

MEDIA & MARKETING

ADVERTISING

Knopf Puts Some Muscle Behind Swedish Thrillers

Departing From Industry Norm, Bertelsmann Unit Readies Campaign for Stieg Larsson's 'The Girl Who Played With Fire'

BY JEFFREY A. TRACHTENBERG

STIEG LARSSON'S "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," a thriller translated from Swedish that has gone on to sell a robust 225,000 hardcover copies in the U.S., was one of 2008's most successful debut novels.

Now, out to capitalize on the growing interest in the late Mr. Larsson, Bertelsmann's Alfred A. Knopf imprint is launching a six-figure marketing effort to support his second book, "The Girl Who Played With Fire," as well as the paperback edition of the first. Mr. Larsson completed a trilogy of mysteries six months before his death in 2004 at age 50.

The Knopf campaign is notable because publishers are traditionally stingy when it comes to promoting their books, preferring instead to focus on Web contests, author home pages, word of mouth and generating reviews.

Industry insiders say most book-related advertising doesn't seem to deliver significant sales gains and, they say, there's a reason for that. "What

they do is buy a single ad, but that's not a campaign," says Carol Fitzgerald, president of the Book Report, a closely held company that operates Web sites related to book publishing. "You have to do everything."

'It's really a departure from what we've done in the past,' says Knopf's Stephanie Kloss.

The number of books that get advertising is probably less than 5%, says Michael Norris, a book-industry analyst at media-research firm Simba Information. "It's too expensive, and too hard to reach readers," he adds.

The Knopf campaign is scheduled to start in June and will run until late September. More ads are likely in November, around the holiday season.

The campaign will include print ads in such publications as the New Yorker, the New York Times and The Wall Street Jour-

nal, mass-transit advertising in New York, Washington, Boston and Los Angeles and ads on such Web sites as USAToday.com, Politico.com, WSJ.com and NYTimes.com.

There also will be a marketing push on the social-networking site Facebook and the micro-blogging service Twitter, as well as in-store promotions in big bookstore chains.

"We need to broaden our existing readership," says Paul Bogaards, a Knopf spokesman.

The campaign will help kick-start the June 23 release of the paperback version of "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" by Knopf's sister imprint, Vintage. Vintage is publishing two paperback editions of the book totaling 600,000 copies. In late July, Knopf plans to issue 300,000 hardcover copies of "The Girl Who Played With Fire." The coming third book in the trilogy could also benefit.

"It's really a departure from what we've done in the past," says Stephanie Kloss, Knopf's advertising director. "We felt we needed something that looks different from traditional

book advertising."

Hauser Advertising, a Pacific Palisades, Calif., firm best known for its work on behalf of entertainment companies, created the campaign.

Cliff Hauser, the firm's owner, says Knopf wanted the promotion to have a movie sensibility. "They felt the main character in the series is a cross between Lara Croft and a female Jason Bourne, and they wanted a campaign that would be more like something you'd do for a film," he says.

The Larsson novels star Lisbeth Salander, a computer hacker and social misfit. "She's a heroine for our times," says Sonny Mehta, editor in chief and chairman of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. "Messed up, defiant, indomitable and without a trace of pity."

Rather than being text-driven, the campaign has strong visual elements. An ad for "The Girl Who Played With Fire" looks like a movie promo, with a prominent central image of a burning match and a dragon, complete with comments from critics.



A mock-up of ad for the coming release 'The Girl Who Played With Fire.'

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Top-Rated U.S. Broadcast Network Programs For the Week Ended May 24

Title	Network	Viewers (in millions)*
1. American Idol — Wednesday	FOX	28.4
2. American Idol — Tuesday	FOX	23.8
3. Dancing With the Stars Results Show	ABC	20.3
4. Dancing With the Stars	ABC	19.2
5. The Mentalist	CBS	16.8
6. NCIS	CBS	16.5
7. Two and a Half Men	CBS	16.2
8. CSI: Miami	CBS	14.2
9. Criminal Minds	CBS	14.0
10. Rules of Engagement	CBS	12.9

*Viewing estimates include same-day DVR playback
Source: Nielsen Media Research

Slow Sales Hamper Staples

BY KAREN TALLEY

Fewer purchases by customers, especially of costlier items such as computers, copiers and furniture, sliced first-quarter earnings for Staples Inc. by a third.

Sluggishness was especially acute among medium and large companies, while the world's largest office-products seller by revenue saw less of a slowdown by consumers who shop at its retail stores. It also pointed out rays of hope among small businesses.

"In this depressed economy, customers have limited [their] purchases to essential consumables and dramatically reduced their spending on durables and discretionary items," said Staples Chief Executive Ronald Sar-

gent during a conference call with analysts.

The company's direct dealings with businesses, especially through contracts, faltered further from a weak fourth quarter, hurt by job losses and bankruptcies.

For the quarter ended May 2, Staples reported a profit of \$143 million, or 20 cents a share, down 33% from \$212.3 million, or 30 cents, a year earlier. The latest quarter included two cents a share in charges from the company's July acquisition of office-products supplier Corporate Express for \$2.4 billion.

Revenue increased 19% to \$5.82 billion, but would have been down 15.6% if Corporate Express were included in the prior-year figure.

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nielsen

you love*
to watch.

(why else would you do it for almost a quarter of the year?)

* If you're anything like the average American, you watch 153 hours of television in any given month. Among those that watch online, three hours and those that view on mobile three and a half hours. And you're loving it more and more.

how do you watch? www.nielsen.com/watch

Source: The Nielsen Company, A2/M2 Three Screen Report

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