

PUBLISHING PORTAL

PublishersMarketplace Well Stocked

PublishersMarketplace is the companion web site to Michael Cader's popular gossip zine, *PublishersLunch*. If you haven't tasted *PublishersLunch* yet, we highly recommend it. Every day, Michael Cader, president of book packager Cader Books, dishes up paragraph portions of publishing news spiced with insightful and sometimes deliciously sarcastic commentary.

Cader's latest effort is PublishersMarketplace(PM), a publishing resource center that offers some free content, but makes most of its wares available only by subscription at \$15/month. Patron Saint Productions recently took a tour of the site, and here's our report.

Contacts Database

The most valuable feature of PM is the database of contacts. It's a *Who's Who* of book publishing professionals, containing contact information such as job titles, e-mail addresses, and direct phone lines for thousands of industry insiders. We have never seen this depth of data in any other publishing directory. For example, searching for "Editors" at "Random House" produced an astounding 86 matches! Even more impressive is the high level of accuracy in a profession that constantly plays musical cubicles.

The main defect in the database is the lack of mailing addresses and fax numbers. While this information is readily available elsewhere, it would be nice to have it in one place. Also, having address information would enable searching by city or zip code.

Deals Database

PM's database of publishing deals is simply stunning. Every day, Cader logs about five new deals into the database. Deals include the results of manuscript auctions, reprint rights auctions, movie options, foreign language rights sales, etc. For March of 2002, a total of 159 deals were logged. We don't know of any other place to

find this kind of valuable insider data about the publishing industry.

Patron Saint Productions used the deals database recently to help a client prepare a book proposal. We were able to get a list of deals made by HarperBusiness and other publishers in the past two years. Each entry told the names of the agents and editors involved, estimates of the amount of money changing hands and, best of all, contact e-mail addresses. Using this data, our client was able to zero-in on a handful of agents and acquisitions editors to pitch his proposal to, with detailed intelligence about recent deals they had done. This kind of information is priceless to agents and authors, who not surprisingly the biggest paying constituency for PM.

Publishers Marketplace

Members

In an interview at the BEA, Cader was cagey about how many paying members PM has. Playing with the site, we were able to find 300 member listings — but that number is misleading. Members can have multiple listings, and most do. Also, members are only listed if they have set-up a web page (free with membership).

Of the 300 member listings on PM, roughly one-third were agents and one third were writers. Publishers and editors combined for 35 listings, about the same as consultants and marketing people. The free web pages that come with membership are simple, cleanly designed and easy to build.

Rights Board

PublishersMarketplace offers a board to list properties for sale. When we reviewed the site at the end of

May, there were 114 active offerings. Members can post items on the board for free. Each item gets a two-week run, but can be re-posted indefinitely.

PublishersLunch has run notices of properties sold through the rights board, so the rights board works. Exactly how well it works is anyone's guess. But given the quality of the membership of PM, the board provides an inexpensive way to get literary properties in front of buyers. Publishers will want to use the board to offer paperback reprint rights, and P.O.D. authors might find the board a useful way to locate publishers willing to pick up a project that has promise.

Book Tracker

PM allows members to track the Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble Online rankings for their books, as well as rankings on 11 bestseller lists. This feature seems to be extremely popular with members, perhaps reflecting the high number of authors among PM's ranks. The focus of authors and others on the virtually meaningless Amazon.com rank has been the bane of many a publishing professional. For those who want a stat worth tracking, try Ingram's sales line: (615) 213-6803. Dial the number, key-in the ISBN for any book, and you'll hear how many copies Ingram sold this week, last week, this year and last year. Those are numbers worth tracking!

Summary

If you are in any way involved in the buying and selling of books, PublishersMarketplace is an extremely useful resource. We highly recommend that you take advantage of the free trial period, and we believe that the subscription price is a fair value. If your need for data is intermittent, you can always cancel and sign-up again the next time you have a project that requires the *deep data satisfaction* found only at PublishersMarketplace.

