LATIN AMERICA IN FOCUS

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About This Magazine: Focus on Latin America

Aligned with Frankfurter Buchmesse’s work in supporting the publishing industry worldwide, Frankfurt Rights is offering tools, resources, and expertise to publishers that can help them engage in global rights discussions. This magazine, supported by the German Federal Foreign Office, is one of the channels Frankfurt Rights offers to give global visibility to publishers and the book markets.

In this issue, we look at a number of book markets and publishing issues across in Latin America, as well as some of the new, international developments taking place there. On page 4, you’ll read about two independent publishers who are using the Frankfurt Rights platform and participating in Frankfurter Buchmesse’s rights workshops. And you can learn more about the Frankfurt Rights platform, including its tools for both buyers and sellers, on page 6.

Articles and news in this issue are produced by book trade magazines Publishing Perspectives and PublishNews ES.

This issue of the Frankfurt Rights Magazine is made possible by generous support from the German Federal Foreign Office.

PublishNews ES is the largest news website in the Spanish-speaking publishing market. We offer practical, independent information, updated daily; we do not depend on any editorial group. On a daily basis we select news that we get through our sources, distributed throughout the Spanish-American sphere.

We have collaboration agreements with key book chambers, professional associations, and institutions in the publishing sector. We also have a fluid exchange of information with the other professional media that make up PubMagNet (Publishing Magazines Network)—including Publishers Weekly, The Bookseller and Livres Hebdo, among others—which allows us to offer a global vision of the sector.

CO-FOUNDER: Carlo Carrenho
CO-FOUNDER: Antonio Martín
EDITOR: Lorenzo Herrero
COORDINATOR: Pilar Torres
COPYEDITOR: Andrea Tineo

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Publishing Perspectives is a leading source of information about the global book publishing business. Since 2009, we have been publishing daily email editions with news and features from across the book world.

Our mission is to help build and contribute to the international publishing community by offering information that publishing and media professionals need to connect, cooperate, and work together year-round and across borders.

Founded by the German Book Office New York and now a project of the Frankfurt Book Fair, Publishing Perspectives works with our colleagues in Frankfurt and the fair’s international offices to bring you the latest publishing trends and opportunities, people to know, companies to watch, and more.

PUBLISHER: Hannah Johnson
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Porter Anderson
ADVERTISING MANAGER: Meike Eckern

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Frankfurter Buchmesse is the most important international trade fair for publishing and content of all kinds—from novels and children’s books to scientific databases. Here, experts from global publishing meet partners from the technology industry and related creative industries such as film and games. Thus, it is the hub of the international rights and licensing trade, and from here new cooperations and business models take their course.

At the same time, the fair is a major cultural event, attracting literature enthusiasts and making Frankfurt the centre of the international media world in October.

Frankfurter Buchmesse GmbH, based in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, is the organisation behind Frankfurter Buchmesse. It is a subsidiary of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association (Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels).

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Juergen Boos

LEARN MORE: www.buchmesse.de
The Number of Spanish Speakers Worldwide Has Grown 30 Percent in the Last Decade

In October, the Instituto Cervantes presented its latest figures on Spanish-language speakers and culture in its ‘Annual Review 2020: Spanish in the World’

The number of Spanish speakers has increased 30 percent in the last decade, and the figure for foreigners studying the language has grown 60 percent, exceeding the level of 22 million Spanish students worldwide for the first time. These “very positive” figures, revealed in the ‘Annual review 2020: Spanish in the world’ and presented last Thursday 15 October 2020 at the Instituto Cervantes show that “Spanish is in great health”, attested Arancha González Laya, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The data is clear: more than 585 million people speak Spanish, five million more than one year ago. Of these, almost 489 million (six million more than in 2019) are native Spanish speakers. Spanish is the second most-spoken mother tongue after Mandarin, and the third language in a global user count after English and Mandarin.

Globally, Spanish speakers have a buying power equivalent to 9 percent of world GDP. It is also the most important second language in the tourism sector. On the internet, it is the third most used language, and after English, the second language for scientific texts. More than 907,000 foreigners come to Spain to study it every year, for three main reasons: the culture, the climate, and the charm of the country.

Throughout the presentation, González Laya affirmed that the Spanish language is “one of our greatest assets, and one of the pillars of our image around the world,” she added, “culture is one of the most relevant sectors in the post-COVID recovery.” Carmén Pastor, the Academic Director of the Cervantes Institute, unpacked the contents of this new bedside reading, for all those interested in Spanish, coedited with Bala Perdida and funded by the Fundación Iberdrola España.

The Annual Review 2020, which is already for sale in bookstores, can also be downloaded or browsed for free in the e-library of the Instituto Cervantes.

More than 585 million people speak Spanish, five million more than one year ago. Of these, almost 489 million (six million more than in 2019) are native Spanish speakers.

A version of this article was originally published on 10/20/2020 by PublishNews España. Translated by Amy Webster.
Latin American Publishers on Frankfurt Rights

In the past months Frankfurter Buchmesse organized several digital workshops for publishers from Latin America, Arabic-language countries, Africa and Southeast Asia to support the participants in selling rights internationally—especially in times of the global COVID-19 pandemic. We asked two publishers to share their insights into their home book markets and how they benefited from the Frankfurt Rights International workshop held by Frankfurter Buchmesse.

“Vacillating between hope and sadness, between discouragement and hyperactivity”

Interview with Raquel Menezes, Director of Oficina Raquel in Brazil

Oficina Raquel is a publishing house based in Rio de Janeiro that began publishing handcrafted poetry books in 2006. Over the years, and with the incorporation of Raquel Menezes, it expanded its print runs and has currently an extensive catalog of poetry, fiction, history, philosophy, and essays as well as books on feminism and politics.

