power than an advertising campaign worth millions of pounds. Add the Internet to the familiar mix of personal recommendations, and viral marketing emerges as one of the strongest marketing methods ever developed. 'When something "goes viral", that means unbiased but interested observers have found a particular piece of content compelling and entertaining enough to share it with their friends, and their friends felt the same and decided to share it too, so the content ends up reaching far more people than the creator of that content ever imagined'²⁴, Andrea See, online marketing executive at Canongate, told *The Bookseller*. In the academic journal *Statistical Science*, a team of economists found evidence that when businesses marketed to the 'network neighbors', the friends,

²¹ Dellarocas, 2006, p. 277

²² Dellarocas, 2006, p. 278

²³ Archer, 2009, 'Viral Issue: Sharing is Caring'

²⁴ Ronai, 2009, 'Digital Focus: Word of Mouth'

of their customers, the 'neighbors' became patrons 'at a rate 3-5 times greater than baseline groups selected by the best practices of the firm's marketing team'²⁵, meaning that people who know their friends are already customers of a company are willing to become customers of that same company based on the word-of-mouth power behind their friends' recommendations.

This is true with books and publishing houses just as much as with any other industry, and the true power of successful viral marketing is finding a few prominent people, or 'nodes', to advertise directly to in order to tap into their social network. Canongate's See tells of her company's recent luck with a node:

David Eagleman's *Sum* was a book that we felt could definitely be marketed via word-of-mouth and it was actually succeeding without making a big splash. Then a highly-influential network node (a person who has a huge number of connections) known as Stephen Fry recommended it on Twitter and it sold 16,000 copies in the following month.²⁶

Celebrities like Stephen Fry and Oprah Winfrey hold great recommending power, but even ordinary people can be great nodes, as 'a particular subset of consumers may have greater value to firms because they have a higher propensity to propagate product information, based on a combination of their being particularly influential and their having more friends'²⁷ than the average shopper.

Once these nodes are found, through a combination of skilful market research and the careful trawling of social networking sites, it is up to marketing brilliance to win

²⁵ Hill, 2006, p. 257

²⁶ Ronai, 2009, 'Digital Focus: Word of Mouth'

²⁷ Hill, 2006, p. 258

their hearts over to the cause. Internet shoppers 'are seeking information and/or entertainment'²⁸ and the marketer that can harness this fact will be able to unleash the power of viral marketing to its fullest extent for not only the first few months of a book's release, but also over the long-term. Without a doubt, one of the strongest commendations for viral marketing is its ability to stay relevant within the Internet's memory, as once a marketing development is uploaded online it will be available for search at a moment's notice, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, forever, through the power of the residual marketing effect. Sheila English, the creator of the first Book Trailer®, writes:

Residual marketing effect or RME is the continuing promotion that occurs after the initial campaign and over the life of the promotional or marketing tool. Where The Long Tail talks about a large number of items purchased in smaller quantities, RME is a measurement of the continued usability of a marketing tool and its effectiveness from greatest potency of initial use to the subsequent longevity of its effectiveness.²⁹

Modern society wants information available in an instant, no matter that a book may have been released several months, years, or decades before. When a publishing house goes online, their promotional material will still be available to the public long after the marketing department has moved on to the next item on its frontlist. And, as all publishers know, backlist sales are the bedrock of the industry, and viral marketing's ability to continue selling a book over the years is a great advantage.

Viral marketing's emergence as a powerful marketing tool allows 'bite-sized pieces of information' to become 'available to the digital generation – and to let them

²⁸ Baverstock, 2008, p. 156

²⁹ English, 2008, 'Residual Marketing Effect', p. 2

share it with their friends'³⁰. Hyperion's Ellen Archer summed up the true power of viral marketing books best when she said, 'People want to share what they're thinking about the books they read, at work, over dinner, and, of course, in book clubs. Why not harness that power?'³¹ Why not, indeed.

3.3 How Other Industries Go Viral

While other industries have harnessed the online power of word-of-mouth advertising with varying success, through Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and blogging efforts, one of the greatest viral marketing achievements of the past year has been Old Spice's hugely popular 'The Man Your Man Could Smell Like' American campaign. The advertisement, envisioned by the legendary advertising company Wieden + Kennedy, transformed a lagging 'old man's deodorant' from Procter & Gamble into a hip, sexy and dashing brand aimed at the youth of today.

Unveiled during the 2010 Super Bowl, Old Spice's rebranding was given birth by spokesman Isaiah Mustafa, 'a handsome, former NFL wide receiver with a polished comedic sense of timing and washboard abs' who 'promised women that he "was the man your man could smell like", even if no man could ever be as truly manly as The Old Spice Man'³².

Overnight, the video became an Internet sensation with over 17 million views registered on YouTube alone at the time of this writing. And although marketing efforts are often discounted as vague in terms of sales made, there is no doubt about the financial success that followed the Old Spice marketing blitz, with sales of Old Spice

³⁰ Archer, 2009, 'Viral Issues: Sharing is Caring'

³¹ Archer, 2009, 'Viral Issue: Sharing is Caring'

³² Reiss, 2010, 'Now Look Here, Now Learn From This'

Body Wash jumping '55% in the past three months and 107% this past month³³', as reported by Brandweek. In fact, 'Gary Stibel, CEO and founder of The New England Consulting Group, said his data also showed a lift for Old Spice' and that 'it's 100 percent driven by marketing³⁴'.



Successful Viral Marketing: Old Spice – The Man Your Man Could Smell Like³⁵

Recently, Old Spice went further in interacting with their fans than any company has before by unleashing an unprecedented viral marketing campaign that followed up on the huge success of the first 'The Man Your Man Could Smell Like' ad. By 'responding to questions and comments from Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, Old Spice man' spent two days "'talking with the Internet'"³⁶, and created over 180 short videos in which he interacted with fans on a global-scale in real time. By creating personalised videos for

³³ Boris, 2010, 'Old Spice Reaps Rewards of Viral Campaign'

³⁴ Boris, 2010, 'Old Spice Reaps Rewards of Viral Campaign'

³⁵ Visit <http://bookvideos.tumblr.com/> to view all videos

³⁶ Williams, 2010, 'The Utter Brilliance of Old Spice's Viral Campaign'

celebrities, ‘fans, randoms and prominent bloggers alike’³⁷, Old Spice was able to capture the imagination of the Internet and create a viral phenomenon that resulted in 5.9 million video views and 22,500 comments in less than a week.

Old Spice was able to create such a strong response because it made use of powerful social media nodes such as Kevin Rose, the founder of Digg, one of the most popular social networks currently around. ‘Rose tweeted the Old Spice Man about’ an illness and was ‘enamored’ when he received a response, causing him to Tweet ‘Holy sh*t, best get well video EVER from Old Spice’ to his ‘million-plus Twitter followers’³⁸. The advertising team at Wieden + Kennedy purposefully chose Rose, along with celebrities such as Ellen DeGeneres, Alysa Milano, George Stephanopoulos, and Demi Moore, and other ‘persons with huge followings on social networks – followings that dwarfed Old Spice’s own...specifically those with particular credibility and influence over the technorati and social media addicts’ so that when the ‘social media kingpins told their followers, their followers told their friends, and the math compounded exponentially, fervently and quickly’³⁹.

The true success of Old Spice’s ‘@Responses’ campaign was the way it ‘used viewers to go viral’⁴⁰. Iain Tait, Wieden + Kennedy’s Global Interactive Creative Director, explains the success as ‘nothing magical’, insisting instead that ‘We just brought a character to life using the social channels we all [social media geeks] use every day. But we’ve also taken a loved character and created new episodic content in real time’⁴¹. However, there is something truly important that all industries can learn from Old Spice’s successes, and that it is entirely possible to speak directly to consumers in order

³⁷ Ehrlich, 2010, ‘The Old Spice Social Media Campaign by the Numbers’

³⁸ Reiss, 2010, ‘Now Look Here, Now Learn From This...’

³⁹ Reiss, 2010, ‘Now Look Here, Now Learn From This...’

⁴⁰ Ehrlich, 2010, ‘The Old Spice Social Media Campaign by the Numbers’

⁴¹ Ehrlich, 2010, ‘The Old Spice Social Media Campaign by the Numbers’

to create ‘an immersive experience that people want... to be a part of’⁴². In a world where large chunks of social interaction are conducted entirely over the Internet, it is clear that people are starting to desire the opportunity to create a community and to connect to companies in the same ways that they connect with their online friends – as equals to be spoken with instead of sold to.

3.4 How Publishers Can Go Viral

Other industries are beginning to capture the public’s attention by creating interactive and innovative advertisements that transcend the traditional ‘push techniques’ of forcing the audience to pay attention. Now, consumers actively market for companies by sending video links to their friends’ email addresses and by posting on their Facebook pages for all to see. For publishers to create a marketing campaign that sells a book as well as The Old Spice Man sells body wash, they need to rethink and renovate their favoured methods of promotion. Clearly, ‘a marketing or agency person cannot ever promise that a campaign will “go viral”, but if your content is well produced, original, and interesting enough for its intended audience – and you’ve cultivated a loyal online following over a period of time using the channels you commonly target for campaigns, you are well set up for a campaign to “go viral”’⁴³. Publishers are accustomed to planning books far in advance and most have already entrenched themselves in Internet social marketing sites and fan pages, so it is only a matter of tapping into the customer lists readily available to them in new ways in order to make the jump to viral marketing success.

