book token  n. 1 a form of gift voucher redeemable in participating bookshops countrywide, a cash alternative for purchasing a book
2 a book reader’s ultimate gift

Book Tokens are promoted and exchangable at most bookshops in South Africa. Are they available in yours?

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A tribute to a friend
So far, 2013 has been a busy year. Numerous meetings with the Eastern Cape Department of Education have borne fruit and booksellers in this region are involved in the supply of books around the province. Booksellers in other areas have unfortunately not been as involved and the SA Booksellers Association needs to build and maintain relationships within the Education Departments. The singular methods of supply in different regions leave diverse opportunities for booksellers, but they are up against tough competition when it comes to meeting the challenges of EduSolutions in some areas. EduSolutions is negotiating higher settlement discounts and gets advantageous prices through the Provincial Education Departments’ bulk buying, which makes it difficult for smaller booksellers to compete.

In the provinces where we are not actually involved in the order or distribution process, the members tend not to be as actively involved in SA Bookseller matters. That is not to say that the organisation does not play an important role – in KwaZulu-Natal the Association has had a number of interactions with the department to see that the ELITS orders come to booksellers. We have met with the eThekwini Library about their changed buying policy and have kept members well informed about what has happened. We have sought meetings to discuss school book purchasing plans.

“We need an organisation to represent us in such situations, and I encourage you all to be active members and to participate in our meetings.”

We need an organisation to represent us in such situations, and I encourage you all to be active members and to participate in our meetings. Booksellers in the Western Cape have had a number of meetings discussing common issues, and form an active group. We need to build our Association throughout the country so that we can help booksellers everywhere to address their problems.

We met with the Superintendent General this year, but at that time the decision to procure centrally had already been made. The good news for booksellers is that the top-ups and stationery will be procured by schools from their local bookshops.

On a National level, the Department of Basic Education has invited us to attend their meetings which take place every three months. This indicates a willingness to work with SA Booksellers and is something we have worked hard to achieve.

The monthly trade statistics, which are biased toward the General Book Sector have shown continuous weekly declines when compared with the equivalent week last year for some time now. This is no doubt due mainly to factors beyond our individual control. We are competing with internet retailers which sell books at very competitive prices and seem happy to do so at no profit. The most notorious of these, Amazon.com, has increased sales by 22% in the last quarter to $15.7 billion but made a loss of $7 million. The company has positioned itself as an invincible force in the online and digital book world yet seems content to continue trading on a no profit basis. It will be interesting to see how the new VAT regulation imposed on the likes of Amazon will be implemented, and what the effects of it will be on local e-retailers and traditional bricks-and-mortar stores.

SA Booksellers was extensively involved in successfully opposing a VAT amendment to increase the VAT exemption on imported books. A further submission to Treasury was done in November 2012 to prove to Government that there is a leakage of VAT as overseas retailers of e-books and other digital goods do not charge VAT, and so are unfairly advantaged compared to local booksellers. The goal of the submission was to convince Treasury that it would be beneficial to all if VAT on all books were zero rated. Alternatively zero rating VAT on e-books will level the playing fields for local booksellers selling e-books.

Treasury, however, stated that they will implement a mechanism to force overseas retailers of e-books to charge VAT and pay it to SARS. Although this is not the ideal outcome for booksellers it is a remarkable achievement as no other industry has been able to accomplish this.

Library purchases have traditionally formed a significant part of the sales.
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The Executive Committee of SA Booksellers and the Editor thank all those who contributed to this issue of Bookmark through articles and/or advertising.

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The Executive Committee of SA Booksellers and the Editor thank all those who contributed to this issue of Bookmark through articles and/or advertising.

**Bookmark**
NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE SA BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION
Vol 35 • Sep – Nov 2013

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**PHOTOGRAPHS** iStockphoto, and thanks to all for photographic contributions

Design and Layout: Through the Looking Glass
Printed by: CTP Book Printers

SA Booksellers, National Executive Committee
The Executive Committee of SA Booksellers and the Editor thank all those who contributed to this issue of Bookmark through articles and/or advertising.
of general books. In an attempt to grow small black businesses many of the libraries are trying to give as much of their business as possible to “tenderpreneurs”. Where such traders are building genuine bookshops they are offering a useful service. Sadly the vast majority are simply looking for an opportunistic profit and are depriving the real booksellers and library specialists of revenue they need. Perhaps more importantly, they are often unable to fulfill their orders which leads to unspent book allocations. The Executive is trying to ensure that the libraries buy from genuine bookshops, and we would like all the booksellers to join us to increase our strength and to improve their efficiency.

Find a detailed account of the state of library purchasing in Jay Rangiah's report on page 24.

The University booksellers are still trading satisfactorily but are faced with similar uncertainties. UNISA – by far the largest university in terms of enrolment – has told booksellers that they hope to develop their own teaching materials for online delivery to students doing their main courses within about ten years. That is a short period in the history of a business and could spell the end of many academic bookshops. The recent Kirtsaeng case in which the US Supreme Court found that books legally bought outside the US could be legally imported into the country put the whole “international edition” practice at risk. The US publishers are for the most part unwilling to forego the profit they earn on higher priced editions to continue supporting third world learners with cheaper ones. At present a number of prescribed texts are available to SA booksellers at prices over R1000, which students will resist. How this will play out in the coming year remains to be seen.

Digital developments may well become important in the school book area too. In the course of the past year the number of digital books available for SA students has greatly increased. Some of the wealthier schools are requiring their students to buy tablets, which are intended to replace books. There is talk in the Western Cape of a WAN (wide area network) being established that all schools will have access to. Through this medium the WCED intends to distribute digital learning materials.

The provincial government in Gauteng has also outlined details of a R396m “e-learning solution” designed to replace the controversy-ridden R2.2bn Gauteng Online. It will involve the roll-out of 88 000 Android-powered tablet computers made by China’s Huawei to 2 200 government schools.

“We need to focus on giving a service that is needed and looking after our customers in the best possible ways. We need to be a part of the solution to the poor quality of education in too many schools. As we said last year, ‘We must be the change we want to see’ and find the ‘Connection through Books’.”

My report may be reading like a list of threats, but we must also look for the positives. The book as we know it is likely to be preferred by many readers for a long time to come, and is the best solution to delivering learning to the many people in our country who cannot use tablets to read from for a variety of reasons. In the US, where about half the books sold are either digital or delivered from internet sites, the growth in digital books seems to be tailing off. Independent bookshops increased their sales by 5% in the past year. We need to focus on giving a service that is needed and looking after our customers in the best possible ways. We need to be a part of the solution to the poor quality of education in too many schools. As we said last year, “We must be the change we want to see” and find the “Connection through Books”.

At this point I'd like to give my special thanks to Frikkie Nel, who has done so much for all of us over the years. After a lifetime in book retail and distribution Frikkie offered his services to us when he retired and he built our national office into a highly professional support for all of our members. We miss him greatly for his work, his wisdom and his company.

Sydwell Molosi,
President, SA Booksellers Association

The SA Booksellers' Committee.
E-trade and e-books report

The past twelve months have seen the e-reader/multipurpose tablet hesitantly wedge itself in general reading culture, but its place within the academic and educational sectors have yet to be secured. Internationally, there have been reports of a satiated market, meaning that we won’t be seeing jumps from print to e-reading like the past 36 months. This trend mirrors statistics published by the Association of American Publishers in early July, reporting that the days of double or even triple digit growth for the e-book market might now be gone, with sales growing by only 5% in the first quarter of 2013.

“The days of double or even triple digit growth for the e-book market might now be gone.”

Still, in its report “Understanding the E-Book Consumer”, released in July 2013, Nielsen estimates that for next year e-book sales of fiction will amount to 47 million units, some 300,000 ahead of the paperback figure and 48% of total fiction sales. The Canadian market for e-books remains steady, according to a new report from BookNet Canada. “The research suggests that the e-book market in Canada may have reached a plateau,” says BookNet Canada President and CEO Noah Genner.

Digital developments in General Trade

It is in the General Trade e-book arena that the bookseller has suffered most in the last 12 months – the lure of faster, cheaper and easier purchasing of books that have often not even hit the shelves in bookstores has proven hard to resist for even the most die-hard print devotees. In South Africa, readers have traditionally come from higher LSM groups, and it is precisely these groups that are able to afford tablets or dedicated e-readers. Usually these devices will have closed e-book ecosystems (which include the sales platform, readers, formats, distribution channels, production tools and formats, and terms and conditions), locking users into specific arrangements. Most of the major players in the e-book market thus far have been creating closed e-book ecosystems. Formats like ePUB3 seem likely to be the answer to a standard format for interoperable, enhanced e-books. An interesting development to watch is access to books on mobile phones – its providing access to literature by placing the power to read in the hands of the majority. School children are accessing reading material on applications like Bookly via Mxit (see page 11) and creating their own stories on Yoza.

The growth in digital books in developed markets like the UK and US is already beginning to flatten out. In South Africa, meanwhile, take-up has been comparatively slow, according to financial services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC); largely due to high prices and bandwidth constraints. In its “South African entertainment and media outlook: 2012-2016”, PwC says the electronic consumer book market is still relatively new to South Africa, and this market is forecast to grow from R2 million in 2011 to R19 million in 2016. As e-books grow to their full potential, they will have an effect on both bricks-and-mortar stores and online retailers. Booksellers are also facing a growing trend of customers browsing in their stores and subsequently buying e-books. This ‘show-rooming’ trend is estimated to have contributed to the decline in print book sales. In response, publishers have begun to release paperback editions sooner than in the past, so as to offer a more price-competitive print alternative to e-books.

Further challenges lie ahead in the vast complexity and cost of using digital rights management (DRM) to protect against e-book piracy, which threatens to increase as digitisation becomes easier. Internationally, the removal of DRM is being investigated and some large publishers have abandoned it already. Whether the South Africa e-book market opts to keep the DRM model or not will largely depend on what other international sellers do.

Online book retail (including e-books) accounted for 44% of all spending by consumers on books in the U.S. in 2012, according to a report from Bowker. This is up from 39% in 2011, which was the first year when online retail eclipsed physical retail as the No. 1 place U.S. consumers buy books. E-book spending grew in 2012 to an 11% share of the total versus 7% in 2011. Jo Henry, director of Bowker Market Research, said: “The review reveals the larger industry impact of the growth of e-books. This is more than simply a format change. E-books are driving powerful behavioural changes among book buyers.”

Regarding the unfair advantage of online retailers like Amazon selling into South Africa at effectively 14% less than South African booksellers (along with their monopolistic pricing based on the
wholesale model) it looks like the playing field is being levelled out, with Minister of Finance Pravin Gordhan announcing in his budget speech in February a significant development for the selling of e-books and value-added tax (VAT) compliance, proposing that foreign businesses selling e-books, music and other digital goods and services should be required to register as VAT vendors. This development comes as a result of the South African Booksellers Association and Publishers’ Association of South Africa as well as some of the larger booksellers and publishers’ engagement with the National Treasury. Even with this development, it looks like Amazon’s position as the leading e-book seller thanks to their low prices was re-affirmed by the outcome of the Apple vs. US Department of Justice price-fixing case. By ruling that Apple was wrong to work with publishers to set prices under an agency model (through which the prices consumers pay were set by publishers instead of by Amazon and other retailers), the court underscored Amazon’s freedom to continue setting prices as low as it wants, using the wholesale model.

