

# THE PORTHOLE VIEW: MARKETING TO THE MASSES THROUGH THE LITTLE WINDOW

by

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**MASTER OF PUBLISHING**

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## ABSTRACT

This report is an outsider-view analysis of the Now Or Never Publishing Company's marketing practices and their efficacy, based on the information obtained from Chris Needham, the proprietor and publisher of the Now Or Never Publishing Company and my industry supervisor. With the information that could be gleaned from administrative access to Now Or Never's Facebook, Twitter, and LitDistCo accounts, I will attempt to demonstrate the effects the company's current marketing practices have on their sales and visibility in the marketplace and propose specific actionable recommendations for the company to take in future to make the most of their limited resources and gain more visibility in the marketplace.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This work is dedicated:

To my mother, Ann Peters, who has always supported me and has helped me get this far.

To Laura, for all of her friendship, love and encouragement, and for pushing me when I needed the hand.

And to all the other friends and family who ever told me that I could do this whenever I started to doubt myself. I couldn't have come this far without you.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>APPROVAL PAGE</b> .....	<b>II</b>
<b>PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENCE</b> .....	<b>III</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>IV</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>V</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>VI</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>VIII</b>
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b> .....	<b>IX</b>



<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>NOW OR NEVER PUBLISHING</b> .....	<b>4</b>
OVERVIEW .....	4
<b>PUBLISHING VISION</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>WHY NOW OR NEVER PRODUCES BOOKS</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>WHY NOW OR NEVER MATTERS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>BUSINESS MODEL</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>TARGET MARKET</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<i>Target Segments in order of Priority</i> .....	12
MARKET ANALYSIS .....	14
PRODUCT/SERVICE ANALYSIS .....	16
SWOT ANALYSIS .....	18
<b>NOW OR NEVER PUBLISHING'S CURRENT MARKETING PRACTICES</b> .....	<b>19</b>
OVERALL STRATEGIES .....	19
ONLINE STRATEGIES.....	21
<i>The Now Or Never Homepage</i> .....	21
<i>The Now Or Never Facebook Page</i> .....	23
<i>Now Or Never on Twitter</i> .....	24
<i>Other Online Resources</i> .....	25
<i>Online Sales and Endorsement Strategies</i> .....	27
PHYSICAL STRATEGIES .....	28
<i>Book Releases and Launch Strategies</i> .....	28
<i>Advertising Campaigns</i> .....	29
<i>The Use of Promotional Items</i> .....	30
<i>Merchandising in Brick-And-Mortar Stores</i> .....	30
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>31</b>
THE ISSUE OF DISCOVERABILITY .....	35

THE USE OF NEW DATA DISTRIBUTION METHODS .....	35
REWORKING THE ONLINE APPROACH TO ADVERTISING .....	38
<i>Capturing Data</i> .....	38
MAKING THE BEST USE OF OUTSOURCED SERVICES .....	40
NON-TRADITIONAL MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES.....	41
CHANGING CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND LABOR ALLOCATION.....	42
<b>CLOSING REMARKS.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>APPENDIX – NOW OR NEVER PUBLISHING’S TITLES AS OF FALL 2014, BY AUTHORS’</b>	
<b>LAST NAME.....</b>	<b>48</b>
BACKLIST .....	48
COMING SOON – SPRING 2015 RELEASES.....	49

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Sales and Returns figures from 2009 to 2013 (LitDistCo) .....	15
Figure 2: Most Current Sales and Returns figures - Jan. to Sept. 2014 (LitDistCo) .....	15
Figure 3: LitDistCo's direct retail portal via Fraser Direct .....	18
Figure 4: Trevor Clark's Facebook cover image (unsolicited, Oct. 17, 2014) .....	24
Figure 5: Total Tweets made by @NONPublishing (as of oct. 13, 2014) .....	25
Figure 6: Some of Now Or Never's book spines .....	31



## LIST OF ACRONYMS

### TERMS

ABPBC

ACP

CPC

EPUB

ISBN

RSS

SEO

PR

### DEFINITIONS

Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia

Association of Canadian Publishers

Canadian Publishers Council

Electronic Publication Format

International Standard Book Number

Rich Site Summary

Search Engine Optimization

Public Relations

## INTRODUCTION

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*From a sociological perspective, the relatively low cost of the required technology decentralizes or, as us commentators would say, “democratizes” production, dramatically expanding opportunities for people to participate as both consumers and producers.<sup>1</sup>*

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The richest commodity available in 21<sup>st</sup> century North America is, arguably, choice. First World consumerism has moved out of the Dark Ages when one company’s brand – such as Sears or The Hudson’s Bay Company – held a monopoly over the marketplace, and into a shining new era of availability. Technology has progressed to the point where anyone, at any time, can choose from a virtually infinite number of suppliers offering different products and prices; and should nothing meet the needs of the individual consumer, he or she has the opportunity to find a simple, web-based interface that can be used to create the exact product desired.

The Canadian publishing industry and its market is just one of many that finds itself deeply influenced by this glut of choice, and the consumer’s ability to function autonomously. Just as the walls existing between the consumer and producer of physical goods are breaking down a little more day by day, the divide between the producer of media and its consumer is falling to pieces as social media grows more and more prevalent. The realization that publishing companies are no longer the sole

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<sup>1</sup> Rowland Lorimer, *Ultra Libris: Policy, Technology, and the Creative Economy of Book Publishing in Canada*. (Toronto: ECW Press, 2012), 267.

gatekeepers standing between aspiring authors and publication has led to a new culture of self-publishing that makes use of services like Amazon.com's Kindle Direct Publishing, CreateSpace's print-on-demand capabilities, and Gumroad.com's digital file distribution system<sup>2</sup>.

The most marked problem with this new model arises in attracting the consumer's attention to any single supplier, and independent producers suffer the most drastically. With the sheer number of products available, and visibility becoming more a matter of "the product with the most reviews available online" than "the product immediately at hand", the very idea of what makes something 'visible' has undergone a drastic transformation.

My time spent as an intern at the Now Or Never Publishing Company during the summer months of 2014 gave me a unique chance to experience what I consider the information-age model of book production. Because the business is run out of the publisher's home, I functioned more as a correspondent than a worker present in the office, and my time was spent doing a little bit of every facet of the work necessary for producing books. It gave me the opportunity to gain an understanding of just how difficult it is for a small publisher to not only produce a finished product, but to get attention in the marketplace when there are so many other companies producing so many other products that all jockey for space on retailers' shelves.

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<sup>2</sup> Deborah Jacobs, "How to Self-Publish Your Book Through Amazon", *Forbes*, November 6, 2014. <http://onforb.es/1fa6gQF>

The magnitude of the problem of attaining and maintaining a place in the market was made all the more evident by my introduction to the limited resources available to a small publisher; the team at Now Or Never Publishing has limited manpower, budget and time to devote to the matter of getting the word out about their existing and upcoming releases, and need to be able to make the most of what they have to make the greatest impact.

This report was written to perform two distinct functions: on the one hand, it is meant to explain how a small, independently run publishing company on the scale of Now Or Never can capture success in its endeavors with limited resources in the way of time and manpower; and on the other, it is meant to give the leader of the company, Chris Needham, a list of actions to take in order to increase the company's level of engagement with and visibility to its end consumer with the assistance of social media platforms and low cost physical marketing techniques that can be easily and effectively used by businesses with even the tightest budgets.

The opening sections of the following report will function as an explanation of how Now Or Never functions (as of the year 2014) for the benefit of the outside evaluator, including evaluations of the company's strengths, weaknesses, practices, and the resources that it makes use of as it produces books and engages with authors. The closing section of the report will function as a succinct business plan put together for the benefit of the publisher: a series of objective, actionable tasks that, when undertaken, will make the most of the finite amount of time available to the publisher—

who functions as the gatekeeper of all of the important knowledge that Now Or Never's consumer needs to be made aware of—and allow him to attract consumer attention and help his company compete more comfortably in a marketplace saturated with competitors.

