

Public Library and Book Publishing Research Project Issues First Report

Nationwide Library eBook Reading Club Lifts Awareness and Sales for First-Time Author

Seattle, Washington—November 29, 2018—Today the [Panorama Project](#) is releasing its first research report. The Panorama Project is the first data-driven research project focused on understanding the impact of the nation's public libraries on book and author discovery, brand development, and retail sales. The multi-year industry initiative is supported by a growing list of publishers, booksellers, libraries, library service providers, and industry organizations.

The project's [Community Reading Event Impact Report](#) presents findings on the impact of a recent OverDrive [Big Library Read](#) (BLR) community reading campaign. With the permission of the publisher and author, a selected title is featured in a Big Library Read library ebook club event. For a two-week period, over 14,700 U.S. public library branches feature the title on their ebook home page and in their OverDrive ebook app. During the event, the book may be borrowed immediately (with no wait list) by anyone with a valid library card from a participating library.

First-time author Jennifer McGaha's [Flat Broke With Two Goats](#) (Sourcebooks, 2018) was selected for the April 2018 BLR campaign. The data analyzed by the project shows that the selection and promotion of the title for the April 2–16, 2018 event aligns with significant increases in associated social media activity and retail print/ebook sales.

Discovery Impact from the Campaign

- 5.6 million page views globally of the ebook title details page in public library digital catalogs.
- An increase in title's Amazon Kindle sales rank—from below 200,000 prior to the library ebook club campaign to 7,833 at the close of the event.

Brand Development Impact from the Campaign

- Over 13,000 Goodreads additions for the title during the campaign.
- 400+ comments from readers, librarians, the author, and OverDrive forum moderator on the OverDrive moderated title discussion board.
- 500+ mentions from libraries and readers on social media sites using #BigLibraryRead.

Retail Sales Impact from the Campaign

- 818% growth in ebook sales from March to April, 2018.
- 201% growth in print sales from March to April, 2018.
- Sustained retail sales above pre-campaign (January–March 2018) volumes:
 - April–June 2018 ebook sales continued at 720% above pre-campaign volumes.
 - April–June 2018 print sales continued at 38% percent above pre-campaign volumes.

Data was aggregated from a number of sources to obtain the most holistic view possible of all library and retail sales activity (print and ebook) across multiple channels. The data sources include U.S. retail data from The NPD Group's DecisionKey® retail book sales tracking service (formerly Bookscan™), U.S. public library ebook circulation data provided by OverDrive, and U.S. sales and marketing data from the publisher. In addition to sales data we have aggregated and incorporated promotional activities known to have been undertaken independently by OverDrive and Sourcebooks.

“This is the first of several library impact research projects that the Panorama Project is working on,” said Cliff Guren, the project’s lead. He added, “The report demonstrates how we are using library and retail data to develop a better understanding the impact of the country’s public libraries on book discovery, author/brand development, and retail sales. We believe that the publication of this first report will serve as a catalyst for others in the publishing community to engage with the project. We are grateful for the contributions and support of [Sourcebooks](#) and the members of our [Advisory Council](#)—all of whom have provided insightful and helpful feedback.”

About the Big Library Read Program

Big Library Read (BLR), facilitated by OverDrive, is a digital book club program that connects readers around the world with the same ebook at the same time without any wait lists or holds. Publishers are invited to nominate titles that align with campaign theme and program requirements. Nominated titles are then offered to the public for a vote allowing readers and librarians to choose the winner. The publisher and author of the winning title support the campaign with custom content and social media engagement. Participating libraries are provided with unlimited access to the selected title for a period of two weeks at no cost to the library. OverDrive coordinates several Big Library Read events each year with participation open to all OverDrive partner libraries.

About the Panorama Project

The Panorama Project is the first data-driven research project focused on understanding the impact of the nation’s public libraries on book and author discovery, brand development, and retail sales. The multi-year industry initiative is supported by a growing list of publishers, booksellers, libraries, library service providers, and industry organizations. [Rakuten OverDrive](#) is providing initial funding for the Panorama Project and was the first company to share data with the project. As such, the OverDrive Big Library Read program was the subject of our first study.

Other research projects are underway on topics such as measuring differences in reader borrowing and buying behavior by genre and the impact of library-sponsored author events. The project has also convened a [Readers’ Advisory Impact Committee](#) focused on cataloging and measuring the impact of public library Readers’ Advisory activities. Updates and reports on these initiatives and our other research projects will follow in 2019.

The Panorama Project has the support of a growing list of publishers, booksellers, libraries, library service providers, and industry organizations. The project’s Advisory Council includes thought leaders from across the industry. The Panorama Project is an open membership initiative. Learn more at panoramaproject.org.

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