



Inside Open Road Integrated Media's Data Driven E-Book Marketing Success Story

Open Road has evolved into a leading marketing platform, boosting sales and discoverability for its publishing partners

Open Road Integrated Media (OR/M) was founded in 2009 by former HarperCollins CEO Jane Friedman and legendary film producer Jeffrey Sharp. Their goal was to breathe new life into literary fiction and nonfiction backlist books. Ten years later, the company stands at the intersection of consumers, content, commerce, and data, and bringing new readers to great books is still at the heart of the its mission. Media veteran Paul Slavin is now at the helm as CEO along with CMO Mary McAveney—who led marketing at Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, and other companies—and CFO Daniel Shemesh, who has a deep background in revenue and operations.

OR/M has evolved into a full-service marketing company focused on cultivating audiences and using data and great content to boost sales for OR/M's publishing partners, including Abrams, Grove Atlantic, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Ingram, and many others.

"Open Road's vision at its founding was to combine sophisticated marketing with great content in the belief that new readers will discover amazing authors and books that had not been at the forefront of the market for

some time," Slavin said. "And we have stayed close to that initial vision.

"Through the use of data and technology, we have been able to scale our marketing and our acquisition efforts," McAveney said. "Simultaneously, we are building an audience of consumers who love to read. These elements of the business have provided tremendous double-digit growth over the past few years."



McAveney will be speaking on a BEA panel called "What Sells Books Now: Scalable Strategies for Modern Data-Driven Marketing" on 5/30/19 at 11:55 a.m.

Today, OR/M encompasses the Open Road e-book publishing house, with a catalog of thousands of titles, as well as six content brands dedicated to bringing in readers of all kinds of books through news, deals, social, listicles, excerpts, features, and articles that are relevant to the genres readers love. All of this drives discoverability and sales for their marketing partners.

OR/M's strategies include cultivating audiences, using data to engage them with content they want about books they are likely to buy. OR/M's efforts in applying these strategies on content from high-quality publishing brands have paid off handsomely. In January, the company announced a 36% year-over-year revenue increase in e-book sales (far exceeding the industry average) and

a 2.5x revenue increase for publishers who have enlisted in its Ignition "white glove" marketing program.

Staying true to its founding mission of finding new readers for great content, OR/M has become a marketing juggernaut able to drive huge sales for its partners, motivating C-suite executives throughout the industry to incorporate a partnership with OR/M into their companies' overall strategic revenue goals.

"Our partnership with Open Road has dramatically increased the sales of a wide range of our backlist titles," said Morgan Entrekin, CEO and Publisher of Grove Atlantic. "The increased revenue for both Grove and the authors is great—but even more exciting is that this initiative is helping introduce these worthy books to new readers."

Open Road Ignition—an Overview

Open Road Ignition entails no risk for partner publishers yet delivers material results. The highest level of the service is its white glove revenue share program. Partner publishers pay nothing until OR/M's marketing services generate revenue that exceeds the publisher's baseline sales (a mutually agreed upon sales number for the titles prior to inclusion), and then a revenue split kicks in on the uplift for those titles. OR/M

absorbs all costs of marketing. With over 8,000 titles enrolled in Ignition's white glove program, OR/M has been able to deliver a 175% uplift in partner publishers sales (see chart).

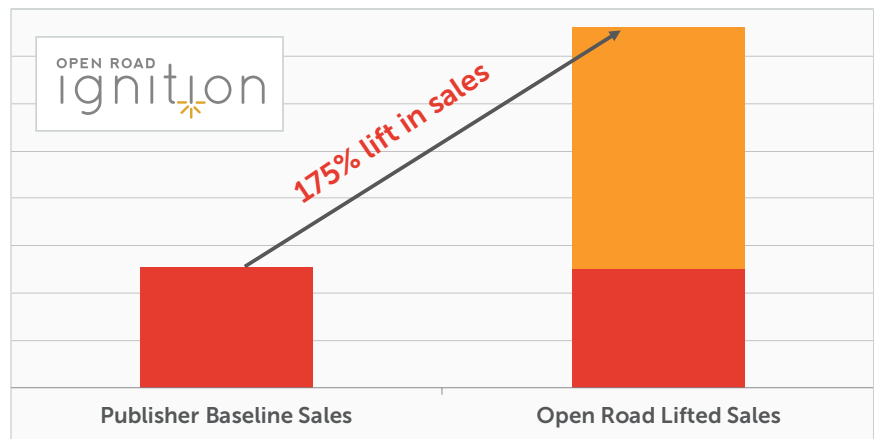
OR/M carefully vets the titles for Ignition, picking the best books to pair with OR/M's content brands and other platforms. Using powerful data tools and its growing audience of e-book consumers, OR/M is able to bring its partners' titles to new consumers and stimulate demand. OR/M has more than tripled many partners' backlist sales and driven incremental growth for titles that may not receive a large share of a publisher's resources. The effectiveness of OR/M's marketing extends beyond the sales of e-books in the program—the company has commissioned studies that show its e-book marketing has substantially increased print sales. Ignition partners can also opt to receive data insights to enable them to gain a better understanding of their customers with an eye to future publishing decisions.

"Open Road has devoted significant

resources to building a vast and ever-growing community of readers and to developing the data and technology structure to understand our readers' preferences and to recommend books we believe they will enjoy," McAveney says. "Our focus on digital content, consumers, and scalable marketing allows us to extract tremendous value out of frontlist and backlist books that many publishers cannot give their full attention to."

Beyond the direct revenue increases

publishers see immediately upon engaging with the program, there are strategic benefits that include complete metadata review and optimization, insight and expertise in digital marketing, and demonstrating a commitment to the backlist. It's no wonder that top publishing brands are partnering with OR/M. To learn more about OR/M's Ignition program, or to explore their genre-themed reader websites and e-Newsletters, be sure to check out openroadintegratedmedia.com.



Open Road's Audiences + Great Content Lead to Sales

OR/M's 7 content brands, genre- and lifestyle-based content sites with corresponding social channels and e-newsletters, are at the heart of the company's marketing success.



THE READER

The Reader delivers the latest book recommendations, news, trends, and deals straight to your inbox.



EARLY BIRD BOOKS

Early Bird Books is for readers looking for free and deeply discounted e-books that will help them to discover new authors.

THE LINEUP

The Lineup features fun, creepy content for fans of true crime, horror, mystery, and books about the paranormal.

THE PORTALIST

The Portalist brings science fiction and fantasy lovers a mix of content about TV, film, gaming, books, and comics.

MURDER & MAYHEM

Murder & Mayhem is dedicated to the world of mystery and thrillers, from classic tales of crime-solving to the latest in Nordic noir.

A LOVE SO TRUE

A Love So True is OR/M's romance vertical, which combines content about romance fiction, pop culture, and real-life love.

#ARCHIVE

The Archive mines the lost chapters of history, digging up the forgotten curiosities of the past and examining them under new light.