## NOW OR NEVER PUBLISHING

### OVERVIEW

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*Trade book publishing is by nature a cottage industry, decentralized, improvisational, personal: best performed by small groups of like-minded people, devoted to their craft, jealous of their autonomy, sensitive to the needs of writers and to the diverse interests of readers.*<sup>3</sup>

---

As Roy MacSkimming states in *The Perilous Trade*, "...[small presses] represent the heartland of Canadian literature"<sup>4</sup>, and Now Or Never Publishing is an up-and-comer helping to develop that heartland in the west coast of Canada. The Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia (ABPBC) describes Now Or never Publishing as "a boutique west coast publishing house specializing in fiction, non-fiction, poetry and memoir [that] eagerly discovers, nurtures and promotes new and established Canadian literary talent."<sup>5</sup> Though far from the only one of its kind, the Now Or Never Publishing

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<sup>3</sup> Jason Epstein, *Book Business: Publishing Past, Present and Future*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2002), 1.

<sup>4</sup> Roy MacSkimming, *The Perilous Trade: Book Publishing in Canada 1946-2006*. (Toronto: EW Press, 2012), 246

<sup>5</sup> "Member Directory", The Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia, accessed October 2, 2014. [http://books.bc.ca/now\\_or\\_never/](http://books.bc.ca/now_or_never/)

Company is a representative of that still functioning cottage industry, made up of a team of separate people who all work remotely to reach the goal of publishing books. With a small crew of five team members, the company turns out an average of four paperback books in the spring and fall seasons. The company functions on what could best be described as an artisanal model of product creation. Each of its novels is carefully curated and functionally handcrafted by the publisher, a single individual who outsources the bare minimum of the processes required to create a finished novel out of the manuscripts that the company accepts. *This method is highly inefficient, but has been functioning for more than a decade*, and the publisher has been capturing success because of the minimal cost associated with such a concentrated workforce.

As of late 2014, Now or Never's distribution was being done through LitDistCo, a Canadian warehousing and distribution company that takes care of making the company's products available for purchase through online retail outlets and brick-and-mortar stores in Canada and the United States. The company's current marketing and advertising are predominantly carried out through physical mail-outs sent to a pre-existing physical subscriber list and Now Or Never's Facebook and twitter accounts, and reviews being provided by various privately run blogs and newspaper book review sections.

Chris Needham, the company's publisher, works as a go-between for the authors and the editors. He is also the designer and main contact for the individuals who send their manuscripts in for consideration. The other team members include two associate

editors – one of whom is also in charge of posting upcoming release information to the company’s different social media accounts, as well as following up with reviewers and distributing mail-outs – plus a Chief Editor, and a director of PR and marketing who, at the time this report was being written, was on maternity leave and hence unavailable to comment.

The publisher’s goal to contribute to the growth of the retinue of works authored by Canadians for the global market is an important part of their business model that should be applauded, considering the difficulty facing all publishers in this era of overabundance where Canadian products are often overlooked in favor of better marketed foreign works penned by foreign authors.

## PUBLISHING VISION

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*Uniquely Canadian stories told by uniquely Canadian voices.*<sup>6</sup>

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The Now Or Never mandate is to create an outlet for Canadian creativity, and their focus is to draw the attention of artists and authors who want to build the legacy of Canadian literature with thought-provoking works.

Now Or Never has the ability as a small, privately owned publisher to produce any books it wants so long as they themselves can find a receptive market for them. Though the company has a commitment to focus on works of fiction, it has not pigeonholed itself to cater to a certain genre of writing, which has allowed it to amass a varied

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<sup>6</sup> Chris Needham, email to author, October 13, 2014.

backlist. The publisher's literary passions drive the decisions made regarding what should and should not be engaged as a project, and though the staff is small, the efforts of each team member are focused on making sure that each manuscript gets the best possible degree of attention – leading to the creation of the highest quality product possible.

## WHY NOW OR NEVER PRODUCES BOOKS

Bringing its vision of the uniquely Canadian voice to the market, the Now Or Never Publishing Company produces works that encourage its readers to re-evaluate their views of the world and expand their understanding of norms that they may or may not have questioned. The company seeks to reflect and celebrate the unique Canadian nature of its authors' works, and to contribute to the voice of Canada's artistic community.

Now Or Never is devoted to the subversive side of literature; the art of changing minds and provoking thought, of bringing new perspectives to their readers and allowing authors with interestingly different stories to circulate their works. The company's Fall 2014 season releases included a book of poetry on the themes of shattered perception and interpersonal relationships by established First Nations poet David Groulx; a novel dealing with the themes of dissatisfaction with the norm, gaining redemption through the acceptance of one's true self, and the fragility of peace and normalcy in small communities by Ontario-based author Philip David Alexander; a compelling, deeply cerebral intellectual mystery novel that deals with questions of



identity, truth, and the human ability to fabricate and justify even the most incredible information by associate professor at Toronto's York University and first-time author Temenuga Trifonova; and a novel about fighting against reality and being confronted with the knowledge that running from one's problems won't fix anything by Shawn Sutherland, another first-time author from Toronto. The company's backlist is full of works that light on such serious issues as depression, survival, the idea that the world can change with no rhyme or reason, and the battle for personal identity in societies that enforce anonymity and homogeneity in their members.

## WHY NOW OR NEVER MATTERS

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*Our office is tiny, messy, and poorly managed at the best of times. Oh yeah, and we're apparently a "literary publisher interested in contemporary Canadian fiction and poetry," whatever the heck that means. It probably means that we only consider work by Canadian authors. So there.<sup>7</sup>*

---

With the majority of the big Canadian publishing companies based in Toronto, Now Or Never strives to grow the reputation of west coast publishers. The company produces works by authors from a variety of walks of life and has a current roster that includes writers and poets from across Canada.

It should be noted that Now Or Never has noticed a considerable year-to-year increase in the number of submissions it receives from both new and established

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<sup>7</sup> Text from the Now Or Never Publishing Company's Contact page, [www.nonpublishing.com/contact/6/](http://www.nonpublishing.com/contact/6/). Accessed January 4, 2015.

authors, indicating that the strategies it's currently employing to capture the interest of the artistic community are definitely working. The publisher offers personalized, professional services and the company's proprietor, Chris Needham – being an author himself – can identify and communicate effectively with the authors who work through the company, which has allowed Now Or Never to foster good relationships with the artistic community.

## BUSINESS MODEL

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*Small presses invent their own mandates, based on the passions and proclivities of their owners. Living on the margins, for the reward of publishing books that matter to them, they confound economists and consultants hired by government to advise on the industry.<sup>8</sup>*

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Now Or Never Publishing functions as a sole proprietorship, with Chris Needham functioning as the company's owner, publisher, and the chief investor. Needham has forgone basing the publishing company out of its own offices in a move that MacSkimming's research has shown is a good tactic for minimizing overhead – as evidenced by similar actions taken by other small publishers in the past, like Montreal's Véhicule Press and Toronto's Cormorant Books<sup>9</sup>. The need to keep overhead low was also the driving force behind the decision to staff the company with a small crew that includes commissioned – rather than salaried – staff members. This system allows the

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<sup>8</sup> MacSkimming, *The Perilous Trade*, 247

<sup>9</sup> Macskimming, *The Perilous Trade*, 258-259

company to focus on being able to produce the best products possible at a lower price point because employees are only engaged when necessary, meaning that their activity is focused and directed when and where it's most needed. The focus becomes the ability to organize effort and meet objectives quickly, and above all to understand the timeline of any project intimately before engaging employee efforts – thus maximizing the productivity and efficiency of a small staff. This focus on efficiency is what makes it possible for Now Or Never to release its average of eight books a year – an impressive number for such a small company.

Now Or Never Publishing is an Active Member of the ABPBC, meaning that the publisher is a voting member of the association that helps direct ABPBC policies and projects at its Annual General Meeting and through seats on the association's executive board and committees. As part of the constitution of the ABPBC requires that all Active Members also be members of the Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP), Now Or Never can also be found in the ACP's member directory. Both associations work to increase the visibility of Canadian works produced by Canadian publishers, and its membership in both associations allows Now Or Never to make use of the services both offer their high-tier members, including professional development and networking seminars and a say in the policy and trajectory of the Canadian publishing industry.