Radical increases in retail sales via the Internet is an international consumers trend, which will likely grow as a result of more affordable smart phones and tables, together with better connectivity. In 2012, 11% of all retail sales in the UK took place via online transactions (versus 1% in 2004). In South Africa online sales increased from R3,3 billion in June 2012 to R4,4 billion in June 2013. One of the biggest threats posed by both e-books and online retailing of printed books to traditional booksellers is the fact that with relative ease, publishers can now sell their books to consumers directly. They have the means and technical expertise to invest in “web shop-fronts” and complicated online ordering platforms, whereas booksellers for the most part seem to be finding the barriers to transition much more difficult to overcome.

Digital developments in Education

Helen Zille, Premier of the Western Cape, said on 8 July 2013 that she would like to see a tablet in the hands of every learner in five years. She went on to emphasize the importance of technology for the future of education, and said that tablets are invaluable educational resources. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has a very clear vision regarding the implementation of e-books or digital learning. Among their goals are seeing every school move from computer labs to learners having their own tablets, with connectivity becoming more accessible and affordable. E-Teaching, where teachers and education managers become empowered to use technology and resources effectively and innovatively, is also ranking high on the priority list. Lastly, a move away from traditional school libraries to multimedia hubs, where learners can have access to a combination of library and digital learning technologies is being implemented where possible. Clearly, this is the way forward for e-books at schools in South Africa. There are many challenges, but if Educational booksellers are pro-active and creative they will be well positioned and will survive.

While sales of digital schoolbooks are small at the moment, we are concerned that they will grow and that booksellers will be more affected as time goes on. Publishers are developing digital versions of more of their books, and selling them directly to schools via their websites in some cases. Via Afrika and MacMillan have led the way in developing their enriched e-materials, consisting of video, slideshows, animation and more. Some booksellers, like Books 24/7, are also selling digital schoolbooks, as well as selling traditional printed books via their online catalogues and websites into schools, and are enthusiastic about their additional value. Hentie Gericke, CEO of Books 24/7 and newly appointed Executive member of the Digital sector of SA Booksellers, recounts how they have had to appoint someone to take care of online orders from schools, parents and learners, because of the sheer amount of orders they are receiving via this channel since their website went live on 1 October 2012. According to Hentie, they are the only bookseller in the world that has a complete, and correct pricelist of all approved CAPS textbooks and reading series, as well as a complete list of the most popular atlases, dictionaries and readers. He admits that they’ve got a long way to go in terms of making their website more user-friendly, but feels that after completing the updated online catalogue, that will be the logical next step.

Digital developments in Academic

Digital Academic books have not yet taken off in South Africa in the same way as in the US, UK and Australia, but it is clear that publishers are preparing for digital delivery, and the Kirtsaeng case may have the effect of hurrying the acceptance of digital books here – publishers are reluctant to expose themselves to the danger of the re-importation of cheap ISE editions into the USA, and so are grappling with the problem of how to sell books at affordable prices in the developing countries. ISP addresses are country specific, and so digital delivery might be a solution. Locally, Van Schaik Bookstores has partnered with Ingram VitalSource, the leading US supplier of academic e-textbooks to provide consumers with an Africa-ready electronic option to access their academic materials. The content for the e-textbooks is provided under agreement from individual publishers – local and international – and according to Melvin Kaabwe of VS, sales of these e-books have exceeded even his optimistic projections.

Hentie Gericke advises booksellers to look to their website designers for advice on how to monetize their websites (and if there is no website – get on board or get left behind!). Focusing on a website that is concise, complete, up to date, and perhaps most importantly, user friendly, is a route booksellers can’t ignore for much longer. On the Dot’s digital warehouse give South African web distributors a way of accessing a great deal of material, but clearly, the real prize for booksellers would be finding a way to participate in the sale of digital alongside our other books. The time for radical mind shifts is here – booksellers who want to thrive in the digital era will have to start thinking about new business models.

With thanks to Hentie Gericke, Peter Adams, and Melvin Kaabwe.
Innovations that encourage a nation of readers »

Paperight: Print-on-demand around every corner
The real challenge of bookselling in South Africa is that about 45 million people are not buying books according to Arthur Attwell, founder and CEO of Paperight. Outside of the schoolbooks they might receive, most South Africans simply can’t buy books of their own.

Even if they could, it’s unlikely that they’d have a flourishing bookshop around the corner from where they live. So they photocopy, borrow, or just go without.

Several exciting projects are trying to change that by delivering books to people’s phones, or by making e-readers cheap. For instance, over 200 000 young people use Siyavula’s Mxit portal to revise science and maths. Tens of thousands read fiction from FunDza, also on Mxit.

Non-profit Worldreader has been giving out Kindles to rural school children for years, and now distributes books for free to their mobile phones in several African and Asian countries (most recently three South African schools have benefitted from this program – for more information see www.sabooksellers.com).

But while they are successfully equipping hundreds of children with basic e-reading devices, the problem they’re tackling is much bigger than that. The e-book ecosystem is intricate, and expensive: it has to include devices, data, electricity, know-how, support, and most crucially of all, a way to pay for books out there. So they democratise publishing, e-books can get it right now at a good price.

Most print-booksellers know well that paper is special, and that in the mad rush to digital there’s a terrible irony: while they democratise publishing, e-books also widen the gap between those with Internet access and those without.

That gap in turn becomes a widening education gap, an economic gap, and a healthcare gap. How bad is that problem here? According to our recent census, over 65% of South Africans don’t have any Internet access at all.

How do we get books to people with no Internet access? Print-based booksellers do what they can, but the costs of stocking bricks-and-mortar bookstores are so high that they simply can’t survive in poorer areas.

We do what we have everywhere already, though, are copy-printers. Most of them are connected to a computer, which is connected to the Internet. Why not print books out there? Most of us are within a short walk of this rudimentary book-making machine – and for most students, a rudimentary book is just fine, if they can get it right now at a good price.

Imagine selling a range of books that require no shelving, no stock, no wastage, no returns, and no up-front purchases.

If your store already has a good copy-printer and broadband Internet, the only costs of selling print-on-demand books are printing, ring-binding, and Paperight’s licence fee. For example, let’s say a customer wants a 300-page set work novel. How do the numbers work?

On many copier leases, the cost of printing a double-sided A4 sheet, including paper, is about 25 cents. Since a 300-page novel will be printed two-up on A4, it’ll fit on 75 sheets. That’s R18.75. Let’s say the Paperight licence fee is R50 and it costs R5 to ring-bind the book. So your total costs come to just under R75. If you sell the book for R115, you’ve made a 50% mark-up with zero up-front costs. The customer’s probably saved 20%. And the publisher’s earned R40 (Paperight keeps 20% of the R50 licence fee), which is the same gross margin they’d make on their traditional edition. Everyone wins.

So is it working? Since launching in May 2013, over 200 photocopy shops have joined the Paperight network, selling study materials, set works, textbooks, and even romance novels. They are in cities, towns and villages, from Mdantsane to Polokwane, Peddie to Petrus Steyn.

The challenge for copy shops, however, is that they don’t yet know how to sell books. Bookselling is a science on its own, involving clever marketing and savvy staff. So it’s critical that booksellers bring their smarts to the print-on-demand revolution, too. Already Caxton and Juta bookshops have joined Paperight: they now offer over 1700 titles on-demand, printed on their existing office copy-printers as needed. If print-on-demand is the future of bookelling, they’re setting the trend.

Crucially, publishers are joining in, too. O’Reilly Media, Random House Struik, Pan Macmillan SA and Oxford University Press Southern Africa are among over 80 publishers with books on Paperight. They’re joining because Paperight is a simple way to tackle a complex problem, a model the Parliament of South Africa recently described, when congratulating Paperight officially, as “[An] ingenious solution to widespread book shortages in the developing world”.

“At Paperight, we’re putting e-books back on paper, because for most people, paper is just easier and cheaper. We do this by setting up regular photocopy shops with the necessary technology and connections to print them out quickly and legally.”

Arthur Attwell is the founder and CEO of Paperright, and a Shuttleworth Foundation Fellow. Before Paperight, he co-founded Electric Book Works, developing and incubating new and better ways to publish in emerging markets.
The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) estimates that at the end of 2012, there were 6.8 billion mobile subscriptions worldwide (compared to 5.4 billion in 2010). That is equivalent to 96 percent of the world population (7.1 billion according to the ITU).

Mobile subscriber rates in the developed world are reaching saturation point, while in developing countries there is still room for growth. This is important because a 2013 study by ComScore (American Internet analytics company) reports that approximately 82 percent of time spent with mobile media happens via apps. Apps (mobile applications) are clearly the future, and South African marketing agency Native knew all about that when they developed Mixit’s new app, Bookly.

“Apps (mobile applications) are clearly the future, and South African marketing agency Native knew all about that when they developed Mixit’s new app, Bookly.”

In the previous edition of Bookmark we reported that approximately 20% of South Africans now own a smartphone (about 10 million active smartphones, compared to about 30 million smartphones in the UK, and about 1 billion worldwide and the numbers are growing fast). Mobiles went from brick-sized in the Nineties to just bigger than lego-size in the Noughties, but now the reverse is happening. With today’s smartphones, screen size is no longer a barrier to extended reading and that is where the biggest numbers are if we want to tap into mass digital reading. Bookly for example, gives access to books to 7.3 million active monthly users.

Bookly is the most sophisticated e-reader app available on the Mxit platform. Native began development of the app in early 2013, and was eager to bring suitable partners on board as quickly as possible. Publishers Random House Struik and Modjaji Books stepped up, creating an appropriate focus on serialised South African novels.

Native’s Head of Inventions, Levon Rivers, explains how it all works. “Bookly creates a virtual library on a cell phone, allowing users to browse books by name, author or genre. It has all the features of other electronic readers on more advanced devices. It saves your progress after each session, and you can create your own virtual bookshelf of favourite reads.”

While offering a wide variety of books is important, Rivers is adamant that Bookly will appeal to educators more directly by providing access to books that pertain to the school syllabus. “From an education viewpoint, we are starting with the classics and planning to extend to set works and textbooks in the future,” he explains. “The most effective way to address South Africa’s poor literacy rates is to ensure that school children have access to books. Imagine every child had their own library on their phone? Bookly will elevate general reading and literacy rates in South Africa,” says Rivers. “It is the cheapest and most accessible way to get books. We’ve also added a layer of gamification to encourage reading amongst the youth.”

Colleen Higgs of Modjaji Books said it was an easy decision supporting the bookly app. “We are thrilled to join Mixit via bookly,” she said. “It’s a new way to read and be read.”

While most people know Mixit as a chat and mobile gaming platform, it now affords users with ordinary feature phones access to a vast library and the opportunity to read books with ease anywhere, at any time – all they need is a cell phone and some airtime. Also, by utilising open source platforms such as Project Gutenberg, the list of available books is growing by the minute.