The publishing industry as a whole will also have to reevaluate the way they spend money to promote books. Instead of slashing marketing budgets at the first hint

⁴² Ehrlich, 2010, ‘The Old Spice Social Media Campaign by the Numbers’

of an economic downturn, it would be advisable to invest in the online marketing techniques that attract customers based on their interests, such as working with Google Adwords to direct customers to their site based on search terms. Tangent One's Mathew Riley speaks of his experience working with 'a digital agency that specialises in working with publishing companies' by explaining that 'You've got to give yourself a bit of a budget... for a couple of grand, I could spend £200 for 10 months on Adwords and try and compete for certain quirky words, depending on what type of content it is, and drum up traffic that way'⁴⁴. Alison Baverstock also acknowledges that 'it costs vastly less to inform a market via e-mail or through online discussion facilities than it does through sending out printed marketing materials'⁴⁵, making online marketing an efficient sales tool for cash-strapped publishing companies.

However, it is important to keep in mind that 'the Internet is about freedom, and it appears likely that a truly free population will not be held captive and forced to watch ads'⁴⁶, making the challenge of viral marketing one that requires an unlimited supply of creativity and resourcefulness in order to become a truly viable marketing tool. With consumers no longer trusting messages 'that they believe come from sources with a vested interest in consumers accepting them'⁴⁷, publishers must create advertisements that are interesting on their own merit and closer in nature to the hugely successful Old Spice viral ads than anything staid and traditional. In the light-hearted spirit of 'The Man Your Man Could Smell Like', publishers would be wise to strike a balance between universal popularity and the all-important 'cool factor' that comes from exclusivity when creating advertisements with the 'great, you-cannot-miss-this power of social media'⁴⁸.

⁴³ Ronai, 2009, 'Digital Focus: Word of Mouth'

⁴⁴ Ronai, 2009, 'Digital Focus: Word of Mouth'

⁴⁵ Baverstock, 2008, p. 229

⁴⁶ Clemons, 2009, p. 37

⁴⁷ Clemons, 2009, p. 22

⁴⁸ Williams, 2010, 'The Utter Brilliance of Old Spice's Viral Campaign'

Early adopters and trendsetters are among the consumers who ‘value the appearance of being on the cutting edge or “in the know,” and therefore derive satisfaction from promoting new, exciting products’⁴⁹, so getting a book into the hands of one of these nodes in all likelihood will do wonders for sales.

The main thing to remember about online marketing is that an ad will not go viral simply by labelling it ‘viral marketing’. Instead, ‘all you can do is hope that the idea behind the communication and the execution – whether it’s a website, email or book trailer – is interesting enough for people to pass on’⁵⁰. And, with books acting as one of the cornerstones of popular and academic culture, publishers have access to a wealth of proprietary content to create the most thriving, commercial, interactive, and symbiotic communities around.

⁴⁹ Hill, 2006, p. 258

4 Book Videos

4.1 What is a book video?

Publishers that want to make the move toward digital marketing are beginning to explore the advertising powerhouse that is a book video. 'Like its cousin the movie trailer, a book trailer is designed to get the buzz going and drive sales, or at least more interest'⁵¹ for an upcoming book. Sheila English is responsible for trademarking the term 'book trailer' and is credited with creating the first book video back in 2002. As a writer, she attended her first writer's training convention the same year and discovered that thousands of others were desperate to get published. Wanting to stand out from the crowd, she thought, 'If movie trailers help sell movie tickets then book trailers could help sell books'⁵², a realisation that would soon become her life's work as she set up the book trailer company Circle of Seven Productions. She explains in her e-book *The Book Trailer Revolution*, that 'book trailers® work in two ways: both as an entertaining way to present the world of the book, and in a subliminal way that is hard to notice until you're in a bookstore and see the book cover that you know you're familiar with – but are not sure why'⁵³. Her first book video – indeed, the first book video in the world – was for Christine Feehan's *Dark Symphony*. Sheila remembers the early days of being a book video pioneer:

⁵⁰ Mathias, 2007, 'Viral, It Might Just Catch On'

⁵¹ Ford, 2010, 'Why Make a Book Trailer? Do They Work?'

⁵² English, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.2.A

⁵³ English, 2008, p. 8

We put the trailer on a DVD with some behind-the-scenes video, then started making our rounds to booksellers and publishers. I can honestly say that at no point did anyone I met with say they had even heard of the term. It took a lot of time, effort, and money just to get people to understand what a book trailer® was.⁵⁴

Her hard work paid off as book videos have since become popular with publishing houses, and authors, the world over. As book trailer® is a trademarked term, most companies prefer to call their productions book videos, but Sheila describes the difference between book videos and book trailers® as something more: ‘Book trailers® use scenes from the book with live actors. These are primarily professionally made, and involve full production crews’, while a book video is a ‘generic term for a book shown in a visual manner, whether it is digital or film’ and so the term “book video” can be used to describe any type of visual synopsis for a book’⁵⁵.



Book Trailer for Christine Feehan's *Dark Symphony*

⁵⁴ English, 2008, ‘The Book Trailer Revolution’, p. 12

Most publishers consider anything uploaded to YouTube a book video and the differences between videos can be startling – some videos simply feature a copy of the cover with a voiceover describing the book, or an interview with the author akin to a speaking engagement at a book signing, while others look like previews for a major Hollywood movie, complete with actors, sets, and a soundtrack.

Regardless of the specifics, it is clear that the key traits of a successful book video are often the same. Beth Werner, the Director of Sales & Marketing for Kirkus Media, insists that ‘the key traits to a successful trailer (in my opinion) are the same that go into any well made film: good script, sharp direction, proper casting, strong sets and acting...except book trailers are even more of a challenge, because the director has less than 2-3 minutes to make/leave a compelling impression, not two hours’⁵⁶. Book videos are sales tools, and as such they need to entice viewers to become buyers and readers. In fact, ‘a good book trailer is all about matching the tone and content of a book and dramatising it in a memorable way’⁵⁷ and leaving ‘audiences intrigued enough to buy the book. That is one true measure of success’⁵⁸ for all marketing in general and book videos in particular. More than being memorable, however, book videos need to be true to the book. Fans of books are passionate and ‘when casting is off’ or the ‘trailer plot does not follow the book, audiences will respond with great loyalty to

⁵⁵ English, 2008, ‘The Book Trailer Revolution’, p. 15

⁵⁶ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

⁵⁷ Mathias, 2007, ‘Viral, It Might Just Catch On’

⁵⁸ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

characters and storylines'⁵⁹, making the creation of a book video one that takes careful planning and precision on the part of the publishing house. In order to make a book video that stands out amidst the millions of videos uploaded on a site such as YouTube, publishers must create a viral marketing campaign that is more closely targeted than an ad might need to be for something such as Old Spice. In this way, viral marketing for publishers is closer to the marketing techniques they already utilise and less like the 'blanket' marketing tactics used by companies that want to impress all Internet users.

4.2 What is the market?

'Audiovisual trailers for books – in the same style as those for blockbuster movies – are now an essential part of any marketing campaign for a big-hitting new novel'⁶⁰. And yet, for something that is now seen as essential, the general public appears to be completely unaware of their very existence. According to a survey conducted for this paper, only 37%⁶¹ of respondents had ever seen a book trailer, meaning that there has been a considerable failure by marketing departments in producing videos.

A leading UK publisher that asked to remain anonymous confided that, although publishers are beginning to utilise the Internet for marketing books, 'there is still a long way to go to catch up with other industries' use of the Internet for marketing'⁶². And, while that means Old Spice-style success may be a

⁵⁹ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

⁶⁰ Barnett, 2010, 'Following the Trailers'

⁶¹ Appendix B: Survey Results

⁶² Anonymous, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.B

bit of a way off, publishers need to first learn how to properly adapt traditional marketing techniques to the possibilities of the Internet. As of right now, it appears that publishers are adopting new advertising methods with the extreme enthusiasm of the newly converted, and are forgetting the most important factor of any marketing campaign – knowing and focusing on your target audience. All the technology in the world will not make up for marketing designed to dovetail with the newest craze or approach without first knowing who would take to the advertising and its style best. Knowing the market's readers is essential when advertising books as they are countless, with each person looking for a book in the genre that interests them most.

With marketing budgets constantly on the chopping block, excursions into viral marketing need to be backed up by what marketing departments are expected to do best: marketing to the right people. And, with new technology glinting with the potential for a promising future, many publishers might be tempted to create a book video simply to appear on-trend. This desire to embrace technology is admirable in an industry associated with old school technology (i.e., the printed book, something that has been around for over 560 years), it is important to remember that not all marketing techniques will work for all books, and that book videos often only work most effectively within certain genres. It is universally acknowledged that non-fiction books make for effective book videos, but there is plenty of debate within the industry about whether the same can be said about fiction books. Sheila English thinks that romance, horror, children's, young adult/teen, fantasy and thrillers all work well

as book trailers⁶³, while Brett Cohen, the Vice President of Quirk, wrote that ‘if the trailer is compelling in some way, then it’s effective. If it drives you to buy the book, awesome. If it drives you to tell 10 friends, even better. If it drives them to tell 10 friends, superb. So, to that end, I think any book could benefit from a book trailer’⁶⁴. While the viral aspect is no doubt a main goal when creating a video, using actors to play out scenes from the plot could backfire on a publisher if readers find the trailer to be an affront to the integrity of the book. A publisher with experience in creating book videos who asked to remain anonymous sums up the issue best:

I think it can be really hard to make trailers for fiction books as the visual interpretation can be so different for each person and you can risk alienating readers with your interpretation of a story.

