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- **Konferenz Tools of Change Frankfurt: Jetzt noch mit Frühbucherrabatt!**

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“Enormous market opportunities are emerging around the world” - Interview mit Andrew Savikas

Der us-amerikanische Fachverlag O'Reilly ist ein Pionier beim E-Publishing. Von vielen deutschen Verlagen, die „lieber erst einmal abwarten“, unterscheidet O'Reilly nicht nur die Experimentierlust, sondern vor allem auch der grundsätzliche Optimismus über die Chancen der Digitalisierung. Im folgenden Interview nennt Andrew Savikas, Vice President of Digital Initiatives von O'Reilly Media, die zentralen Erfolgsfaktoren beim E-Business.

Who are the key players in the digital arena that have impressed you in the past year? How are they reshaping the way publishers and other media companies do business?

Andrew: It's hard to avoid the impact of the big digital players -- Amazon, Google, and Apple. And important to remember how young those companies are, especially compared to major publishers. Amazon is one of the best there is at investing in multiple (and sometimes competitive) strategic options: Mobipocket, Booksurge, Lexcycle, AbeBooks, Shelfari. These are all relatively low-cost ways for Amazon to make sure they have a strong position in many different futures. Google has now indexed more than a trillion web pages, which is several orders of magnitude more pages than are in all of the books ever published. A decade ago, "information" and "search" probably meant books for most people (remember the Yellow Pages?). Today if you're not in Google, you don't exist. Apple dragged the mobile phone and media industries into the future with the iPhone. When browsing the Web, watching movies, buying music, and playing games became something fun, simple, and so convenient you could do it wherever you were, the potential became very clear. Now more than a billion apps have been downloaded on the iPhone, and that's just the tip of the mobile paid content iceberg.

On the smaller scale, Lexcycle made an enormous impact on publishing, especially given their size (staff of 3, I believe). They demonstrated that a smart and nimble company could beat anyone when it comes to digital and mobile. Amazon was able to undercut and outmaneuver bookstores, in part because it didn't have to support a huge physical infrastructure of retail outlets. Companies like Lexcycle can undercut and outmaneuver Amazon because they, in turn, don't have to support a huge physical ecommerce, inventory, and fulfillment infrastructure. There are hundreds of startups getting into the digital publishing space, and that's a sure sign that there's still plenty of opportunity to go around.

How is social media changing how publishers communicate with each other and with their audience?

Andrew: Social media means that we don't talk *to* an audience, we talk *with* an audience. We are social creatures, and we seek out connections. Give people the opportunity to connect and to collaborate, and you'll be rewarded. I look at one of our top sellers of last fall, a book called "Real World Haskell" about an obscure programming language. The authors wrote the book out in the open, asking not just for feedback, but placing a comment link at the bottom of every single paragraph in the entire book. 8,000+ comments later, they had a great book that's gone on to sell very well in print and in digital form. Everyone trying to connect with an audience using social media should read "The Cluetrain Manifesto" -- it really lays out the new rules of the game for business on the Web. But the big



story in social media right now is Twitter. People dismissed it as a silly fad, but look at the role it has played in the protests in Iran. Tim O'Reilly will be talking a lot about Twitter at TOC Frankfurt, and his views on why Twitter matters for media publishers are incredibly useful in understanding this new medium.

Mobile novels have been a hit in Japan and other parts of Asia for nearly a decade now. With mobile reading now representing a serious opportunity for growth in the US and beyond, what can we learn from our international counterparts? What sorts of forums exist for discussing new developments and challenges for digital publishing on an international scale?

Andrew: We can try to learn as much as possible! The truth is that no one knows in advance what will work and what won't for a given audience or type of content when it comes to mobile delivery. The best we can do is try to learn as much from the small successes and failures of others so that when it comes time to place a bigger bet, we can do it with at least a little bit of confidence. And while it's very likely consumers in the West will adopt the same habits and technologies that are already prevalent in other parts of the world, it's also likely that enormous market opportunities are emerging around the world, where demographics and economics are creating the next century's middle class. More than half of India's population is under the age of 25; they will not need to be convinced to read on a mobile phone.