Raquel Menezes, who has twice been president of the Brazilian League of Independent Publishers (LIBRE) and finalist of the Publish News Book Industry Young Talents Award, directs Oficina Raquel.

Frankfurter Buchmesse: How is the Brazilian publishing industry doing?

Raquel Menezes: Unfortunately, the Brazilian publishing market was already suffering a crisis before it was hit by the pandemic. The little investment in education makes us a country with a low number of readers. In many areas, we observed that many things were getting even worse. On the other hand, however, people at home started to read more, including ebooks and audiobooks. That’s a positive effect.

FBM: What challenges and also what opportunities have arisen for you?

Menezes: At Oficina Raquel, we are more focused on the digital opportunities. We learned a lot about social networks and the way we can relate to our customers. We took advantage of the first days working from our home offices to improve our metadata. In addition, we learned how to do events online. In April, for example, we held “Rio que lê,” an event aimed at teachers, mediators, and librarians. More than 5,000 people from all over Brazil participated, and that is a number and variety that we never would have reached in a face-to-face event.

FBM: What are your wishes for the Brazilian (independent) publishing scene and for your licensing business?

Menezes: Obviously, we as independent publishers suffer a lot from the pandemic, but I also noticed that we are now able to adapt faster and easier. In other words, we are more flexible, maybe because of our small size. The thing I wish for the most is that independent publishers are able to maintain their creative spirit that allows them to stand out in the market. I hope that our creativity gets recognized (and monetized, of course). We have many good names to present to the foreign market.

FBM: How can the Frankfurter Buchmesse and/or Frankfurt Rights support you?

Menezes: After more than a year without participating in events, connecting with other publishers through Frankfurt Rights is very helpful. It gives us the possibility to learn more about the international marketplaces and offers interesting rights and trends.

FBM: How did you like our Frankfurt Rights International Workshop?

Menezes: I found the initiative very interesting. It kept the editors connected. The structure of the workshop was also very good.

FBM: Which learnings have you already been able to implement in your work?

Menezes: My assistant was the one who attended the workshop. For him, who has not yet been to any international book fairs, it was an opportunity to get to know the international market and to be better prepared for when we can attend face-to-face meetings again.

FBM: What are your expectations regarding Frankfurt Rights?

Menezes: I want to present...
How is the Mexican publishing industry doing?

Muñoz: I hope, as I always do, to find great books and great publishers. That’s always my aim in business.

FBM: Have you already been able to make valuable contacts via Frankfurt Rights?

Muñoz: We already had encounters with publishers that we’re going to meet at Guadalajara Book Fair, so that’s good for our preparations. Beyond that I think the platform is very user-friendly and has lots of potential, I’m looking forward to getting more into it in the future.

FBM: What do you think will change post-COVID?

Muñoz: I think in the post-COVID era we will all be more cautious on what we buy and sell and how we invest. We will shift our priorities to buying and selling rights without losing an arm and a leg.

FBM: Are you planning to visit the Frankfurter Buchmesse 2021?

Menezes: I would love to. First to reconnect with fellow publishers, but also because it would mean that the world is healing.

A version of this interview was originally published at www.buchmesse.de.

“"The word that best describes the current situation is reinvention."

Interview with Genoveva Muñoz, publisher of La Cifra Editorial in Mexico

La Cifra Editorial is a Mexican publishing house focusing on novels, picture books, graphic novels, children’s books, academic and creative essays as well as short stories and comics by Mexican and foreign authors that introduce topics and ideas that have been little explored, enriching and encouraging collective reflection.

Founded in 2007, La Cifra Editorial explores new ways of communicating ideas through daring graphic works and engaging academic essays.

Frankfurter Buchmesse: How is the Mexican publishing industry doing?

Genoveva Muñoz: I think the word that best describes the current situation is “reinvention.” We are facing a major sales crisis, but we’ve found new ways and options to cope with it: publishers share administrative costs, create joint marketing campaigns, or learn how to reach audiences differently. I think the pandemic taught us that we do not always need large structures, not only from an “green-economic” point of view, but if we look at nature carefully. These meetings have an expense of inputs that can be reviewed, and the hybrid model can help us. I say this, for example, in relation to the Guest of Honor country, which could have a more interactive and digital structure in the future.

FBM: What are your wishes for the Mexican (independent) publishing scene and for your licensing business?

Muñoz: First, that we always have to keep in mind that life is short and that we should try to enjoy what we love most. For me, that is definitely publishing great books.

Second, I wish we could continue to be as connected as we were last year. Although we didn’t meet at book fairs and launch events, I think I met more people in video calls than ever before. It is exhausting but being able to see people from all over the world in real time can save money and time. Video calls are so practical and productive that we surely will integrate them in our work from now on, even though the live experience and the personal contact at book fairs is invaluable, of course.

For the license business, I hope we recover fast so we can buy and sell on a regular basis. For that, we need affordable deals and flexibility from the rights holders.

FBM: How did you like our Frankfurt Rights International Workshop?

Muñoz: It was a great experience; very practical and very valuable. What I liked most was the approach; it was really intended for publishers, and it was focused on our needs. The experience was also very enriching because I met other publishers from Latin America, and it made me realize that we share the same doubts. Also, I found out that our region has a growing interest in licensing businesses, which is very good.

FBM: What are your expectations regarding Frankfurt Rights?

Muñoz: I hope, as I always do, to find great books and great publishers. That’s always my aim in business.

FBM: Have you already been able to make valuable contacts via Frankfurt Rights?