Trailers work much better for non-fiction where you have hard facts to work with – plus if there is existing footage that can be cut into the trailer than that’s obviously beneficial.⁶⁵

Nearly all of the respondents interviewed agreed, and Liz Dubelman of VidLit, a leading American book video producer, said that while they ‘have had success with humour books, business books, non-fiction, thrillers, romance and even novels’ the books that most benefit from a book trailer ‘would be humour, business, and educational’⁶⁶ books.

⁶³ English, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.2.A

⁶⁴ Cohen, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.D

⁶⁵ Anonymous, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.B

⁶⁶ Dubelman, 2010, Interview, A.2.B

Lisa Woods, publisher and writer for 'The Book Trailer Blog', further described the fiction/non-fiction divide by explaining:

I think all genres can benefit from book trailers but perhaps they work best for non-fiction. That's because I think fiction book trailers on some level are competing in people's mind with Hollywood movie trailers which have a production quality that is impossible to replicate on a publishing budget. Non-fiction trailers merely have to pique the target audience's interest in the topic. And this in general can be done much more cheaply. Non-fiction book trailers can use still images and voiceovers or 'textovers'. Non-fiction trailers can simply be interviews with the author, historical footage, or feature pages from the book.⁶⁷

Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, is the realisation that what works most naturally in a book video environment are cookbooks and cookbook authors. While a fiction or traditional non-fiction author may come off in an interview as stuffy or impossible to relate to, cookbook authors are able to show the audience the many great aspects of a recipe by actually cooking and letting their actions do the talking – and selling – for them. And, with the popularity of cooking shows on television, many people are more open to watching a cookbook trailer than they would a video for a fiction book. Possibly the greatest benefit of cookbook videos uploaded on the Internet is the wide exposure granted to the author, even when they are relatively unknown. As an example,

⁶⁷ Woods, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.C

Lynn Andriani reminds us of the power a video has for introducing an audience to a new cookbook author when writing about the video for Eileen Yin-Fei Lo's *Mastering the Art of Chinese Cooking* and says that 'while Lo's book, a lavish volume with full-color photos throughout, shows images of those markets, it doesn't portray Lo's tiny frame darting across sidewalks, her eyebrows raising at the green produce, or her voice stating, in Chinese-accented English, "I'm always interested in cooking because I love to eat!"'⁶⁸. For Alex Beckstead, the San Francisco-based documentary filmmaker behind the *Mastering the Art of Chinese Cooking* video, a good book video is 'something that goes beyond the book. Excerpts and blurbs are fine, but you can get that from the jacket and thumbing the pages. Much like people want to go to a reading or hear an interview on NPR, a good book trailer can give you a sense of the person behind the book, or the world the book comes from'⁶⁹. The ability for a publisher to highlight a new author is a great advantage in the book industry and, as David Hawk, the publicity manager for food and drink at Chronicle, explained about the cookbook videos he has been in charge of creating, 'We're finding for a lot of the books, it gives the author a way to get their voice and persona across in a more dynamic way'⁷⁰.

This is not to say that fiction publishers should bow out of the book video arena. Many publishers have been finding success by presenting book videos for novels in inventive and creative ways. Instead of trying to recreate the story in a Hollywood-inspired trailer, publishers are instead focusing on the author. For

⁶⁸ Andriani, 2009, 'Behind the Scenes of a Cookbook Trailer'

⁶⁹ Andriani, 2009, 'Behind the Scenes of a Cookbook Trailer'

Gary Shyteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story* book video, no real attempt is made to describe the book's contents in any way. Instead, the entire video is a big joke featuring interviews with the author's friends, other authors, and actor James Franco, and features one-liners such as 'He demands his advance be paid entirely in smoked meat, pickled tomatoes, and three recently graduated debutantes from Mount Holyoke'⁷¹ and states that the author is in fact illiterate.

The humour in the book is provided in the video but the actual storyline is left a mystery as the viewer gets wrapped up in the zany and ridiculous world of the author.



Gary Shyteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story* Book Video

⁷⁰ Andriani, 2009, 'Cookbook Authors Rock Out with Book Trailers'

⁷¹ Gary Shyteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story* Book Video,

In this video, the author is the selling point and people who watch the video and connect with the humour are more likely to be intrigued to try the book than any video featuring a recreation of the plot ever could.

The video was uploaded to YouTube and sent to major social networking sites, such as Tumblr, Facebook, and Livejournal, where the target audience of young, easy-going and joke-friendly members were able to identify with the video and send it to their friends. The video is a success as a promotional tool for *Super Sad True Love Story* just as much as it is a testament to the creativity of the publisher and their intuition on who would best relate to the book. Marketing is just as much about finding the right audience to sell to as it is about creating convincing sales pitches, and videos, more than anything, 'need to be delivered to genre-specific online destinations to be truly effective with sales and branding'⁷².

Marketing Executive for Octopus Publishing Group Louisa Combs suggests that publishers should 'consider your target audience from the very beginning. Create an imaginary book buyer who fits your demographic – gender, age, social class, interests, and then think what kind of video would appeal to them'⁷³. And, of course, publishers should be wary of recreating the zaniness of *Super Sad True Love Story* when fashioning a video for a book aimed at a different demographic, as 'an MTV-style video with fast editing and modern graphics is never ever going to sell copies of Hugh Johnson's *Pocket Wine*, when the demographic is 50+'⁷⁴, which is to say, certain demographics will simply never be properly marketed to

⁷² English, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.2.A

⁷³ Combs, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.A

⁷⁴ Combs, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.A

with a book video. Other demographics, however, *can* be marketed to through book videos, and that age range tends to be made up of young adults who already interact with the Internet on a daily basis and find out most of their information from ‘crowd-sourcing’ their friends and Googling.

Knowing a market is one of the most important things a publisher can focus on – they must know who is most interested in what genres, what trends are currently storming popular culture, and what techniques are most effective when directed at their target audience. Sheila English explains one of the major coups of Circle of Seven Productions:

COS did a book video where the book was a romance about treasure hunters. We researched what movies would be coming out around the time of the book’s release so we could use tags and descriptive words that would tie-in to the popularity of a major motion picture. This strategy allows us to piggyback onto a popular movie trailer. *Pirates of the Caribbean* was coming out around that time and that was a perfect tie-in for the book video. People interested in treasure hunting or those who love that theme would go see the movie and then what? Offering a book with a similar theme allows people to continue being entertained by that theme.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ English, 2008, ‘The Book Trailer Revolution’, p. 26

Staying in tune with the cultural zeitgeist of the moment is always a smart marketing move and awareness of new technological advances is something every marketing department in a publishing house should be focusing on.

4.3 Are Book Videos Worth it?

Smart marketing will always depend on finding the right market to advertise to – once that is achieved, Internet success is something of a given. But the considerable expense associated with creating a book video can make many publishers shy away from the process, as they are unsure whether the project will ultimately prove worthwhile. Beth Werner says that ‘it depends on the objectives for each title/project, to determine if a trailer is a reasonable marketing effort and expense’⁷⁶. Many, such as Robert McCrum, *The Observer’s* former literary editor, feel that a book’s objectives will never judge a trailer as reasonable. McCrum predicted back in 2006 that book videos ‘will be a passing fad – like tube advertising. The awkward truth is that this sort of thing only works if you spend a lot of money – and that’s just what British publishers don’t have’⁷⁷. Nevertheless, whether or not book videos will eventually fizzle out is inconsequential at this point in time as book videos continue to make strides toward legitimacy in the publishing industry.

Books are just one of the many entertainment options available to society today, and the real struggle publishers will face in the future is convincing the public that reading is worth spending time on. By attracting non-traditional

⁷⁶ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

readers, 'those who usually watch TV, go to the movies, play video games and spend far too much time downloading to their iPod'⁷⁸ to books, publishers will be able to win a significant share of the entertainment market. And, it is sad to say in comparison to these electronic forms of entertainment, books are often looked at as boring and not enjoyable, so publishers are fighting a bit of an uphill battle that can only be won by evolving with the times and showing the public, especially the young, that books are cool. Focusing on Young Adult books will be ultimately beneficial to the publishing industry as a whole as these books 'reach out to a younger audience in a way that interests them, with topics that interest them. In order to grow the entire publishing industry, we need to gain more readers. Books that appeal to non-traditional readers should be given promotional tools that appeal to that age group'⁷⁹ and, right now, the best option for showcasing the wonders of books is over the Internet and by embracing the multimedia future that is actually already upon us.

A major benefit of book videos is, of course, the fact that they are on the Internet. The Internet does not shut down like a bookstore and can be accessed at all moments of the day. Once a video has been uploaded to a site like YouTube, it can be viewed at anytime by anyone. Tying back to the idea of RME, or residual marketing effect, mentioned in the previous chapter, Sheila English explains that:

A video, once released online to a social market, will see its initial effect during the first month. Once that time is over the video is

⁷⁷ Barnett, 2010, 'Following the Trailers'

⁷⁸ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 24

⁷⁹ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 24

still available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. There are opportunities that are organic in nature such as a news event that can enliven the video should the video be of a similar topic. Should the author come into the media's eye for any reason or the author does a speaking tour, etc., the video offers additional search opportunities when the public goes online to find out more about the author.⁸⁰

The long-term marketing that book videos provide is perfect for the publishing industry, which continues to make profit off of the backlist: 'Since video marketing leaves the ad in place for years it is possible to collect purchases that were lost...In short, timing is everything and being ready to refresh the consumer's mind with a quick video ad that reminds them how much they initially wanted the product is a residual marketing effect'⁸¹.