When it comes to marketing and advertising, Now Or Never Publishing relies on in-house efforts that include mail-outs and notifications via social media. The company's Twitter and Facebook accounts are used to spread awareness of upcoming titles and to

remind subscribers to their mailing list of their backlist, but from an outsider's perspective most of their marketing efforts are highly targeted, which keeps them from making as broad an impact as they could.

## TARGET MARKET

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*If you ask people in the publishing business what sells books, they will give you a lot of answers: reviews sell books, jackets sell books, publicity and promotion sell books, price is important and on and on. And they're right. All of these are important to some small extent.*

*But if you ask the general public what motivates them to buy books, the top two answers by far are "topic/subject" and "author's reputation".<sup>10</sup>*

---

By the publisher's own admission, Now Or Never's focus is on appealing to 'general readers'<sup>11</sup>. This allows them to market to a greater range of potential consumers, but does in some cases make it difficult to capture a consistent audience. The company makes offers to publish subsequent works by authors who work through them, which can be good for capturing a fan base – thus capitalizing on the "author's reputation" means of gaining book sales mentioned in *Publishing for Profit* – and can lead to the growth of the publisher's market as long as the company continues to cultivate client relations and nurture the growth of an author's following to secure future sales. Building

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas Woll, *Publishing for Profit: Successful Bottom-Line Management for Book Publishers, Fifth Ed.* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press: 2014), 183.

<sup>11</sup> Chris Needham, email to author, October 3, 2014.

Now Or Never's brand will inevitably lead to the growth of the brands of each of its contributors; an exponential cycle that can only benefit the company in the future.

Now Or Never's focus on the publication of literary works already works in the company's interests as it allows them to take advantage of one of the largest sections in brick-and-mortar bookstores, and leads to a categorization under *Books>Literature & Fiction> Literary* in Amazon.ca's database.

#### *TARGET SEGMENTS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY*

The company's focus lies in capturing the attention of 'general readers', and their strategies to do so have taken the form of targeted marketing techniques revolving around the existence of a physical mailing list in the past and now focuses more on disseminating information through Now Or Never's social media outlets. At this time, however, there is little in the way of outreach, and a lack of emphasis on capturing the unaffiliated consumer's attention. Considering Now Or Never's 'boutique' size, it is equally important for the company to maintain the attention of existing consumers, as it is to capture the interest of new, untapped consumers. With the company in a current state of stasis as far as internal expansion is concerned, the continued expansion of its consumer base is necessary to facilitate an increase in sales as well as a greater degree of recognition for the authors that it publishes, which will in turn make Now Or Never more attractive to prospective consumers.

Now Or Never's current focus on general readers, coupled with the company's personable and casual public face, demonstrates a current emphasis on the primary

consumer demographic of the individual inclined to read, but not exactly looking for a work of a particular genre or written by a particular author. The focus on the casual consumer is also evidenced by the relatively passive means Now Or Never employs when it comes to capturing attention in the market. With its reliance on the mailing list of subscribers and both its authors' and its own social media connections, the majority of its efforts are spent capturing the attention of consumers who either already know about the company itself, or about the individuals whose works are being published. Impulse buyers – consumers who notice Now Or Never's books on the shelf while browsing the general fiction section of a brick-and-mortar store, or are referenced to them through an online services suggestion based on previous purchases or items being browsed – are the most likely source of supplemental sales when it comes to their primarily targeted demographic, especially considering the company's focus on publishing new and unrecognized authors as well as established ones.

Coming a close second to the general reader in terms of the company's focus is the reader interested in literature written by Canadians. These readers are invested in supporting the Canadian artistic community, and actively go out of their way to find works penned by Canadian authors because they want to engage with Canadian culture. With Now Or Never's professional mandate revolving around the publication of works written by Canadians with resonant stories to tell, they provide a valuable outlet for the Canadian voice to the worldwide reading market. Again, the focus remains on a rather broad demographic, but Now Or Never's marketing trajectory has been formulated in

the interests of maintaining an inclusive portfolio that remains accessible to as many readers as possible.

A tertiary segment of the market that the publisher could more actively pursue is course adaptors at post-secondary institutions. Though Now Or Never takes the potential for interest from this segment into account when it considers the possible reach of a prospective project, they do not appear to make any marketing overtures towards the demographic at the time of this report. Gaining the interest of contemporary literature courses in post-secondary institutions is an avenue that Now Or Never should consider in future. Some sales from post-secondary institution bookstores have been captured, but on the level that suggests the books are stocked as part of the general or Canadian-authored fiction sections, rather than as required reading for coursework.

## MARKET ANALYSIS

Records available from Now Or Never's distribution service indicate a general trend of sales outpacing returns in terms of the company's success, a great indicator that the publisher's products are being well received by the consuming public.

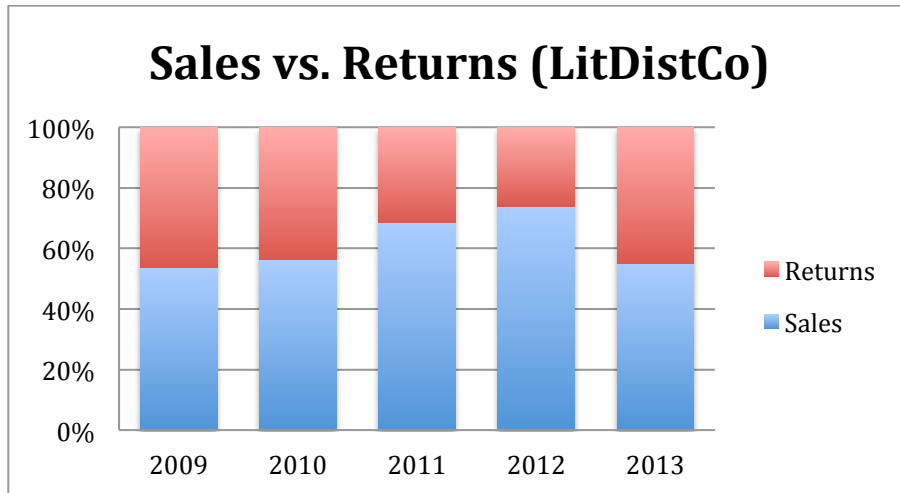


Figure 1: Sales and Returns figures from 2009 to 2013 (LitDistCo)

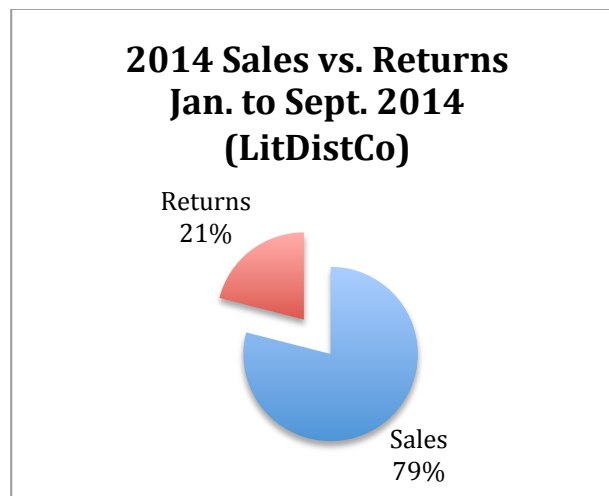


Figure 2: Most Current Sales and Returns figures - Jan. to Sept. 2014 (LitDistCo)

As indicated by the above chart, the company has seen an overall increase in the ratio of sales to returns from 2013 to 2014. This could be indicative of a number of factors, including an upturn in consumer interest in the company's products, a reactionary variance in production numbers on a year-to-year basis to accommodate consumer behavior, and variances in how the company's products are received by



consumers in brick-and-mortar stores. Sales numbers from one year to the next were tripled while the value of returns declined.

Now Or Never does not, at this time, evaluate its marketing methods based on where sales are made. It should be noted, however, that there are a few fundamental demographics beyond 'general readers' that could easily be targeted that are not at this time being actively pursued. The section of the report that follows will attempt to discern the reasons behind the upturn in sales versus returns as indicated by the above figures, and to give the reader a greater degree of insight into the specifics of the products that Now Or Never has made available to its audience.