Muñoz: We already had encounters with publishers that we’re going to meet at Guadalajara Book Fair, so that’s good for our preparations. Beyond that I think the platform is very user-friendly and has lots of potential, I’m looking forward to getting more into it in the future.

FBM: What do you think will change post-COVID?

Muñoz: I think in the post-COVID era we will all be more cautious on what we buy and sell and how we invest. We will shift events, sales and marketing activities online. It is low cost, and it is effective now that even people who didn’t like to buy online or to attend events online now see it as an option for them. So licensing is growing into a more dynamic business. We may not need to meet face-to-face to make a deal or place an offer, but we need the face-to-face meetings for other things: networking, experiencing the touch and feel of books, meeting unexpected fellows, and finding what we were not looking for.

A version of this interview was originally published at www.buchmesse.de.
Frankfurt Rights Presents: Latin America

With support from the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Frankfurter Buchmesse and Frankfurt Rights are offering small and independent publishers in Latin America the opportunity to present their rights digitally while the COVID-19 pandemic continues to constrain travel and in-person meetings. This project includes organizing rights seminars and subsidizing rights seller accounts on Frankfurt Rights for selected publishers.

Translation and adaptation rights sales are an effective avenue for the dissemination of culture, books, and awareness of international authors. To this end, Frankfurt Rights is presenting a selection of independent Latin American publishers who’ve signed up to sell rights on its platform. In addition, buyers can find thousands of titles from Latin American by searching Frankfurt Rights by country.

### Argentina

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<tr>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Genre</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alto Pogo</td>
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### Mexico

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### Peru

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<td>Colmena Editores</td>
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Lima, Peru
Photo by Jacques PIQUE on Unsplash
Frankfurt Rights: Info for Buyers and Sellers

Frankfurt Rights is Frankfurter Buchmesse’s online platform for the international rights and licence trade. Here’s how it works.

Benefits for Rights Buyers

Frankfurt Rights is designed to support rights professionals and editors on a daily and weekly basis as they make acquisition decisions. This platform brings together buyers, sellers, and relevant rights information on a single, easy-to-use platform—there is no more searching through multiple websites, PDFs, and emails to find the information and contacts you need. Our digital communication and presentation tools keep your rights business running smoothly, no matter where you work from. Buyers can always use Frankfurt Rights for free—there is no subscription required.

- DISCOVER titles across all genres and be inspired by the latest content
- CONNECT with your established partners and find new contacts from all over the world
- EXCHANGE ideas with rights holders and get access to content samples and other relevant rights information

Become a Rights Seller

Frankfurt Rights is the leading online platform for buying and selling rights internationally that enables communication, information sharing and transactions between rights buyers and sellers, allowing publishers to focus more efficiently on relationships and content.

- A custom publisher portal, with key titles and branding
- Unlimited upload of titles to the platform
- Instant Offer — automated, fully customizable, flat fee transactions
- Instant Permissions — automated, fully customizable, permissions transactions
- Instant Rights Guides — quickly created and exported rights catalogues
- Advanced messaging between buyers and sellers
- Comprehensive search and browsing features
- A 24-hour global market

Built on IPR License’s established platform by an experienced team of rights and publishing experts, Frankfurt Rights is designed to support rights professionals on a daily and weekly basis as they make sales decisions and already in use by major publishers around the world. From nonfiction and academic works to fiction, children’s books, and more—the platform is for all types of publishers selling subrights, including translation, audio, film, permissions, and more.

Showcase Content Internationally

Frankfurt Rights offers a Rights Portal where you can present your publishing house alongside your content. Rights buyers can browse, search and enquire about your title rights online.

Our Instant Rights Guide functionality allows you to create a custom rights guide in only a few steps.

If you want a seamless sales experience for your buyers, upgrade to our fully customized White Label solution and brand your Rights Portal so as to look like your own website.

Streamline Your Rights Sales

Use our tools Instant Offer and Instant Permissions to facilitate the process of licensing your content to the world. You can negotiate and complete deals for whole book and journal rights as well as permissions. Our technology will help you make your sales process more efficient.

frankfurtrights.com
What Do Women Want from Publishers?

A report on “Women Who Read—Spain and Mexico” from publisher Entre Editores presented by Trini Vergara surveyed more than 9,000 women readers.

In July, PublishNews broadcast a video presentation of “Women Who Read—Spain and Mexico,” the report from Entre Editores (www.entreditores.net) with Trini Vergara, the founder of Entre Editores, and Lorenzo Herrero, the editor of PublishNews. The two broke down the concluding points of the report, including a comparison of results between Mexico and Spain.

The report from Spain was based on analysis of the responses of 9,400 Spanish women over the age of 18, who consider themselves readers. The fact that women readers represent 68 percent of the reading public, according to the latest data from the FGEE (Federación de Gremios de Editores de España – The Spanish Publishers Guild) should not be overlooked. Also important to note is that 50 percent of Spanish readers claim to read more than 15 books per year, more than one book per month. Regarding format, while printed books continue to be the most common choice, 38 percent indicated that they regularly read ebooks. There is a large gap in the figures for online sales that, according to the FGEE’s Handbook, published in February 2020, represented only 7.4 percent of total book sales. Audibooks still haven’t broken into the Spanish reading market, with only 2 percent of using this format “often” or “always.”

As for book sales, online purchasing is advancing at a great pace, it is already the usual means for 60 percent of younger Spanish women readers, and 30 percent of those aged 46 and over. The tendency towards digital is also seen in the way that Spanish women readers make purchasing decisions about their next read, mostly using social media as their source of information. One of the conclusions which stands out most in the report is that Spanish women show their disagreement with the market prices for books. Seventy-three percent say they wouldn’t pay more than €18 for a novel, which in the market retail at €21.