“We wanted to create an app that could accommodate unlimited reading material,” says Rivers. “At Native we create work that has a meaningful impact on people’s lives and we are very much invested in South Africa’s future. We feel that smart phone functionality shouldn’t be limited to the rich, especially when such technology could influence the lives of millions of people.”

This is also particularly true in a country where e-readers and tablets remain a privilege of the elite few. In this context, Native has found a way for South Africans to access hundreds of books, be the first to sample a novel by an established author and exercise a basic human right – the right to read.
In retail marketing, it is important to observe what customers actually do in your shop, including finding out what it is they are looking for, how easily they were able to find those items, whether they finally bought those items. With these observations and other information that you collate, you can intelligently tweak your retail space so that more customers fulfil your business goals. These tweaks (optimisations) include making adjustments to your advertising, shop layout, product placement and use of promotional material such as shelf wobblers and signage.

“In digital marketing, it is equally important to observe the behaviour of visitors to your website so that you can make informed improvements to it and reach your business goals more effectively. This process is largely driven by web analytics.”

In digital marketing, it is equally important to observe the behaviour of visitors to your website so that you can make informed improvements to it and reach your business goals more effectively. This process is largely driven by web analytics. According to the Web Analytics Association (WAA), web analytics is defined as ‘the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of Internet data for the purposes of understanding and optimizing Web usage.’

Early web analytics software dates back to 1995. From 1996 hit counters became a common feature on websites, thereby introducing web statistics to the wider public. These web counters indicated the number of visits a webpage had received, providing a crude indication of a page’s popularity. The notion persists to the present day that visitor numbers are a key statistic, whether or not they understood or enjoyed a particular piece of content on your site.

When trying to navigate your site, or whether or not they understood or enjoyed a particular piece of content on your site, author and Google Analytics evangelist Avinash Kaushik – widely regarded as the ‘guru’ of web analytics – provides this revised definition: “Web Analytics 2.0 is the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data from your website and the competition, to drive a continual improvement of the online experience that your customers, and potential customers have, which translates into your desired outcomes (online and offline).”

From Kaushik’s helpful definition, we can see that qualitative data is enshrined in the web analytics process. Qualitative data can be derived from many offline and online sources including online surveys, user comments (if your site has a commenting facility) and information users leave elsewhere online (or offline) about your site and brand (e.g. on Twitter, Facebook and blogs). Furthermore, his definition includes “from your website and the competition – emphasising the importance of looking at what your competitors are doing online, incorporating this into the analysis, and adjusting your strategy to counter any threats this reveals.

Whilst your initial use of analytics may not encompass all the above, don’t be daunted – if you haven’t done so already, register a Google Analytics account, get the account code added to your website, and start exploring this powerful reporting tool! If you are running a suite of different digital marketing assets, do also start getting to grips with any built-in analytics capabilities these offer (e.g. Facebook Insights, YouTube Analytics) and incorporate this into your decision making.
With famous authors, literary functions, events, displays, workshops, hundreds of exhibitors and an exciting exhibition, the 2014 CAPE TOWN BOOK FAIR is, well, one for the books.

RESERVE YOUR STAND NOW!
Louise Barry-Taylor
011 549 8300 or email: louise@tepg.co.za

www.capetownbookfair.co.za
There is no doubt that the recession continues to affect consumers, and shops throughout the country have noted that they are quiet, with customers continuing to be very price conscious. The fact that the Rand has plummeted against the major currencies has not helped our industry, as so many trade books are imported and prices have gone up (and are likely to remain high in the short to medium term).

**Overview**

In PricewaterhouseCoopers’ (PwC) “South African entertainment and media outlook: 2012–2016”, Rillian Nienaber reports that “spending on printed consumer books is expected to reach R1.7 billion in 2016 from R1.5 billion in 2011. The electronic consumer book market is still relatively new to South Africa and this market is forecast to grow to R19 million in 2016 from just R2 million in 2011, which is an increase of 56.9% at a compound annual rate.

The Government has determined that the creative industries are key contributors to economic growth and job creation. Consequently, in its Industrial Policy Action Plan 2 (IPAP 2), the Government included the creative industries and in April 2011 allocated R14.8 billion over five years to promote tourism and the creative industries. IPAP 2 specifically targets reading and established a Ministerial Task Team to develop a growth strategy for book publishing. There are only about 400 bookstores in South Africa serving a population of 49 million. For most people, access to books is limited, which contributes to the small market for consumer books. CNA, with more than 180 stores and Exclusive Books with 48 stores dominate the retail bookstore market, together accounting for more than half of the book outlets in South Africa.”

**Sales performance**

Revenue for the past year (July 2012 – June 2013) fell by 2.7% to R1,545 billion and volumes fell by 9.1% to 11,53 million units. Digging a little more reveals that revenue in the second half of 2012 was 7% down on the same period in 2011, with volumes down by 9.2%, despite a 9.5% increase in the average selling price (ASP) from R120.55 to R131.96.

The first 24 weeks of 2013 showed a decrease in revenue of 5% (R736 million to R699 million) over the same period in 2012, despite a 4% increase in ASP (R131.14 to R136.58) which was offset by a 8.9% decrease in unit sales (5,618 million units to 5,121 million units). Interestingly sales of adult fiction titles are UP by 2%, which is a reversal on the same period last year, where sales fell 16% from 2011. Children’s Non-fiction sales increased by 5%. Sales of adult Non-fiction titles fell by 7%, while children’s fiction sales fell by 8%.

**New developments**

The big news in the trade sector is the sale of Exclusive Books by Times Media. The uncertainty within the group has lead to key staff members resigning to join other players in the book trade or leave the industry entirely. This is extremely worrying for us as an industry as we need a strong, visible bookselling chain to continue to raise the profile of books in South Africa. Word is that the new owners have been identified, but no announcement has been made as yet.

The merger of Penguin and Random House worldwide has been given approval by the governments of the U.S., New Zealand, Australia, the European Commission, Canada, South Africa, and China and the new structures for each country have been announced. Due to the unique situation of Random House Struik in South Africa, Penguin SA and Random House Struik will continue in their current form for the foreseeable future.

There have been a number of changes / moves of agencies in the past few months, with one of the most significant being the move of Book Promotions warehousing and accounts to Jonathan Ball Publishers. Furthermore as at 1st July Jonathan Ball Publishers took over the Little Brown UK, Piaktus and Octopus agencies from Penguin SA. This could have implications for booksellers as they may need to increase their credit limits with Jonathan Ball Publishers to cover the orders for these extra lists.

**Industry threats**

The number of Kindles, iPads and other electronic devices in the SA market continue to grow dramatically and this of course is impacting on SA booksellers as more customers turn from print books to e-books. Furthermore consumers are increasingly using the internet to search for print book bargains and often find cheaper (especially US) editions on local and foreign internet websites.

A matter of concern for bookshops selling to schools, is the increase in the number of publishers who are supplying books directly to schools at discounts ranging from 10% to 30%. This is putting publishers in direct competition with their own customers, and in many cases has forced booksellers to increase the discounts which they have to offer to schools, and in some cases even close their doors.

**General comments**

In an effort to maintain relevance in an increasingly challenging environment, and to generate sales by marketing books as a source of entertainment, booksellers are hosting functions and more bookfairs / literary festivals are taking place.

**SOME KEY BOOKFAIRS AND LITERARY FESTIVALS:**

*Time of the Writer, 18 – 23 March 2013*

Presented by the Centre for Creative Arts (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and made possible through principal funding from the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund, the 16th edition took place in Durban between 18th and 23rd March with 19 authors in attendance, mainly...
from South Africa and Africa. The mix of book launches, panel discussions, seminars and workshops has proved attractive, with attendance rising steadily each year. In tandem with the festival, the writers participate in a School Program, where they interact with students to encourage reading, writing and realising the importance of books.

www.cca.ukzn.ac.za

Franschhoek Literary Festival, 17 – 19 May 2013
The 7th FLF was the biggest and liveliest so far with 50% more festival goers than in 2012, almost all 91 events were sold out and over 13 000 tickets sold. For the third year, the festival was preceded by a Book Week for Young Readers during which children's authors visited every classroom in the valley, telling stories and reading to 4 500 learners. The FLF Library Fund has also employed a qualified librarian who is helping to upgrade, stock and run four government school libraries, an effort which is starting to show results as many of the youngsters are now borrowing a new book every week. Dates for FLF 2014 are 16 – 18 May, with the Book Week for Young Readers running from 12 – 16 May.

www.flf.co.za

Kingsmead Bookfair, 25 May 2013
The second annual Kingsmead Book Fair took place at Kingsmead College in Melrose, Johannesburg on Saturday, 25 May. The Fair attracted over 2000 visitors, an increase of 43% on 2012. Showcasing the talents of over 70 authors, journalists and newsmakers, the Fair hosted a children's and an adult programme. Next year's date is set for Saturday, 24 May.

www.kingsmead.co.za

Bloody Book Week, 31 July – 4 August 2013
The 3rd Bloody Book Week – Africa’s first crime book festival – promises to be bigger and better than ever, with more discussions and more author events scheduled all over Johannesburg. Featuring bestselling British authors Peter James and Stuart MacBride, and over 13 local authors, as well as journalists, forensic specialists and crime investigators.

www.thebloodybookweek.co.za

Open Book Literary Festival, 7 – 11 September 2013
Open Book, now in its third year looks set to be an amazing 5 days of back to back events. The programme includes acclaimed crime writer, Ian Rankin, Granita Best of Young British authors, Kamila Shamsie and Sunjeev Sahota, Caine Prize winner, Tope Folarin as well as Teju Cole, Patrick deWitt and Gillian Slovo. The list of participating local authors is no less exciting. From icons like Andre Brink, Mongane Wally Serote and Sindiwane Magona through to emerging stars, Nqo Mhlongo, Kgabeli Moele, Nthikeng Mohlele and Khosi Xaba, the festival will once again be creating an exciting platform for international and local authors to engage with each other as well as their readers.

www.openbookfestival.co.za

National Book Week, 2 – 7 September 2013
Set to engage and challenge the nation to read and share a book, National Book Week will feature a wide range of activities, which are aimed at encouraging more South Africans to read books by South African or other African authors.

Sharing the love and joy derived from reading are other notable South Africans such as Zakes Mda, Deon Meyer, Bonnie Henna, Azania Mosaka, Aaron Moloisi, Zenande Mfenyane, Geina Mhlophe, and others who join National Book Week as official ambassadors for this year’s National Book Week.

www.nationalbookweek.co.za

Cape Town Book Fair, 13 – 15 June 2014
The Cape Town Book Fair will be back next year with renewed vigour. Be sure not to miss this excellent bookselling opportunity.

www.capetownbookfair.co.za

Other Book Fairs and Festivals
www.woordfees.co.za; www.kknk.co.za
www.clovraardklopx.co.za
www.vryfees.co.za; www.mg.co.za
www.literarytourism.co.za

Kids Lit Quiz World Finals, Durban, 3 July 2013
The 2013 World Finals of the Kids Lit Quiz was held at Durban Girl’s College on the 3rd July. The national champions (teams of four primary school children, with their two coaches) from South Africa, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand and USA visited us for a week of activities, sight seeing and of course the actual competition. South Africa has a wonderful record in this event as Manor Gardens Primary from Durban won in New Zealand in 2011 and Roedean Girls from Johannesburg, came second in 2012. We should take advantage of the publicity generated from the KLQ and encourage as many schools as possible to participate next year (and the years thereafter), which in turn will keep the focus on children’s literature and literacy in general. We have huge literacy problems in our country, but we have proved that with funds and the will to succeed we can compete with the best in the world. There is hope!

www.kidslitquiz.com

“South African entertainment and media outlook: 2012-2016”, PwC
With thanks to: Nielsen Bookscan for the sales stats; Frankie Murray for the Open Book Report; Jenny Hobbs for the Franschhoek Literary Report
Sefika Awards

Winners for exceptional service in education and literacy

At the annual Sefika Awards dinner, outstanding service to the publishing and bookselling industry was celebrated in style, with this year’s theme: “A splash of Colour”.