And, just as cookbook authors benefit from the increased recognition provided by book videos, trailers allow all authors to interact with the public in a way that was never before available to them. Vicki Salemi, author of *Big Career in the Big City*, believes that book videos are good value in terms of publicity. She says that even though 'it's always hard to track book sales back to a specific PR strategy in terms of selling x number of books as a result of the video...overall it adds to the marketing of it' and that 'anything an author can do to reach new readers is always good. Plus, it gives authors a face and a voice when previously,

⁸⁰ English, 2008, 'Residual Marketing Effect', p. 3

⁸¹ English, 2008, 'Residual Marketing Effect', p. 13

without a video, we're a name on the front cover'⁸². And, with many authors simply just a name on a cover, videos humanise the book and create a connection between authors and readers that could potentially generate sales.

With the need to create a viral video continually buzzing in a marketer's head, many publishers are keen to push the envelope. Orion recently launched the 'first age-rated book video on Amazon.co.uk' with Jonathan Tropper's *This is Where I Leave You*⁸³. And, although Claire Brett, the senior marketing manager at Orion said that the point of the video was to show off the great dialogue' of the book, there is no doubt that the saucy nature would do more than its share 'to generate word-of-mouth'⁸⁴. The mature rating for the video, of course, goes hand in hand with the target audience of the book – that is to say, adults interested in serious literature. And as Brett Cohen explains, the right audience is critical when creating a video:

The book trailer is only as good as the audience you are showing it to. If my main YouTube following subscribed because of the *Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters* trailer and I show them a cookbook trailer, then it's a waste of time and money – because I'm not delivering on what they signed up for.⁸⁵

⁸² Salemi, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.B

⁸³ Allen, 2010, 'Orion Launches X-Rated Promotional Vid'

⁸⁴ Allen, 2010, 'Orion Launches X-Rated Promotional Vid'

⁸⁵ Cohen, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.D

By delivering a ‘compelling trailer to the right audience’⁸⁶, publishers are making sure that the book video is worth the effort spent in creating it. And more than that, a *successful* book video will show its worth only after it proves it has created sales. When asked to describe an effective book trailer, Louisa Combs said that, generally speaking, ‘the key traits really depend on what book you’re marketing. But, crucially, I would say originality, the ability to capture – and hold – people’s attention from beginning to end, an idea that really pushes the book – it’s no good creating a great video unless it actually sells the books. Return on Investment (ROI) is crucial here – unless that video converts into sales, it’s wasted money’⁸⁷. With publishing houses continually striving to save money, a failed book video could be extremely detrimental to a budget.

Perhaps the most important thing when deciding whether a book video is worth creating is finding out, first and foremost, whether the target audience is likely to be interested in watching the video. Louisa decides on whether a book video is worth creating by focusing on the book it would be promoting: ‘expectations for sales for that particular title, the print run, and also whether that particular title’s audience are likely to be digitally minded’⁸⁸. Penni Fu, Strategic Planner for Wieden + Kennedy, the same advertising company responsible for the Old Spice ‘The Man Your Man Could Smell Like’ campaign, weighed in on the debate as someone with considerable marketing experience outside the publishing industry, saying that the true worth of a book video is its ability to sell books and also that a ‘book video cannot work by itself. Other

⁸⁶ Cohen, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.D

⁸⁷ Combs, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.A

marketing tactics (book websites, podcasts, and e-newsletters) should be employed to maximise its effect. A video cannot be right on its own'⁸⁹. A true statement is ever there was one, and one which is backed up by Vicki Salemi who provided an author's opinion on the subject, saying that, 'As an author you really can't just do signings and then ignore videos or tours. You need to truly get involved in all aspects of promotion because it's not just "one thing" – it's the culmination of many things, including building your platform for your next book'⁹⁰. Going beyond the idea of marketing for the next book is Beth Werner's belief that 'another objective and measurement of a book trailer's performance is if the video makes the book rights more appealing for a movie contract. This is as clear a goal for the publisher as selling books, and trailers can go a long way toward attracting and researching attraction levels, for a book to turn into a movie'⁹¹.

While ideas of success for a book video are varied, it is apparent that book videos are worthwhile endeavours for publishers to pursue, not the least of which is that besides targeting a book's traditional audience, it offers publishers the chance to appeal to a wider audience like never before. And, as cost will always be one of the most important issues when discussing publishers' marketing efforts, book videos are actually quite cost-effective, as 'for the price of a small print ad in *The New York Times*, you can have a live action book

⁸⁸ Combs, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.A

⁸⁹ Fu, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.A

⁹⁰ Salemi, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.B

⁹¹ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

trailer®'⁹² from Sheila English's Circle of Seven Productions. And, with many publishers now creating book videos in-house, it would appear that where there was once a 'mindset that says paying hundreds of dollars to be put in a reader's magazine is perfectly acceptable and desirable for a promotional campaign' and where 'many people balk[ed] over investing that same amount of money into video that will yield them more views for a longer period of time'⁹³ is beginning to shift to one that is more willing to embrace the book video in order to increase sales and attract new readers. Book videos, if marketed properly, are without a doubt worth the time, effort, and money.

⁹² English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 48

⁹³ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 64

5 Interactivity

5.1 Author Tours

One of the original purposes of book videos was to serve as a replacement for the traditional book tour, allowing for an author to connect with their audience on a global scale without stress and expense. To understand if book tours have a future after the introduction of book videos, it is important to first analyse the importance of a tour as a promotional tool.

Alison Baverstock explains that an author tour is ‘a promotional tour during which a popular or newsworthy author gives a series of talks, or perhaps signs copies of a new book’ and that it ‘requires an immense amount of planning’⁹⁴. Looking beyond the logistical technicalities and the significant costs associated with transporting an author from city to city, however, is the measureable rise in book sales and expansion of an author’s visibility through media coverage. Additionally, authors are able to connect with their readers in a personal way and provide fans ‘the behind-the-scenes story of the book’⁹⁵ not otherwise available. Darren Shan, author of the Young Adult fiction series *The Darren Shan Saga*, considers tours essential to promoting a book:

When I first started touring, I focused on school or library events, where I was basically trying to ‘convert’ kids who had never heard of me into new fans. This is a very good way of creating interest. Now that I have a base of fans, I do more public events and

⁹⁴ Baverstock, 2008, p. 215

signings. I think it's a great way to interact with fans and assert your presence. It makes you more 'real' to your fans.⁹⁶

Beyond connecting with readers, Darren Shan also said that touring was 'very important from a sales point of view' and provided for a good gauge of professional growth⁹⁷. When authors are provided the chance to interact with fans through speaking engagements, it 'can make a tremendous difference to their public image'⁹⁸. Book tours and author signings are essential for the marketing and publicity departments of publishing houses in that the ability to get an author's face in front of the public personalises a book and makes it more interesting for the readers.

While the chance to meet a favourite author can be a wonderful experience for a fan, it is possible that many readers will never get that chance because of time-constraints, missed signings, and living in areas where the author does not visit. The perfect alternative, then, would appear to be a book video that focuses on the author and is, essentially, a filmed interview broadcast over the Internet. Online author interviews 'are a great opportunity for the author to connect to readers on a personal level'⁹⁹, even when the opportunity is not available for them to meet in person. Indeed, a book video could go beyond the traditional author interviews and talks at bookstores and become something of a 'mini documentary', as John le Carre's video for *A Most Wanted Man*

⁹⁵ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 16

⁹⁶ Shan, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.A

⁹⁷ Shan, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.A

⁹⁸ Baverstock, 2008, p. 171

⁹⁹ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 22

illustrates, clocking in at nine minutes and totally transforming the idea of what a book video can provide¹⁰⁰ – instead of just an advertisement for a book, book trailers have the potential to reach out to new audiences by having an author speak personally to them through a camera’s lens about the book they have written, breaking the fourth wall and interacting directly – albeit digitally – with a reader.

In Sheila English’s *The Book Trailer Revolution*, an online how-to guide for authors about creating book videos, she explains that the benefits of placing an author interview online is that it not only allows ‘your readers to feel more connected with you, nurturing reader loyalty’, but that it is first and foremost ‘a product that highlights your personality’, giving authors the chance to brand themselves, and their books, online for the first time and to provide a mouthpiece in which they can offer ‘up-front information about your books, your career, your process of writing, research or life experiences’, motivating ‘potential readers and get[ting] them to try your book’¹⁰¹. Readers are interested in author’s lives because they have invested their free time and money and have expended emotional effort by reading an author’s stories; if they see an author’s interview online and came away from it genuinely liking the way the author came across on film, ‘they are more likely to give [a] book a try’¹⁰². And, even the process of watching an author over the Internet through sites such as YouTube can engage a viewer more than watching an interview on television because ‘statistics from various sources tend to agree that Internet video is more

¹⁰⁰ Page, 2008, ‘Le Carre Gets Trailer Treatment’

¹⁰¹ English, 2008, ‘The Book Trailer Revolution’, p. 51

engaging, since the viewer must activate a video player before they can watch the video'; and, once engaged, 'they can choose to comment, put it on their own site, or email it', turning it into 'a "word of mouth tool" that can be passed from one person to another, making it viral'¹⁰³, the ultimate goal for any modern marketer.

