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NEWSLETTER

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PERSPECTIVES



High time for change in the textbook industry

By *George Alexander*

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger wants California's schools to switch from textbooks to on-line materials. What he is calling for is impractical in many respects. And yet, it contains elements of the inevitable future facing textbook publishers and printers. And if it fixes the ludicrous process by which textbooks are adopted, it will be good for education.

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Google Books settlement: a losing proposition for non-US publishers and their readers

By *George Alexander*

While much has been written about the pros and cons of the Google Book settlement for US publishers, authors, and readers, little attention has been paid to the impact on books from publishers in other countries. Those publishers lose control of their copyrighted work, and they (and their readers) also lose most of the presumed benefits of the deal.

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Vendors: what happened to your faith in the value of advertising?

By *Hans-Georg Wenke*

"Counter-cyclical." That's the advice that was always given – make your advertising counter-cyclical. In good times you can get away with a bit less. But when things start to go downhill: advertise, advertise, advertise. Because advertising works. At least that's what marketers say. Those who live from advertising, because they print it, say it too. But above all, it is vendors of

What's the ideal size for a printing company?

A new study from Germany says it is between 100 and 400 employees.

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(June 5, 2009 – G. Alexander) A Hamburg-based consulting organization called Pier 18 has analyzed data from the German printing market between 2004 and 2008, a period when the number of printing companies decreased by 10%. Most of the troubled companies were very large or very small.

The number of large companies (over 500 employees) collapsed, the largest decline for any group. Companies with less than 100 employees declined by 11%, and those with 20-99 employees declined by 4%.

The only group that actually increased in size during the period was the group with 100-499 employees, which the report's author, Christian Pier, identifies as the optimal size range for a printing company.

The report contains information about trends in sales, production, employment, investment, and bankruptcies in the German printing industry. It projects a 3-5% drop in sales for the industry in both 2009 and 2010, as overall business conditions worsen significantly, in which case the decline could be more severe.

The report (in German) is available for free on request from info@pier18.de.

Weblink: [Summary of the Pier 18 report \(German\)](#)

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printing equipment and machinery who say it the most. And, in the past, they have done plenty of advertising to convince us that we should install more such machines (theirs, of course).

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Amazon acquires Lexcycle. Too bad.

By George Alexander

On April 27, Amazon announced the acquisition of Lexcycle, creator of Stanza, the leading ebook software package for the Apple iPhone. (In fact, Stanza is one of the most popular iPhone applications of any kind.) We're happy for Lexcycle's founders, who are reaping the financial rewards of a job well done, but sad for the ebook industry.

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Audio interview: Web-to-print is mainstream

Interview with Todd Bernhard (RSA, english)

Todd Bernhard from Rochester Software Associates (RSA) talked to Beyond-Print editor Daniel Schuermann at OnDemand about the new features in it's Web-to-print software WebCRD as well as the future of Web-to-print and the OnDemand show.

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Audio interview: The latest from Quark

Daniel Schürmann interviews Joshua Duhl (Quark, Inc.)

At the On Demand Business and Technology Expo in Philadelphia, Beyond-Print.de editor Daniel Schürmann spoke with Quark's Joshua Duhl about the latest developments and new products that Quark showed at On Demand, including a web-to-print-like product that is currently still in beta testing.

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