

IfMS® Announces New Line of Books for *Complete Morons*®

Boss Says Market for Intelligence-Challenged is Underserved

Editor's Note: We received the following news release which we believe wonderfully illustrates the principles of branding for book publishers.

(LOS ANGELES—April 1, 2002)—The Institute for Moronic Studies® (IfMS®) (NASDAQ®: IFMSORG®) today announced the publication of a new line of books to meet the needs of the severely intelligence-challenged. Dr. X.S. Saliva®, Founder and Boss of The Institute®, said in a barely-legible written statement that “the percentage of Complete Morons® in the population is increasing rapidly, but they don’t often go to bookstores because they can’t understand most of what’s there.” Dr. Saliva says The Institute® will attempt to transform Business Books® using lessons learned from the growing graphic novel market. “Graphic novels contain few words,” drools Saliva, who holds a Doctorate in Psychology® from The Online College of The Bahamas®. “Graphic novels are able to communicate complex literature through pictures alone,” dribbles Saliva, adding, “we believe we can do the same with Business Books®.”

The Complete Morons® Series® will debut at the May meeting of the Book Retailers Association® (or BRA®—“that’s funny,” spits Saliva) in New York with the release of the first three titles, *Check Cashing For Complete Morons*®, *Looking Busy at Work For Complete Morons*®, and *Telephones For Complete Morons*®. “The telephone book is our A-list title for the Fall season,” Saliva gushed. “Forget about computers—they’re well beyond the grasp of most Complete Morons®. Although they’re getting trickier all the time, telephones are still within the range of the significantly sub-intelligent.” *Telephones For Complete Morons*® begins with

the basics of speaking into the correct end of the receiver, and works up to more challenging activities such as retrieving voicemail messages.



Complete Morons® logo by Dr. Agon

Looking Busy at Work For Complete Morons® is a career advancement guide, according to Dr. Saliva. “Complete Morons® aren’t corporate climbers,” oozes Saliva, “they earn less than the average employee. Very few have broken through the glass ceiling that keeps them out of the ranks of senior management and boards of directors.” Saliva cites former Enron® Chairman Kenneth Lay as “a beacon of hope for Complete Morons® everywhere,” noting that for someone to achieve Lay’s rank and really not understand anything about the financial dealings of the corporation he is running is “a milestone in modern management.”

Dr. Saliva believes that The Institute®’s organizational chart can serve as a model for other companies. “First of all, it’s a chart, which means it’s easier for Complete Morons® to understand. Secondly, we don’t use vague jobs titles such as ‘Vice President’—what does a vice president do, anyway? We use a flattened hierarchy at The Institute®—I’m the Boss, and

everyone else is an Underling. That’s something Complete Morons® comprehend intuitively. The point for them is not to rise through the ranks, but to hang onto the jobs they already have. Looking busy is the best strategy a Complete Moron® has for realizing his or her career goals.”

The book *Check Cashing For Complete Morons*® is IfMS®’s entry into the personal finance category. Noting that most Complete Morons® don’t have a bank account, Saliva refers to check cashing as “a survival skill.” The book includes proven endorsing techniques, types of ID required by many check cashing outlets, how to cash a check at the supermarket, and other strategies for reducing check cashing fees.

“Most guides for idiots, dummies, or other conventionally stupid people are over 100 pages long,” complains Dr. Saliva. “The Institute®’s books are no longer than 50 pages, and they teach with pictures. If a picture’s worth a thousand words, I guess you could say we don’t publish anything longer than 50,000 words,” says Saliva, grinning like an idiot. “The Institute®’s books are well-suited to the new global marketplace. There are few words to translate,” spews Saliva.

Asked about producing e-books or PDF® books, Dr. Saliva bubbled. “First, you’d have to find the darn things online, then you’d have to download them and either send them to a printer or install them on an e-book reading device. That’s not our market,” dripped Saliva.

Business Books® are just the beginning for IfMS®, Saliva leaked. The Institute® plans a health and fitness cluster beginning with *Peeing For Complete Morons*®, nutritional guides such as *Chewing Your Food*

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For Complete Morons®, and a series of sports monographs starting with *Pretending to Understand Football For Complete Morons®*. The product line includes motivational blank audiotapes that are “perfect for meditation.” The Institute® also runs a successful speakers bureau. “Many corporate meetings require presentations by Complete Morons®,” expektorates Saliva. “We are able to provide them at very nominal rates.”

