

# THE U.S. BOOK MARKET

Compiled by the Frankfurt Book Fair Office New York Inc.

## Overview

Trends in 2015/2016 included significant growth in downloaded audio sales and in adult books. The boom of eBooks, however, is declining.

Adult non-fiction remains the largest print category. It is also the one with the largest gain over 2015 with a rise of 6.9%. Adult fiction declined slightly by 1.04%. The only category, which included books with more than one million sold copies, is juvenile fiction. Print sales in this category rose by 3.8%.

Looking at sales by format, trade paperbacks – the format that holds adult coloring books – had a 4.01% gain in unit sales over 2015, which is slightly less than 2015 (5%). The hardcover and board book formats also had sales gains in the year, but sales of mass market paperbacks and physical audiobooks both had declines in 2016.

Total units sold topped 674 million in 2016 as reported by the Association of American Publishers.

(Source: Publishers Weekly, Association of American Publishers)

## Economic Data

**Population:** 324,693,199 (March 2017 est.)

**Literacy rate:** 99 %

**Gross Domestic Product:** \$18.560 trillion (2016 est.)

**Inflation rate:** 2.3% (2017 est.)

**Unemployment rate:** 4.7% (2016 est.)

**Languages:** English 79.2%, Spanish 12.9%, other Indo-European 3.8%, Asian and Pacific island languages 3.3%, other languages 0.9% (2016 est.)

(Source: census.gov, cia.gov, bls.gov)

## Book Production in the U.S.

- ) Unit Sales Print Books 2016: 674 Million (+3.3 %)
- ) Unit Sales Print Books 2015: 652 Million
- ) Sales 2015: 27,78 Billion US-Dollar.
- ) Sales E-Books 2015: 2,84 Billion US-Dollar (-11.3 %)
- ) Unit Sales E-Books 2015: 424 Million (-9.7 %)
- ) Sales Downloaded audio 2015: 552 Million US-Dollar (+37.6 %)
- ) Self publishing titles 2015: 727,125

(Source: Association of American Publishers)

## Sales figures

As per the Association of American Publishers (AAP), total U.S. book sales hit \$27.78 billion in 2015, down 0.6% compared to 2014, while unit sales decreased 0.5% to 2.71 billion. The revenue decline results from a challenging year in the education markets.

Sales in the trade category rose 2.6% over the previous year, while unit sales increased 1.0%, and trade remained the largest category, with revenue from the year 2015 at \$15.84 billion. The largest growth within the trade category was in adult books, where sales rose 6.0% to \$10.47 billion. Revenue of children's/young adult books fell 3.4% in 2015.

(Source: Association of American Publishers)

## Book Categories

The largest gain in 2016 came in the adult nonfiction category with a sales rise of 6.9% over 2015. This reflects a boom in subcategories like crafts and hobbies, religion and self-help. For example, the crafts and hobbies subcategory rose by 75% to 20,33 million unit sales. The religion subcategory benefitted from new titles of religious authors like Pope Francis, Lysa Terkeurst and Sarah Young, leading to a 13% rise in this category. In 2016, however, there were no single non-fiction books that sold as well as the 2015 bestsellers. Instead, the high number of newly published books led to the sales rise in this category. Alone 3,500 new adult coloring book ISBNs were issued in 2016, which is an 108% increase over 2015. The highest decline was in the art/architecture/design/ photography subcategory with 18% less sales than in 2015.

Adult fiction sales declined by 1,0% over 2015. New bestsellers like 2015's *The Girl on the Train* or *Go Set a Watchman* were missing. Instead, *The Girl on the Train's* paperback edition was the bestselling adult fiction title with 955,000 copies sold, followed by Frederik Bachman's *A Man Called Ove*, which was published in 2015 also, Only one fiction category had a big sales increase over 2015: comics and graphic novel sales increased by 12%.

J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child: Part 1 and 2* led 2016's juvenile fiction bestselling list with 4.5 million print copies sold. This led to a 17% rise in the science fiction/fantasy/magic genre in this subcategory. Also over one million units were sold of Jeff Kinney's newest Wimpy Kid book, *Double Down* (1.1 million units) and Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard's *Killing the Rising Sun* (1.1 million units) in 2016. Although only three titles sold over one million print copies (there were six in 2015), juvenile fiction sales went up 3.8% in 2016.

(Source: Publishers Weekly)

## Unit Sales of Print Books

(in millions)

	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2015-2016
total	635.093	652.673	674.151	3.29%

## Unit Sales of Print Books by Channel

(in million)

	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2015- 2016
Retail & Club	518.091	546.761	573.761	4.95%
Mass Merchandisers & Other	116.191	105.953	100.389	-5.25%

## Unit Sales of Print Books by Category

(in million)

	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2015-2016
Adult Nonfiction	240.130	256.042	273.589	6.85%
Adult Fiction	138.712	141.690	140.221	-1.04%
Juvenile Nonfiction	48.882	54.624	55.456	1.52%
Juvenile Fiction	176.685	171.383	178.043	3.8%

## Unit Sales of Print Books by Format

(in million)

	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2015-2016
Hardcover	173.483	178.255	187.940	5.43%
Trade Paperback	338.940	355.737	370.019	4.01%
Mass Market	71.758	64.318	59.357	-7.71%
Board Books	27.092	30.978	33.280	7.43%
Audio	5.128	4.434	3.836	-13.49%

