

BOOKSELLER JARGON

by **Stephanie Bond**

During a recent conversation with my husband about bookselling, he stopped me several times for an explanation of a word or acronym. Afterward it occurred to me that writers are guilty of throwing around words which newcomers (and veterans alike) might not be familiar with. Consequently, this month's column features book industry terminology, including merchandising terms that might be helpful when talking to a bookseller about how to display your books to their best advantage.

ISBN—international standard book number; a unique number assigned to a book for purposes of identification (found on the back of the book, sometimes in 2 formats: 10- and 13-digit)

Bip—book in print; a book which is still distributed for sale

Backlist—an author's books still in print but not a current release

Mass Market Book—this classification refers to the cover dimensions of a book (roughly 4 x 7 inches); the standardized size makes packing and merchandising books more cost-effective; mass market typically refers to paperbacks, although Ballantine recently introduced hardback books in mass market size

Trade Book—cloth-back book, typically larger than mass market size; might feature acid-free (non-yellowing) paper used in hardback books; also referred to as a 'quality' book

Distributor/Wholesaler —middle-man operation which orders books from many publishers in large quantities, then distributes to destination bookstores and non-traditional book outlets such as grocery stores

Destination bookstore—any retail outlet where a customer goes specifically to buy a book (as opposed to a drug store where a book might be a secondary purchase)

Endcap—high-profile space on end of bookstore shelf, most endcaps are 'purchased' by publishers to promote specific titles

Leased Lines—publisher purchased signage (posters, etc.) in bookstores

Floorstack—a stack of books under endcap or shelving

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Barge—large block of hardback books stacked table-high for maximum exposure to foot traffic; typically a mixture of titles and subjects to promote books out of their normal section

Shelf-talker—an advertisement which hangs over the end of a shelf to attract a customer's eye to a particular book

Floor Dump—publisher sponsored pocketed cardboard displays which are free-standing and might include elaborate signage

Spinner Rack—special rotating rack for mass market books; restrictions might apply for which titles to be displayed and/or how those books might be merchandised (or not) elsewhere in the store

Flushing—pulling books to the edge of a shelf for maximum exposure and to offset the problem of displaying books of different depths

ARC—advance reading copy of a books (bound or unbound), also known as galleys

Hand-selling—when a bookseller recommends your book to customers (demonstrates good use of ARCs, word of mouth)

Striping—how books are merchandised on a wall; refers to quantities displayed, color coordination of covers, etc.

PGs—purchase guides; these comprehensive lists group books available by subject; individual store managers use PGs to customize their stock around core titles ordered by the home office.

Auto Replenish—special way to flag a book title to be restocked as soon as a copy is sold (most books ordered from PGs are auto- replenished)

Publisher's Recall—notice from publisher they will no longer accept returns on a specific title; mass market paperbacks are stripped; trade books and hardback books are returned whole

Strip—removing the cover of a mass market paperback; the covers are returned for credit, the 'carcass' of the book is destroyed and recycled. ~SBond