



## Tips, Tricks, & Strategies for Effective Direct Ordering

While every bookseller knows that they get a better price when they buy direct from the publisher, it can be more work. To do it right, you've got to open accounts with your top suppliers, keep on top of your promotions, and make sure you hit your minimum orders.

Fortunately, publisher direct ordering can be made a lot easier with a few simple strategies:

- **Initial Orders:** Place your initial order for a title direct with the publisher to take advantage of extended terms, better discount, and full returnability. Then, if you need fast re-stocking or to fulfill a special order, you can turn to wholesalers.
- **Evergreen Backlist:** Restock evergreen backlist directly from the publisher. Unless a title is on a school reading list or there's been a media surge, you'll usually have time to get it from the publisher before the next customer asks for it.
- **Plan for Promotions:** Publishers regularly announce backlist promotions around the major book tradeshow (Winter Institute, BookExpo, fall regionals). Start building backlist orders in advance so you can meet the promotion minimums. For example, you might use a Winter Institute promotion to order backlist for Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and Mother's Day holiday displays.
- **Special Orders & Restocking:** Put all your special orders and restocking needs on one PO and stock check it with a distributor. If anything is out of stock or you're over the shipping minimum consider whether you can pull a few titles off and order them direct from the publisher. Sort by price and move over the more expensive titles for greater savings.

### Additional Tips & Tricks

- **Request a Phone Rep:** If you don't already have one, request a phone representative from each of your vendors. It's worth having a rep even if you don't do regular frontlist buys with them; they share a ton of information with their accounts regarding promotions, drop-ins, affidavits, etc.
- **Place Frontlist Orders Early:** Make sure to place frontlist orders before the order cutoff date (usually 4-6 weeks in advance) to ensure you receive your books by the on-sale date.
- **Take Extra Care with Hot Titles:** Publishers often require hot titles to be ordered in carton quantities and have a signed affidavit on file. When in doubt, ask!
- **Note Shipping Times:** For each publisher, track or make a note of how long it takes to get your shipments to help you with future ordering decisions.



- **Gather Your Promo Codes:** Keep all your active publisher promotional codes in one place and doublecheck your list before placing direct orders.
- **Your Purchase Order Number Can Help:** Use your PO number to encode information about the order: discount, free freight, author event order; for example: 999-46FF for an order with 46% discount and free freight.
- **Know Your Suppliers:** Document everything you learn about a publisher – order minimums, shipping minimums, terms, contact emails, how to report damages, etc. -- in one place that your staff can all access (in your POS, in a Trello board, a Google doc).
- **Use Pubeasy to Check Stock Status:** If your POS system doesn't support publisher stock-checking, you can stock-check the major publishers through Pubeasy.com before submitting an order.
- **Order Direct through Pubnet or Pubeasy:** Place your direct orders through Pubnet if you have an EDI capable point of sale system, or through Pubeasy if you don't. Both are free to retailers.

Done right, ordering direct can save you 4% to 6% on your cost of goods. And, since COGS typically make up 50% to 60% of the cost of running the average bookstore, a program of efficient direct ordering can really add up to significant savings that fall right to the bottom line.

Uncertain about how to order from the publisher through Pubnet or Pubeasy? Contact us at [Support@MVB-online.com](mailto:Support@MVB-online.com) and we will be happy to help.