Publishers, booksellers and authors congregated at the Vineyard Hotel in Cape Town to applaud and be applauded for the roles they play in promoting a culture of reading by producing and selling quality books in South Africa.

The teams that won these awards are the leaders in their fields and it is important that the publishers are recognized for their dedication to producing works of perfection and that the booksellers are thanked for taking these works and getting them into the hands of readers country wide.

The final award for the evening, the Nielsen Booksellers Choice Award, now in its 13th year, is a very special award, bestowed upon an author for a book he or she has written that booksellers most enjoyed selling throughout the year.

This year’s award went to Frank Chikane for Eight Days in September – The Removal of Thabo Mbeki, published by Picador Africa.

John van de Ruit was presented with a new award, introduced by Nielsen and SAPnet this year. The Nielsen SAPnet Gold Book Award is presented for exceptional sales to an author who has achieved continuous sales since the start of the Nielsen BookScan SA panel.

Sponsored by Paarl Media, Nielsen, SAPnet, Creda Communications, Lebone Litho Printers, Premier Freight, Geodis Wilson and On the Dot, the entire evening and all of the honour it bestows upon the recipients of the awards, is an annual highlight, celebrating South Africans that are advocates of literacy.

1 Hentie Gericke accepts the award for Education Bookseller of the year for Books 24/7
2 The SA Booksellers executive
3 Stephan Erasmus accepts the award for Academic Bookseller of the year for Van Schaik
4 Terry Morris accepts the General Trade Publisher of the year Award for Pan Macmillan
5 Frank Chikane, winner of the Booksellers Choice Award for Eight Days in September
6 The Via Afrika team responsible for winning the Education Publisher of the year award
7 The winning Academic Publisher of the year team from Oxford University Press
8 Ziel Bergh from Penguin accepts the Gold Book Award on behalf of John Van Der Ruit for his Spud series from Simon Skinner of Nielsen Book
9 Janine o’Conner accepts the award for General Trade Bookseller for Books and Books
Nielsen Booksellers’ Choice Award 2013 Shortlist

Nielsen is very proud to sponsor this award that recognises talent, creativity and success in the book industry and we congratulate all the nominees and shortlisted authors and publishers.

Eight Days in September – The Removal of Thabo Mbeki
by Frank Chikane,
published by Picador Africa

Wat’s Nuus – Riaan Cruywagen,
published by Naledi

Songs and Secrets – South Africa from Liberation to Governance by Barry Gilder,
published by Jacana Media

The Last Rhinos by Lawrence Anthony and Graham Spence,
published by Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.

Taken Captive by Birds by Marguerite Poland,
published by The Penguin Group

50 Flippen Brilliant South Africans
by Alexander Parker and Tim Richman illustrations by Zapiro,
published by Mercury

Die Staat Teen Anna Bruwer,
by Anchien Troskie,
published by Kwela Books

SPUD – Exit, Pursued by a Bear,
by John van de Ruit,
published by The Penguin Group
South African Publications Network
Invaluable business tools for the South African book industry

Compiled by NICOLENE FINLAYSON

In a constant effort to bring SA Booksellers’ members and readers of Bookmark up to date information that is both relevant and valuable, we’re proud to announce that from the September issue, Bookmark will be working with South African data supplier, SAPnet (South African Publications Network) to bring you quarterly “Top Best Sellers” Reports for the General Trade, as well as updates and informative snippets about their services to the book industry.

“Passionate about all things data-related, CEO Freda van Wyk gave us a rundown of how they see a future where more books get sold, more often, in more ways, using that oft-misunderstood commodity, metadata.”

Passionate about all things data-related, CEO Freda van Wyk gave us a rundown of how they see a future where more books get sold, more often, in more ways, using that oft-misunderstood commodity, metadata. SAPnet are a leading producer and supplier of bibliographic and other content rich metadata, supplying enriched data on products encompassing the book, music, video, TV, technology and other manufacturing industries. Their sales statistics services for the book-industry have been running for nearly a decade (making them one of the longest running sales statistics service for books on the globe) and, says Freda, “There has been so much diversification going on – publishers, booksellers, academic institutions and libraries have all had to review their business processes and systems, and with the ever looming growth of online retailing and e-books, there is definitely a growing awareness of the importance of good quality metadata”.

SAPnet is also the exclusive product partner in South Africa for Nielsen, Rovi and Softlink, alongside their own, South-African focussed data products and services. These play a critical role in understanding and analysing local book industry needs.

SA BookSearch.co.za
SA Booksearch allows subscribers to search over 5 million South African titles available through market agents and publishers in South Africa. This online service was originally developed in 2004 as simple means for booksellers to validate ISBN’s and titles, thereby providing the necessary information for the booksellers to procure titles from the various publishers and distributors, but has now been extended by adding stock levels, availability, shipping estimates and prices from various publishers and distributors. It also has valuable features like the “Top 10” (the top 10 best sellers in Fiction, Non-fiction, Children’s - Fiction and -Non-fiction of South African titles each week) based on SABookScan charts.

SA Textbooks.net
This web allows tertiary institutions to pre-compile their lists of required prescribed and recommended textbooks online well before they make the information available in a standardized format to all stakeholders (i.e. libraries, publishers, booksshops and students). But more importantly, the platform is capable of integrating with the current acquisition software of the library, where a customized process of approval for the acquisition of selected titles aligns with the business processes of the institution.

RPG Online
Through the RPG-Online platform, SAPnet has been streamlining the way South African publishers enter and access data for their own titles. They can easily update their imprints, and enter and edit correct metadata for their current or backlist titles. It is this input of good quality (“healthy”) data which enables other role players in the book industry to supply their clients with more efficient and effective services – from viewing and evaluating titles, to searching and checking real time stock levels, and ordering titles from the publishers and distributors.

Ikhatalogu
Through this service, libraries can have on-demand access to MARC21 records, BookData MARC and BookData Multimedia MARC as well as a core record service in XML and CSV file format.

Softlink and Rovi
SAPnet is the exclusive distributor for Softlink (an integrated Library management system) and the Rovi Corporation (focussed on digital

Data about data
Metadata is a rather vague term – it is both data that describes data (e.g. this field is an author name) and the structure of the data itself (e.g. this is a particular version of ONIX). But in general, explains Emad Elakahal* from Elkotob.com, “Metadata” is a set of data that provides information about one or more aspects of other data or of an object. Metadata creation has always been an essential part of the book production process, helping to keep track of all contributors (authors, editors, publisher, etc.). Libraries have traditionally relied heavily on metadata to manage the storage and lending of books. Within this context, metadata is normally used to find, identify, select, and obtain a book. The greatest benefit of metadata, however, is its ability to facilitate communications: in the book supply chain, all players need to effectively exchange data about their catalogues, stock levels, title availability, and sale prices in an accurate manner.

*Emad has an M.S. in Information Technology from IT University of Copenhagen (www.elkotob.com).
TOP 25 BEST SELLERS
in SA General Trade
for the weeks 1–24 of 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POS</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>PUBLISHER</th>
<th>PUB DATE</th>
<th>RRP (R)</th>
<th>UNITS SOLD</th>
<th>REVENUE (R)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inferno: (Robert Langdon Book 4)</td>
<td>Brown, Dan</td>
<td>Random House Struik</td>
<td>May-13</td>
<td>299.00</td>
<td>1,4947</td>
<td>3,776,502</td>
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<td>Fifty Shades of Grey</td>
<td>James, E. L.</td>
<td>Random House Struik</td>
<td>May-12</td>
<td>145.00</td>
<td>13,196</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fifty Shades Darker</td>
<td>James, E. L.</td>
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<td>May-14</td>
<td>145.00</td>
<td>10,904</td>
<td>84,183</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Bared to You: A Crossfire Novel</td>
<td>Day, Sylvia</td>
<td>Penguin Books (SA) (Pty) Ltd</td>
<td>Jul-12</td>
<td>130.00</td>
<td>10,509</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Fifty Shades Freed</td>
<td>James, E. L.</td>
<td>Random House Struik</td>
<td>May-14</td>
<td>145.00</td>
<td>9,647</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The Storyteller</td>
<td>Picault, Jodi</td>
<td>Jonathan Ball Publishers SA</td>
<td>Apr-13</td>
<td>220.00</td>
<td>7,646</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>A hustlers bible</td>
<td>McKenzie, Gayton</td>
<td>ZAR Empire Holdings</td>
<td>Feb-13</td>
<td>7396</td>
<td>7,396</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Unstoppable: The Incredible Power of ...</td>
<td>Vujicic, Nick</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct-12</td>
<td>6,114</td>
<td>8,034,642</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Conversations with my sons and daughters</td>
<td>Ramphele, Mamphelea</td>
<td>Penguin Books (SA) (Pty) Ltd</td>
<td>Sep-12</td>
<td>170.00</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Fifty Shades Trilogy Boxed Set</td>
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<td>Random House Struik</td>
<td>Aug-12</td>
<td>430.00</td>
<td>5,980</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Enslin, Andries</td>
<td>Carpe Diem Boeke</td>
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<td>Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel</td>
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<td>Penguin Books (SA) (Pty) Ltd</td>
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<td>Things I could not say</td>
<td>Chikane, Frank</td>
<td>Pan Macmillan South Africa</td>
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<td>125.00</td>
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<td>Niehaus, Carmen</td>
<td>NB uitgewers/publishers</td>
<td>Apr-13</td>
<td>330.00</td>
<td>5,085</td>
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<td>And the Mountains Echoed</td>
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<td>Until the End of Time</td>
<td>Steel, Danielle</td>
<td>Random House Struik</td>
<td>Mar-13</td>
<td>250.00</td>
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<td>920,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Platters wine guide 2013</td>
<td>van Zyl, Philip</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nov-12</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>649,930</td>
<td></td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Simple, fabulous lunchbox ideas</td>
<td>Katzenellenbogen, Leita</td>
<td>Random House Struik</td>
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<td>120.00</td>
<td>4,674</td>
<td>484,960</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>The Hundred-year old man who ...</td>
<td>Jonasson, Jonas</td>
<td>Book Promotions</td>
<td>Jul-12</td>
<td>164.00</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Cakes and desserts</td>
<td>Paarman, Ina</td>
<td>Ina Paarman Cookbooks</td>
<td>Oct-10</td>
<td>29.99</td>
<td>4,618</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Best Kept Secret: Book Three</td>
<td>Archer, Jeffrey</td>
<td>Pan Macmillan South Africa</td>
<td>Feb-13</td>
<td>285.00</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>The Power of Praying</td>
<td>Omartian, Stormie</td>
<td>Other USA</td>
<td>Jan-08</td>
<td>4,469</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>Dec-12</td>
<td>210.00</td>
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<td>653,366</td>
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Data collected, processed and compiled by Publications Network (Pty) Ltd t/a SAPnet, exclusive representative of Nielsen BookScan in SA from sales at retail outlets. ©2013
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The future of Exclusive Books
The inside story

By BRIAN WOOTTON, Head, TMG Books

I refer to the recent articles (Company Comment, July 4) and (Financial Mail, Go to the self-help section, July 5 to 10) regarding the future of Exclusive Books.