(Source: Publishers Weekly, Nielsen Bookscan)

## Average book price 2016

### Adult

Hardcover Fiction	\$ 27.07
Hardcover Non-Fiction	\$ 28.14
Trade Paperback Fiction	\$ 16.43
Trade Paperback Non-Fiction	\$ 20.86
Trade Paperback Mass Market	\$ 7.73

### Children's Titles

Hardcover (all titles)	\$ 18.12
Trade Paper (all titles)	\$ 7.16
Mass Market Paper (all titles)	\$ 6.32

## Young Adult Titles

Hardcover (all titles)	\$ 19.95
Trade Paper	\$ 12.08
Mass Market Paper	\$ 8.00

(Source: School Library Journal)

## Bookstore Sales

Bookstore sales increased over 2015 by 2.5%, the second year in the row that sales rose after seven declining years. Overall bookstore sales of \$ 11,981 million dollar were made in 2016. While the first half of 2016 was even stronger with a 6.1% increase over 2015, sales in the second half slowed down, partly due to the presidential election, to a negative 3.1% over the year before.

(Source: Publishers Weekly)

## Online retailers

While sales of eBooks are decreasing, more printed books are purchased through online retailers such as Amazon. Their sales increased by 15% to 275 million units sold in 2016. Thus, rising their share from 38% in 2015 to 41% of all print book sales. After opening the first brick-and-mortar bookstores in Seattle in 2015, Amazon has opened two more in San Diego and Portland and has announced to open more in New York, Chicago and Dedham. This way, Amazon is targeting the bookstore market after only focusing on online sales for so many years.

(Source: author earnings, Market Watch)

## Number of publishers

There are five large publishers (Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan and Hachette Book Group USA), plus 300-400 medium-sized Publishers and approximately 8,6000 small/self-publishers. 1,200 publishers are providing monthly data to AAP (Association of American Publishers).

(Source: Publishers Weekly, Association of American Publishers)

## Selling Translation Rights

English continues to dominate as the language of origin for translations into German by a large margin. In 2015 6,031 new titles were translated from English into German (6,527 in 2014). Thus, 63.8% of all translations are from the English. Most of the English translations are fiction (3,505 titles) which make up 68.9% of all fiction titles published in German in 2015.

While most of the German-language books are being translated into Chinese (20.1%), the second language German books are being translated into is English with a share of 7.6% in 2015 (7% in 2014).

(Source: Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2016)

## Buying Translation Rights

In 2015 574 licenses of German books have been sold to the English-speaking world, which corresponds to a share of 7% in the license market. This is a rise from 450 licenses sold in 2014. The percentage has increased continuously since 2010 onwards.

(Source: Publishing Perspectives)

The number of translated fiction and poetry rose from 573 titles in 2015 to 609 titles in 2016 (512 works of fiction and 97 of poetry), according to an independent study by Chad Post of Three Percent. With 68 German titles published in the US, it is after French and Spanish the third language that the published translations originate from.

(Source: Three Percent)

## Top houses for translation

According to Three Percent, the following Publishing Houses published the most titles in translation in the US in 2016:

- / AmazonCrossing (9.85%)
- / Dalkey Archieve (7.22%)
- / Seagull Books (3.28%)
- / Europa Editions (2.79%)
- / New York Review of Books (2.3%)
- / Archipelago (1.97%)
- / Deep Vellum (1.97%)
- / Hispabooks Publishing (1.97%)

- / New Directions (1.97%)
- / Minotaur (1.81%)

(Source: Three Percent)

## Digital Publishing 2016

The number of survey respondents that have digitally published continues to rise in 2016, to 73.21% from 72.9 percent in 2015, according to a survey conducted by Data Conversion Laboratory (DCL) and Bowker. Even more publishers plan to publish digitally in 2017 (79.51%). Most eBooks being published are fiction (64.76%), followed by non-fiction (39.41%). Publishers are most concerned about the quality as well as the retention of formatting when publishing eBooks.

(Source: Data Conversion Laboratory, Bowker)

## Self Publishing 2015/2016

Between 2014 and 2015 self-publishing has risen by 21.24%. In 2015 727,125 ISBNs were assigned to self-published titles. Also, more libraries and booksellers offer self-published content, which leads to more self-published titles on prominent bestseller lists. In 2016, however, the share of self-published authors declined from 45% to 42%.

(Source: Bowker, [digitalbookworld.com](http://digitalbookworld.com))

## Copyright Law

Copyright law in the U.S. is governed by federal statute, namely the Copyright Act of 1976. The Copyright Act prevents the unauthorized copying of a work of authorship. However, only the copying of the work is prohibited--anyone may copy the ideas contained within a work. For example, a copyright could cover a written description of a machine, but the actual machine itself is not covered. Thus, no one could copy the written description, while anyone could use the description to build the described machine.

Copyrights can be registered in the Copyright Office in the Library of Congress, but newly created works do not need to be registered. In fact, it is no longer necessary to even place a copyright notice on a work for it to be protected by copyright law. However, the Copyright Act does provide additional benefits to those who register with the Copyright Office. Consequently, copyright registration and the use of a copyright notice is recommended.

(Source: bitlaw.com)