Video streamed online is also a great advantage for a book's promotion and, as a representative for John le Carre told *The Bookseller*, offers a 'rare, worldwide opportunity for his fans to hear him talk about the book'¹⁰⁴. The chance for an author to connect with their audience globally is a worthwhile exploration more publishing houses should consider as they attempt to attract readers in new and technologically-savvy ways. With the all-encompassing power of the Internet, it is entirely likely that book videos and digital author interviews will come to be seen as a necessary tool for all marketing departments – and, some might say, eventually come to replace the traditional author tour entirely. The benefits of placing author interviews online are undoubtedly many, as they allow readers to learn more about an author and the behind-the-scenes heroics of writing a book, as well as bond with an author – and their book – in quite the same personal way as at an author's speaking engagement. The global reach of an online video strengthens the interview as a promotional tool as it creates the opportunity to connect readers throughout the world. In fact, the creation of a community of fans for a book is an essential

¹⁰² English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 23

¹⁰³ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 47

¹⁰⁴ Page, 2008, 'Le Carre Gets Trailer Treatment'

ingredient in the recipe for insuring the future of traditional book publishing, as well as the new upstart ePublishers.

5.2 Fan Power

The strength of word-of-mouth advertising is at its highest when it comes directly from a credible source, a person not connected to the product at all. With the backlash against traditional advertising methods in full-force because of the democratisation of the Internet, a new sense of community has developed that will ultimately be the greatest windfall for marketers. When readers have the ability to connect with each other, the power of their enthusiasm is contagious, transforming the old go-to marketing method of book reviews from a highbrow endeavour to something akin to a grassroots movement.

In *How to Market Books*, Alison Baverstock comments that ‘features and reviews of books in the media are one of the most influential ways of shaping reading habits’¹⁰⁵ as people tend to turn to recommendations when seeking out a new book. Spokespeople and other commercial entities are no longer taken seriously by the public and ‘messages attributed to a commercial source have much lower credibility and much lower impact on the perception of product quality than the same message attributed to a rating service’¹⁰⁶ in the form of reviews. This recommendation process ultimately sells books, as highly considered reviewers seal the fate of new works by weighing in on whether something is worth reading. Instead of taking the chance of choosing a boring –

¹⁰⁵ Baverstock, 2008, p. 171

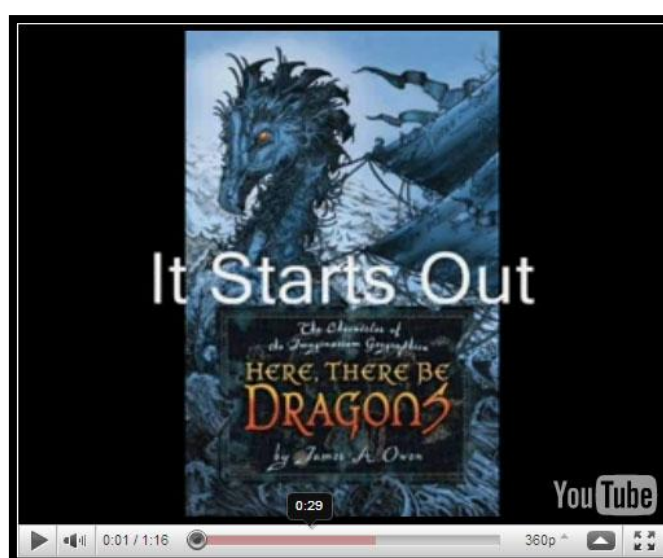
but expensive – hardcover book based on a splashy cover design, a review gives approval or disapproval and lets the buying public know whether a new work is worth their money and the considerable free time it takes to read. ‘Such coverage is highly influential in all markets as it offers objective analysis of the product’¹⁰⁷ and the chance for a reader to get a second opinion on a book. And, although an entire industry has developed in which professionals with a considerably high pulpit espouse on the relative merits of a work, most people still consider the direct recommendation from a friend the most persuasive kind of review.

With the Internet shrinking the size of the world, it is now entirely possible for people to form attachments with others they have never met in their own – non-digital – life. And, with the comparatively low cost of digital cameras and camcorders, people have been able to broadcast their thoughts and opinions on everything from books to favourite characters with ease. Many people have begun to create vlogs, or ‘video weblogs’, through which they record their own reviews of books, some even going so far as to create elaborate book videos to promote their favourite novels. Cameron Bowie, a YouTube vlogger, recently posted a book video for James A. Owen’s fantasy novel *Here, There Be Dragons* after having read it as part of a class assignment. Inspired, he then created a book video:

I really enjoyed it so I made the video to show what this book is about and to try and get others really excited about reading this book. I made the video because nowadays people usually pay attention to videos in class so

¹⁰⁶ Clemons, 2009, p. 18

I used that approach and a lot of people were impressed by how well the video was done and that it told them what the main plot was in the book. I do believe that I have inspired people to read the book and I hope they enjoy the book as much as I have.¹⁰⁸



Cameron Bowie's Fan Video for James A. Owen's *Here, There Be Dragons*

A leading UK publisher who asked to remain anonymous believes that these home-grown book videos are the true successes of the digital era as they tend 'to be short and punchy' and are effective because 'they're less obviously an ad, and appear to have been created just for interest'¹⁰⁹.

User reviews add value to a product because they come directly from the heart of somebody who will not directly benefit from the book's success at all, except, perhaps, to inspire the publisher to release a sequel. Publishers that

¹⁰⁷ Baverstock, 2008, p. 183

¹⁰⁸ Bowie, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.3.A

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.1.B

actively encourage their readers to form online communities and broadcast book reviews online are ‘harnessing social content’¹¹⁰ and enabling ‘old fashioned word-of-mouth’¹¹¹ to do all the marketing work for them. However, publishers still need to do the legwork of finding the right nodes that are most likely to take a book they love and promote it to the world through the Internet. Publishers might be tempted to create a book video posing as a fan, but this sort of artifice can always be found out and ultimately rings hollow as a marketing technique. ‘Readers want to hear from other readers (word of mouth promotion) about a book’¹¹² and not from the tired and jaded marketing department responsible for selling the book. Authors interested in getting elbows-deep into the marketing of their books should aim at teaming ‘up with super-users (fans willing to engage in social media on your behalf) or other authors. Pitching yourself has become as effective as banner ads. People are becoming so immune that they don’t even see it anymore’¹¹³ and planted reviews will only harm a book’s success in the long-run. In a world where true enthusiasm is contagious, publishers are best advised to create books that are high quality and get them into the hands of the right audience, a form of revitalised direct marketing that is perfect for the earnestness inherent in the digital generation.

However, more than just creating excellent books, publishers must continue to actively engage audiences and work on targeting the proper market. Of course, some books are more likely than others to find an online audience, a

¹¹⁰ Clemons, 2009, p. 30

¹¹¹ English, ‘The Book Trailer Revolution’, p. 16

¹¹² English, ‘The Book Trailer Revolution’, p. 24

¹¹³ English, 2008, ‘BEA-2008 Digital Bundling Panel’, p. 4

fact that publishers are always aware of, as some books are simply more popular than others. But, the ones that can be promoted digitally should be, as the potential to capture the imagination of a large segment of the online population is great and the reward could very well be increased sales. Random House recently launched a hugely successful campaign for Lauren Kate's *Fallen* that combined traditional marketing efforts, such as book tours and author signings, with a highly-promoted online experience targeted specifically at the teen girls most likely to clamp on to the book's themes of 'fallen angels and forbidden love'¹¹⁴. The multipronged approach to marketing the book took considerable planning and the careful embrace of major popular culture trends:

The author embarked on a six-city pre-pub tour at the end of October to promote the novel, due December 8 with a 100,000-copy first printing. The publisher will roll out the next phase of its marketing and publicity campaign on November 20, when a book trailer will open in 47 theaters (showing *New Moon*) in 10 cities. Additionally, 44,000 DVD book samplers featuring *Fallen* and other paranormal romances from Random House BFYR will be given out at theatres, and *Fallen* ads will begin running on Facebook and Google.¹¹⁵

The sizeable expense associated with this marketing campaign paid off as *Fallen* continues to grow in popularity as teens look for a book that combines many of the same themes as *Twilight*, a vampire book/movie sensation. By

¹¹⁴ Lodge, 2009, 'Random Hopes "Fallen" Will Soar'

piggybacking off the success of a cultural phenomenon, especially by broadcasting the book video for *Fallen* as a preview for *New Moon*, the latest *Twilight* film, Random House was betting on the fact that the same fan mania that has fed the *Twilight* series would transfer over to their newest release.

The fan website 'Fallen for *Fallen*' attests to this fact as Maris Mirovic, the administrator for the site, also runs a fan site for *Twilight*. However, Maris' devotion to her *Fallen* site reveals once again the ripple-effect of marketing, as she set up the site entirely on her own and without encouragement from the publisher. Instead, she said that she 'enjoyed the book and thought it had potential of creating a certain fan base and, since there weren't any fan sites about it at the time' she decided to 'give it a shot'¹¹⁶. Even though there was an official site for the book, Maris felt that a website for fans, by fans, was something that the *Fallen* community needed – without the oversight and advertisement-heavy qualities of the publisher's own site. Further to the point, Maris has featured several videos on the site and believes that 'book videos can help a book gain more popularity and get more people to hear about it, to read it. Especially the videos made by fans. Just the fact that there are fans making the videos is great praise for the book'¹¹⁷. It would appear that the power of book videos as a promotional tool is matched only by the sense of community developed by fans on fan sites, as Maris admitted that 'participating in Fallen for *Fallen* has

¹¹⁵ Lodge, 2009, 'Random Hopes "Fallen" Will Soar

¹¹⁶ Mirovic, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.3.B

¹¹⁷ Mirovic, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.3.B

certainly increased my feelings for the book and it's a beautiful thing, being able to communicate with other people who love it just as much'¹¹⁸.

