

A book is an e-book is a computer game is a film is a website
It's all about the content! With digitisation on the rise, the diversity and complexity of publishing products is increasing. As a result, book people and their professions are also transforming. The professional programme at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2008 provides insights and perspectives.

Question: "What is a book?" Answer: "One of many possibilities to process and circulate content, and to put it up for discussion." Other alternatives to achieve the same, for example, are websites, databases, films, computer games or audio files. Considering all this, it is not surprising that for several years now, more than 30 per cent of the products exhibited at the Frankfurt Book Fair have been digital. "The publishing industry is still one of the strongest sectors in the business of culture and creative expression", says Juergen Boos, Director of the Frankfurt Book Fair, and also provides a reason: "Because it knows how to use the increasing digitisation to its advantage."

As the internationalisation of the industry advances, the global licence business is booming, as well. A trend which is clearly reflected at the Book Fair - with a one per cent increase in rented space, things will be a bit tighter in the exhibition halls than in past years, especially in the academic area (Hall 4.2), the English-language area (Hall 8) and the area for Central and Eastern Europe (Hall 5.0). 7,373 exhibitors from 100 countries have been registered. The Literary Agents & Scouts Centre (LitAg), which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, has five per cent more registrations than last year - a sign that things are looking good in the international licence trade, including digital exploitation rights.

E-books on the rise

One thing is certain - the selection of digital products presented by the publishing industry is on the rise. At the Frankfurt Book Fair 2008, 361 exhibitors will include e-books in their assortment. E-books made up approximately two per cent of exhibited products in 2007 and this is bound to increase. With the hype around the new generation of reading devices such as Kindle, iLiad and the Sony Reader, a lot of market growth is expected, especially in the education and fiction genres.

Besides product presentations, all sorts of events at the Fair are devoted to digitisation and its consequences. The **International Publishers Association** will focus on book piracy at its annual convention on Fair Friday. Forum Innovation will house exhibitors such as **Libreka!**, **Google**, **Amazon** and other full text search machine specialists. But popular publishers like **S. Fischer** and **Hoffmann & Campe**

will also be participating at the forefront, when it comes to presenting new models of business. The new collective stand **Books & Bytes** in (Hall 3.0 B 100) will show how novels can flourish online. As a part of the podium discussion, such questions will be raised as to whether e-books might be a solution to insufficient distribution infrastructure for print media, for example, in the Arab World (Thursday, 10.00 a.m., International Centre, Hall 5.0 D 901) or whether Internet literature will soon make the printed word obsolete, which is currently hinted at in China (Wednesday, 10.15 a.m., Forum Dialogue, 6.1 E 913).

Careers in transformation

When packaging options and the distribution of contents are subject to such upheaval, it follows that the individual industry professions will also be subject to change. A large portion of the trade programme of the Frankfurt Book Fair, from 14 to 19 October 2008, will be devoted to questions about new professions, transformed self-concepts and strategies in the digitisation process. The entire production, distribution and commercialisation chain from author to reader, from production to Web 2.0 will be highlighted. Particularly fascinating discussions will be hosted in the Foyer of Hall 4.2, on the new **B.I.T. Sofa**, which will address the provocative topic: "Are traditional libraries a thing of the past?"

The **STM publishers** (Science, Technology, Medicine) are also concerned with the future of the trade, at their international congress entitled "Forward from Forty: STM in its Fifth Decade". At Forum Future in Hall 4.0, the **German Publishers and Booksellers Association - Börsenverein** is devoting a whole event platform to digital prospects. Also, the **30th International Supply Chain Specialists Meeting** will illuminate the core questions and problems that arise within the digital production and distribution chain.

The whole world in Frankfurt, a focus on children's books

What makes these numerous events and thus, the Book Fair as a whole, such a unique exchange of ideas is the international approach. Out-of-the-box thinking is a guarantee at the annual German and English-language trade programme of the International Booksellers & Trade Visitors Centre in Hall 4.0. This is co-organised in part by the **European Booksellers Federation EBF/IBF**. Children's and youth books are especially important here. For decades, they have been a reliable segment within the book trade, yet still offer new surprises with unexpected trends and topics. There is also an international flair, when the **Abu Dhabi International Book Fair** or the new

German Book Office New Delhi send out "Teatime" invitations. The book markets of Northern Africa, Croatia and China will also be introduced as a part of the traditional "Business Breakfasts". In the Translators Centre and the International Centre, new markets and different cultural areas take centre stage, whereby a special focus will be placed on this year's Guest of Honour Turkey and China (Guest of Honour 2009).

Multinational concerns and small publishers, the global and the local, books and bytes, old-timers and newcomers, booksellers and online marketers, producers and antiquarians, authors and readers, education workers and learners, academic & scientific books and novels and a professional programme that caters to everyone's needs - the Frankfurt Book Fair embodies all this and more. You can find the complete programme of the Frankfurt Book Fair 2008 at www.book-fair.com/calendar_of_events/

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