
Subject: Market Research 101

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 21:44:44 GMT

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Folks,

OK, today's topic: "What you want, verses what you can get". Or, perhaps, "What you want, verses what you can afford."

I wrote this book of mine with only one idea in mind: I wanted a book that was both informative and beautiful. It turns out that informative you can get for a dime a dozen. Beautiful, well, that costs a bit more. Quite a bit more, as it turns out. :-)

So, here is the question I should have started with, according to my MBA son. How much would you be willing to pay for a book about graphics programming in IDL?

Let's start with a couple of assumptions. Let's assume it is a pretty good book and that it contains information that may be of some interest to you. Would you pay \$25, \$45, \$85, \$135? Where do you start drawing the line? What causes you to draw the line? Do the aesthetics of the book have anything to do with it? Do you care whether it is in back or white or color? Cloth cover or paperback? Sexy picture of the author on the back cover?

At your price point, whatever it is, would you expect a full-color book, or would you expect black and white illustrations? (Keep in mind this is a book about scientific visualization techniques.) If you expected color, how much of a premium (above what you would pay for a black and white book) would you be willing to pay? What would you think is "reasonable"?

Would it matter to you if the book was in black and white, but you could gain access to a color PDF of the book for some nominal charge if you bought the book?

Or, are you one of those modern kinds of readers who disdain physical books, and only consider buying a book if you can load on your Kindle or iPad?

Obviously, I have to make some choices here in the next week or so. And, obviously, I don't expect everyone will be willing to cough up \$150 for a book, even if it is

personally autographed by the author. But I would like to get a sense of what people might expect to pay for a technical book and what they would expect to get for their money.

Thanks!

Cheers,

David

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David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