Many people believe that the Internet has made society more insulated and less willing to reach out to their fellow man, but, at least in the case of book videos, that seems to be undeniably false. Books have always brought people together, be it at bookstores, in book clubs, or on the Tube, and the Internet has only enhanced the participatory power of sharing a great story about something mutually adored.

5.3 Book Videos & Interactivity

Although a survey conducted for the purpose of this paper revealed that nearly 65% of respondents had never heard – or watched – a book video, it is interesting to note that a community as devoted to videos as the online participants of 'Fallen for *Fallen*' has developed. Alison Baverstock explains that 'with daily life becoming more and more automated, and everything available online, individual customers are looking for relationships with their preferred brands: to find out more about them. And if they are offered what they like, they will enthuse about them to other people they know like to buy and communicate in this way'¹¹⁹. And, just as fans of *Fallen* have connected online, fans of book videos of all kinds have created communities that interact as much offline as they do over the Internet. Lisa Woods maintains 'The Book Trailer Blog' and highlights her favourite book videos on the site, while American publisher

¹¹⁸ Mirovic, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.3.B

Melville House recently ‘held the inaugural Moby awards... for the best – and worst – in the book trailer industry’¹²⁰. And, just as Lisa admits that she started the site to draw attention to the best book videos she could find, she was only inspired to create the blog because so much of what she found online in terms of book videos were ‘amateurish and poorly done’¹²¹, a theme The Moby’s picked up on when presenting ‘an award for Trailer Least Likely to Sell the book, for example, which went to *Sounds of Murder* by Patricia Rockwell...a runaway winner: [with] a little over a minute of shaky footage of the cover of the book accompanied by a rather disconcerting gravelly voiceover’¹²².

There are actually several book video awards occurring every year, but the most interesting to watch is, without a doubt, the Kirkus Book Video Awards, which celebrates the best of fan-made videos for Random House books. Beth Werner, the Director of Sales & Marketing for Kirkus Media, holds the Awards close to her heart and says that the main objectives of the Book Video Awards (BVA) are ‘to help the publisher/sponsor sell more books using video trailers and Internet promotion as a dynamic medium for reaching young readers’¹²³. The considerable benefits of the BVA are explained by Beth:

I believe (and have been told, repeatedly) that the Book Video Awards (BVA) program makes a significant and positive impact on the lives of participants. In addition to bridging the gap between

¹¹⁹ Baverstock, 2008, p. 157

¹²⁰ Barnett, 2010, ‘Following the Trailers’

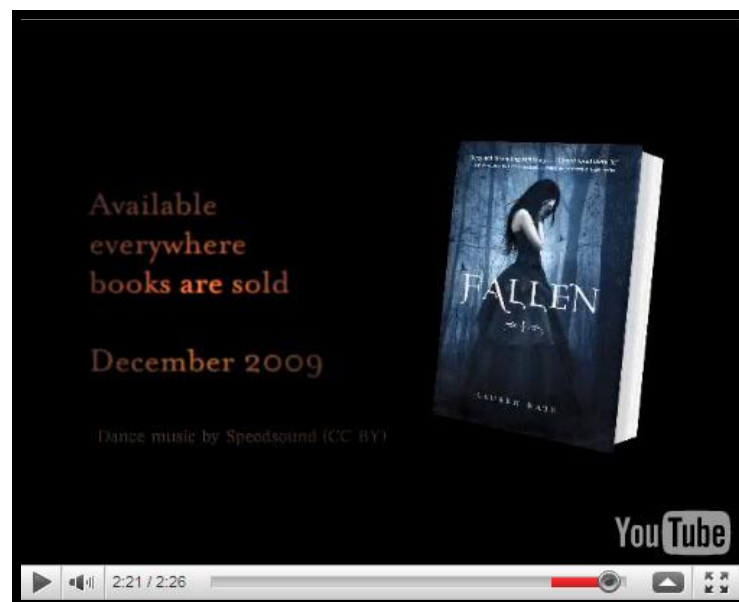
¹²¹ Woods, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.C

¹²² Barnett, 2010, ‘Following the Trailers’

¹²³ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

books and film for multimedia promotion, the BVA program also serves to give authors exposure for their book in the film world. For an author to see their book played out in film and also entered into a contest with consumers voting, is tremendously exciting. Beyond nostalgia for authors and marketing value for publishers, the Book Video Awards gives film students a chance to produce a professional piece of work (on someone else's dime), then compete for a prize and attend a reception at Tribeca Cinemas in NYC. What would possibly be better than that for a young film student?¹²⁴

And, the most recent winner of the Book Video Awards? *Fallen*, of course.



Kirkus Book Video Award Winner 2009

¹²⁴ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

With an awards show that involves the public, producers, and authors, the Book Video Awards represents the best of the best in the melding of Internet advertising with traditional promotional techniques. And, more than anything, ‘the Book Video Awards is a terrific concept because it’s good for business and it also feels good. It supports the arts while encouraging and empowering young contributors to our culture’¹²⁵, the perfect example of digital marketing done right.

5.4 The Future?

And so the question remains: are videos the future of the publishing industry?

While professional book video producer Liz Dubelman sees book videos as ‘a sort of replacement for the dying book tour’ in which ‘we could have the author read a section of their book – as they would on tour – and replace the live element with a collage-style of visual and audio’¹²⁶, it would appear that the true destiny of the book video is as an important *supplement* to the traditional marketing techniques already favoured by publishers. As author Vicki Salemi reasoned:

I don’t think there is any replacement for author signings as it’s important for authors to meet their readers and vice versa, and interact. That said, with the economy the way it is and costly tours,

¹²⁵ Werner, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.B

¹²⁶ Dubelman, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.2.B

not to mention tight schedules and geography constraints, a video is a great element to add to an author's repertoire in terms of 'getting out there', even if it's online.¹²⁷

Author Darren Shan agrees, saying 'I definitely wouldn't advocate scrapping tours in favour of online marketing. I think there's a need for both, but in children's books, touring should be the backbone around which all other campaigns are slotted'¹²⁸. And when asked whether 'online signings' could be seen as a viable alternative to a book tours, Darren scoffed at the idea:

I think they're a gimmick more than anything else. Also, for me the most important part of any event is being able to sign books afterwards. I think that's what a lot of fans enjoy more than anything else – meeting the author and getting their books signed. A video event, when you can't do that, is a bit of a tease in my opinion...¹²⁹

However, it must not be forgotten that fans of books are looking to reach out to others who feel the same way as they do. The world can be a lonely place for fans isolated by time and space and it would behove publishers to unite a book's fans by harnessing their creative energy and helping them develop online communities. Alison Baverstock's brief exploration of viral marketing in *How to Market Books* excellently advises publishers to support fledgling online communities by encouraging 'them to be ambassadors for your project' and that

¹²⁷ Salemi, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.B

¹²⁸ Shan, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.A

by making a few books or other promotional items 'available free for them to run a competition or offer as prizes may get them talking about it. Get them to endorse it for you and they may do even more'¹³⁰. By exploiting the power of word-of-mouth advertising, publishers are able to 'justify a shared passion that unites both you and the wider group of people who share your enthusiasm'¹³¹ and create an online community that not only connects fans the world over, but also promotes books in the most effective way. Perhaps the hardest thing publishers will have to deal with as they begin their inevitable shift to digital will be the realisation that 'power has shifted from publishers' marketing teams to authors, bloggers and other online networkers'¹³². If publishers can 'find the right group of people, talk about things that fascinate you both', you will see that these people, your book's fans, 'will spread the word to others they know who will find it equally compelling. Enthusiasm is catching'¹³³ so publishers might as well harness it.

¹²⁹ Shan, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.4.A

¹³⁰ Baverstock, 2008, p. 229

¹³¹ Baverstock, 2008, p. 229

¹³² Mathias, 2007, 'Viral, It Might Just Catch On'

¹³³ Baverstock, 2008, p. 169

Conclusion

The world has turned and publishers are in danger of being left behind. Instead of turning a blind-eye toward the coming changes in the market, publishers need to embrace the multimedia-based future and adapt to the digital era. With the Internet allowing readers to reach out across seas and form bonds over books, publishers have been given the ultimate marketing tool, one 'where a reader can leisurely watch a handful of trailers, come across something interesting to them, and then read more about that book right there online'¹³⁴ while chatting with fellow fans and generating the kind of word-of-mouth promotion that cannot be bought. Indeed, the one true challenge publishers have to face is that of cross-category competition – 'books are losing shares not to books but to online content or mobile phones or gaming due to the ever-changing media habits of the audience'¹³⁵, and yet the same multimedia foes that are stealing marketshare provide salvation for an industry often stuck in the past. Books are often shunted to the bottom of the entertainment pile, and yet there is nothing more enjoyable than a good story told well, no matter what form it takes. In order to compete, books must present themselves as entertainment for the mind, body, and spirit and the best way to revamp their image is by going digital. Entertaining book videos featuring exciting plot twists and informative author interviews created by publishers will soon go hand in hand with fan created websites and fan pages – for the future is interactive and democratic.

