
Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [Jean\[2\]](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 22:03:55 GMT

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On Feb 9, 4:44 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> 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. :-)
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> So, here is the question I should have started with,
> according to my MBA son. How much would you be willing
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> 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?
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> 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
>
> --
> 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.")

David,

I (my lab :-)) bought your previous books and I really like the format/paper quality of the IDL Programming Techniques (second edition). Color is not as important as the content of the book. I'm not that old but I'm kind of the old generation in the fact that I prefer reading technical books on paper (I reserve my iPad for non work related readings). But having access to the pdf would be nice too especially for 'word search'.

Can't wait to read your new book

Jean

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 22:14:09 GMT

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Jean writes:

> I (my lab :-)) bought your previous books and I really like the
> format/paper quality of the IDL Programming Techniques (second
> edition).

I guess as long as we are talking about it, this is another issue. IDL Programming Techniques was spiral bound because I wanted it to lay flat on my desk. I used (still use it, to be honest!) that book as a reference book and I want it laying flat so I can type code out of it.

I expect this book will be perfect bound. The advantage of a perfect bound book, from my point of view, is that it can be distributed both in America and in Europe and Australia by the big book distribution companies. Those companies, as a rule, will not handle spiral bound books.

I wondered about having a special spiral bound edition that I sold strictly from my web page and perhaps from Amazon, who still seem willing to deal with spiral binding.

Or, people can do what I do with all my bird and flower guides: take them to Kinko's and have the whack off the perfect binding and spiral bind them. It costs me about \$2 a book and I wouldn't think about going into the field anymore with a perfect bound field guide.

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

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

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 22:53:49 GMT

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I want the electronic version. And not just for an e-reader. I need a pdf I can search on my work computer.

My experience with other paper-vs-electronic pricing is that the latter goes for about 50-70% of the former. But, for an electronic book that costs 70% of the paper version, it better be full-colour and hi-res. At the 50% level, in the past it was not unusual for me to buy both electronic and paper so I could read the latter on the train to-and-from work.

Nowadays, with the explosion of e-readers, I'm only interested in electronic books in pdf form.

Note: I have only ever bought electronic technical books.

For technical topics I'm not interested in beauty. I can buy copies of "Cats in the Sun" if I want to

look at beautiful

pix. I'm interested in the conveyance of information, expanding the realms of what I can do, or what I thought was possible. That doesn't mean I don't want the graphics to look professional, I do. I just think beauty is too subjective a metric for measuring the efficacy of a technical text (you might think sticking pictures of your kids on the front page makes it "beautiful").

As for the price - in my opinion I think you're limited to <\$100 simply because of IDL v8 function graphics. Whenever I see an IDL plot/surface/image/map/whatever graphic now I immediately think "how would I do that in function graphics?" (It's the Curse Of Knowledge[*]) I also think your book/expertise will help with that via the usual route: you point out how you actually did something, what issues were important, what weren't, etc. I reckon that sort of information is

universal regardless of the graphics display system one may prefer. Having said that I'm willing to buy several copies for my colleagues (electronic for me, paper for them) simply to get you working to fix your IDL v8 installation so you can write the function graphics version. :o)

cheers,

paulv

[*] Check out "Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die" by Chip Heath and Dan Heath. Or see:

<http://37signals.com/svn/posts/213-the-curse-of-knowledge>

David Fanning wrote:

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> can get". Or, perhaps, "What you want, verses what
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> Sexy picture of the author on the back cover?
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> 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?
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> 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?
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> 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
>
>

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 23:10:28 GMT

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Paul van Delst writes:

- > Having said that I'm willing to buy several copies
- > for my colleagues (electronic for me, paper for them) simply to get you working to fix your IDL v8 installation so you
- > can write the function graphics version. :o)

I'm thinking about that book, too! I may do a thin book on map projections, first. But this one is not far down my list.

I'll probably have to switch my whole set-up over to my Linux machine, though. I can't find any of my graphics windows in IDL 8. Help! They disappear somewhere behind all this clutter on my display and it takes two hands to shake my keyboard enough for them to somehow show up again.

Every time I read about someone doing something in IDL 8 I just shake my head. I don't know how they stand so much abuse. It must be better on something other than Windows 7. Here it is like doing graphics programming in nothing but pixmaps. :-(

Cheers,

David

--

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.")