#### PRODUCT/SERVICE ANALYSIS

Now Or Never's main format is the paperback, and their 5" x 8" trim size makes their publications the perfect, easily accessible pocket book for any reader. The content that Now Or Never seeks out as a company shows that the publisher is in the habit of producing works that provoke thought in their audience, making their works accessible. The general content of the works that the company publishes revolve around self-discovery and introspection and have a great potential to stimulate discussion, which could easily be marketed to the book club demographic as well.

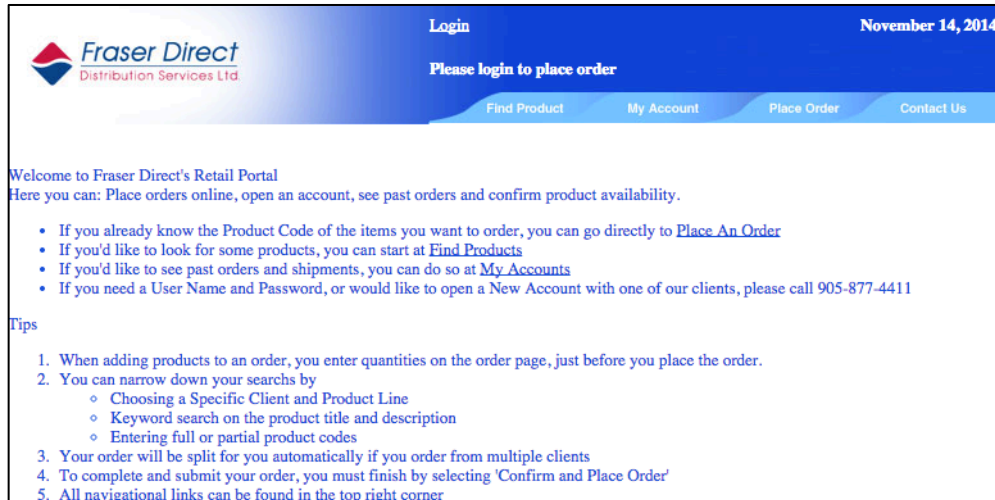
LitDistCo, the distributor that Now Or Never works through, allows purchasers to make a minimum purchase of five books at a 40% discount to regular booksellers and a 50% discount to wholesalers, and requires the publisher to pay for half of the actual freight cost on orders that exceed this minimum, as well as offering a policy of allowing

returns for three months after the invoice date and within twelve months of that same date on any purchase that is not expressly marked as non-returnable or final sale<sup>12</sup>. The above terms are undoubtedly what make them popular with independent publishing companies still trying to gain a foothold with retailers who may feel hesitant to buy in larger amounts, and with independent booksellers who don't want to have an excess of stock on hand at any given point. The distributor offers comprehensive bibliographic data to Canadian publishers, and keeps data aggregators updated with its clients information, which is again appealing to small and independent publishing companies as it cuts down on the amount of information that each company has to distribute and curate in house. LitDistCo also allows its users access to itemized sales information that allows for a direct tracking of the number of books invoiced, paid for, ordered, sold, and returned as well as a breakdown of the fees associated with the services that the publisher accepts as part of the distribution package it signs up for. LitDistCo's online interface, however, is slightly clumsy, and does not allow the user to capture sales and returns data by customer. It does allow its users to download the data provided on its site in Excel spreadsheet form, but this information is a direct transcription.

The direct retail portal is also clunky and doesn't seem to have been created with the intent of encouraging the casual buyer to navigate it easily.

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<sup>12</sup> LitDistCo. "For Booksellers", Accessed October 2, 2014.  
<http://www.litdistco.ca/?q=booksellers>



*Figure 3: LitDistCo's direct retail portal via Fraser Direct*

The user is required to know exactly what he or she is looking for in order to place an order through it, but LitDistCo offers a comprehensive online catalogue of the books they distribute for all of the companies it represents.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

Now Or Never Publishing's strengths lie in its acceptance of submissions from authors with all levels of expertise, and the fact that its small staff ensures the most personal approach to the acceptance and processing of manuscripts possible. The company's publisher performs multiple functions, meaning communication and development processes can occur between the company and its authors with a greater degree of immediacy than is sometimes the case when more tiers of employee engagement are required. It should also be noted, however, that the company's size means that its small staff requires more careful management in order to assure that tasks get completed in a timely manner in the face of budget limitations that make large expenditures – such as grand-scale marketing efforts – difficult to arrange, and means

that the company is required to rely heavily on government grants to supplement their existing resources.

There are opportunities for Now Or Never to gain a broader reputation as a 'boutique' publisher and make the most of their small business reputation, and there is the potential for the company to form partnerships with local, independent book publishers for better placement on local shelves. There are also a wide variety of local business fairs that Now Or Never could begin taking advantage of, and the potential for returns in terms of attention from the local artistic community that could be gained by hosting events like writing contests for young and upcoming Canadian authors with the offer of publication as a prize. The only things that the company have to be wary of in future would be the threat of budget constraints bringing down the number of total feasible publications that could be made in a season, the fact that it has limited visibility through its current online advertising outlets, and the fact that Now Or Never would be in a great deal of trouble if its publisher – who does the majority of the work of making submitted manuscripts ready for production – should happen to become incapable of performing his duties. It is worth mentioning these potential hazards as, at the time this report was being written, no contingencies appeared to be in place for such an occurrence.

## **NOW OR NEVER PUBLISHING'S CURRENT MARKETING PRACTICES**

### **OVERALL STRATEGIES**

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*Marketing differs from sales because it concentrates on a multidirectional push-pull effort that takes into account the customers' needs and fulfills those needs. Sales, on the other hand, concentrates on pushing...products into the stores.<sup>13</sup>*

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Of the suggested points that Thomas Woll mentions in his list of marketing plan components<sup>14</sup>, Now or Never focuses primarily on developing the publicity strategy. The company builds publicity for its releases by sending review copies to online reviewers, newspapers, and magazines as well as posting on its social media accounts and setting up author-centric events like book launch parties and signings. Now Or Never does not at this time circulate a physical catalogue of its books, nor does it have a digital catalogue available in a traditional sense, but the publisher's homepage has individual pages for each of the books that it has published that include pricing information and authors' biographical information. Now Or Never does not (at the time of this report's authorship) have it's own sales force, depending on LitDistCo's sales representatives and catalogue to capture sales to retailers. Extraneous prospects, like sub-rights sales and sales through nontraditional outlets, mail order catalogues, and library and wholesaler promotions are not avenues that the company has considered pursuing at this time, but the publisher does work through Amazon.ca and Chapters, which allow for sales to be captured from non-domestic customers. LitDistCo as a distributor also takes care of its clients US distribution.

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<sup>13</sup> Woll, *Publishing for Profit*, 209

<sup>14</sup> Woll, *Publishing for Profit*, 209-210

The company's current marketing strategies are also highly location-based, which is both a positive in that it focuses the most exposure of new works on the areas where its authors are most active and a negative in that the market local to the publisher isn't always made as aware of new products. Though it keeps the company's expenditures to a minimum and makes it easier for authors to take on part of the effort of marketing their own works without the need for the company to arrange disruptive and costly author tours, Now Or Never doesn't benefit as strongly as its clients do, staying mostly in the background.

## ONLINE STRATEGIES

### *THE NOW OR NEVER HOMEPAGE*

The Now Or Never Publishing homepage is simple and easy for browsers to navigate, with pages that host information on the books that it has produced and the authors that publish through it. Each author's page has an attractive photo of the individual in question as well as a short biographical blurb, and each of the individual book releases has the back cover information visible for the reader to peruse, along with the book's ISBN and retailer's price. There are additional social media thumbnail buttons that allow sharing of content, but there is little in the way of direct engagement on Now Or Never's homepage aside from some pings through Facebook and Twitter on the site's contact information page<sup>15</sup>.

According to the publisher, the initial site design was outsourced to Digital Art Designs LTD – a web design and hosting company run out of Coquitlam ISBN – but that

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<sup>15</sup> Now Or Never Publishing website. Accessed October 7, 2014.

updating the site's content is taken care of in-house by employees with administrative access to the site's backend<sup>16</sup>. That the website is in good shape and updated frequently with information regarding upcoming releases shows the company's commitment to making the most of the information outlets that it has the most control over. The website appears to function primarily as an online portfolio of the publisher's works, with little in the way of audience engagement.

