



Business & Trend

Chinese Publication Market

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The Integration of Digital Publishing (1)

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Several years ago, I proposed the phrase (Digital Publishing) in one article when the network was being hot at that time, and there would be another market if the publication was published and surfed the Net at the same time. However, the bubble of the network evaporated soon, and the upsurge failed. Before one year, "Digital Publishing" was proposed once again, and became hot for the moment, but just several years later, the meaning is changed widely. For being prudent, I have especially asked the domestic and international experts "what is Digital Publishing?" The interesting is that the understanding for each person is quite different.

What is "Digital Publishing"? There are the answers from the simplest to the most complicated. The simplest understanding of Digital Publishing is "e-book", which puts the book content of printed on the paper on various kinds of electronic readers. The most complicated understanding is the digitization totally. The Publication, since composition, production, consumption, classical-collection, commercial affair, and copyright, is digitized totally. Publication perhaps will also print on paper, but it is just a part of several links only. In view of this, Digital Publishing is still in developing. It is not the time giving a definition of it. From the operation instance of the publishing business instead, we can experience the closely connection between digit and publishing even more.

Cherish the memory of printing

There are two advantages in traditional printing publishing: the use of the paper and the aesthetic feeling of the layout over several hundred years, which wouldn't disappear easily in the era of network and digit. Several executives retiring from New York Times found this situation and established NewsStand (www.newsstand.com) on the net several years ago, which done is to transmit the beauty of traditional printing with the network. The method is very simple: printing house and publishing house complete the printed matter, such as newspaper and magazine. Besides printing, they can make an outlet separately when the edition is finished, change the manuscript into PDF form, and then pass it with the network to NewsStand to be sold.

The selling and issuing can be done in NewsStand, and readers can download from the network and print out the whole newspaper or magazine. Because the data loading is big that make print out slowly, readers also can read it on the screen of the computer. There are more than 150 kinds of global newspaper and magazine selling in NewsStand. The selling price is slightly cheaper than the printing edition, and the prescription is faster than printing edition, which is certainly the focal point of promotion too.

More than one doing similar way as NewsStand, another software company Olive in U.S.A. (www.olivesoftware.com) does the same too, but adopts different technology. Although PDF format is good, the material amount is too big, and just can be read or print out after finishing download the whole newspaper or magazine. Olive adopts XML technology, and regards 'page' of the newspaper or the magazine as the unit, so that readers can read the content while downloading one page. Operation way is to download and print out one page of newspapers with the same editorial format first, and the whole page will be narrow shown on screen, not full screen as PDF, but readers just only click and select an icon of news or the picture that news or picture will show alone and clearly to be read in the same format. Washington Post adopts this technology to sell its electronic edition of the newspaper at present. This way is similar to webpage that readers can download one page alone, and read in moving.

Except for transmitting the printing publication with the network, the e-book developing for many years still does not break away from the lay out of printing edition of books. Magazine reader Zinio (www.zinio.com) is the most vivid software reader, or we can say it is comparatively successful one of electronic reader. The characteristic of the screen of the computer is in beautiful movements, suitable for 'watch ', but not suitable for 'read' of long characters, especially the recorded narration that need thinking carefully. Unless the display is designed well, in the way of effective thinking, the materials are not so valid as reading and printing on the paper.

It seems that the magazine is comparatively suitable for watching and reading in the screen of the computer with the beautiful picture and recording narration. Zinio adopts PDF as the main software, which can enlarge and reduce the picture and text, and imitate the movement of the roll paper when looking through the page with hand, have increased reader's interest. Zinio has more than one hundred kinds of international magazines that are sold by its platform at present. Taiwan Acer Group gets the authority of the agent and uses the platform to sell the foreign magazines and Taiwan magazine at the same time including more than ten Taiwan magazines, such as CW magazine and Business Weekly.

Besides taking the visible computer as the reader, an exclusive e-book reader is in development by the displayed technique of shine electronic paper (ePaper) and electronic ink (eInk). The new e-book reader Librie of 170 dpi (<http://www.eink.com/news/releases/pr70.html>), commonly developed by Japan Sony, Dutch Philip, Japan letterpress, and American eInk (www.eink.com) company in the first of the month, provides the same brightness of background, the same contrast of the background and script as newspaper, and better quality than previous products (such as "the Imperial Academy e-book " from Tianjin Jinke Electronics Co., Ltd. and "Cang Jie's electric book" from Taiwan Shinbon Electronics Co., Ltd.). But it still needs to improve to the standard of a comfortable and long-time reading, and break through the technique of the visible picture in grey and color.

Books Print on Demand: digital printing is beginning to start

(7) Digital printing is a trend. For various and a small amount of printing on demand, digital printing is the only choice, which printing industry is trying to find out and test over the past ten years, have already grasped the direction gradually. The most successful example of Books Print on Demand is Lightning Source (www.lightningsource.com) of U.S.A., which worked hard in ten years to publish 10 million books and began to make a profit at last. About 3 million of different thickness of books printing every year at present, there are only two books equally in each order. After receiving the order from every publishing house and bookstore, the printing house usually finishes it in two weeks. This market is developed well day by day with the progress of technology, and move towards the mainstream of book publishing gradually. In the DRUAP show last year, we can find digital printer of Delphax (www.delphax.com), with bookbinding machine of Muller Martini (www.mullermartini.com), the additional control of the size and cutting of each book, and the front cover adding finally, which makes the procedure of printing on demand totally automatically. The market goal of digital printer with 600 dpi and 450 meters each minute is to print 20-2500 volumes.

Print on demand is not limited to the large-scale factory. The small-scale equipment deals with a small amount of demand of the bookstore, publishing house, and school immediately, which should separate for another district on the market. Bookends (www.book-ends.com) bookstore of New Jersey of U.S.A. adopts the simple system of InstaBook(www.instabook.net) and finish the manufacture of a book in ten minutes. InstaBook including laser printer and glue installation, has a fast printing. After printing, it takes ten minutes of whole course to glue with a firm grip, and stick the colorful front cover printing in advance. The printing fee is 150 dollars for ten books. For classical titles without copyright, the price of each one is from 10 dollars to 99 dollars.

Besides printing, this bookstore also provides the service of publishing advisor, composing, design of front cover. This kind equipment of small scale book printing, will be popular because of the improvement of binding automation, and will become the book vending machine that is seen everywhere.

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