As for Mexico, the high number of respondents must be noted: 22,547 women participated in the survey. In this case, the age of the respondents was less uniform, from 18-25 years (55 percent). Equally, the Mexican women readers are “super-readers,” 29 percent saying they read more than 15 books per year, and 38 percent reading between seven and 15 books per year. These figures are extremely high in relation to the country average, between two and three books per year, according to data from INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía – The National Institute for Statistics and Geography).

Similar to Spain, the ebook format is gaining ground daily for the regular readers among those surveyed (41 percent), however, audiobooks are a phenomenon which seem to be taking root with Mexican women readers, in contrast to Spain, where only 7 percent stated that they “often” or “always” listen to audiobooks.

Where printed books are concerned, online sales aren’t as strong as in Spain, but it’s a growing percentage, with 30 percent of women already buying “often” or “always.” What is surprising in this case is that more of these sales are via bookshops’ websites than Amazon, which is consistent with a younger audience that uses social networks for making purchasing decisions. In Mexico, more than half of women readers find the sales price of books in line with what they are prepared to pay.

Download the reports from Entre Editores and watch Trini Vergara on the report on YouTube.

A version of this article was originally published on 07/22/2020 by PublishNews España. Translated by Amy Webster.
Mexico’s Book Industry: 10 Years to Recover from the Pandemic’s Effects

The Mexican Books Chamber (CANIEM) estimates that the Mexican book industry missed out on 25 million book sales during the quarantine period in 2020.

According to statistics presented at the FIL Guadalajara (the International Guadalajara Book Fair) by CANIEM (Camara Nacional de la Industria Editorial Mexicana—the Mexican Books Chamber), the Mexican book industry has, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, lost income of 2.322 million pesos (around €97 million) to date. Recovering these losses will take the industry 10 years.

Ignacio Uribe Ferrari, coordinator of the Statistics Commission of CANIEM, said that before the pandemic, sales of 11.126 million pesos (€464 million) had been anticipated in 2020, which represented a decline of 1 percent on the previous year’s figures.

“For this reason, we estimate that the best-case scenario, net income for printed books in 2020 will be 8.797 million pesos (€367 million), which represents a decline of 22 percent year-on-year; and in the worst-case scenario, a decline of 29 percent,” explained Uribe Ferrari. “In other words, in the best case we have lost income of 2,329 million pesos (€97 million), and in the worst, 3,662 million pesos (€153 million),” he said.

This means that, due to quarantine measures, the sector has lost sales of 25 million books, and now CANIEM estimates that the year finished with sales of 99 million books, 20 percent down compared to 2019. “Before the contingency measures we estimated 124 million unit sales, whereas we now anticipate 25 million fewer, best case, and 35 million fewer, worst case,” added Uribe Ferrari.

He went on to calculate that the publishing industry would need some 10 years to recover from this 29-percent decline in 2020.

The analysis presented on December 1, 2020 was created using production and market figures for printed books, sales distribution channels, the ebook market, 2020 performance figures, prospective sales figures, and a 2019-2020 year-on-year comparison, explained Juan Luis Arzoz Arbiz, President of CANIEM.

Book Sales by Sector

Alejandro Ramírez Flores, Managing Director of CANIEM, said that, in keeping with the quoted figures, production of textbooks for the Secretaría de Educación Pública (Department of Public Education) had dropped 25 percent, and trade publishing by 4 percent. In 2015, production stood at 145 million units, though these numbers were already in decline, with 134 million in 2018, and 118 million in 2019.

“In 2019, the publishing industry’s private sector sold 123 million books and reported income of 11.234 million pesos (€469 million), representing a 7-percent fall in the number of books printed, but an increase of 6 percent overall, meaning the average [book] price increased from 79 pesos (€3.30) per unit to 91 pesos (€3.80),” said Ramírez Flores.

Currently, the 29 million freely distributed secondary education textbooks (sold to the government) and the 18.9 million open-market primary education textbooks make up the bulk of the market. However, these only represent 11 percent of net industry income, since they are sold at extremely low prices.

Children’s books make up the majority of book sales, 20.3 million units sold, generating an income of 1,242 million pesos (€52 million). Religious books sold 10.9 million copies in 2019; literature and fiction sold 10.7 million, and health and personal development sold 3.9 million copies, according to CANIEM’s report.

There are three main sales channels in Mexico: closed (sales to government, schools or colleges, and private company special editions), open (bookshops, supermarkets, department stores, book fairs, and e-commerce), and export (representing only 4.3 percent).

The report specified that closed channels represent 49.4 percent, and open channels 46.5 percent of unit sales. Undoubtedly, the key route to market remains bookshops, with 39 percent of unit sales—in other words, continuing to take around one-third of open channel sales. All these figures are taken from 2019 reports.

Digital book formats in Mexico continue to attract low adoption, only representing 2 percent of total sales in 2019—though increasing from 1.8 percent in 2018.

Support from CANIEM

With economic recovery now predicted to take up to a decade, CANIEM will not be sitting with their feet up, stressed Arzoz Arbiz. He added that they are already working on strategies to improve sales and distribution in partnership with the Asociación de Libreros de México (Mexican Booksellers Association).

“One strategy has been to partner with the FIL Guadalajara on special sales throughout all bookshops in Mexico. But in addition to that, we are looking at strategies for all publishers, with their own unique offers. We also have a global strategy for sales channels,” indicated Arzoz Arbiz.

