

**Speech Prof. Dr. Gottfried Honnefelder
Director of the German Publishers & Booksellers Association
Opening Press Conference of the Frankfurt Book Fair
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Frankfurt Book Fair Cinema, Forum Level 0
Blocking period until 14 October 2008, 11.00 a.m.
The spoken word is golden.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we open the 60th Frankfurt Book Fair after World War II and in hindsight we see how massively the publishing and bookselling industry has changed in the last six decades. Who would have thought 60 years ago that every year 90,000 new books would be issued? Who would have thought it possible that the entire encyclopaedia is no longer contained between two book covers, but rather on a machine that looks like a typewriter with an upright picture? And that many people can use this encyclopaedia all over the world simultaneously? In the last 60 years, the publishing industry has experienced a huge transformation.

How does it look today? The book market is thriving. The year 2007, with a gain of 3.4 per cent, was such an exceptional year that publishers and bookstores will be happy with simply maintaining this level. One topic in particular currently occupies us - the digital development of the book market and, therefore, I would like to speak about this subject here.

The e-book is a big chance for the book market. It will lead the industry into the future, endowing the principle of "book" with a new dimension. Yet we have to decide on some requirements and basic conditions, because regulations, processes and business models often lag behind technical developments. This lies in the nature of things - first cars are made to go faster and then the speed limits are introduced.

Digitisation is certainly not a new topic. New are only the dimensions of the topic. New is that digitisation is now commonplace and no longer confined to specialised or industry publishers, but has expanded to include publishers from across the board. With the new e-book models, the discussion about digitisation has received a serious medial boost. They have a new functionality and user-friendliness in comparison to

the models we were talking about ten years ago - in short a big leap in development. Whether this will really pay off, or if e-books will really be integrated into everyday use, as predicted by many, still remains to be seen.

No international publisher can close his eyes to this development. No publisher can believe that electronic publishing doesn't affect him, which then means, every publisher needs to think about whether his business model will remain innovative into the future. Using the market, publishers guarantee permanence, selectivity and publicity for contents. By publishing a book it receives characterization as a work, the contents are primed, made available to the reader and presented to the public. In the past this content was printed on paper between two book covers and then sold in the bookstore. This is what publishers and bookstores live from. Of course, individual chapters and sometimes even entire books are copied, yet that is a lot of work and economic repercussions are minimal. Plus, the law demands a financial settlement in such cases.

What is the state of things today when contents are made available digitally? They can be copied with two or three clicks and distributed in huge numbers. One copy of a work can be used simultaneously by thousands of people. The existing business model doesn't apply any longer. The publishers, who have worked with digital content for some time now, know this of course. The others have to learn how to handle it and accept that "Open Access" prevails time and again, and that Internet users don't have any patience when the "free flow of information" runs into walls. A development towards this new openness is the future job of publishers and bookstores. In doing so, one must be ready to adopt new financial and publishing models and not always insist on copy being paid for. We are talking about new book-minded financial models which reward the publishers' work in new, perhaps indirect ways.

Because the digital sales route already today is an important sales route among many, we need a political debate about the basic conditions for handling intellectual property. The solution to the problem cannot only be shifted onto the publishers. Education, knowledge, content - these are the resources of a modern society. But how do we keep it this way? These resources must be protected! Anyone who steals a book out of a bookstore can expect consequences. Why should there be different laws on the Internet? Simply because this book is not printed on paper and bound?

In the political discussion there exists little understanding for this problem. The law enforcing the right to protect intellectual property is usually mentioned here, which

has been in place since September, and which, among other things, regulates the entitlement of rights' owners such as publishers to disclosure regarding Internet pirates. Data protection is meant here. Yet this comes up short. The mentioned law doesn't pan out because it collides with regulations from another law, one concerning telecommunications monitoring.

Politics haven't grasped yet that an overall concept for handling intellectual property and personal rights on the Internet is decisive. Cosmetic changes in single laws do not help authors, creative workers and publishers. Culture and high-technology can only be brought together with an overall strategy for a civilised Internet, as demonstrated by the Olivennes Project in France. A concrete proposal, tailored to Germany, from the perspective of the rights' owners already exists on a federal level. The goal is a cooperation model with Internet service providers to achieve a pragmatic solution to dealing with Internet pirating.

We can't treat the Internet as a largely lawless space for the simple reason that this creates difficulties in solving the problem of how to treat intellectual property on the Web. In development, sitting it out has never achieved anything.

This is the central problem for publishers and booksellers, but also one for all of society in the coming years. It must be solved if Germany wants to continue to be successful in competing with other countries. Publishers and booksellers are calling for all those affected to sit together. So far we are still waiting for a signal from the Federal Government.

In the next 60 years the Frankfurt Book Fair will certainly be changed as a marketplace for content. It will, however, only continue to exist and continue to create international trends in the publishing industry when the handling of intellectual property proceeds down a regulated path. And only then can international knowledge be truly useful.