

## Bahá'í books find 'traction' in retail trade

Wonderful things have happened for Bahá'í books in retail bookstores since June 22, when the National Spiritual Assembly wrote the American believers and asked for their support of the trade publishing initiative by purchasing books during these critical months.

In less than three months, orders for books under the Bahá'í Publishing imprint have risen dramatically from major industry wholesalers and retailers. Author events have become easier to schedule in several major independent bookstores. And more.

Launched with support from the Kingdom Project, Bahá'í Publishing is an imprint of the U.S. Bahá'í Publishing Trust dedicated to producing books for public sale.

"From the bottom of our hearts, we warmly thank all the friends who have responded so well to the request of the National Assembly," said Tim Moore, sales and marketing manager at the Publishing Trust.

"There's absolutely no doubt that our improving record of sales, visibility in the publishing industry, and recent success with author events is directly attributable to the purchases being made by Bahá'ís in many cities and towns. It's so encouraging that more of the friends are better understanding the spiritual foundation that underlies the entire trade publishing program. It's making an important difference."

Moore further explained that recent well-organized author events at prominent venues such as Transitions Bookplace in Chicago; BookPeople in Austin, Texas; and Bodhi Tree in West Hollywood, California, have energized the sales representatives who periodically visit buyers for the major wholesalers and retailers in their respective territories.

As sales increase and good crowds turn out for Bahá'í authors, the sales team becomes even more motivated to inform buyers about Bahá'í Publishing titles.

"I've personally witnessed this effect," said Moore. "It's exciting, to be sure, but it's also wonderfully confirming to see how this noble effort is beginning to take hold."

According to the sales manager, sales were relatively flat from January through June as the Publishing Trust transitioned to working with sales representatives and prepared for the release of five new books in June.

In July, the Trust sold more than 3,300 books -- by far the best month on record since the program began in 2002.

Until August, that is, when more than 6,100 books sold.

August also witnessed the first advance orders for books that will be released in October. "We've never seen that before," Moore added. "It's another very positive development."

Lee Minnerly, general manager of the Publishing Trust, said these events are setting a stage for even better things to come.

"We know that selling books about the Bahá'í Faith in retail bookstores is very important," he said, "but the spiritual foundation that underlies producing the books, getting them into the channels of distribution that serve the publishing industry, helping others to understand they are available, and actually placing them into the hands of motivated readers will enable all of us to accomplish even more.

"Whether shared with a friend who is seeking, in a group such as a Bahá'í book club, or as part of a core activity, these books are powerful spiritual tools for stimulating minds and hearts in remarkable ways we can't anticipate."

The friends still play a crucial role in establishing a Bahá'í presence in U.S. bookstores.

"We hope the friends will continue their enthusiastic support of the program when we release our next titles," Minnerly said.

Visit <http://www.bahaibooksusa.com/> for more information.