The challenge is that so many of us in publishing spend too much time looking around our own geographic market -- a market defined by geographic boundaries that mean much less for digital content. So it's important to make the effort to engage with those from other regions, and to use events like TOC Frankfurt as an opportunity to learn about what's happening elsewhere in Europe and around the world.

What are the key success factors for selling e-content?

Andrew: Electronic content is nearly always read while connected to the broader Web. That content needs to behave like the Web it's connected to -- and that means extensive hyperlinking and open standards, the fertilizers of those trillion Web pages. It's also critical to remember that people rarely pay for content itself -- people rarely pay for products in general; what they pay for is a solution to their problem. In the case of content, that problem may be that they want information, or entertainment, or to find out what everyone else is talking about so they can join the conversation. It's also as much (or more) about the packaging and convenience as about the content itself. There's already so much content on the Web (and in the world in general) that people will gladly pay for someone else to find and filter the good and interesting bits, and bundle them up into a convenient package, even if those pieces are available elsewhere for free. Adding to the recommended reading list, "The Economics of Attention" does a fantastic job of explaining why the most important scarce resource right now in an information economy is human attention.

What kind of "change management" do publishers and other media companies need?

Andrew: The willingness to fail, and the insistence on learning from those failures. Try as many different things as you can, taking care to minimize the cost of failure, but maximize the amount you learn from either success or failure. That's one of the main reasons we started the Tools of Change Conference (first in California and New York, and now in Frankfurt). We need a way to spread the knowledge of publishing innovators -- especially people and topics that weren't likely to show up in the mainstream trade press. We also want the industry to have a place to share the knowledge they're building from the experiments and new ideas in their companies.



Konferenz Tools of Change Frankfurt: Jetzt noch mit Frühbucherrabatt!

Die internationale Konferenz „Tools of Change“ des us-amerikanischen O'Reilly Verlages wird von der Frankfurter Buchmesse nach Deutschland geholt. An einem Tag erhalten die Teilnehmer einen kompakten Überblick zu aktuellen Entwicklungen im Verlagswesen, und zwar vor allem im Hinblick auf die Digitalisierung. Mit Tim O'Reilly spricht einer der Pioniere des Web 2.0-Konzeptes. Konferenzsprache ist Englisch.

Folgende Themen sind geplant:

- A global survey of mobile reading technology and business models
- An in-depth and data-driven look at the relationship between piracy and print book sales
- An overview of current ebook devices from Europe and around the world
- Lessons learned from successful entrepreneurs (including those behind the Stanza iPhone ebook reader) about building a next-generation publishing business from the ground up
- The Twitter revolution and what it means for publishers
- Emerging standards for discovering and selling books online and in the cloud
- What readers really want (and need) from publishers
- Practical technical information about developing engaging and effective mobile content

Referenten:

- Tim O'Reilly, CEO and founder, O'Reilly Media
- Neelan Choksi, COO, Lexcycle
- Cory Doctorow, Happy Mutants LLC
- Dominique Raccah, Publisher, Sourcebooks
- Brian O'Leary, Principal, Magellan Media Consulting Partners
- Michael Tamblin, VP of Content, Sales and Merchandising, Shortcovers
- Peter Brantley, Director, Internet Archive
- Timo Hannay, Publishing Director, Nature Publishing Group
- Sara Lloyd, Digital Director, Pan Macmillan
- Kassia Krozser, Founder, Booksquare.com
- Ramy Habeeb, Director, Kotobarabia
- Simon Waldman, Director of Digital Strategy, The Guardian
- Gail Rahn Frederick, Learn the Mobile Web

Die Konferenz Tools of Change Frankfurt wird von der Frankfurter Buchmesse zusammen mit der O'Reilly Media veranstaltet und findet statt am Dienstag, den 13. Oktober 2009, einen Tag vor Beginn der Buchmesse. Informationen zum Programm und Anmeldeöglichkeiten gibt es auf der Website <http://www.tocfrankfurt.com>. Der **Frühbucherrabatt** gilt noch bis zum **15. Juli 2009**.

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