No page on the site has a space for a sidebar featuring a Twitter feed or an RSS feed that could be partnered with updates or blog posts to allow for greater audience attention and participation, which is something that the company should consider in future. Steps like running a blog about the company's upcoming events, or even a Tumblr account to re-blog information about the Canadian publishing industry and circulate information related to upcoming releases with teaser information in order to constantly have something going on would boost Now Or Never's online visibility and provide subscribers with a reason to want to continue to pay attention to the company's endeavors. With the company's main selling point being their biannual release schedule, making website subscribers aware of updates when they happen would be an invaluable means of piquing consumer awareness in time to drive sales of new releases.

It should be noted that Now Or Never includes a stipulation on its contact page that allows for direct-to-publisher returns through its website, but that the company does not at this time allow for direct purchasing. Considering the limited resources available

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<sup>16</sup> Chris Needham, email to author, October 3, 2014

to the company, the lack of direct ordering capability is part of a strategy to avoid incurring the costs associated with single-unit shipping and on-hand warehousing in the company's offices.

#### *THE NOW OR NEVER FACEBOOK PAGE*

This lack of engagement with the target audience is definitely evidenced on the company's Facebook page as well, with 2014 seeing an average reach of approximately forty-two people per post for the twenty-six posts that had been made from January to October, and with a total of twenty-three Likes and two Shares, the word is not getting out about what Now Or Never wants to share with its followers. Something about the content that they have available for their audience isn't resonating in the sense that the individuals that do follow the company on social media don't spread their posts farther than their own feeds.

In some cases, information regarding the company's upcoming releases is spread through the personal Facebook accounts of the authors whose works are being produced. Unfortunately this is not always the most reliable means of getting word out about Now Or Never as a company, as was the case of author Trevor Clark's Facebook account at the time this report was being written. Mr. Clark had changed the cover photo image of his personal account to one that featured the cover artwork of his most recently released novel (see fig.3 below). Though this could have been a fantastic opportunity for Now Or Never to get a small visual plug for its product and potentially have consumer attention drawn to its main website, the picture was cropped in such a way that the company's logo was excluded from the image.





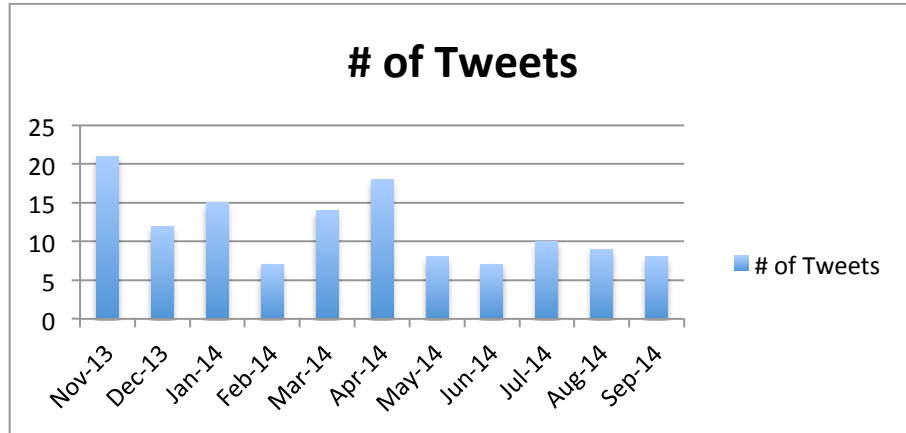
*Figure 4: Trevor Clark's Facebook cover image (unsolicited, Oct. 17, 2014)*

Mr. Clark would not have been obligated to include such information, and his posts about the book did include mention of the publisher, but having a stipulation in author contracts requiring acts of self promotion that use the company's visuals also include the publisher's logo when – in an instance like Mr. Clark's use of his book's cover design as part of his personal profile on a very visible social media network – it could potentially be seen by and interest consumers that would otherwise have no knowledge of the publisher. Which could in turn direct more individuals to Now Or Never's homepage and potentially drive direct sales.

#### *NOW OR NEVER ON TWITTER*

Now Or Never Publishing began tweeting in November 2013, and as of October 2014 has a total of 853 followers and has made a total of 143 Tweets. The company's feed is well curated, including re-Tweets from their authors regarding upcoming books, as well as plugs for new and upcoming releases from their lists and links back to the company's website. It promotes the publishing company's laid-back, offbeat attitude with a personable and casual tone and makes the attempt to draw consumer attention to its

other social media interfaces, but falls a little short when it comes to continued engagement. At the time of the authorship of this report, Now Or Never’s Twitter feed had not been updated since September, while their website had recently undergone a few updates regarding the Spring 2015 releases.



*Figure 5: Total Tweets made by @NONPublishing (as of Oct. 13, 2014)*

Considering previous months show batches of anywhere from ten to twenty posts, sometimes grouped in small clusters of days around the middle of the month, October’s lack of updates can be attributed to the aforementioned Marketing and PR manager’s maternity leave and the unavailability of other employees to take up the task.

#### *OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES*

Now Or Never has a number of online profiles through which it connects with communities looking to engage in and discuss Canadian literature and book in general, all of which it uses to increase its own visibility to the reading public.

Along with its profiles with the ACP and ABPBC, Now Or Never engages in outreach to its market through The 49<sup>th</sup> Shelf, an online discovery and discussion platform for

Canadian books that works to increase the ease with which readers can discover Canadian-authored books. The founders of The 49<sup>th</sup> Shelf have created an authoritative web-based resource to serve as a foundation for a range of collective marketing activities for Canadian books<sup>17</sup> in collaboration with the ACP and the Canadian Publisher's Council (CPC) with the assistance of funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Ontario Media Development Corporation, and Amazon.ca<sup>18</sup>. By creating a profile with 49<sup>th</sup> Shelf, Now Or Never Publishing works towards gaining the attention of readers who are already committed to being able to access works of all genres by Canadian authors. Now Or Never's profile on the 49<sup>th</sup> Shelf website is not as developed as it could be, lacking a full publisher's profile, but it does allow users to leave personalized reviews on the books that they have read, which benefits other potential readers in that direct feedback from reader is often the most compelling means of driving new sales.

Now Or Never has also partnered up with BitLit, giving consumers the chance to own electronic copies of their publications for free as long as they've bought a physical book. BitLit does not charge setup, hosting or participation fees and only takes a small commission on the sale of books that publishers put a price on – a fee that Now Or Never is exempt from, as all of their EPUB editions are priced – allowing for publishers to gain a greater level of engagement with their audience.

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<sup>17</sup> <http://publishers.ca/index.php/about/programs-a-projects>, accessed Nov. 14, 2014

<sup>18</sup> <http://49thshelf.com/About-49th-Shelf>, accessed Oct. 12, 2014

The publisher is also visible on Goodreads, a site that encourages readers to post lists of books that they have read and post information about the books they are in the process of reading. Goodreads allows readers to engage over books and provide reviews in a controlled way. With the benefit of readers providing reviews and referencing books to other prospective readers who share their tastes and may not have access to the review blogs targeted by Now Or Never's advance reading copy mail-outs. Now Or Never does not, at the time of this report's authorship, have much engagement on its books available on their Goodreads profile. It has, however, offered some of its titles as prizes for Goodreads contest winners.

#### *ONLINE SALES AND ENDORSEMENT STRATEGIES*

At the time this report was being written, Now Or Never's online sales were chiefly engaged through the Chapters and Amazon.ca websites. Though the company's website (as mentioned above) hosts the ISBN codes and prices of their releases, it does not currently allow for online purchases to be made through the website. Direct purchasing through the company has traditionally been offered primarily during book launch events, where copies of the books being released are made available for purchase and the author can be asked for an autograph. There appears to be no push to provide consumers with a means of making online purchases directly from the publisher at this time, nor is there a link from Now Or Never's homepage to their distributor's direct ordering service. The cost of warehousing and shipping individual copies from the publishers' offices would not be easily offset by the profit that could be captured, and needing to curate links and changing data in the website's code would add a

considerable amount of work – and potentially cost – since the site’s content is curated entirely in-house, and Now Or Never does not at this time engage the services of a full-time, dedicated web designer, rather relying on the template provided by Digital Art Designs LTD.

