

First-Time Publisher Solves the Return Problem

First-time publisher, Alan Tutt of PowerKeys Publishing, has found a solution to a major problem many small publishers face when dealing with the book trade. Returns.

Before publishing his first physical book, Alan invested time to become familiar with the standard policies and operating procedures of other small publishers, noting that many of them mentioned the same problem—wholesalers and bookstores would order large quantities of books, return them before they had to pay the invoice, and then reorder the same books again. A situation that can easily put a small publisher out of business.

“I started thinking about why the situation existed and what could be done about it,” says Alan. “After a few days, it became clear—the wholesalers and bookstores wanted the larger discounts given with larger orders, but didn’t have the resources to sell them quickly enough.”

PowerKeys Publishing has designed their dealer terms to offer larger discounts even with smaller orders. Discounts are ‘universal’, allowing any customer to qualify for any discount depending on quantities purchased. In addition, discounts are based on quantities purchased (and paid for) over the previous 12 months. A bookstore that orders just 5 books per month will eventually qualify for a 50% discount. A wholesaler ordering 50 books per month will eventually qualify for a 60% discount. These discounts become retroactive, and reaching the next discount level results in an extra-deep discount on the qualifying order.

While he was at it, Alan thought of a way to counter the payment-adverse customers as well. “We have two lines in our dealer terms which ensure that everyone plays fair. First, before we will accept a new order, all previous orders must be paid. And second, no order will be accepted for a title previously returned.”

Alan feels comfortable laying out the ground rules like this because his company has a solid track record marketing e-books on the Internet. “We have a following online and have been profitable for the last five years. In fact, we already have enough pre-sales of our first physical book to pay the printing bill, even after paying generous commissions to our online affiliates. Making this book available through the traditional book trade is a bonus for our customers, not a requirement for staying afloat. However, we do want to make it a win-win situation for everyone involved.”

PowerKeys Publishing’s dealer terms may be found at www.PowerKeysPub.com/dealers.

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