



EPS Insights: 7 June 2005

**R.R. BOWKER: BRINGING THE DOI INTO THE BOOK PUBLISHING MAINSTREAM**

*\* At the past weekend's Book Expo America, R.R. Bowker formally introduced its Digital Object Identifier (DOI) registration and application services. Re-christened and trademarked as MarketLinks, and focused clearly on extending book publishers' online marketing strategies, the DOI becomes a new core element of the 133-year old "Books in Print" publisher and ISBN agency's transformation from bibliographic publisher to marketing and transaction services provider.*

*by Steve Sieck, Managing Partner, EPS-USA*

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R.R. Bowker is partnering with Content Directions for use of the latter's underlying DOI technology and will become, in effect, its exclusive partner for the book industry (Content Directions will maintain its current direct relationships with existing book publishing clients such as McGraw-Hill Education). Indeed, Bowker was a nearly inevitable choice to bring the DOI into the commercial infrastructure of the book publishing industry. Publishers already provide ongoing streams of metadata to the "Books in Print" database. An optional DOI prefix will become an automatic opt-in within the process of ISBN registration. As with ISBNs, registration of DOIs will be priced in blocks according to the number purchased – for example, to register 1,000 DOIs with Bowker will cost "in the \$500 range." The higher level of ongoing services associated with DOI registration will be reflected in ongoing maintenance fees depending on the level of services provided.

Accompanying the announcement were case studies illustrating the DOI's impact on the all-important organic search results for three publishers in the religious, college, and trade segments. An early before-and-after test was conducted with Acropolis Books, using 75 titles. Using the same search terms, the number of titles appearing on the first page of Google results went from 4 to 59; the number ranked first went from 0 to 27. Houghton Mifflin created MarketLinks for about 8,000 active titles, with interlinking for all other Houghton titles by subject (from *Books in Print*) as well as annotations, covers, and other relevant content from the *Books in Print* database. By adding its own website as the top choice in the DOI "buy the book" menu, the publisher generated over 35,000 visits to [hmco.com](http://hmco.com) between August 2004 and January 2005, creating about 2,500 shopping cart visits on the site in the month of January. MarketLinks also have been registered for approximately 25,000 active Penguin and Dorling Kindersley titles. In addition to standard metadata, Bowker added data elements from *Books in Print* (e.g. review citations, awards, bestseller notations) and is adding full-text reviews from *Publishers Weekly* and *Library Journal*. From November 2004 to April 2005, MarketLinks generated over 70,000 visits; total referrals to the site have increased 48%, with more than 60% of Google referrals the result of MarketLinks. (The largest spider impact has been seen from "related titles on this subject" interlinking.)

Despite earlier evidence of DOI effectiveness (see links to our own white papers on this subject below), the book industry has shown characteristic caution in

adopting it as a linking standard. Now, integrated with the industry's core identification system, an inflection point should be near. With it should come an era of greater publisher control over their own online marketing and distribution, and an opportunity to regain some of the market leverage lost to distributors such as Amazon and Barnes & Noble in the last few years.

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#### RELATED LINKS

R.R. Bowker: <http://www.bowker.com>

Content Directions: <http://www.contentdirections.com>

"Economic Benefits of the DOI in Content Marketing" white papers:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1220/eps1>

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1220/eps2>

#### FROM THE EPS ARCHIVE

##### Previous EPS Insights

R.R. Bowker: adding value in the book and library marketplace, EPS Insights, 30 September 2004

<http://www.epsltd.com/accessArticles.asp?articleType=1&updateNoteID=1387>

Nielsen BookData – where will new registration agencies take DOI? EPS Insights, 6 February 2004

<http://www.epsltd.com/accessArticles.asp?articleType=1&updateNoteID=1169>

R.R. Bowker bolsters services strategy with PubEasy, EPS Insights, 21 February 2003

<http://www.epsltd.com/accessArticles.asp?articleType=1&updateNoteID=121>