¹³⁴ Woods, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.C

¹³⁵ Fu, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.A

Lisa Woods, prominent book video blogger and publisher, sees only promise in the future for the publishing industry:

I can imagine that as e-book readers become more popular and sophisticated in terms of their color, audio, and motion graphics capabilities, we will see an increase of book ‘commercials’ tacked at the beginning of books like movie trailers precede movies. They also could become part of e-magazines – an animated page you come across in between pages of digital content that you can play or skip. I can also see that as motion graphics software becomes more and more inexpensive and easier to use, everyday people will spontaneously generate short films about everything – including their favourite books. I think media-savvy authors could benefit from encouraging their fans to create and share short films inspired by the author’s books and leverage these videos by featuring the best (or all) of them on the author’s website/Facebook page.¹³⁶

Traditional marketing techniques are bound to change as society advances and soon ‘what are now promotional trailers will take on the job of teasing and selling that’s now shouldered by cover and jacket flap copy’¹³⁷ – in other words: same idea, different method. Publishers have a lot to be proud of but it is now time for the industry to adapt to the future and absorb the techniques that other

¹³⁶ Woods, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.C

¹³⁷ Colbert, 2010, ‘Watch: Five Great Book Videos’

industries have been exploring and sometimes excelling in since the digital revolution took hold.

One of the first ideas to be embraced should be that of using viral marketing to sell books – with the caveat that it needs to be used as a supplemental stepping stone toward the future and not as a total replacement for traditional techniques. No industry should adopt any new marketing tool without investing due diligence regarding its appropriateness for the task at hand. For publishers, this means picking and choosing from the new and the old to find the marketing tactic that works best for each book. Wieden + Kennedy's Penni Fu notes that 'what is worthwhile to observe is how technology shifts people's habits, so that books can be marketed or sold in a way that is right for the audience. It does not matter if the technique is new or traditional, but whether the technique is right or not deserves attention'¹³⁸. As with any commodity, proper marketing will always be of utmost importance. This is never truer than when it comes to selling books. Although the Internet allows for extreme target marketing on a global scale, its effectiveness will largely rest on the actions of creative, astute, technology-adoptive publishers that can balance traditional cost-effective advertising and promotional campaigns with the many social networking opportunities made available on the Net for the care and feeding of its fan base.

In the end, knowing your audience will be the ultimate saviour for the publishing industry. As society becomes more niche-oriented and youthful, the

¹³⁸ Fu, 2010, Interview, Appendix A.5.A

publishing industry needs join the rest of the multimedia entertainment industry. In *How to Market Books*, Alison Baverstock agrees, stating that ‘one common response to the vast choice of activity available today is that life is becoming increasingly niche: people are intensively farming their time into small plots of things they want to do’¹³⁹; it is publishers responsibility as cultural trendsetters to adapt to the newly personalised nature of society and offer individuals exactly what they are interested in, especially by grabbing their attention through new and innovative ways. By ‘reaching out to a younger generation this way, cultivating new readers’¹⁴⁰ will insure the publishing industry has a future. In order to stay relevant and profitable, publishers have to prove to the younger generation that books are just as entertaining as movies and computer games, and in order to do that, publishers need to start investing in advanced marketing techniques that speaks directly to these people, turning them into buyers and readers.

The future for the publishing industry may appear to be on shaky ground to some and many of the old guard might consider the adoption of new technology as an affront to ‘serious literature’ but that is not the case. Literature cannot be destroyed by being popular and in order for publishing houses to succeed in today’s economy, their books must become fashionable. And, with the increase of viral marketing, book videos, and fan sites, it is clear that the true potential of book marketing might be in the hands of the public. Not to see this – and failing to take action that uses the Internet to reach out to the world – would

¹³⁹ Baverstock, 2008, p. 237

be corporate suicide. It should be every publishing house's prime directive to encourage *enthusiasm* for their products through the use of book trailers and support for fan websites because, when enthusiasm is contagious, fan based viral marketing kicks in, creating a juggernaut that in the end may very well save the publishing industry.

¹⁴⁰ English, 2008, 'The Book Trailer Revolution', p. 67

Appendix A: Interviews

Please see attached CD to read complete interviews

1. Publisher Perspectives

- a. Louisa Combs, Octopus Publishing Group
- b. Anonymous, Leading UK Publisher
- c. Eleanor Muir, Laurence King Publishing
- d. Brett Cohen, Quirk

2. Book Video Producers

- a. Sheila English, Circle of Seven Productions
- b. Liz Dubelman, VidLit

3. Reader Responses

- a. Cameron Bowie, Creator of *Here, There Be Dragons* fan video
- b. Maris Mirovic, Moderator of fan site *Fallen for Fallen*
- c. Andy Gunton, *One Day* vlog review

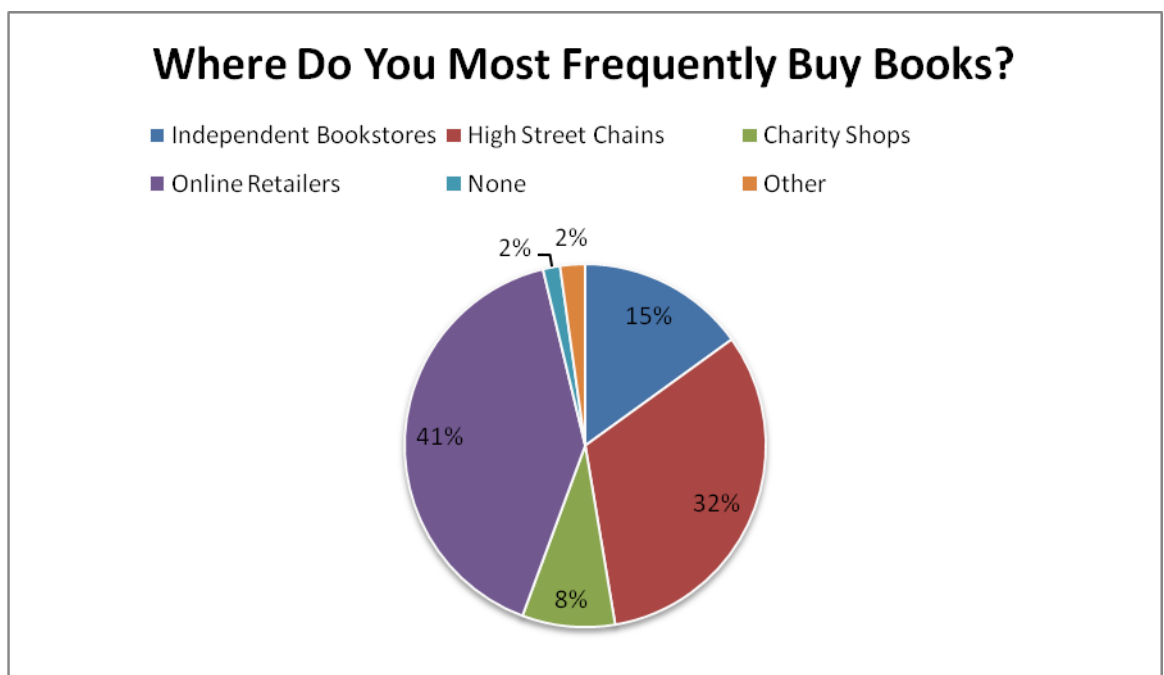
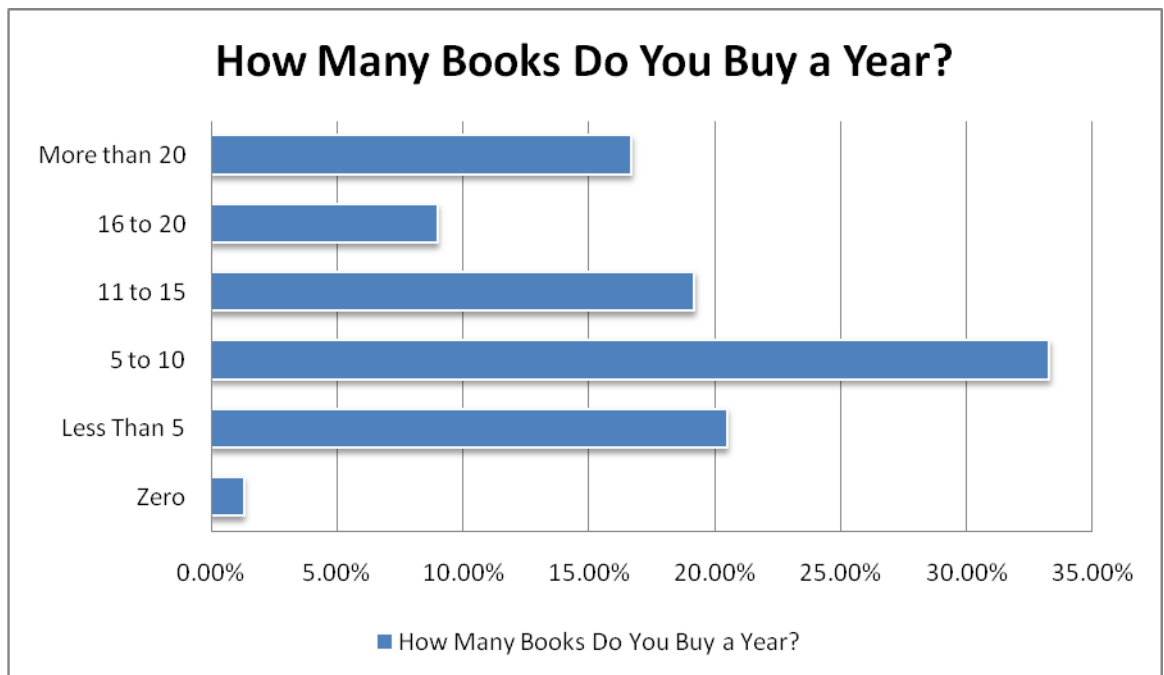
4. Authors