When it comes to online marketing strategies, Now Or Never makes use of its Facebook and Twitter accounts to circulate news about upcoming releases, both through the company accounts and through the personal accounts of its authors. The company does not have ad content available to capture consumer attention on any other site, either via banner or partnered post, though the review blogs that feature information on the books published through Now Or Never do reference back to their homepage.

## PHYSICAL STRATEGIES

### *BOOK RELEASES AND LAUNCH STRATEGIES*

Now Or Never’s current release and launch strategies revolve primarily around the authors they represent and takes into account the author’s location, the particulars of the book that is being released, and the author’s online presence and existing network. The locations for the launches are usually areas like local pubs and libraries, and information regarding the events is circulated via online pushes and invitations in tandem with physical mail-outs. The practice is standard and the cost is kept low through a system of semi-reliance on the author’s existing communication networks, meaning that a new and emerging authors don’t generally benefit from having full-on release and/or launch parties. As an author’s reputations and circulation has a chance to

grow, however, so does Now Or Never's degree of assistance when it comes to the expansion of his or her visibility to consumers. Not only does this provide incentive for the authors to develop their own lines of communication between the company and its audience, but it also gives the publisher the opportunity to conserve its resources and provide incentive for authors to stay on with Now Or Never as they continue to produce works.

#### *ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS*

When questioned, the publisher admitted that Now Or Never is seeing diminishing returns on traditional review copy mail-outs with the general public, though they prove valuable to libraries and other institutions<sup>19</sup>. He feels that social media and online reviews are currently more effective with current readers. The publisher went on to mention that, at this point, there are no plans to engage with local, privately owned book stores to secure better product placement, but that the company's budget won't really allow for bids.

Though the company is beginning to shift the focus of its advertising efforts towards digital outlets, it doesn't seem as though the shift has been internalized into the company's current processes. This is evidenced by the lack of engagement that the company captures through its social media sites, and the lack of resources that the company currently makes use of in terms of broadening its online reach. Suggestions regarding potential future moves that could be taken to rectify these issues are made in the closing portion of this report, but taking the company's small size and limited

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<sup>19</sup> Chris Needham, email to author, July 16, 2014

resources, it should be noted that these suggestions will be made with an emphasis on the most time and resource efficient strategies available that will guarantee the highest amount of reach while minimizing costs.

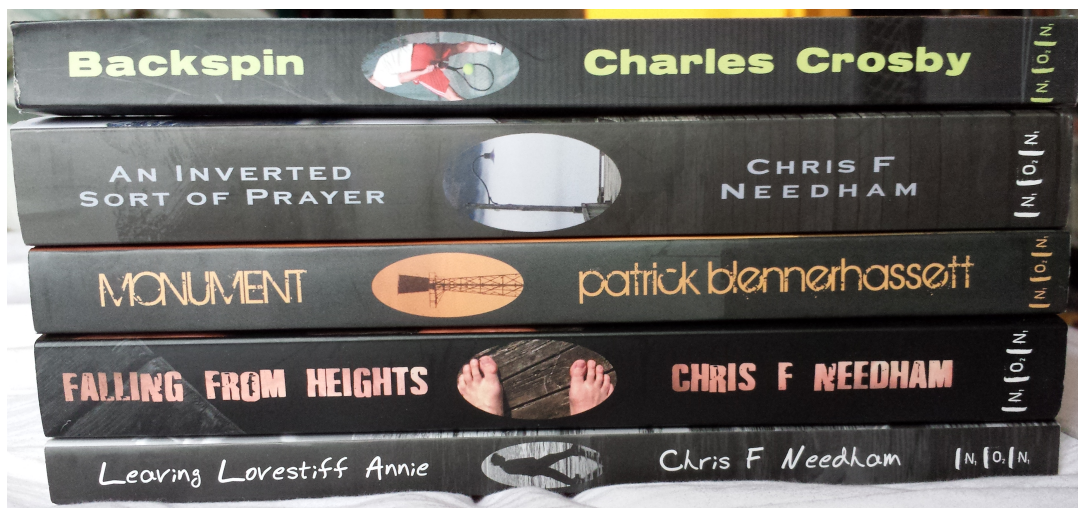
#### *THE USE OF PROMOTIONAL ITEMS*

According to the publisher, Now Or Never makes use of posters and signage for their events, but no visual evidence of their promotional images exist online, including on the company's website and social media profiles. At this time, it would seem as though Now Or Never keeps its use of promotional items to a minimum and doesn't take many opportunities to circulate them outside of their book launches and releases. Having little in the way of extraneous budget, Now Or Never doesn't have much in the way of resources to devote towards producing self-promotional content, and relies more on word-of-mouth to spread its reputation through the social media networks of the authors that it publishes. With a minimalist design in terms of its imprint and an emphasis on understated but impactful graphics, creating more in the way of promotional items would be a good move for the company, especially considering the fact that it isn't in the habit of changing its visual brand and promotional items for the company itself would be easy to stockpile as long as they were of a reasonable size – such that said items would not incur much in the way of extra cost in terms of warehousing and shipping to interested consumers.

#### *MERCHANDISING IN BRICK-AND-MORTAR STORES*

With little in the way of extraneous budget, paying for particular placement on bookstore shelves is something that Now Or Never could not support at the time this

report was being written. This means that the company's existing releases are mixed in with the rest of the general fiction available on the market, and can be somewhat difficult to see on the shelf. Now Or Never compensates for this, however, by keeping a consistent theme on their spines: a solid, dark colored spine with the title text and a window with a portion of the cover image inside, a step taken to help differentiate Now Or Never's product on an at-a-glance basis.



*Figure 6: Some of Now Or Never's book spines*

When questioned about the possibility of entering into partnerships with local, independently-run bookstores and making an attempt to get books by local publishing companies showcased in their own shelves, the publisher (Chris Needham) responded favorably, but said that the company has no extant plans to enact such a strategy.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Though Now Or Never's current practices have been showing returns, there is a lot the company could still be doing to increase the degree of visibility it has as a publisher,



and its products have in the marketplace. When asked to provide an estimate for the amount of capital available to invest in marketing efforts per title, the publisher quoted an amount of five hundred to a thousand dollars per book, per season<sup>20</sup>. Since Now Or Never is a sole proprietorship and the company does not at present capture any additional funds from investors outside of the company, the careful and mindful allocation of resources is the most important thing to be aware of in terms of moving forward with possible improvements to the company's existing strategies.

Because Now Or Never's director of PR and marketing was unavailable for comment when this report was being written, I was unable to gain a greater understanding of the kinds of efforts that were being made in terms of marketing the company's brand and product than what the publisher was able to express, and what I was able to glean from an examination of the information I had access to. Because of the lack of analytics information, and the low engagement logged by the social media outlets the company uses that do in fact log such information, all I can do is base my suggestions on what I, as an outside observer, was able to grasp of the methods already being employed.

First and foremost, Now Or Never needs to put a greater degree of emphasis on the importance of marketing efforts and take steps to increase the company's discoverability to readers, subscribers, and buyers of their content and not just authors.

The company needs to start capturing data on its consumer demographics and the level of engagement it has with prospective clients and consumers in the marketplace.

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<sup>20</sup> Chris Needham, email message to author, September 26, 2014

As of 2014, Now Or Never has not taken steps to capture analytics information, which means that the company does not have a comprehensive idea of how successful or unsuccessful its different marketing tactics are. This means that the company has no base understanding of what demographic its current efforts are appealing to. As a number of analytics capturing services are available for free to users that capture below a certain threshold of hits to their websites, the company is currently suffering by not taking advantage of such sources of valuable information.

Now Or Never needs to put a greater degree of effort into using its social media outlets and making use of outsourced services—such as the use of online services to produce promotional materials at low cost—to boost the publisher’s visibility and provide new ways for the company to interact with the public.