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [penteado](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 23:41:42 GMT

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On Feb 9, 7:44 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

- > 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?

For subjects that involve visualization, I find aesthetics very important. Not only books specifically about visualization, but also those on subjects that need good visualization. I have been disappointed by several books on statistics or other subjects related to data analysis, because they were lacking in figures (or lacking decent figures). For that reason I have decided against buying some (Amazon's preview is very useful for that).

So I have a hard time imagining a book like yours without color. I understand it costs more, and would pay more for that reason. As for the physical material, I would prefer none (see below).

- > 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"?

For a book on visualization, if I did not know the author, I would probably not even consider buying one without color. For a color book, if the table of contents seemed convincing enough, and the subject useful enough, I might go up to \$120-150 (the latter is pushing it, though). Usefulness is the most relevant part in accepting the high end of the price range. Since I do not use direct graphics, I would hardly go for more than \$40. If it was a good book about iTools or Graphics, I might go for \$150 (but it would be hard to convince others to buy it, something I always try to do when I find one to be useful).

- > 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?

Pretty much. I have bought electronic versions of several physical books I already had. I only buy a physical book if there is no alternative. For the Kindle device there is the problem of the lack of color (not a problem to me, as I prefer to read Kindle books from the computer anyway). This became even more important after I moved out of the US, which makes shipping that does not take forever cost about the same as (or more than) the books.

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [SonicKenking](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 00:04:59 GMT

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On Feb 10, 8:44 am, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> Folks,
>
> OK, today's topic: "What you want, verses what you
> can get". Or, perhaps, "What you want, verses what
> you can afford."
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> Thanks!
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> Cheers,
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> David Fanning, Ph.D.
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> Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

I'd expect the book to be under \$100. Paperback is fine. Hardcover will be awesome (but not necessary). For a paper book, black and white illustrations are OK. Readers can consult to the electronic version for colors. Or even without any electronic version, they can still experiment the sample code and create the full-color plots themselves on computers.

I prefer physical books to electronic ones. I like the feeling of turning pages when reading a physical book. The book does not have to be overly decorated. Your previous book (2nd ed.) looks great, though I prefer perfect bindings. As for the cover, I really like the arts of the computer books published by O'Reilly.

I don't think the system admin would upgrade our IDL 6.4 any time soon. So I'll try convince the library to buy a copy of the book in addition to my own.

Yang

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [Mike Potter](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 07:53:37 GMT
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For a book of a technical nature it isn't unusual to spend \$100 or more - I've got a number of astronomy books that cost that much. So I would not expect to pay less than \$85 for a good book on IDL graphics programming. And I'm another who would prefer a color version and be willing to pay for it. Not a fan of pdf versions - nice to have but when I'm learning something I prefer a book. Old skool!

Mike

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [pgrigis](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 15:30:01 GMT

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On Feb 9, 4:44 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

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

I would argue for a price around 69\$ or 79\$ at most.

Much more than that and you'll have to deal
with illicit PDFs sprouting all over the place...

Color: how many pages have illustrations? I would
think it may be possible to limit color to the illustrations
and use B&W for the text - that should contain the costs.
I am assuming the printer would charge differently for
grayscale pages then colored pages, which may or may not
be true.

PDF: yes - sell in bundle with printed version and/or
separately.

If you worry about illicit PDFs... It turns
out that scanners with OCR are so common and cheap that
I doubt it makes any difference if you provide it or not
yourself anyway.

Ciao,
Paolo

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 15:59:06 GMT
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Paolo writes:

> Color: how many pages have illustrations? I would

- > think it may be possible to limit color to the illustrations
- > and use B&W for the text - that should contain the costs.
- > I am assuming the printer would charge differently for
- > grayscale pages then colored pages, which may or may not
- > be true.

Yes, this is an option I am exploring. The problem really is that the book has LOTS of figures. Figures, I would argue, are the whole POINT of the book! And with very few exceptions, the figures are in color. Setting up a "mixed" book is expensive, too. So that pretty much means once it is set, you don't want to add a clarification paragraph that throws all the figures onto the B&W page! Basically, a set-up nightmare, is what I am saying. :-(

- > If you worry about illicit PDFs... It turns
- > out that scanners with OCR are so common and cheap that
- > I doubt it makes any difference if you provide it or not
- > yourself anyway.