At the outset it is important to separate the decision by Times Media Group (TMG) to “offload” the Exclusive Book business and the specific challenges that may be facing the business.

“TMG has, and I believe rightly, made the decision to focus on its core media assets. It has decided that its book assets do not form part of this core. But this does not imply that these assets are inferior.”

TMG has, and I believe rightly, made the decision to focus on its core media assets. It has decided that its book assets do not form part of this core. But this does not imply that these assets are inferior.

Quite the contrary – for example, included in the TMG book businesses being sold is the academic chain Van Schaik, which has shown strong growth during the past few years and continues to grow as a result of rising student numbers and government bursary funding. Interestingly, the Van Schaik chain was bought from Naspers a few years back when they too decided to focus their business, which included exiting their physical retail businesses.

Judging by their most recent results I think one would be hard pressed to find fault with the decision to concentrate on core activities.

From an Exclusive Books perspective it is better to be sold than to have an uninterested holding company – one only has to look at CNA in the Edcon group to realise that it is not ideal for a business to remain part of a group where it is not considered core.

With regard to the specific challenges facing Exclusive Books, much has been made about the effect of e-books. It was interesting to read that, according to consulting firm PwC’s forecasts, e-books will account for 8% of the consumer market in 2017, up from 2% in 2012.

According to our research, e-books already reached the 9% mark in 2012, admittedly assisted by the Fifty Shades of Grey trilogy. Internationally, e-books at the end of 2012 accounted for 28.2% of the consumer book market in the US and 9.3% in the UK (source: Bowkers Books and Consumers).

E-books have shown dramatic growth over the past few years. However, growth is beginning to flatten and indications are that the e-books will form between 20% and 30% of the total consumer book market, depending on the territory. The growth of e-books is influenced by a number of factors, including education, technology penetration, internet adoption rates and levels of reading.

While e-books find favour with some consumers, there are a number of reasons why others prefer books in the printed format. These include:

• Fit-for-purpose – out spotting birds in the wild, the Sasol field guide to birds is better than a Kindle or a tablet;
• Giving and lending – one can’t wrap an e-book, and lending capability is limited;
• Some people like to own and display the books they have read – there are a large number of light reads where owning a reading device doesn’t make sense and;
• There are those who simply prefer the experience of reading the printed format.

A common error is to assume all books are the same, whereas in reality there is a vast difference in levels of adoption across categories. For example, fiction has seen a much higher adoption rate than illustrated and children’s books.

The common wisdom for this is that the experience of reading a fiction title in print and on a reader is very similar, whereas this is not the case when letting your child select the book they want to read at bedtime and having them turn the page as the story unfolds.

With regard to shopping for books, whether in print or digital format, online favours those who know what title they want to buy, whereas bricks-and-mortar stores are better for discovering titles and impulse-buying.

If the estimate that e-books will settle at between 20% and 30% of the consumer book market is correct, then at today’s level of 9%, we have already absorbed about 40% of the expected effect.

As e-books grow to their full potential, they will have an effect on both bricks-and-mortar stores and online retailers. If foreign experience is anything to go by, they will have a bigger effect on online retailers, who are frequented by “connected” customers, than on sales through physical retail outlets.

Without dismissing the fact that e-books will have an effect on Exclusive Books, they will not result in the death of the business as seems to be implied.

Since its most profitable year, ended March 2009, to the year ended March 2013, turnover has declined only 5.7%.

Exclusive Books outperformed through the mid 2000s assisted by good positioning and some economic tailwinds.

As with many businesses, good times resulted in some over-exuberance with regard to expansion and perhaps not enough attention paid to running costs.

When the market turned, in about 2009, the business was slow to react, specifically with regard to trimming the cost base. This had a negative effect on performance.

Management is addressing costs, and obviously this comes with its share
of negative sentiment. With regard to the stores in the portfolio, it is less about the number of stores than the quality of sites.

The business will have closed seven marginal and loss-making sites – down to 45 stores – by the end of July, and it is our view that these stores should never have been opened in the first place.

At the same time, we are investigating three new sites which we believe will fit well in our portfolio.

For competitive reasons it is not possible to provide detailed store-level information, but I can disclose that the remaining stores enjoy healthy trading densities and margins that are well ahead of comparable retailers, and strong levels of profitability. Exclusive Books is still by far the biggest channel to market for consumer books in South Africa and the sale of the business has attracted keen interest.

While we believe that there are some natural adjacencies that are aligned with our book offering, books are still by far the biggest product category, at 81% of turnover.

“We have no intention of moving away from being a deep-range bookstore employing people who understand books.”

We accept the concerns raised as an indication that our customers are very protective about the future of what has become a much-loved brand over the years, and we have no intention of moving away from being a deep-range bookstore employing people who understand books. Ultimately, the most important people to us are our customers and we will consider their needs first when deciding what products we sell.

In summary, the book industry in South Africa, as in other parts of the world, is undergoing fundamental change that will require all market participants to adapt. The growth in e-books will not only affect the local retailers but also the local representatives of international publishers. At present they are not receiving their rightful share of e-book sales in the country on titles they represent, and as these sales grow that will put increasing pressure on the sustainability of their businesses.

In addition we now compete in a global market and the days of international publishers making a margin on the selling of books into the South African market and the local representative making a further margin on the sell-through in the South African market are numbered. Change must be embraced, and at Exclusive Books we are positioning the business for the future, which we believe will include physical book stores for many years to come.

Submitted to and printed by the Business Day in reply to media speculation surrounding the sale of Exclusive Books. Printed with permission of Brain Wooten, Head, TMG Books. There is value in Exclusive Books, www.bdlive.co.za

Homegrown essentials from Penguin Books

Jacques Kallis and 12 Other Great South Africa All-rounders
97801433538325
September 2013
R 230.00

i-Tjieng
97801433538462
September 2013
R 180.00

Cook from the Heart
9780143353848
October 2013
R 240.00

Lessons
Rug Lascaris
9780143353850
November 2013
R 230.00

WE ARE WHAT YOU READ
Books Are My Bag (BAMB) celebrates books and bookshops and the simple truth that bookshops do more physically to let people enjoy their passion for books. Booksellers, publishers and authors have come together with Britain’s most iconic advertising agency, M&C Saatchi to create a simple but universal message about the joy of books and bookshops.

Bookshops are at the very core of Books Are My Bag. The PR Campaign, beginning around the trade launch on September 14th and continuing through to Christmas 2013, will focus on that celebration. The Street Campaign uses bookshop’s prize assets, their customers – as walking advertisements for the campaign.

Books Are My Bag celebrates the vital role that booksellers play in engaging readers, and is supported by the Society of Authors. The PR Campaign will focus on that celebration. This celebration of the physical book and physical bookshop will have both local and national dimensions.

“Books Are My Bag celebrates the vital role that booksellers play in engaging readers, and is supported by the Society of Authors.”

At the time of going to print, British Booksellers were being urged to join a national “Big Bookshop Party” event to help launch the Books Are My Bag consumer campaign on Saturday 14th September. The Booksellers Association called on bookshops to host parties and get festive with specially designed bunting to coincide with the launch of the BAMB campaign intended to highlight the joy of books and physical bookshops.

Bookshops were advised to invite local authors, hold food tastings with cookbooks, serve special BAMB cocktails, host bag decorating sessions for kids, organise author readings and launch competitions and petitions.

Bookshops have been given 75 bags to give to customers for free and thereafter can decide whether to sell or give away the other bags they have ordered. So far 1,805 bookshops have placed an order for 267,000 bags, with participating stores including Waterstones, W H Smith, Blackwell’s, Easons and John Smith’s, among many independent booksellers.

The Booksellers Association (BA), which launched the “Books Are My Bag” campaign at the London Book Fair in April to promote books and bookshops, is now taking a second batch of orders. Wholesaler Bertrams will deliver the bags – its group buying and marketing director Toby Bourne compared the delivery to the launch of a major novel such as Harry Potter.

Bourne said: “It presents similar challenges in terms of speed of supply and trade buzz. We want every participating bookshop to benefit from the campaign, which will help get customers into bookshops irrespective of whether or not they are an existing customer.”

The promotion will launch to consumers officially on 14th September, with a celebrity-led photo campaign. Some shops have already organised events to mark the release. A “Pimp My Bag” bag-decorating day will be held at Much Ado About Books in Alfriston, East Sussex; children’s book centre Seven Stories in Newcastle will hold Twitter competitions throughout the week of the launch.

Alan Staton, head of marketing at the BA, said: “Books Are My Bag is the biggest-ever cross-trade promotion of books and bookshops, so we urge all our members to seize the opportunity, place their orders if they haven’t done so already, and start thinking creatively about ways to distribute their bags.”

Faber launches online shop with Book People; ‘Get partying’, BA tells booksellers; Books Are My Bag orders over 260k; www.thebookseller.com
It is at this time of year, when booksellers are looking at ordering for the following year, that stock is taken of books that have perhaps not moved as one thought they would. Perhaps too many were ordered, perhaps a lecturer changed his recommended reading list, or perhaps a course was discontinued. Thanks to these and other industry idiosyncrasies, booksellers are often left with overstock of books that they have not sold. The bigger chains have the capacity to interchange these books between their shops, however, the smaller independent booksellers are not left with many options. Books that come from local publishers cannot always be returned and those that come from overseas are very expensive to send back.

This is why we developed a Book Swap Site on www.sabooksellers.com for our members.

The concept is simple
- Log onto www.sabooksellers.com using your membership log in details
- If these have been forgotten, simply reset your password using your already registered email address
- Click on the Book Swap Site button on the RHS
- Create a swap offer
- Your offer will be advertised to members for three months, after which it will fall off the listing.
- Any members interested in taking those books off your hands, or swapping them for some books they have on overstock, will contact you directly to talk business.

Some things to remember
It is up to you to set the price for the books you wish to move, keeping in mind that it would be prudent to offer a slight discount to encourage an effective marketplace.
Keep currency fluctuations in mind as books imported at the beginning of the year will now cost more thanks to the weakening of the Rand. These books could be offered at a discount to the current market price without booksellers actually losing out on any profit margins.

“Check out the Book Swap Site for books already listed and add your own to ensure a vibrant online marketplace for all.”

SA Booksellers encourages profitable bookselling at all times and we are working hard to offer our members every opportunity for success. Check out the Book Swap Site for books already listed and add your own to ensure a vibrant online marketplace for all.