- a. Darren Shan, *The Darren Shan Saga*
- b. Vicki Salemi, *Big Career in the Big City*

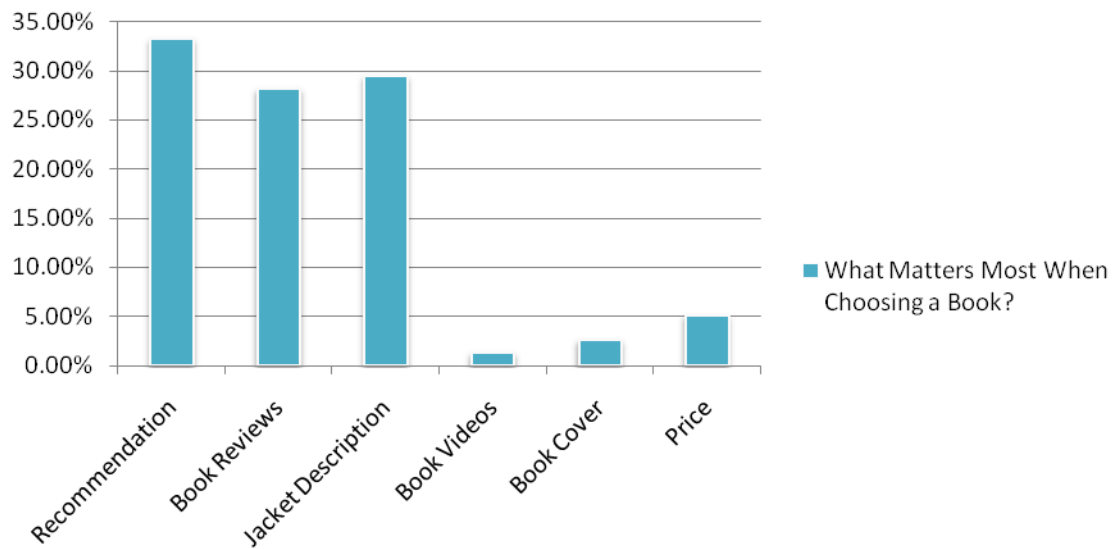
5. Advertisers and Innovators

- a. Penni Fu, Wieden+Kennedy
- b. Beth Werner, Kirkus Book Video Awards
- c. Lisa Woods, The Book Video Blog

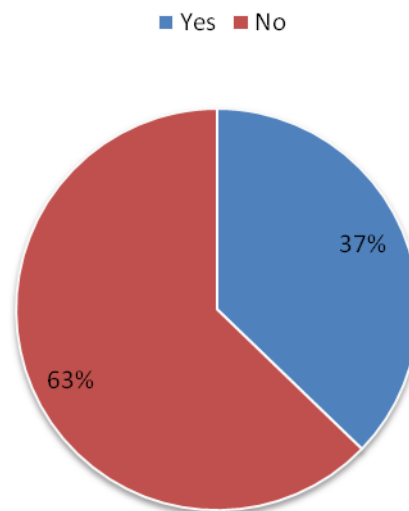
Appendix B: Survey



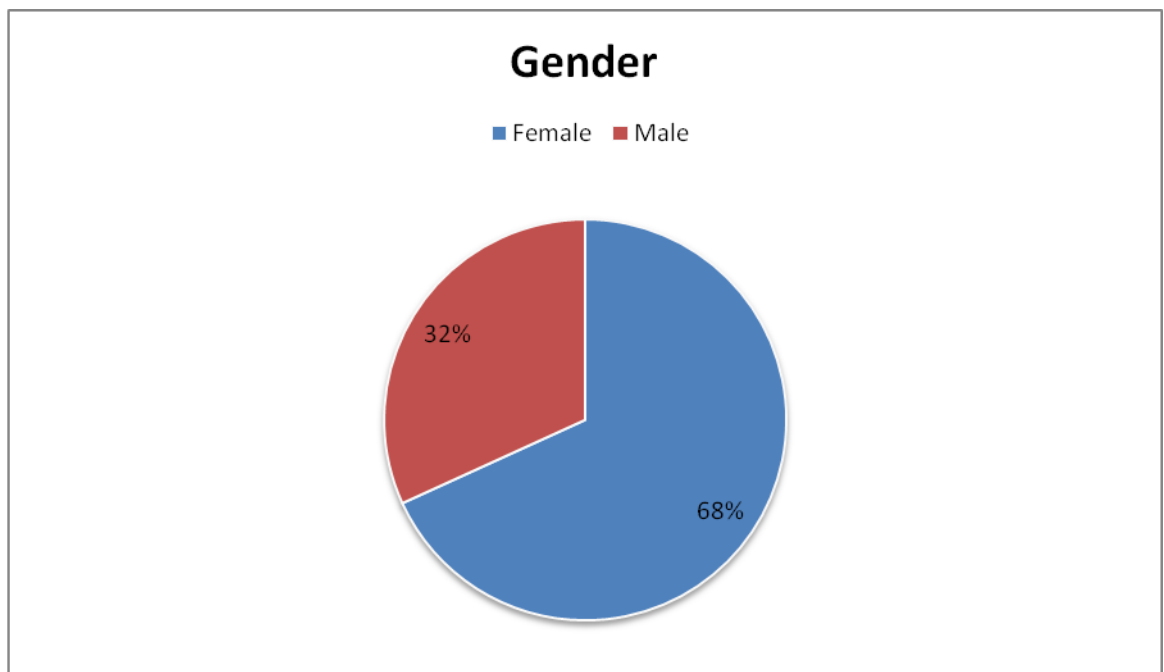
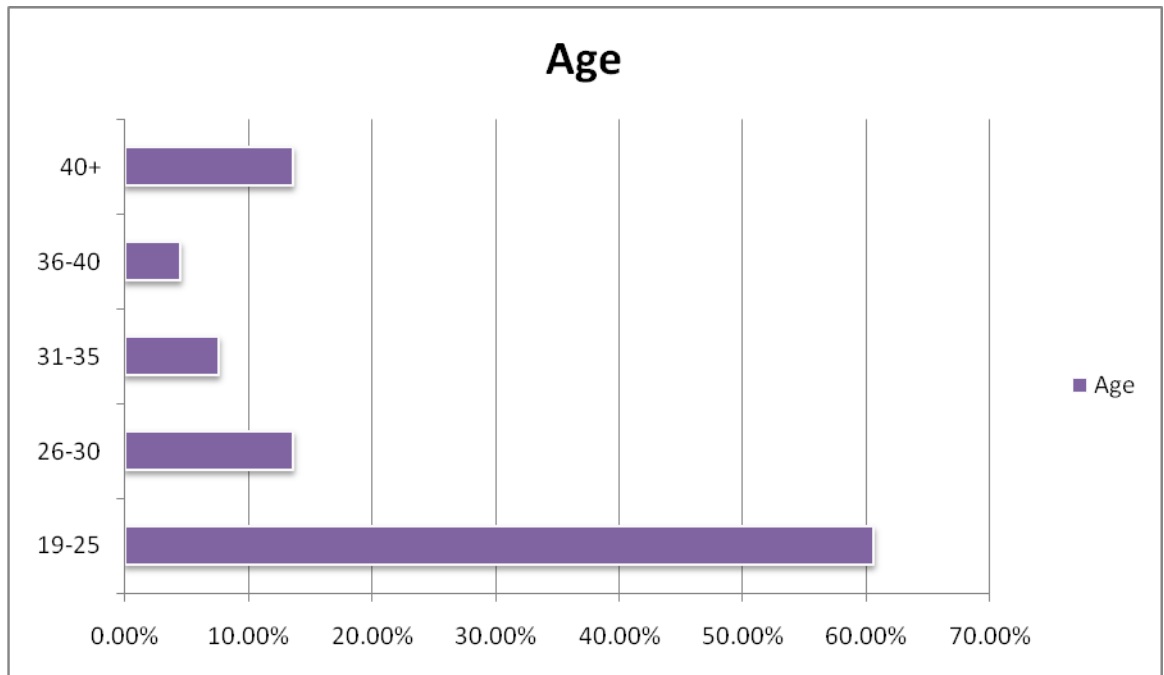
What Matters Most When Choosing a Book?



Have You Ever Watched a Book Video?

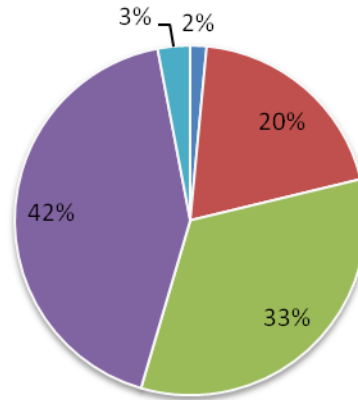


Demographics of Survey



How Much Time Do You Spend on the Internet Per Day?

■ Less Than an Hour ■ 1 to 2 Hours ■ 2 to 3 Hours ■ More Than 3 Hours ■ Other



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