CANIEM is also waiting for a response to their written request for support and feedback from the federal government regarding the initiative “Ley del Libro” (Book Law), which is being discussed in the Chamber of Deputies. In 2021 CANIEM will also focus on supporting the opening of more bookshops in Mexico, which continues to be the most important sales channel.

A version of this article was originally published on 12/05/2020 by PublishNews España. Translated by Amy Webster.
UNAM Raises Concerns About Mexico’s Public Policies Affecting the Book Industry

UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico - National Independent University of Mexico) highlights the need for zero tax on bookstores and public library development.

A survey to investigate the impact of the public health emergency on the cultural sector, together with the report ‘How to Leave Intensive Care—Future Strategies for the Cultural Sector’ published by the Department of Cultural Dissemination at UNAM, and a series of forums organized by the Cultural Management initiative at Cátedra Internacional Inés Amor, focusing on the publishing sector, have raised concerns about public policies affecting the book trade.

The calls from the forum participants are linked to the revision of the Fixed Book Price law and the request for tax incentives for publishers, the highlights being zero percent tax for bookstores, the development of public libraries, and an increase in government purchasing programs.

The findings were presented by Jorge Volpi Escalante, the head of coordination at the Department of Cultural Dissemination at UNAM, during their virtual conference in late October 2020, held to publicize the results of three of the 13 requests for support from cultural agents across different sectors including the visual arts, theater, and music, who, along with all cultural industries, have seen their projects slashed due to the pandemic.

The announcement of the three results relating to the publishing industry were presented here. The first was for the collaboration of 23 independent publishing houses on a publication of 24 books, which will involve the participation of 147 writers, editors, illustrators, translators, compilers, and artists. The second is a reedition project, of 17 out-of-print titles from UNAM, covering sciences and humanities.

“We created three criteria when reviewing proposals from independent publishers: a general principle that the chosen books must be of interest to the university community; a principle of fairness, that there should be a gender balance within the book project team, and the third was to ask publishers to propose works in the local language,” explained the writer and editor Socorro Venegas, General Director of Publications, who went on to confirm that the bursary value was one million pesos.

The third result was confirmation of financial support for 13 independent cultural magazines affected by the crisis, who were chosen by a committee put together by the University of Mexico Magazine, run by the writer and editor Yael Weiss.

Regarding the market for UNAM during this period, Socorro Venegas noted that sales of printed books through online bookstores had increased 10 percent during the pandemic, however, the period when bookstores were closed saw a fall in sales of approximately 80 percent. UNAM’s online bookstore services have also been made available for use by other publishing houses that need it, due to the pandemic.

A version of this article was originally published on 10/29/2020 by PublishNews España. Translated by Amy Webster.
Bibliomanager and Mercado Libre Look to Boost POD in Latin America

Argentina has been chosen as the launch country for the new e-commerce/POD partnership.

In November 2020, Argentinian e-commerce marketplace Mercado Libre announced a new partnership with Latin America’s main print-on-demand (POD) distributor, Bibliomanager, to sell POD titles via Mercado Libre’s online channel.

Mercado Libre already has 40 percent of the market share for online book sales in Latin America. Bibliomanager currently operates across eight markets. This new partnership enables far greater international reach for POD titles and allows for greater automation of the sales process, with direct shipping to the buyer using the dropshipping business model.

Argentina has been chosen as the launch country for the new partnership. The model will then be rolled out in Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, and Uruguay. All markets will benefit from the advantages of on-demand distribution, including zero stock, a live catalogue, and local printing services.

This partnership comes at critical a time of digital adaptation for all business sectors. Online sales have proved an important outlet for many publishers who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, readers have been able to securely take advantage of the promotions from over 200 publishers that make up Bibliomanager’s distribution network.

This international synergy shows again that the on-demand distribution network knows no borders, particularly when books make up the precious cargo. In the words of Gustavo Vorobechik, Bibliomanager’s CEO, “This integration is a definitive move to continue providing bookshops and publishers the necessary tools to maintain a competitive edge and is an investment in the value chain of the book industry itself.”

Bookwire Spain Offering Print-on-Demand

Titles will also be directly available to Amazon’s European markets, through Bookwire’s use of Amazon PoD.

As of October 2020, Bookwire’s publishing clients in Spain and Latin-America are now able to use Amazon POD for print on demand services in Europe. Publishers will now be able to offer titles directly in Amazon’s various European markets, making them available to international customers. In the next few months, this offer will be extended to POD for books in Spanish language.

Led by Eric Gonzalez Canova, General Manager of Spanish Markets, the launch of this POD service through Amazon POD, is a huge development for Bookwire’s more than 400 existing publishers in Spain and Latin America.

As well as the distribution and marketing of e-books and audiobooks, Bookwire’s publishers in Spain and Latin-America can now offer printed books in various European markets with an agile ‘on-demand’ service directly through Bookwire OS, and crucially, instantly become part of the world’s biggest online bookshop’s catalogue.

As titles become available for print on demand through Amazon POD, they will also become available in Amazon’s European markets, namely Spain, France, Italy, the UK and Germany. Titles are made available to the international reader directly after placing an order through Bookwire OS.

“We are offering our publishers an invaluable sales tool: to print individual titles in a flexible and high-quality manner through Amazon POD. We think this combination of e-books, audiobooks, and tailor-made print books is the future of income generation,” said Eric Gonzalez Canova, General Manager Spanish Markets, Bookwire.

The new service offered through Amazon POD is the first step in the field of print on demand for Spanish-speaking markets, with further production and marketing opportunities for Spanish-language publishers to come in the next few months.