Now Or Never needs to consider using its own local community – and not just the local communities of its authors – to promote itself and gain a greater reputation as a publisher and not just a producer of books.

And finally, because the engagement of additional staff members would be impractical considering the company’s limited resources in terms of space and budget, decisions regarding the future division of labor need to be made. Though the publisher has, to this point, taken on many roles in order to cut down on the number of individuals needed to make the process of creating and marketing the company’s products as streamlined as possible, the processes that are not under his direct control seem to suffer from a lack of direct input regarding information that needs to be

distributed to the consumer. Continuing to function on a model of book production that relies almost solely on the work of a single individual puts the company at risk in the event that the publisher becomes incapacitated or otherwise unable to perform his usual duties.

## THE ISSUE OF DISCOVERABILITY

The main problem that Now Or Never is facing as a publisher is the fact that it is, at current, focused primarily on its trade audience—the audience they capture in the form authors, distributors, and other publishing companies—rather than its consumer audience, which is made up of individuals searching the web for products or services. Now Or Never is proud of the content that it creates, and should go to greater lengths to make itself and its products visible to potential consumers. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, including reworking the company’s existing website to include metadata to allow for a greater degree of SEO, and increasing the degree of engagement the company has with its consumers in the form of providing a greater amount of information about its projects it makes available through social media sites like Twitter and Facebook than it currently circulates. Small changes in practice that include making the company’s website layout compatible with mobile readers such as tablets and smartphones and reworking the methods of data distribution that the company employs will make all the difference in making the end consumer think of Now Or Never and its products, and motivating him or herself to actively engage with the company, thereby becoming an informed, deliberate, and above all loyal consumer.

## THE USE OF NEW DATA DISTRIBUTION METHODS

Now Or Never needs a better means of curating its digital information distribution outlets. Considering the size of its staff and the time constraints put on the publisher, as mentioned above, streamlining the process of updating Now Or Never’s Facebook and Twitter feeds—as well as other social media sites that the company may decide to make

use of in future—is of the utmost importance in order to cut down on the amount of time required to disseminate the necessary updates.

In order to rectify this problem, Now Or Never needs to make use of affordable, time saving services such as Hootsuite and MailChimp.

Hootsuite, a social media management system, allows its users to manage up to one hundred social networks to launch campaigns and promote their brands while offering analytics reports and allowing for up to three hundred and fifty posts to be queued for automatic dispersal. Considering the service allows for a thirty-day free trial and an overall monthly cost of \$9.99<sup>21</sup>—an affordable price considering the amount of time that will be saved by keeping everything in one place, and making sure that additional information such as the reach each post is getting is available. The ability to queue posts would allow the publisher—who, as mentioned above, is the ultimate gatekeeper of all of the information Now Or Never as a company has, and its consumer base needs—to make the most of his downtime while still allowing up to nine other posters to make updates as well<sup>22</sup>.

MailChimp offers users the ability to send up to twelve thousand emails per month to a subscriber list of up to two thousand unique individuals for no cost. With Now Or Never’s current release schedule of an average of four books every six months, this would allow for up to two thousand subscribers to get notified of the company’s new releases and release events and no cost, including updates on each individual book as its

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<sup>21</sup> <http://signup.hootsuite.com/>, accessed January 4, 2015

<sup>22</sup> At an additional cost.

release date is reached. Options exist to buy email credits that allow the user to adhere to any budgetary limitations, another attractive feature of the services, and allows its users access to analytics information that includes subscriber profiles that illustrate engagement and website activity, and functions that—like Hootsuite—allow mail-outs and notifications to be queued for scheduled dispersal and automated emails based on customer behavior and preferences<sup>23</sup>.

Rather than thinking solely along the lines of increasing the amount of work that needs to be done in order to capture the company's audience's attention, the focus of its future actions has to be on saving as much in the time of employee time and effort as possible while still expanding the reach of the information that needs disseminating in order to capture consumer attention. With the option of branching out into other social media services—like Instagram, Pinterest, and Tumblr to name a few—while foregoing the need to visit a dozen sites to do so *and simultaneously capturing a comprehensive analytics report*, Now Or Never stands to benefit greatly from something as simple as implementing the services on a trial basis.

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<sup>23</sup> [www.mailchimp.com/features/](http://www.mailchimp.com/features/), accessed October 16, 2014

*The best advertising for any book is word of mouth. For this the global village green offers limitless scope.*<sup>24</sup>

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### CAPTURING DATA

Now Or Never Publishing does not, as of Fall 2014, capture information through any analytics program—a dangerous oversight considering the importance of online visibility for any company, especially considering Google Analytics is free for any site that generates fewer than 10 million hits per month and captures information such as the number of hits a website gets, whether the hits are unique or made up from repeated site access from certain users, and a rough geographical understanding of where interested users or site browsers are. The information captured by Google Analytics would help Now Or Never as a company paint a clearer picture of the kind of attention its current marketing and social media outreach efforts are gaining, and allow its employees to get an up-to-date understanding of each subsequent move and its repercussions. Now Or Never's website currently functions as a catalogue-cum-contact hub for the company, with its Facebook and Twitter feeds attempting to drive attention to the main website, but without an understanding of how successful or unsuccessful these efforts are, the company will not be able to properly expand.

Now Or Never also needs to put its existing resources to better use, including Facebook's Insights page, which allows its users a good perspective on the kind of attention any one page a user curates actually receives—more information that the

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<sup>24</sup> Epstein, *Book Business*, 172.

company does not currently capture. At the time this report was being written, the Now Or Never Facebook page had a total of two hundred and seventy-one likes<sup>25</sup> with low reach and low engagement—even though it has been a member of the social media site since August 2011. This data is indicative of nothing if not a lack of emphasis being put on capturing consumers' attention. With just a little trial and error, expanding the reach and engagement of other Facebook users with Now Or Never's profile will lead to a greater understanding of the kind of outreach that will honestly benefit the company, allowing for a more streamlined marketing process to be adopted and ultimately leading to less wasted time and resources in future marketing efforts.

Facebook's Ads function—another service that Now Or Never was not employing at the time of this report's authorship—would allow Now Or Never to circulate ads promoting its website at a minimum of \$5.00/day depending on the number of clicks the user wants to incite. Considering the publisher's budget of five hundred to a thousand dollars per title (depending on its ranking in the release roster)<sup>26</sup>, the allocation of eleven dollars per day for an estimated sixteen to thirty five clicks per day for ten days—a total maximum cost of \$111—could lead to a *marked* increase of consumer attention for Now Or Never's homepage, and consequently the promotion of their backlist titles which don't benefit from marketing attention.

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<sup>25</sup> Accessed Friday, October 2, 2014

<sup>26</sup> Chris Needham, email to author, September 26, 2014



## MAKING THE BEST USE OF OUTSOURCED SERVICES

With brand recognition doing its work for publishers like Penguin Random House—who has brought its brand into its consumers' households by putting their brand on household goods like coffee mugs, tote bags, and posters—gaining acknowledgement as a brand instead of just a producer of product that resembles hundreds upon hundreds of other products is of huge importance in today's market, and a strategy that can be employed by publishing companies of any size as long as the right methods are employed. Considering Now Or Never's counter-cultural attitude, and the fact that it has a distinct visual identity, merchandising is an avenue that the company should consider in future to supplement its budget. There exist any number of online services that allow for the creation of items with customizable designs, all of which could be treated as additional advertisement material – such as tote bags with book covers or the publisher's logo featured on them – that Now Or Never's consumers could purchase and in so doing assist with spreading the word about the company.

CafePress is a website that allows its users to customize pieces of merchandise with personalized logos or designs on them and includes templates for everything from shirts and tote bags to coffee mugs and pens. They also allow their users to create personalized shops that are hosted by CafePress but can be linked to any website with the included option of providing HTML to make the shop page fit with the rest of the user's website design. CafePress allows its users to mark up customized merchandise

and capture the amount the item is marked up by<sup>27</sup>, with a plan that does not require payment on the seller's part and entitles CafePress to a total of ten percent of the royalties captured by monthly sales to a maximum of ten dollars<sup>28</sup>. CafePress also takes care of all of the e-commerce support required to run a webstore, including providing secure checkout and credit card payment processing, worldwide shipping, customer support, promotional tools, and sponsored promotions and sales, making it a very low maintenance option for handling online merchandise sales.