Spring Has Sprung with the Best of our Books This Season!

**Vicious Circle**
by Wilbur Smith
October 2013
9781447250128
R299.00

**Back to the Bush: Another Year in the Wild**
by James Hendry
September 2013
9781770103382
R220.00

**The Pacemen: 100 Years of South African Fast Bowlers**
by Drew Forrest
October 2013
9781770103320
R220.00

**My Second Initiation: The Memoir of Vusi Pikoli**
by Vusi Pikoli and Mandy Wiener
October 2013
9781770103450
R220.00
That one book not only changed his life; it also transformed the lives of those in his community. Such stories explain why many countries are eager to ensure that libraries continue to provide access to knowledge, learning and ideas.

“IT NEEDS TO BE STRESSED THAT THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT HANDLING OF INFORMATION IS A NECESSARY SKILL THAT HAS TO BE MASTERED IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS TO SUCCEED IN IMPROVING HIS/HER QUALITY OF LIFE.”

It, therefore, needs to be stressed that, in order to succeed in improving his/her quality of life, each learner is given ample opportunity to interface as many information sources as his/her curriculum can accommodate, and this means going well beyond the pages of a textbook, and to present his/her responses in written, aural or visual forms.

Recognising the cultural importance of sharing, Mahatma Gandhi said that, “no culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive”. The stimulus to share and reuse information and knowledge comes in many guises. Perhaps the most deep-rooted of our human instincts is the desire to preserve our culture for future generations. This is one of the most important functions of libraries.

The Department of Arts & Culture and municipalities in the various provinces have expressed its commitment to the provision of effective, efficient, economical and equitable services with the best value for money principles. Although each province has its own procurement model, many have adopted a tender system. We look forward with optimism to the future and the SA Booksellers Association hope and pray that this is not the perfect storm.

The KwaZulu-Natal provincial library services department has amended the submission procedures for book exhibitions in order to ensure that books are ordered more timeously and that there is a more regular flow of new resources for the public. The acquisition section had endeavoured to arrange for six exhibitions during the course of the year. A schedule of submissions and returns was circularised to all suppliers. Each supplier is restricted to 50 books of all genres/ type of printed material. Guidelines, detailing the systems and procedures to be implemented, were made available.

The Eastern Cape provincial library will facilitate and coordinate appro’ meetings comprising of 40 adult and 40 children’s titles. However, due to internal restructuring, the process is expected to be slow. The procurement system at the Western Cape provincial library is one of the best in the country. This province, which has a much smaller budget than the other provinces, conducts book selection meetings on a fortnightly basis.

The status quo in the Free State province and Gauteng has remained the same in the past few years. In Mpumalanga, the library services division invited booksellers to tender. These are being adjudicated and five new suppliers will be added to the list of other regular suppliers. The library services in the Northern Cape work on public quotation. Preference is given to local suppliers. North West has a list of approved suppliers and a tender system is in force. The supply chain management in Limpopo is presently formulating its tender conditions.

All the metro’s in the country are engaged in tenders. The eThekwini library...
changed its procurement policy in order to accommodate a tender (Enquiry S.3800 Supply and Delivery of Library Materials) for a period of twenty four months. Presently, this library has entered into a Service Agreement with three suppliers.

The SA Booksellers Association notes its concerns regarding certain aspects of the Parliamentary Monitoring Group report on the Community Library Services Grant. This grant was established to transform urban and rural community library infrastructure, facilities and services (primarily targeting previously disadvantaged communities) through a recapitalised programme at provincial level. While some of the provinces have not utilised these funds, others are not using the grant as how the monitoring group wishes it to be used.

In respect to school libraries, KwaZulu-Natal is the only province with a formal policy on school libraries. The KZN’s Directorate of Education Library Information and Technology Services (ELITS) drew up its own school library policy in 2002. The purpose of the policy is to guide the establishment and development of school libraries in the province and also to support education and specialist library staff in the development and management of school libraries.

“We need to view reading to our children as not a privilege but a priority. We have the opportunity to supply the young minds with great thoughts, a large vocabulary, provide them with the opportunity to develop comprehension skills and spark new ideas from a young age.”

ELITS invited booksellers to submit suitable material for an exhibition where library material would be selected to provide starter collections for primary and secondary schools. This took place from 1–12 October 2012 in Pietermaritzburg. In April this year, successful suppliers were requested to produce pro forma invoices for all titles selected. However, the official orders have not been finalised, as yet.

The SA Booksellers Association wishes to remind all that we need to view reading to our children as not a privilege but a priority. We have the opportunity to supply the young minds with great thoughts, a large vocabulary, provide them with the opportunity to develop comprehension skills and spark new ideas from a young age. As parents, we want the best for our children and reading to them from a young age, and continuing for many years to come, is one of the greatest gifts one could ever give a child.
Marked across the world on 18 July each year, Mandela Day aims to inspire people to take action to change the world for the better and, in doing so, to build a global movement for good. There were a number of initiatives focussed on educating children through reading and book donations thanks to the 67 minutes of Reading to Children Campaign, which aims to raise awareness about the importance of parents reading books to their children and assisting in spreading a culture of reading in South Africa.

“Reading to Children Campaign aims to raise awareness about the importance of parents reading books to their children and assisting in spreading a culture of reading in South Africa.”

According to a survey conducted by the South African Book Development Council, 5% of parents read books to their children and this plays a major role in the low reading statistics recorded by the Council, which indicate that only 14% of South Africans are considered regular book readers.

The South African Reading Foundation (SARF) and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) donated African Literature books to 60 children at the Johannesburg Children’s Home. SARF is also currently running the Read a Book SA Campaign on Twitter with over 23 824 followers, the followers were encouraged to read books to their children or younger siblings for 67 minutes and send pictures of them participating in this activity to @ReadabookSA.

NAL’IBALI’S 67 IDEAS TO ENCOURAGE READING: A FEW OF OUR FAVOURITES

- Start your own reading club or circle. For tips on how to start a reading club, visit the Reading Club Basics section at www.nalibali.org or www.nalibali.mobi on your mobile phone.
- Visit a reading club where you can read to children, tell them stories, drop off books and stationery.
- Volunteer to read or tell stories to children at your local library.
- Take a group of children to your local library and introduce them to the joys of borrowing books.
- Build your own memory bank of children’s stories.
- Organise a book-drive among your friends to collect or buy books.
- Collect cushions, blankets and rugs or carpets and donate them to a reading club near you to create an warm, cosy environment that invites cuddling up to share a good story.
- Donate reading-related resources to a school, classroom, community centre or reading club who need them.
- Story mistakes: make deliberate and silly mistakes when you read or tell a favourite story to young children, and let them have fun correcting you. For example, read about Silverlocks and the four bears, and Little Red Riding Socks etc.
- Choose a story or rhyme with repetition or a chorus, such as “There was an old lady who swallowed a fly”, and “The three little pigs” to share with the children. Once they know it, invite them to join in. Pause and allow them to take over telling the repeated parts.
- Change a story: change the characters, title, beginning or ending of a story, to make it your own. Young children love it if you use their own names, and those of friends and family members as characters. Ask children for different ways to end a story: sad, silly, happy, unbelievable etc.
- Tell stories from the story bag: collect small items to put in a “story bag” (e.g. a ring, a doll, a puppet, a bunch of keys, a wallet, a bell, a sock, or a purse). Children can take turns pulling out items from the bag, and make up stories using these items.
A number of Springbok rugby players gave 67 minutes of their time in Langa township in Cape Town and Eldorado Park in Johannesburg as part of the recently launched Boks for Books campaign. Four Springbok stars read to learners of the school and participated in a Tag Rugby Clinic.

“The Mandela Day container library project, an innovative response to the shortage of libraries at South African schools, celebrated Nelson Mandela month with the handover of its 28th library.”

The Mandela Day container library project, an innovative response to the shortage of libraries at South African schools, celebrated Nelson Mandela month with the handover of its 28th library – a custom-adapted 12-metre shipping container to Alpine Primary School in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town.

Breadline Africa is one of a number of NGOs and corporates that have partnered with the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory to drive the container library project, with corporates providing financial support, sponsorship of books and employee volunteers, and literacy organisations, book donation agencies and publishers providing books, educational equipment and materials.

The first Mandela Day container library was opened on 18 July 2011 at Tsakane Primary School on the East Rand in Gauteng province, and since then a further 26 have opened, covering deserving underprivileged schools in urban and rural areas countrywide and collectively touching the lives of over 20 000 pupils.

Another container Library was delivered to the Blikkiesdorp community in Delft, outside Cape Town, through the collaboration of the Boundless heart Foundation, the Design Indaba, South African Breweries and AM Cargo. Y Tsai refurbished the container, Cecile & Boyd designed the interior and furniture was provided by Xanita. The library was enthusiastically received by the community, who will collectively be responsible for the library, its functioning and upkeep.

Nal’ibali, the reading for enjoyment campaign put together 67 ideas to encourage reading. The ideas are innovative and fun and can be accessed on their website.

http://www.southafrica.info/mandela/libraries-100713.html#.
UgEgvBajDx4#ixzz2bCrASfvN
www.nalibali.org
www.liasa.org.za
Overview
A PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), report on Consumer and Educational Book Publishing tells us that there are approximately 120 publishers in South Africa, of which nearly 90 are represented by educational publishers.

“This is due to the large school-going population, which requires textbooks and for which the Government is the principle provider in South Africa. Educational books consequently dominate the overall market, accounting for 61% of total spending in this sector in 2011.”

“The report views the curriculum revision as a positive factor in the educational book market, and says that the market is likely to benefit from that as well as the expanding economy as a whole.”

The report views the curriculum revision as a positive factor in the educational book market, and says that the market is likely to benefit from that as well as the expanding economy as a whole. However, in an interesting point the report says that this growth is expected to be offset by the declines in the school-age population. “This is likely to lead to a reduction in the number of textbooks that will need to be purchased and will ultimately limit the growth of the educational book market. We expect that the overall educational market will total R2.4 billion in 2016, a 0.5% compound annual increase from 2011. Of this, print educational books are expected to increase at a 0.2% compound annual rate, to reach R2.3 billion, while electronic educational books will rise to an estimated R40 million in 2016 from R7 million in 2011, a 41.7% compound annual increase.”

Central region
Members were gravely concerned about the recent media report that the MEC for KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Education, Mr Senzo Mchunu would unlock savings of about R200 million a year by procuring all textbooks through the Department. Since 1997, the legislation has made provision for Section 21 schools to procure their own textbooks and for the government to make purchases on behalf of Section 20 schools – those unable to run their own finances. The SA Booksellers Association has corresponded with the Education Department and they have confirmed that they will do everything in their power to procure centrally. This is a serious concern for booksellers as we now only do business with Section 21 Schools and if that disappears, there will not be many other book sales to keep us busy. It was agreed we should try to ascertain the views of the Organisation of Governing Bodies as teachers might not want to lose their ability to choose books of their choice.

It is strongly rumoured that Edu-solutions have had their Kwazulu-Natal textbook contract extended for another year. Members believe that we are at a huge disadvantage with the nett pricing of some publishers in the Department of Education catalogue. At the Executive meeting, there was a lot of discussion around how negatively the school book pricing in the departmental catalogue impacted on us. Some schools really believed that we were short changing them.