“POD is a great tool, not just for backlist, but for frontlist too, as titles can be made available for sale, for print readers, alongside the e-book and audio digital formats. The great economic advantage for publishers, therefore, is that they can control all these formats directly through Bookwire OS, and therefore optimize their resources,” said Margarita Guerreiro, Spanish Account Management Director of Bookwire GmbH, who have been offering POD services to publishers in Germany since 2015. In April 2020 Bookwire OS announced a large expansion of their services with “Print on Demand 2.0,” which is extending internationally, starting with the Spanish-speaking markets.
Scribd Audio Introduces Spanish-Language Audiobooks in Mexico

Widening its newly opened Scribd Audio program, the subscription service announces new Spanish-language audiobooks for Mexico.

Continuing a busy spate of announcements, the San Francisco-based subscription service Scribd has announced that its new Scribd Audio brand—announced last month for its productions with independent publishers—is expected to produce 100 Spanish-language audiobooks by the end of this year.

The company reports that it has more than 30 Scribd audiobooks in Spanish now. What’s coming, according to media messaging, will focus on nonfiction topics in “personal growth, business, science, and spirituality.”

A part of the impetus for this, the company says, is that Spanish-language listening on the platform is growing nearly twice as fast as English-language activity.

Partners for the Spanish program include: Anagrama, Almadía, Sexto Piso, El Colegio de México, Capitán Swing, Arpa Editores, and Koan Libros.

Selections made for this round of production are, the company says, made with the Mexican market in mind. Publishing Perspectives readers will recall that Scribd entered the Mexican market in 2019, and announced a major advertising push there last October, pleased with the pandemic-era response they were seeing in a market hard hit by the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreaks.

The Mexican subscription reportedly costs the equivalent of US$6.95 per month. In October, the company reported some 85,000 Spanish-language ebook and audiobook titles. In this latest communication, it says it has more than 100,000 Spanish-language premium ebook and audiobook titles on offer.

Women Writers and Narrators Featured

As part of this production effort in Spanish-language audiobooks, Scribd is announcing a series of work meant to “amplify women’s voices and perspectives and increase the visibility of female authors on Scribd.” This part of the work is to include narrators and essayists including Emma Reyes, Nona Fernández, Dolores Reyes, Rebecca Solnit, and Caitlin Moran.

In a prepared statement, Julie MacKay, Scribd’s director of international content acquisition, says, “Audiobooks have become an increasingly popular way for readers to enjoy books and for the first time we’re seeing that Spanish-language audio listening activity on Scribd is growing almost twice as fast as our English-language audiobook activity.

“We believe audio adoption will continue to accelerate and we’re excited to launch a program that brings more audiobooks to market and help authors and publishers reach new readers in Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries.”

“This initiative is also a unique opportunity for us to spotlight books written by powerful female storytellers.”

Some of the Spanish-language Scribd Audio titles no on the platform are:

- Bogotá, La ciudad rescatada
- Caracas, La ciudad herida
- Buenos Aires, La ciudad abrumada
- La Habana, La ciudad detenida
- Miami, La ciudad capital
- México, La ciudad desbocada
- Growth IQ by Tiffani Bova
- Conexiones perdidas: Causas reales y soluciones inesperadas para la depresión by Johann Hari
- Vacunas: Verdades, mentiras y controversias by Peter Gotzsche
- Parásitos by Carl Zimmer
- El rinoceronte zen by John Tarrant

And the company’s information for the news media points to these titles as part of the content in which it’s reflecting the importance of women’s work:

- Memoria por correspondencia by Emma Reyes
- Cometiera by Dolores Reyes
- Voyager by Nona Fernández
- El paraíso en el infierno by Rebecca Solnit
- Agripina: La primera emperatriz de Roma by Emma Southon

Scribd spokespeople say that upcoming works in the Spanish-language series are to include Nunca me abandones by Kazuo Ishiguro, Cáscara de nuez by Ian McEwan, Las vírgenes suicidas by Jeffrey Eugenides, Desmorir by Anne Boyer, Las mutaciones by Jorge Comensal, Glaxo by Hernán Ronsino, and Brenda Navarro’s upcoming novel.

A version of this article by Porter Anderson was originally published on 04/04/2021 by Publishing Perspectives.
Pre-Pandemic: Trade Publishing in Colombia Grew 4.7 Percent in 2019

In 2019, 43.7 million book units were sold of 19,996 titles published, according to a report from the Cámara Colombiana del Libro (Colombian Books Chamber).

Sales from the Colombian publishing sector grew to 798,838 million pesos (€185.5 million) in 2019, based on the publishers’ net sale price, signifying an increase of 4.7 percent over 2018 figures, according to a report from the Colombian Books Chamber, based on data from publishers, distributors, and bookstores nationwide.

The national market, which makes up 92.3 percent of total sales, contributed 4.5 percent towards this growth, with export making up the remaining 7.7 percent of sales. General interest books showed the greatest change, with a growth of 16.4 percent, followed by educational textbooks, with 0.1 percent. Conversely STM title sales fell 4.3 percent, and religious title sales by 0.1 percent.

Bookstores continue to be the industry’s primary sales channel with 35.2 percent of total sales (contributing 2.9 percent to the total growth), followed by distributors with 11.1 percent (shrinking in 2019 by 5.3 percent). Online sales have increased to 34 billion pesos (around €8 million), a contribution of 1.3 percent to the 2019 increase, while public spending on books decreased from 5.1 percent in 2018 to 4.2 percent in 2019.

As with the trade books sector, more than 50 percent of sales in the educational and STM sector were direct, while religious and general interest buyers tended to purchase from bookstores.