Yes, I've never made good career decisions (except, possibly, to spend a good deal of my working life playing tennis). My decision to become an "author" in my dotage is probably one of my worst. :-(

Cheers,

David

--

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.")

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [ben.bighair](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 16:11:13 GMT
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On 2/10/11 10:59 AM, David Fanning wrote:

- > Paolo writes:
- >
- >> Color: how many pages have illustrations? I would
- >> think it may be possible to limit color to the illustrations
- >> and use B&W for the text - that should contain the costs.
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>

Hi David,

I have encountered password protected PFDs in the past. I know that it isn't fool proof, but would that help stem the tide? I bought this book a while ago...

http://zoi.utia.cas.cz/moment_invariants

... and the code to go with it was in a password protected file. The password was a word in the book. I don't know, but I suspect that there's a list of passwords that are generated for each book purchase. That would limit your ability to sell through other merchandisers.

I hope you get back on your feet soon.

Cheers,
Ben

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 16:31:10 GMT
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Ben Tupper writes:

> I have encountered password protected PFDs in the past. I know that it
> isn't fool proof, but would that help stem the tide? I bought this book
> a while ago...
>
> http://zoi.utia.cas.cz/moment_invariants

>
> ... and the code to go with it was in a password protected file. The
> password was a word in the book. I don't know, but I suspect that
> there's a list of passwords that are generated for each book purchase.
> That would limit your ability to sell through other merchandisers.

I am learning that publishing a book is very much like doing research. Chaos rules! Then, either a single clarifying idea breaks through and (Eureka!) solves the problem, or (more likely) you start making decisions that eliminate possibilities until you are left with something you can actually handle.

I'm pretty sure I'm still in the chaos stage. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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.")

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [Carsten Lechte](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 16:42:57 GMT

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On 10/02/11 17:11, Ben Tupper wrote:

> I have encountered password protected PFDs in the past. I know that it
> isn't fool proof, but would that help stem the tide?

I would say, no, it would not. Even if the encryption was perfect, it only takes a single buyer of the book to convert it to an unprotected format. And if it can be displayed on a computer screen, it can be copied. People who plan to pirate the book in order to sell it would probably expend this effort to circumvent the protection.

Encryption also tempts the author to disallow printing (you would have to do that, otherwise the whole protection would be pointless). Now the legally purchased product is intentionally less useful than the pirated version. While one could always buy the book and also grab the pirated version, overall, it would not be a pleasant buying experience.

This sounds depressing, but that is all I can offer in a world where

digital copies cost practically nothing to make.

chl

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 17:05:09 GMT

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Carsten Lechte writes:

> This sounds depressing, but that is all I can offer in a world where
> digital copies cost practically nothing to make.

Well, now this is EXACTLY what isn't true! It has cost me, personally, about \$50K to make! And that's only my time. It doesn't count damage to relationships, the time to acquire the experience to be *able* to make the PDF, or any of the other, considerable, costs born by the idiot who decides to *create* something.

Oh, don't get me started....

Cheers,

David

P.S. Thank God there are idiots, but I think there are going to be fewer and fewer of us if we keep on in this direction. Who, in their right mind, would want to do this?

--

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.")

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [Carsten Lechte](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 17:18:26 GMT

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On 10/02/11 18:05, David Fanning wrote:

> Carsten Lechte writes:

>
>> This sounds depressing, but that is all I can offer in a world where
>> digital copies cost practically nothing to make.
>
> Well, now this is EXACTLY what isn't true! It has
> cost me, personally, about \$50K to make!

OK, I amend my statement to say that *copies* of copies cost
practically nothing to make. I had not intended to slight your
authorial effort.

chl

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 17:28:59 GMT
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Carsten Lechte writes:

> OK, I amend my statement to say that *copies* of copies cost
> practically nothing to make. I had not intended to slight your
> authorial effort.

Carsten, I know you weren't slighting me.
But, as you can see, it is a sore spot with me.
Touch it, and you get yelped at. Can't help it. :-)

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
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Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 18:19:11 GMT
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David Fanning writes:

- > Carsten, I know you weren't slighting me.
- > But, as you can see, it is a sore spot with me.
- > Touch it, and you get yelped at. Can't help it. :-)

Here is a more reflective thought.