The tender for charts and dictionaries that was put out last year has not been fulfilled and was re-advertised. That tender was advertised again in July 2013 and cancelled.

The total Learner Teacher Support materials (LTSM) budget for KZN this financial year is approximately R800 million. Since the last year, 437 more schools have opted to change from section 20 to section 21 status.

Recent media reports and confirmation of workbooks being dumped in a Tongaat warehouse and of new books being shredded in a courier company premises is not good for our industry. The workbooks were a National Education Department tender for supply to schools throughout the country. It should be known that this would not have happened if booksellers were given the exercise.

Eastern Region
Meetings were held with the Superintendent General this year, but even at that time the decision to procure centrally had already been made. The good news for booksellers was that the top-ups and stationery will be procured by schools from their local bookshops.

The non-payment of school debt has led to an anxious time for most booksellers with big amounts still unpaid. The schools had received their first tranche in April/ May and we all tried our utmost to secure payment. The fact that the schools have not paid the accounts is a huge challenge. The fact that the Department of Education has given the schools paper budgets is further hampering debt collection. Many booksellers have resorted to legal action against the schools.

Northern Region
The letter from Gauteng Education Department (GED) to publishers who
will not be allowed to promote their books at schools does give booksellers an opportunity if they manage their relationships correctly as it will be practically impossible for principals and teachers to get to view all the books at the proposed promotions and gain a comprehensive understanding of what is on offer. It is very likely that schools will invite booksellers with whom they have good relationships in later to gain a better understanding.

Electronic books will have a much bigger influence in future and booksellers need to make sure they are not excluded in this case as publishers will market their e-books directly to schools. Booksellers need to be the middle man between the school and the publisher and will be able to do that if they maintain relationships with schools. Most of the private schools are looking into e-books. Government schools might follow later.

In Witbank booksellers are experiencing huge volumes of technical college books being copied. This was reported to publishers more than a year ago. On Friday 24 May the South African Federation against Copyright Theft (SAFACT) and the local police raided the responsible shop and confiscated all their computers, along with numerous copied books. The case will now go to court.

The late approval of Natural Science and Technology books for the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) syllabus creates some problems for schools. Books are now approved and publishers have started the printing process, but books will only be available mid-July at the earliest.

The region is finding that section 21 schools are also now not buying from booksellers but instead are getting their books from Edusolutions.

**Southern Region**
The Southern Region held its AGM on 6th August and Mr. Paul Swart, Director of Institutional Resource Support of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) was the guest speaker at the breakfast function. Mr. Swart provided some insight into the Changing Realm of LTSM and the WCED’s e-Vision.

The MEC for Education has on a number of occasions publicly stated that all schools in the Western Cape have received all their textbooks on time. That may be true as far as CAPS textbooks are concerned, but it is totally untrue when it comes to the delivery of Norms & Standards orders placed via the Source Link tender system. We know of many schools where orders have not been supplied in full. The MEC obviously based his facts on information given to him by officials of the department who do not have the capacity and/or systems to check all deliveries.

For the first time Western Cape Schools will be ordering and purchasing their textbooks on-line. Orders have since been placed online via the WCED ordering system. Publishers had to submit tenders for their individual titles. The closing date was 22 July.

Schools have to purchase Readers, Teacher Guides and Life Orientation from their Norms and Standards. They can either purchase through the Booksellers or alternatively place their orders online via the Department and the Department will deduct the costs from the relevant schools Norms and Standards.

The WCED is very pro going the e-learning route and are currently investigating all avenues in this regard. A meeting was held with the Department and all interested parties on 11 July. They are looking at wireless networks for every school, tablets for students – which obviously will contain textbooks in e-book or PDF format.

**National**

Since the meeting held with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) dated 5th December 2012, SA Booksellers has been acknowledged by the DBE and Provincial Education Departments as the official representative of booksellers in SA.

Three representatives of SA Booksellers are invited to attend the quarterly DBE LTSM Stakeholders meeting of which the first one was held on 27th June and SA Booksellers was represented by the president, Sydwell Molosi.

“South African entertainment and media outlook: 2012-2016”, PwC
The Sport of Reading
South Africa are World Champs

By MARJ BROWN, National Coordinator, Kids Lit Quiz SA

The Kids Lit Quiz has been called the Olympic games of reading, the pub quiz without the beer and the sport of reading. What the authors, headmasters and headmistresses and general audience who came to witness the event were not prepared for, was the incredible buzz – an atmosphere that no one would have ordinarily linked to the usually solitary pursuit of reading.

Here were children: currently the best readers in the world out of thousands of children who had taken part in regional and national heats in six parts of our globe: the best teams from SA, the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This was an opportunity for the national teams to travel to SA and take part in a grueling quiz based on the last 2000 years of literature. The contestants would face 10 themes with 7 questions per theme, on topics they would only know as the quiz began. On top of this was the pressure of hitting the buzzer first – if they gave the correct answer they receive 2 points and if it was incorrect they would lose 1 point.

“Wayne Mills, the international quizmaster, and winner of the Order of Merit in New Zealand for his services to children’s literature, had spent a year carefully crafting questions that were interpretive and required higher order thinking.”

Wayne Mills, the international quizmaster, and winner of the Order of Merit in New Zealand for his services to children’s literature, had spent a year carefully crafting questions that were interpretive and required higher order thinking. He predicted that out of the 22 years of running the quiz, this would be the most difficult, as the teams were so strong: 4 out of 6 schools had been in the 2012 world finals and 1 school in the 2011 finals. He thus felt the outcome would be close. He could not have been more accurate: the results were three teams with one point between them – SA first, NZ second and Canada third.

Different teams had strengths and shone in different themes. It was impossible to predict who would win this final. SA answered the very last question correctly and leapt to victory! The winners were treated to trophies made by SA artists Robin Opperman, R6000 in cash to share amongst the 4 team members, books, the world trophy and certificates.

The teams were received by Counselor Logie Naidoo at the Durban City Hall and the quiz was followed by a gala dinner amongst the tanks at the Ushaka Marine World. Fourteen SA authors attended the dinner and kids could buy their books and get them signed. Authors and audience alike were treated to one child from each team talking about their favourite book. All teams were treated to a week in Durban. The teams saw a range of sights – from Moses Mabidha Stadium, to game viewing in Tala, to a shark dissection at the Sharks Board!

Well done to all the teams on their performance. A special congratulations to the SA team on their victory – to Shreeya Khoosal, Katherine Duvenage, Julia Kinghorn, Jessica Wise and their coach Gill Murdoch.

Huge thanks should go to the sponsors of this event – The Times Media Group – for supporting literacy and promoting literary excellence. To end with a few quotes from the authors present:

“What a balm for a writer’s soul to see such smart and committed young readers – wow!” Joanne Macgregor

“I enjoyed myself hugely and was deeply impressed by those wonderful children.” Lesley Beake

“I had one of the best times of my life last night. And the quiz was a heart stopper.” Edyth Bulbring

“It was a great honour and a huge delight to be invited to the Lit Quiz event... had the most stimulating and happy evening at UShaka. I met wonderful people and was astounded by the stature of the contestants – such great minds in such very small people!” Marguerite Poland
Oxford English Grammar: the essential guide is a brand-new grammar reference, self-study and practice guide developed specifically for Grade 8–12 South African learners and teachers.

- A wealth of teaching boxes, annotated examples and exercises guides learners through each step of the learning process and helps them to master the essential elements of grammar.
- A separate answer booklet is provided to help teachers assess learners' work.
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“Oxford English Grammar will afford learners an opportunity to learn how language is used and to build meaning from word and sentence level to complete texts. I will most definitely recommend this book for learners and teachers.”

- GET English Coordinator
On the 8th of May of this year the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, made the following comments while presenting his department’s annual Budget Vote Speech for the 2013/14 financial year in Parliament.

The problem
- Approximately a million young people leave school every year, and should be absorbed into Post-School Education or directly into the workforce if they are not to be unemployed.
- In the first quarter of 2013, 3.5 million of these young people were not absorbed into employment, education or training, and many adults also find themselves in a similar predicament.

How will Government tackle this?
- Provide/allocate money from the budget and from Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) funds.
- Fund more Further Education and Training (FET) students – target 4 million students by 2030.
- Fund more University students – target 1.62 million students by 2030.
- Build Colleges and Universities and improve current infrastructure at institutions.
- Enhance Adult Education and training.
- Use NSFAS (National Student Financial Aid Scheme) as primary tool to ensure access for poor students to post-school education.
- Linking the education and training institutions and the labour market. This is because workplace training is generally more effective if on-the-job training is combined with theoretical study and also because practical experience during training (or in immediately afterwards) increases a student’s chances of finding employment.

All of these statements are positive news for our country as well as for anyone providing a service to educational institutions and their students.

Dear Bookseller, you have a very important role to play in a crucial industry. If all parties work together, get our youth educated and succeed in employing them, I believe our country and children’s future will greatly benefit.”

During the past semester academic booksellers had varied success. Overall it must be stated the market conditions are tough. Price competition is experienced from low cost operators who focus on large volume titles. These booksellers do not have a presence on campus for the full year (operate from a temporary location), focus on high volume titles (adopted titles for popular courses), do not offer a comprehensive service (accounts, bursary administration) and disrupt the market for full time booksellers that stock full range and volume of titles and offer a proper service to customers all year round.

Sales performance
Sales in academic bookselling were regarded as fair. Basket sizes have improved marginally due to a weaker Rand resulting in increased book prices. For the first semester of 2013 the Rand weakened by 7.1% to the US Dollar and 9.5% to the British Pound from the previous buying period. Ring fencing of bursary money has meant that less bursary funds are paid to students in the form of cash. More of these funds are reaching bookshops.

In spite of the above, academic book sales have not increased by the required percentages to maintain profit levels. Academic booksellers have to look at other products and book sectors to maintain turnover levels. Cost inflation (e.g. rent, salaries, transport, electricity, etc) regularly outgrow sales increases. Academic booksellers are therefore caught in a narrowing band between rising costs and stagnant or low increasing sales.
Bursary administrators and debtors
Less bursary administrator terminal connectivity problems were experienced during the first semester on this academic year. Eduloan did provide an online solution that was adopted by some booksellers.

“More sales are done on debtor accounts every year due to the increased amount of students funded by bursaries.... The effect of this change in market behaviour is that more capital is required by booksellers to fund these debtors.”

More sales are done on debtor accounts every year. This is due to the increased amount of students funded by bursaries. Most of these accounts are payable from 60 to 90 days from invoice. The effect of this change in market behaviour is that more capital is required by booksellers to fund these debtors.

Representatives from SA Booksellers attended the Financial Aid Providers of SA (FAPSA) conference held during June in Durban. Representatives from the following bodies normally attend: National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Auditor General and bursary administrators of Universities and FET Colleges.