Commercial publishers employed 5,783 people in 2019, a decrease of 0.5 percent from 2018. 75.1 percent of personnel employed have a long-term or permanent contract, while 24.9 percent hold a temporary contract. Sales and marketing personnel represent 38.4 percent of the workforce, and 35.2 percent administrative, while editorial staffing makes up 26.3 percent.

“Data shows that the traditional route to market continues to be the bookstore. The Colombian Books Chamber will therefore continue our efforts to strengthen the country’s bookstore chains, which will result in continued growth for the industry. We hope that the participation of bookstores in the market, as a whole, will stabilize and grow in the coming years,” assured Enrique Gonzalez Villa, Executive President of the Colombian Book Chamber.

A version of this article was originally published on 11/10/2020 by PublishNews España. Translated by Amy Webster.
“For the first time, Venezuelan books, printed in Venezuela, are being exported for circulation outside our borders. This was made possible thanks to an agreement between the Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Cultura (Venezuelan Ministry of People’s Power Department of Culture), through Librerías del Sur (Venezuelan bookshop chain ‘Southern Bookshops’) and the Fondo de Cultural Económica de México (FCE México),” announced the Venezuelan Minister for Culture, Ernesto Villegas in 2020.

The titles were selected by FCE México, which is a non-profit publishing group, partly funded by the Mexican government, with 27 bookshops in Mexico and eight foreign branches in North and South America, and multiple representative offices across South and Central America.

Via messages from his Twitter account, Villegas highlighted that the first batch of 9,332 copies were shipped thanks to a collaboration with Venezuela’s national airline, Conviasa. He added that the titles were from publishing companies attached to the Ministry of People’s Power Department of Culture, “with which, through a fair-trade agreement, we paid for the Mexican titles that were on sale in Filven 2020 (Feria Internacional del Libro de Venezuela – Venezuela International Book Fair), and which continue to be available in the Aníbal Nazoa bookshop in Sabana Grande, Caracas.

Minister Villegas highlighted that the literary works would be made publicly available in Mexico, via FCE México’s bookshops and national book fairs.

Featured among the Venezuelan authors are Enrique Bernardo Núñez, Juan Uslar Pietri, Teresa De La Parra, Jorgelina Rodríguez, Asalía Venegas, Earle Herrera, Carlos Franco, Luis Angulo Ruiz, María Alejandra Díaz, Daniel Arella, José Negrón Valera, Enrique Hernández, D’jesus, Hugo Colmenares and Lechin Brea.

“The titles were selected by FCE México from the catalogues of Monte Ávila Latin American Publishing, Ayacucho Library, and El Perro y la Rana, publishers attached to the Ministry of People’s Power Department of Culture,” said Villegas.

In February 2021, this cultural cooperation continues to grow, and Venezuela has now sent 18,289 books, which will be publicly available in FCE México’s bookshops and in the country’s book fairs. In exchange, the books from Mexico can be acquired by the Venezuelan population in the Aníbal Nazoa bookshop, based in Sabana Grande, Caracas, and in the bookshops of Librerías del Sur.

The partnership and cultural cooperation links between the Ministry of People’s Power Department of Culture and FCE México have been strengthening since 2019 through the promotion of reading. Both institutions have the mandate to continue the book exchange in the coming months.

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Opinion: The Publishing World, An Archipelago

Writer and journalist Adán Delgado’s view on the current state of the Mexican publishing sector.

Part I: The Sinking

There exists a false, and Manichean, dilemma in the Mexican publishing world, between the ruthless industry of large-volume sales versus romantic intellectual and artistic projects with flimsy business models. In a society where reading education is insufficient, whether because of unappealing obligatory reading lists in school or a general lack of interest, the purchase of new books seems to be limited to the educated middle classes and certain sectors of the upper classes, who see book ownership as a sign of sophistication. On the other hand, the old prejudice persists that the lower middle classes and the working classes only buy cheap, pirated or secondhand books, and do not use digital devices.

This false idea can be imagined as an archipelago: the big publishing and distribution firms concentrate on bestsellers, manuals, and books by people in the public eye. The independent sector is a subdivision, the small publishing houses invest in little-read literary translations, art editions, poetry, and promising young writers; meanwhile the independent bookstores focus on a carefully curated selection, a personal touch, and establishing their bookstores as cultural spaces. The target audience of this large bloc are those with buying power.

The drop in sales started with the closure of bookstores in March and April 2020, made worse by the cancellation of all book fairs in the first half of the year. Faced with this, publishing industry figures reacted in different ways to mitigate the damage, or in the more dramatic cases, to survive and try to reduce the financial impact on their employees and families.

Part II: The Map

This crisis is not new; there is no evidence that the Mexican publishing business has ever shared an economic or social framework with any other cultural industry. The business of new releases, bestsellers, and the exploration of new digital formats seems entirely at odds with projects that favor reissue and artworks from established artists such as Vicente Rojo, Graciela Iturbide, and Abraham Cruzvillegas.
« from previous »

sues of classic works, with translation of little-known authors, with quality and innovation in publishing design, with publication of young authors, and with time spent on genres which hardly sell-through. “There is no way to make independent projects work financially,” seems to be the tacit catchphrase among the big-name publishers, while they simultaneously fail to consolidate or strengthen those markets, due to lack of stable income. The result is a vicious circle, a sector that doesn’t develop its great potential because everyone continues to act out of self-interest.

Gustavo Cruz, editor at Almadía, via email, comments from the front line:

“The sector has suffered from general neglect, the public policies that allow for fairer competition in the book market are useless, and consequently we now have a situation where publishing initiatives are trapped between two opposing monopolies: the state, and the big international publishing conglomerates. This puts any dynamism and plurality at great risk, key components of any desirable cultural ecosystem. This has turned the publishing market into a lawless wasteland, where everyone takes the attitude of “every man for himself” and has prevented any union organization efforts that represent the sector’s wide range of interests from bearing fruit.”