Offering customized merchandise as marketing materials like customized tote bags or mugs with the Now Or Never brand on them during book release events—and potentially even to authors as signing bonuses—makes for an affordable and easy way to cement the company's name in the minds of the consumer. An author with a Now Or Never mug in his or her kitchen cupboard will inevitably be asked about it, and the asker will inevitably find out about the company and *might even want to know more*.

#### NON-TRADITIONAL MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

By putting a greater degree of emphasis on marketing itself as a publisher, rather than solely marketing the books it publishes, Now Or Never stands to expand its potential client base far beyond what it currently captures while also spreading its name around to the local artistic community. Just as Anvil Press has grown its reputation

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<sup>27</sup> E.g. An item with a base price of eighteen dollars, with a seller's mark up of five dollars, will sell for twenty-three dollars, of which the seller receives five.

<sup>28</sup> If thirty dollars of royalties are captured in a month, ten percent (three dollars) is deducted from the amount the seller captures from CafePress. If three hundred dollars worth of royalties are captured in a month, ten dollars (not thirty, which would be ten percent) is deducted from the amount the seller captures.

through its partnership with the Vancouver-based 3 Day Novel Contest, Now Or Never could host an annual young writer's competition as part of a partnership with the creative writing departments of local post-secondary institutions like Capilano University, Simon Fraser University, or the University of British Columbia. Forming partnerships with local writer's workshops would also be a good opportunity for the company to become better known, as well as provide the local artistic community with a name to attribute to the sometimes unforgiving-seeming face of the publishing industry.

Establishing such a competition would be a great way to spread awareness of the company's goals and the level of dedication Now Or Never's staff has towards producing quality products, but it would be a fantastic way to scout for new and unrecognized talent in British Columbia, and foster solid relationships with local authors. Add the stipulation of a modest fee for entrance into the contest—such as the 3 Day Novel Competition's \$50 signup cost—and offer winning entries the chance to be published as part of an anthology, and Now Or Never stands to produce a product that has an built-in market made up of prizewinners and their friends and families; as well as a means of reaching out to the local artistic community and providing a whole new way for Canadian writers to be acknowledged.

#### CHANGING CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND LABOR ALLOCATION

It should be noted, however, that before any of these changes can be made, a restructuring of the way Now Or Never's staff is engaged in its projects and the ancillary tasks and duties that go hand in hand with them needs to occur. No amount of planning can make up for lacking channels of communication, and no amount of effort by a single

worker can make up for uneven workload distribution. Changes to these aspects of Now or Never's current practices as a company need to be made in order to lay the groundwork for future expansion and success. Because the publisher performs the majority of the duties required to move projects from the stage of manuscript acceptance to final proofing and design, *and* is the chief gatekeeper of all of the information that needs to be circulated to the end consumer, sales representatives, and marketing channels, his time and its allocation is of the utmost importance. Because of the limited availability of free time in his schedule, he is unable to personally curate the many channels of communication the company has. Now Or Never's Facebook and Twitter accounts—along with the company's online profiles on Goodreads and the ACBP websites—go without consistent updates because the publisher does not at this time have the ability to update them himself, nor the proper channels of communication with the employees he currently has functioning as the curator/curators of those accounts.

Because all of the employees working with Now Or Never are disassociated, a clear, well-defined schedule needs to be provided by the publisher regarding when information on any project—or group of projects—that the company has engaged in order to maintain visibility with the end consumer through its social media outlets. When considered in tandem with the publication schedule that the company already formulates for its products, demarcating certain milestones to make public—such as final rounds of editing, beginning the design process, and sending a finished book to the printer—as they come due is a way to maintain audience interest in a product and

engage potential consumers who could otherwise be distracted from their interest in purchasing the final product.

Including a clause in author contracts requiring authors to be more responsible for making information about their novels and Now Or Never as a company is another step that should be taken in order to relieve some of the pressure riding on the publisher's shoulders with regards to releasing information about upcoming releases as well. By putting together a schedule of pre-agreed upon releases for the authors to post to their own social media sites with information about the progress of their projects' development and maintaining their own levels of engagement with their readership, each author can contribute positively to driving consumer interest in the final product, and hopefully see an increase in sales numbers. Such a clause in the contract is also beneficial to the publisher in that it allows the publisher to discuss the level of engagement the author is willing to maintain with his or her audience, and establish the author as a member of the publishing team rather than just as a client, engendering a positive sense of involvement.

## CLOSING REMARKS

My time spent working with the Now Or Never Publishing Company provided me with invaluable insight into the workings of a small, independent publishing company. The efforts of Chris Needham and the other staff members at Now Or Never and their commitment to the Canadian publishing industry and the artists and authors that make up Canada's artistic community are inspiring, and the amount of hard work that goes

into every release gives me a great deal of hope when I think about the future of the publishing industry, both within Canada and beyond its borders. I believe that by taking the recommendations made in this report, the Now Or Never Publishing Company will be able to capture more information regarding how to best serve and attract the attention of its target demographic; all while gaining a greater understanding of how to market itself and its products and a greater degree of visibility in the Canadian and global marketplaces. By making use of all of the available resources listed in the above report, it should be possible for any publishing company with limited resources in the way of employee time and manpower to practically and efficiently use social media platforms, low- to no-cost online services, and low cost physical marketing techniques to make themselves more visible to their target consumers.

I also feel that the description of Now Or Never's practices and strategies will be helpful for anyone looking to start a small publishing company of his or her own. Considering Now Or Never's success, even in the face of the limitations and constraints it functions under as a small endeavor that manages to run based almost entirely on the efforts of a single individual, it should be possible for anyone to follow in Chris Needham's footsteps with the right amount of knowhow, ingenuity, and dedication to publishing and the literary arts.

With the need to engage the consumer on his or her own fast paced level becoming more and more important, streamlining the business of disseminating information to the end consumer becomes more and more important as well. Taking advantage of

services that can be used for minimal or nominal cost while maximizing utility and time-efficiency is of the utmost importance for the Now Or Never Publishing Company to consider as it moves forward.

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APPENDIX – NOW OR NEVER PUBLISHING’S TITLES AS OF FALL  
2014, BY AUTHORS’ LAST NAME

BACKLIST

Alexander, Philip David. *North Of Here*.

Alexander, Philip David. *Peacefield*.

Beal, Jeremy. *Johnny Kicker*.

Blennerhassett, Patrick. *Monument*.

Blennerhassett, Patrick. *Random Acts of Vandalism*.

Clark, Trevor. *Dragging The River*.

Clark, Trevor. *Hair-Trigger*.

Clark, Trevor. *Escape And Other Stories*.

Clark, Trevor. *Love On The Killing Floor*.

Cotton, Brad. *A Work In Progress*.

Crosby, Charles. *Backspin*.

Dunlop, R.W. *A Clap For Cadence*.

Green, Gila. *King Of The Class*.

Groulx, David. *In The Silhouette Of Your Silences*.

Grubisic, Brett Josef. *This Location Of Unknown Possibilities*.

Laverty, Micheal. *Hands Of The Tyrants*.

Mackay, Colin. *Remote*.

McConaghy, Mel. *The Stoker*.

McPherson, Christian. *My Life In Pictures*.

McPherson, Christian. *The Sun Has Forgotten Where I Live*.

Needham, Chris F. *An Inverted Sort of Prayer*.

Needham, Chris F. *Falling From Heights*.

Needham, Chris F. *Leaving Lovestiff Annie*

Rolli. *God's Autobiography*.

Sneath, Daryl. *All My Sins*.

Strong, Trevor. *Edgar Gets Going*.

Sutherland, Shawn. *Seeing Red*.

Trifonova, Temenuga. *Rewrite*.

Worth, Liz. *PostApoc*.

COMING SOON – SPRING 2015 RELEASES

Mason, Paul Nicholas. *The Night Drummer*.

Sampson, Mark. *The Secrets Men Keep*.

White, Calvin. *The Bodies And Other Political Poems*.