I am speaking generally here, and not just personally, but I think there is a real lack of awareness on the part of the general public on what it takes to live a "creative" life. I think this applies in the arts, music, science, everywhere. To be creative means to take risks. By definition, you are doing something outside the norm.

It is a very lonely place that is sometimes obtained at great personal sacrifice. Your mother might see you as irresponsible. Your children might be embarrassed you can't get dressed and take a shower before 5:00 at night. The dog thinks YOU smell! In truth, the life you choose is not just about YOU. It is about everyone around you, too.

And, it wears on you. Especially when the rewards are so completely uncertain. Will anyone come to the symphony? Will they want to hang this painting on their wall? Will they brave the cold to come to the play? Can they tell the difference between *this* photograph and the one taken by Aunt Tilly on Memorial Day? Will they steal this book and distribute it for free to everyone they know?

I don't really think there is anything that can be done about it. Creativity must be its own reward, or there really isn't much point to it. But, still, some appreciation for what it *really* costs (and I am not talking for a second about money here), would be most appreciated by people who "create" something that didn't exist before and wouldn't exist without their effort and inspiration. I think I know enough about this topic that I can safely vouch for this.

Knowing the true costs, I guess, is what makes that spot so painful. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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.")

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [astroboy2k](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 18:38:39 GMT
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My votes:

David's previous books are priceless. My time is worth money. \$135 for a book that saves me time is a deal (for me), but I suspect people would start to balk at anything over \$100-120. A fair share of the market is going to be starving graduate students or underpaid postdocs. In my experience, trying to get someone running a research empire to buy an absolutely indispensable book is like asking them for a quart of blood. They always seem vaguely insulted as such a request too. They'll drop 20 grand on a piece of lab junk, but \$100 on books seems to be a frivolous extravagance. I suppose they figure grad students will buy books for the lab out of their own huge salaries if they stall long enough.

Since this is graphics, I think color images would be a huge help. Not all pages have to be in color, of course, but my guess is that there will be some graphics that should be in color. If color costs are a sticking point, then perhaps color figures could be put on dfanning.com. That would be fine.

The format and paper and quality of the old book (2nd edition) was very good, definitely worth a little extra money, since it takes a beating from frequent use. Paperback is good, as long as the quality is the same as the old book. I don't think compromising on the paper/print quality is a good idea, even if it means no color.

I'd prefer spiral bound option, since as far as I'm concerned the book really needs to lay flat.

It's nice to be able to search a PDF document, but I find that jotting notes down in the margins on actual paper is a huge help. If a pdf version was fairly cheap, I'd but that too.

A bit off topic, but I'd enjoy a book by coyote on his adventures and thoughts on life...

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 18:48:46 GMT

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Mark writes:

> A bit off topic, but I'd enjoy a book by coyote on his adventures and
> thoughts on life...

Ha! Yeah, me too. The "True" History of IDL. :-)

My original plan was to write this IDL book, which would make me rich and famous enough to spend the rest of my days writing about what I learned on my retrospective hike to Oregon. You see how well my dreams turn out! ;-)

But, maybe some day. The Universe is weird that way.

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

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

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by [Teddy Allen](#) on Thu, 10 Feb 2011 19:33:08 GMT

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On Feb 9, 4:44 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> 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 black 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
>
> --
> 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.")

David,

First of all, thank you for your continued efforts to help the pace of my programming evolve from the speed of uphill flowing chilled molasses to snail like. Yes, there is a huge difference! I represent the IDL user who spends days on plotting (and career choice re-evaluation) to achieve seconds for real analysis...yes, the graduate student.

In the past three years I have bought three IDL books. At that time price was not a concern due to my modis operandi: I need all the help I can get approach. At this point with the evolution of IDL 8.0, I will only consider buying another IDL book only if it is written in 8.0 (or 8.0.1, etc...). I think the advantage you may have in selling this book is that there do not appear to be any IDL 8.0 books currently on the market. If you make it, I will buy it, thus insuring a rapid evolution from snail to gazelle.

