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Mary Curtis
President of Transaction Publishers



ABOUT GOOGLE BOOK SEARCH

Google Book Search enables authors and publishers to promote their books on Google. Google scans the full text of a partner's title so that Google users can see books that match the topics they are searching on. When users click on a book search result, they're taken to a Google-hosted web page displaying a scanned image of the relevant page from the book. Each page also contains multiple “Buy this book” links, which enable users to purchase the book from online retailers. Users may also see contextually targeted Google AdWords ads on these pages. Partners receive a share of the revenue generated from ads appearing on their content.

For more information, visit
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Transaction Publishers revives backlist, reaches academic audience with online book previews

About Transaction Publishers

Transaction Publishers is widely recognized as a major independent academic publisher of books, well-defined series, and serial publications in the social sciences. Committed to reaching the widest possible audience for the best work being done by social researchers, Transaction is located on the Rutgers University campus in Piscataway, New Jersey, yet attracts a substantial international audience. Established in 1962, Transaction publishes both original titles and a small number of carefully chosen classics in the field. It currently has 4,000 books in print and publishes between 120-150 titles per year.

Challenge

A forward-thinking academic publisher that serves a global readership in the social sciences, Transaction's top priority is increasing exposure for its titles.

“I think of us as Mighty Mouse. We're not a big publisher in terms of size, but we have a big impact. Our authors are relatively well-known, and our classics are written by distinguished scholars who are recognized internationally,” says Mary Curtis, President of Transaction Publishers. “The question is: How do we magnify that impact?”

According to Curtis, today's market presents a special challenge to publishers. “One of the things that has frustrated me about book publishing is that for younger generations, books are inert – unless they're on the Internet, they're not there,” explains Curtis. “We want more visibility for all our titles, and for our backlist to come alive.”

Another important goal for Transaction is expanding the audience of educators who might be interested in incorporating its books in their curricula. “Professors and academic associations need to know whether a particular book is appropriate for students,” says Curtis. “But you can't tell unless you have a way to look at it.”

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Solution

Transaction decided to join the Google Books Partner Program after being invited to a demo at BookExpo America in 2004. “When I heard the details, I thought it was a terrific idea,” says Curtis. “From my perspective, unless you think what you have isn't very good, why not let people preview it?”

Now, says Curtis, Transaction's backlist “is more alive than ever.” Titles like *The Dark Side of Love: The Positive Side of Negative Feelings*, which sold well in 1999 but “went to sleep,” are reaching new audiences. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, which was published in 1967, has received 118,319 page views and hundreds of “Buy this book” clicks since it went live on Google Book Search.

Other backlist books have attracted so much interest that Transaction has decided to republish them. “By monitoring Google Book Search statistics, we’re able to meet demand because we can see it coming,” says Curtis. “We get a book out again, and it gains momentum. If people can’t find a book, it dies. If they can, it builds.”

In addition to enjoying increased online visibility and a backlist revival, Transaction is reaping benefits from giving its academic customers a way to preview books. “There are definite correlations when I look at books with high numbers of page views and those getting heavily adopted and sold for courses,” reports Curtis.

Offering previews has also proven to be a successful marketing strategy for other audiences. In a recent marketing initiative, for instance, Transaction sent an email to Jewish libraries to promote *The Jewish Divide Over Israel*, including a link to preview the book in Google Book Search. “We sold a lot of books,” says Curtis. “And I’m sure we sold more because people could actually see the book.”

Transaction has now included the majority of its catalog in Google Book Search and plans to continue pointing customers to the service for previews of its books.

“This fall, we’re going to promote Google Book Search in our meetings with professional associations like the American Sociological Association and the African Studies Association,” says Curtis. “Every meeting we go to, someone asks us about a book that we don’t have on hand. Now we can tell people they can find our books on Google Book Search.”