SA Booksellers has engaged with NSFAS to discuss the implication of the new NSFAS strategies including:

- The workings of the Central Application Clearing House (CACH) mechanism as a first phase towards the establishment of the Central Application System (CAS).
- The workings of the cellphone payment mechanism.
- The vetting of proper academic booksellers as service providers that will be allowed transacting against the book pocket of a bursary.
- The timing of bursary allocation influences the outcome of students’ results. Funding allocated to students in May/June results in those students not having access to books for half the academic year. Funding must preferably be allocated in February.
- Books are important and need to be properly funded. A mere R1 000 per student for books is not sufficient for amount required varies per subject area studied.
- Payments of book bursaries in the form of cash directly to students are seldom used for books.
- NSFAS must provide additional funds for computers. Books (in electronic format) require separate funding than the hardware on which it is consumed.

Market interest in e-books
Interest in e-books was expressed by various institutions, libraries and a few individuals. In general the interest is there, but the market demand does not yet exist in South Africa. Issues preventing the availability of e-books include: publisher concerns with Digital Rights Management (DRM), territorial pricing, payment methods, online connectivity, download speeds, various operating systems software (Windows, IOS (Apple), Android, Blackberry), availability of devices, etc.

Although these factors currently prevent a rapid swing towards e-book adoption, technologies will at some point become available at a cost that is affordable to students. Booksellers must be ready to adapt when this occurs.

Direct supply by publishers
This issue is constantly experienced and even though booksellers understand that it does make financial sense to publishers in some instances, it must be understood that:

1. Booksellers are still the largest route to market for academic books.
2. Booksellers are under enormous financial strain due to various factors out of their control e.g. Cost inflation (rent, salaries) higher than book price inflation (book price increases), negative effect of exchange rates, etc.
3. Booksellers do require the bulk supply deals to maintain profitability and service levels.
4. It is in the interest of publishers that a financially sound Bookselling industry is maintained. Direct supply hurts bookelling and could ultimately lead to the bookseller’s demise, which would have a very negative impact on publishers.

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In yet another interesting development regarding ownership, Juta and Company Limited and Times Media Proprietary Limited have reached an agreement whereby Van Schaik Bookstore will acquire the assets in Juta’s retail operation as a going concern. The transaction, which is subject to Competitions Commission approval, anticipates the rebranding and integration of the existing Juta Bookshops into the operations of Van Schaik, a division of Times Media.

The transaction, if approved, supports Juta’s intent to exit from the business of retailing books to build on their position as the leading South African provider of legal and regulatory information and student textbooks, and focus on technology-enabled learning and information solutions. For Van Schaik, the transaction enhances their position as the leading Academic and Professional retailer in South Africa.

“While this is an historic departure for the 160-year-old company, Juta remains a strong and financially stable enterprise with an excellent track record of performance.”

Lynne Du Toit, CEO of Juta and Company comments, “While book retailing remains an important distribution channel for Juta publications, it is no longer a strategic imperative for Juta to continue to own this part of the value chain. In pursuing this exit strategy, our priority has always been our people, and our key objective was to secure the ongoing operation of the stores and thereby preserve as many jobs as possible while ensuring the longevity of the retailing channel. We are delighted to have reached an agreement which does just that. While this is an historic departure for the 160-year-old company, Juta remains a strong and financially stable enterprise with an excellent track record of performance. This transaction will allow us to focus more keenly on our strategy to deliver technology-enabled content and solutions in the interest of our customers’ emerging needs.”

Managing Director of Van Schaik, Stephan Erasmus says, “Van Schaik is a profitable 99-year-old company that specialises in retailing to academic students. Given that we are in a growth phase, the acquisition of Juta Bookshops makes sense as we have the infrastructure, expertise and systems in place to allow for speedy and seamless integration and an improved overall offering that will benefit our customers should the transaction be approved.”

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If you would like to find out more about becoming a member of the South African Booksellers’ Association, contact: Samantha Faure, Tel: 021 945 1572, Email: saba@sabookbooks.org, PO Box 870, Bellville, 7535
You can shed tears that he is gone
Or you can smile because he has lived.
You can close your eyes and pray that
he’ll come back
Or you can open your eyes and see all
he’s left.
Your heart can be empty because you
can’t see him
Or you can be full of the love you shared.
You can turn your back on tomorrow and
live yesterday
Or you can be happy for tomorrow
because of yesterday.
You can remember him and only that
he’s gone
Or you can cherish his memory and let it
live on.
You can cry and close your mind, be empty
and turn your back
Or you can do what he would want; smile,
open your eyes, love and go on.
– David Harkins

The act of being born and that of dying
is the universal law. It is a process which
applies to everything. Nothing is static
or remains constant. We are all part of a
process of coming into being and passing
away. We call this the process of life. There
are people dying every day and that death
is dealt with according to the religious and
cultural practice of the deceased and his/
her family. We learn of its occurrence; we
pay due respect if we know that person
and we get on with our lives.

Yet every now and then a death
occurs which strikes a huge blow, which
affects the whole country. We sit up and
take serious note of it and assess the loss
suffered. The death of SA Booksellers
Association National Manager Frikkie
Nel is one such occasion. The book
industry has sustained a grievous loss
with the passing of our beloved friend
Frederick Nel (affectionately known
as Frikkie) on 20 June 2013 of a heart
attack. It is difficult to assess our loss. The
world we live in seems poorer and less
hopeful without him.

Frikkie left a proud legacy of Ubuntu, empathy, selflessness,
humility and industry. Many of
us will remember him for his
love of people and his deep
sense of empathy. He lived his
life to the full and touched so
many during his time here with
us. We all have a whole lot of
memories that we will always carry
with us – memories that defined Frikkie;
memories that we will always hold dear.

“Frikkie left a proud legacy of Ubuntu, empathy, selflessness, humility and industry. Many of us will remember him for his love of people and his deep sense of empathy. He lived his life to the full and touched so many during his time here with us. We all have a whole lot of memories that we will always carry with us – memories that defined Frikkie; memories that we will always hold dear.”

Frikkie was born on 20 November
1946 in Kirkwood in the Eastern Cape to
a family that comprised of three brothers
and a sister. Shortly thereafter, the
family moved to the town of Ladysmith
in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Frikkie’s
leadership qualities were identified at a
very early age at Ladysmith High School.
He was the Head Boy of that school.

Perhaps, the finest moment of his life
was in 1971 when he married Annette
in Port Elizabeth. He loved her, their son
Frikkie Jnr, daughter-in-law Lysel and
granddaughter Emily unequivocally and
selflessly. He was a devoted husband,
father, father-in-law and grandfather.
He took all of these roles to heart and
he strove to honour, support, guide and
most importantly, love his family – even
during those inevitable tough times that
life throws at you. His devotion to his
family was the foundation of his actions –
the anchor that defined and shaped his
life. He meant something to each and
everyone in his family.

Little Emily was the centre of his
universe. He adored her and loved her
with the same passion he served the
book industry. He shared this love for his
three-year-old grandchild with everyone.
in the industry. Emily, in turn, loved him dearly and still asks "if Oupa gets food in heaven".

Frikkie dedicated his life to the book industry for 39 years as a full time employee. He started his career in Port Elizabeth as a junior clerk under Barend Bouwer at Nasionale Boekhandel. He then worked for Via Afrika in Umtata. In 1973, Annette and Frikkie relocated to Durban where he was appointed manager of Nasionale Boekhandel. A year later, with great joy to both, Frikkie Jnr was born.

In 1982, Frikkie moved to Johannesburg to work at the Braamfontein branch of Nasionale Boekhandel and he was thereafter appointed manager of Groothandel Dienste (now On the Dot) in Randburg. His profound knowledge and experience won for him widespread recognition in the book trade. His untiring industry, sound sense and unwavering fidelity soon attracted attention and his services were rapidly sought after.

In 1987 Frikkie was appointed as National Marketing Manager of Van Schaik Boekhandel, which was based in Pretoria. By then the industry demonstrated by Frikkie in doing his work became legendary. The many who worked with him appreciated his vast knowledge, his wisdom and his efficiency. He distinguished himself with his efficiency and his quest for zero defect. When he relocated to Cape Town in 1991, Frikkie was appointed Manager of On the Dot, in Bellville South. He worked there until his retirement in 2005.

“The many who worked with him appreciated his vast knowledge, his wisdom and his efficiency. He distinguished himself with his efficiency and his quest for zero defect.”

Over the years, Frikkie had demonstrated in many ways his sincere interest in the welfare of the book industry. The industry, in turn recognised his administrative abilities and the high quality of his leadership. His zeal and devotion to the trade neither failed nor faltered. As a consequence, Frikkie was appointed National Manager of the SA Booksellers Association, upon his retirement from On the Dot. He was responsible for the opening of the SABA offices in Cape Town.

Frikkie distinguished himself by his dedication and contribution to the welfare of the Association. He assisted greatly in making SA Booksellers the organisation it has now become—well organised and highly professional. He was passionate in his role as manager. For all the things he did in his active and very often hectic life, he did it for the benefit of the bookselling fraternity. His needs and requirements were always considered last.

Gardening was his hobby. Frikkie believed that gardening provides the gardener with an opportunity for self-expression. In these tense and busy days some such hobby becomes a necessity. He was passionate about his orchids and roses. After his retirement from On the Dot, Frikkie spent two years in planning and building a greenhouse for his orchids where he housed various varieties. He enjoyed spending time early in the morning in his greenhouse caring for his plants and also having personal time to himself.

Over the ages, the great teachers of humanity have taught and urged people to live simply. Without studying the writings and teachings of these great men, Frikkie by nature was simplicity in the truest sense of the word. The twin sister of simplicity are humility and modesty. All three had great virtues. Frikkie had plenty of these.

Frikkie's life stands in sharp contrast to those who crave for publicity, honour and public acclaim. He assisted many people without revealing that he was the source of that assistance. He asked for no praise. He sought no glory for himself. In this regard, he followed the great teachers referred to earlier.

Frikkie was the champion of others. He lived a principled life underpinned by a strong sense of right and wrong. He was never a man to step back from a challenge; to let something wrong stand unchallenged. He cared enough to act in order to take a stand. When a person of Frikkie's character and personality dies, many will grieve his death. While he was alive, he touched many of us in a large variety of ways. There can only be memories of goodness and decency.

“Frikkie was the champion of others. He lived a principled life underpinned by a strong sense of right and wrong. He was never a man to step back from a challenge; to let something wrong stand unchallenged. He cared enough to act in order to take a stand.”

William Shakespeare in Hamlet uses the affable Polonius to advise his son Laertes in the way in which he should live. “Those friends thou hast, … Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.” The image of the hoops of steel brings to us the closeness of the friendship Polonius wishes for his son. Frikkie was many things to many people but to us he was a true friend. If Shakespeare put such great emphasis on friendship, what must we aspire for among friends? For us, Frikkie's love for his friends was the lesson he would want us to keep.

Reassuringly, Frikkie is at peace now. He lived a life of service to his profession, his family and friends. He was, in the true sense of the term, a people's person. As friends, we will miss him, but are grateful that we were lucky enough to know him, and are better for having done so.

We wish to end by quoting Shakespeare in Julius Caesar:

> His life was gentle and the elements
> So mixed in him that Nature
> might stand up
> And say to all the world:
> THIS WAS A MAN.

Your endless journey has begun, your soul is free. Rest in peace, Frikkie.
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