

An IBPA Roundtable

June 2013



Books in Action, Part 2

As you might imagine, it's exhilarating to get a stream of reports from IBPA members about what their books do for the people who read them and, through those people, for lots of others. Because each email tells a different story, I'm impressed again and again by how many ways independent publishers fulfill needs, including the most painful kinds and the kinds that are mostly about fun.

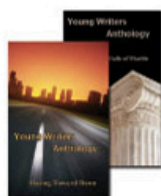
But it gets even better because the dozens of books we're highlighting in "Books in Action" are the tip of a gargantuan iceberg.

As Kelly Gallagher of Ingram pointed out in "Independent Publisher Power" (February), current methodologies show that publishers with annual net sales under \$5 million contributed \$2.2 billion to total 2011 industry revenues. And smaller publishers (those publishing fewer than 10 ISBNs a year) "are multiplying quickly. A recent study published by R.R. Bowker estimated the growth rate from 2006 to 2011 at over 69 percent, and noted that this group of publishers now numbers nearly 21,000," not counting companies such as Smashwords and writers who publish through them.

Do the math, and the implications look pretty clear. The dozens of books whose stories appear in the *Independent* have changed, are changing, and will change many, many lives for the better, and it figures that books from the thousands of other independent publishers are doing that too. How many books would that be? At least tens of thousands and quite possibly hundreds of thousands. How big a difference do independent publishers make? I'm not sure what words could describe it, but I'm inclined to go with just "mind-boggling."

—Judith Appelbaum

Airing Emerging Writers' Work



Our *Young Writers Anthology* series is best summarized by the three marketing taglines we are using:

Allow yourself to be surprised. We focus exclusively on young writers ages 13 to 22. We have structured our business model so that we can introduce readers to innovative and next-generation experimental works as the writers are emerging, rather than publish content aligned to today's market tastes.

Literature for young adults written by young adults. VerbalEyre works to encourage a renaissance of creative writing among young people. We believe that the very fabric of the publishing industry is changing and that the future looks more horizontally diverse and cooperative. By disseminating the *Young Writers Anthology* broadly in schools through institutional purchases and sponsored purchases and by featuring our young writers' biographies prominently in the books, we hope to open the eyes of thousands of young people to the creative potential within themselves and to demonstrate that society values their voices.

Empowering young writers to say, "I am my scholarship!" Believing that the new way of doing business in the publishing industry involves much more cooperation between publisher and author, we pay our authors royalties of between 40 and 50 percent of proceeds. For the *Young Writers Anthology*, the royalty is 50 percent divided evenly among all participating authors, and we have structured the royalties so that each young writer receives them in a named scholarship account and can draw on that account to fund progress toward higher-education goals.

We believe this approach gives them an effective marketing message as we teach them the marketing skills all successful writers must have to connect to readers in today's publishing world.

Derek Koehl

VerbalEyre Press