On the other hand, the big publishing consortia are advancing their projects into new digital frontiers: ebooks, audiobooks, and online sales are being strengthened with digital content and discount campaigns. The digital market for books in Mexico is growing at a rapid pace, our country is leading sales of digital content and discount campaigns. The new digital frontiers: ebooks, audiobooks, consortia are advancing their projects into certain limits, most noticeably the public’s reticence in embracing these formats. The need for self-preservation compels us to seek an increase in income through these channels, and this will encourage us to take an active role in the distribution of these digital formats.

“These formats do have their own benefits. As the late Claudio López Lamadrid [editorial director at PRH Spain, who died in January 2019] saw it, ebooks allow the catalogue to stay live, whereas the costs of production and warehousing put limits on the printed format.”

Independent bookstores are spaces that specialize in prolonging the life of the books in the store window. Founded and sustained by passionate readers, they group their clientele based on personal recommendations and from knowing each reader. Readers inspire readers, or, if you prefer, customers attract customers.

This un economical marketing strategy is in stark opposition to those of the big publishing houses, who have consolidated their own sales channels in partnership with the chain bookstores. In the war of promotions and discounts, the independent bookshops are busy trying to survive, whilst their ability to open and strengthen in local markets is missed.

Claudia Bautista, founder and director of RELI (Red de Librerías Independientes – Network of Independent Bookshops) comments:

“A very direct approach are the events that some bookstores run: special participation in book fairs, storytelling, reading marathons, and others. The booksellers have a huge creative capacity to get the public interested. This type of event is inspiring for readers, children, and adults (...) It is an active channel to generate readers—above all regular readers who buy a book, finish it, and look for another. Independent bookstores fuel demanding, long-term, passionate readers.”

These loyal—customer—generators work with minimal budget and tools to professionalize their activities, which has ultimately marginalized them from the growing digital market, says Bautista.

“Ebooks dispense with small bookstores entirely. In fact, the direct sale of this format is damaging for all points of sale. This situation has been discussed with others from the industry, and they asked us what we can do to reduce direct sales. The reality is that our capacity for technical investments is minimal. There are bookseller members of RELI who manage their stock in Excel, others with pen and paper. It’s a structural problem. The bookstore is a business which simply isn’t viable in Mexico.”

With the regime change, the federal government abandoned its special

“The booksellers have a huge creative capacity to get the public interested. This type of event is inspiring for readers, children, and adults (...) It is an active channel to generate readers.”

Claudia Bautista

Historical center of Mexico City.
Photo by Javier Santos Guzmán on Unsplash
Part I

a policy of encouraging book production and economic flexibility. Regarding the publishers, an end to the discount war that is suffocating law (la Ley del Precio Único), which would put has a clear proposal: ucation and cultural purposes. Gustavo Cruz a source of development without losing its ed ever, this seems to be moving forward without ccess to books for those that are lacking. How ing its efforts on encouraging reading and acc Part III: Spotting the Coast

marketing, such as support with transport and customs, backing rights sales and audio-visual adaptations, and, even if it does happen to be suspended during the pandemic, support for export. The biggest problem is that the gov ernment has had a paternalistic approach and has failed to see within the culture a productive sector with huge potential to help kickstart the economy.” The view from independent bookstores is not too different, Claudia Bautista says: “The authorities of this administration have worked more closely with us than ever in the past. They have made declarations, but the will is still lacking. The Book and Reading Promotion Law (La Ley del Libro y del Fomento a la Lectura) has been stuck in the Senate for one year; the bookshops’ priorities are just not near the top of the agenda. Approval and application of the law is pending, and so, therefore, is regulation of the competition for small bookstores. Despite what is said about neoliberalism, what has always prevailed in book sales is a competition in which the market rules; and when the market rules, what we have to offer has no monetary value.”

Part II

“Although the role of a bookseller is lessened in the digital world, under these circumstances we know that it is a necessary way forward. Those booksellers with existing websites haven’t seen as many closures. With El Sótano (small bookstore chain) came the idea to create a platform which featured El Sótano’s catalogue but is curated by the booksellers of RELI (Red de Librerías Independientes – Network of Independent Bookshops). The result is a simple website (www.libreriasindependientes.com.mx) that supports our sales and that we wouldn’t have been able to do alone. You access it like any other platform and choose whichever bookshop you want to buy from.”

Part IV: A Backwater

While the publishing archipelago shows signs of interest in becoming a continent, a large part of its constituents continues to exist thanks to their less profitable virtues: their passion for reading and creativity. Bautista has a clear view for the bookstores: “It is now up to us to join the inevitable digital wave and use our creativity to make the reader feel close. Giving a personalized service, through the screen.”

On the same issue, Gustavo Cruz adds: “It is often said that we are the most creative part of the sector, and if this is true it’s because we understand that the biggest part of our job is to build audiences. For this we must support all our launches and commercial efforts with hard work to spread the message: presentations, web content, readings, competitions, and so on.”

Despite the campaign “Dependientes de lectores” (“We need our readers!”) not reaching its intended numbers, what was achieved shows that there are still islands of readers with an unconditional love for books, according to Cruz: “The response has been very good and has made it clear that there is a whole community supporting us, who believes in the work we do, and above all, who reads and values the books that we publish.”

All signs indicate that the passions for reading and for creativity are two of the most important factors for getting us through these tough times, and that readers have not abandoned the sector.

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