Generally, I detest electronic books. I do not like to be forced to use a battery or a plug to do something that normally does not need it. Can you imagine being on a long flight, say from Narita to Jakarta, and have to stop reading because the power is used up on an e-reader, thus forcing you to browse again and again at the sky mall catalog hoping that you can catch something different with each turning page. For me paper books are the only way to go. However, the ONLY exception is for reference books. As a student, I tend to travel extensively with bulky texts and reference books. Not only does that kill my back, but it can add extra weight to the sensitive weight limits from all airlines. Once I was over the limit and was forced to walk throughout the airport with my IDL manuals and GFD text shouting nerd alert with each step. A kick me sign on my back would have been more welcomed.

Now, getting back to your topic...I would be delighted with a PDF version. I use my IDL reference books while using IDL. Since I do not use IDL without power, I do not need a paper book. A PDF IDL book would allow me to leave my other books at home, but more importantly will always be accessible whenever I use IDL. Also, you can easily imagine the benefits of a PDF book while competing for space on the small in flight tray tables. There is no room for both a book and laptop. But, voila, there is infinite space for the PDF! While I am not a publishing guru, I can guess that a PDF book with unlimited color plots would be much less expensive to produce and hopefully less expensive to buy than a paper book. Color plots in an IDL reference book are indispensable and should not be compromised. I hope there will be a PDF version available. This request is not an effort to spend less, but instead to reduce bulk and exploit color plots to maximize the learning process.

Hope this info helps.....Good Luck!

teddy

p.s. there is sooooo much more room on a PDF for sexy pics of the author. (and limitless photoshop opportunities as well!)

Subject: Re: Market Research 101

Posted by Paul.Bowyer@gmail.com on Fri, 11 Feb 2011 09:46:25 GMT

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On Feb 10, 8:33 pm, Teddy Allen <teddy.ie...@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Feb 9, 4:44 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

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>

>> Folks,

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>> Sexy picture of the author on the back cover?

>

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>> 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
>
>> --
>> David Fanning, Ph.D.
>> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
>> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming:<http://www.idlcoyote.com/>
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> evolution from snail to gazelle.
> Generally, I detest electronic books. I do not like to be forced to
> use a battery or a plug to do something that normally does not need
> it. Can you imagine being on a long flight, say from Narita to
> Jakarta, and have to stop reading because the power is used up on an e-
> reader, thus forcing you to browse again and again at the sky mall
> catalog hoping that you can catch something different with each
> turning page. For me paper books are the only way to go. However, the

> ONLY exception is for reference books. As a student, I tend to travel
> extensively with bulky texts and reference books. Not only does that
> kill my back, but it can add extra weight to the sensitive weight
> limits from all airlines. Once I was over the limit and was forced to
> walk throughout the airport with my IDL manuals and GFD text shouting
> nerd alert with each step. A kick me sign on my back would have been
> more welcomed.
> Now, getting back to your topic...I would be delighted with a PDF
> version. I use my IDL reference books while using IDL. Since I do not
> use IDL without power, I do not need a paper book. A PDF IDL book
> would allow me to leave my other books at home, but more importantly
> will always be accessible whenever I use IDL. Also, you can easily
> imagine the benefits of a PDF book while competing for space on the
> small in flight tray tables. There is no room for both a book and
> laptop. But, voila, there is infinite space for the PDF! While I am
> not a publishing guru, I can guess that a PDF book with unlimited
> color plots would be much less expensive to produce and hopefully less
> expensive to buy than a paper book. Color plots in an IDL reference
> book are indispensable and should not be compromised. I hope there
> will be a PDF version available. This request is not an effort to
> spend less, but instead to reduce bulk and exploit color plots to
> maximize the learning process.
> Hope this info helps.....Good Luck!
> teddy
> p.s. there is sooooo much more room on a PDF for sexy pics of the
> author. (and limitless photoshop opportunities as well!)

Hi David,

I would be more inclined to buy a pdf version, and I'd probably pay
\$50 for the pleasure.

For a printed version, and issue of colour, either have colour
versions on your web site as someone else suggested, or provide a CD
with them all - or will that cause costs to rocket too?

All the very best,
Paul

Subject: Re: Market Research 101
Posted by [cgguido](#) on Fri, 11 Feb 2011 19:27:32 GMT
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On Feb 10, 1:33 pm, Teddy Allen <teddy.ie...@gmail.com> wrote:

> David,
> First of all, thank you for your continued efforts to help the pace of
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> molasses to snail like.

So... from slow backwards to slow forwards... that is powerful stuff! :-)