THE INSTITUTE FOR MORONIC STUDIES® is a non-profit organization devoted to the needs of the severely intelligence-impaired. Founded by Dr. X.S. Saliva® a long time ago, The Institute® distributes 100% of its revenues to employees. “When sales increase, we all benefit,” sputters Saliva. “So far, we have paid out \$782.50 to employees of The Institute®. We think that speaks volumes about the size of this market and our determination to serve it with heart,” concludes Saliva.

If you would like a free review copy of any of the Complete Morons® Series® books—or an interview with Dr. X.S. Saliva®—just let us know. You can probably find the IFMS® on the World Wide Web® if you know how to use that technology. The Institute® has applied for a phone number and mailing address, and will pass those along as soon as they are available.

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Complete Moron®, Complete Morons®, ...For Complete Morons®, the Complete Morons® Series®, the Complete Moron® caricature, The Institute for Moronic Studies®, The Institute®, IFMS®, Business Books®, and Dr. X.S. Saliva® are all registered trademarks of The Institute for Moronic Studies® and are used here with the poorly-worded permission of The Institute®. Enron® is a Registered Tradename of The Enron Corporation, and is used without permission. NASDAQ® is probably a registered anagram. The Online College of The Bahamas® and Doctorate of Psychology® are registered tradenames of The Online College of The Bahamas®, but it doesn't matter because they are outside of the United States. The Book Retailers of America® and BRA® (that's funny) are not registered tradenames as far as we know, but we're not taking any chances. We think PDF® is a registered trademark of Adobe® and we're not sure if anyone owns the word “e-books” yet. World Wide Web® is probably a registered trade name, too.

Pro Bono

Client: The Julia Moore Bad Poetry Competition

This month's pro bono campaign illustrates the value of humor in online marketing. Patron Saint Productions was asked if there was anything we could do to increase the number of submissions to the annual Bad Poetry Competition sponsored by the Flint, Michigan, public library. The contest winner always gets good media coverage, but that comes too late to inspire people to enter. Submissions had been declining for several years, and the contest was in danger of being discontinued if participation didn't improve.

Our first suggestion was to include a category for Bad Raps, since rapping is so popular right now and almost everyone agrees that most rapping is just very bad poetry. That suggestion got a tepid reception. So we retreated to what we know best: online publicity.

The news release being used to promote the contest was too long for an online discussion group posting. It was over 500 words, about 8 paragraphs, or two typed pages. Worse than its length, however, was its lack of humor. If you're promoting a bad poetry contest, you can pull out all the stops, because if your prose doesn't work, so much the better. Here's the discussion group posting we wrote to promote the contest:

Subject Line: WANTED: Humorously Horrible Poetry

Once again it's that time of year
When lousy poets loft a cheer,
When raunchy rhymers rake an ear,
When iambic idiots amble near.

What could cause these loser lits
To surface from their reeking pits?
Blame the putrid poetry competition
from—where else—Flint, Michigan.

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The Julia A. Moore contest is free. It's sponsored by the public library. They actually seek the verse of fools. If you're inclined, here are the rules:

<http://www.flint.lib.mi.us/about/programs/jmoore/contest.html>

That's more like it! About 80 words, a few short verses, and a link to the contest rules. We posted this message to about 20 Usenet newsgroups and about 20 Internet mailing lists devoted to poetry, prose, writing, and literature.



We received enthusiastic support from the moderators and owners of the discussion groups where we posted, and generated many friendly, funny replies from group members. And we didn't get any complaints. Humor goes a long way toward softening the usually tense environment in online discussion groups.

When the March 19 deadline for the contest passed, the Flint Public Library informed us that contest entries were up 60% this year. They probably didn't appreciate the subtle swipe we took at their home town. After the movie *Roger & Me*, if you live or work in Flint, you need to develop a sense of humor about it. It helped us promote the contest online, and it will help Flintonians glide through life as well.

