

Birlinn uses DataSource to manage data and grow sales

Before signing up to DataSource, Birlinn would spend a minimum of 6 hours each week on handling data. It was laborious, repetitive and seemed to add little value. Now that process is entirely automated and Birlinn has more time to concentrate on books.

The discoverability of a title is crucial to its success and the 2016 Nielsen Book UK Study proved there is a strong link between the completeness of the appropriate metadata and the resulting sales.

In order to increase discoverability, publishers need to send their metadata to many trade customers and data aggregators, each of whom has different requirements. This requires a lot of time and is open to errors.

The Business Problem

Before using **DataSource**, a member of the **Birlinn** team would spend several hours each week providing the market with accurate up to date product information. Updating various databases and providing different formats was entirely manual, and therefore slow, mundane and prone to errors. Continuing in this way was unsustainable but the job still had to be done.

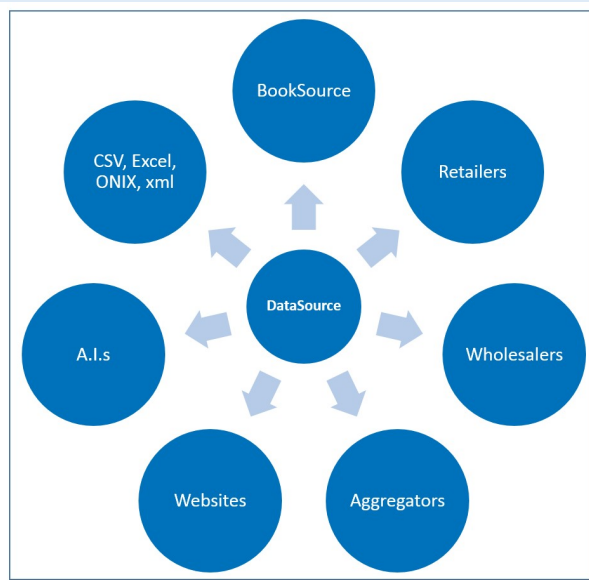
Having committed to finding a solution, Birlinn began to search for options. They quickly learned that this wasn't something they had to do for themselves, that there were many commercial packages out there that would do the job perfectly well. But the problem then became which one to go for. Which one took the least amount of time to get up and running, and which took the least amount of effort to operate?

The BookSource Solution

In 2017 BookSource launched **DataSource**, our metadata distribution service. Earlier that year we implemented STISON as a way to collect and manage the title information that we require to do our distribution job. DataSource is an extension of that data set, on STISON, comprising fuller marketing information, cover images, links to external information and many other pieces of rich data.

DataSource takes the complete metadata record from STISON, wraps it up into a pre determined format and send it to various wholesales, retailers and aggregators. Current recipients include Nielsen, Gardners, Bowker, BDS and MyBookSource.com.

Birlinn's choice was then an obvious one. By subscribing to DataSource they were already half way there, and it meant that all the integration to capture other pieces of data had already been done. They also



liked the idea of having all their information linked back to one system... it seemed like a natural fit.

The Process

Because BookSource already had much of the data on STISON the process was quite painless. Birlinn felt that the process of signing up to DataSource was very quick and straight forward. A simple check of ISBN pre-fixes was all that was needed and there were only a few very minor issues to sort once they had gone live.

The Result

Now Birlinn only update ONE system... STISON. That then feeds into BookSource but also to all the partners, in all the formats that have been set up... and the list continues to grow. The information is now more accurate, more timely and more usable.

Ultimately, Birlinn now spend half the amount of time they used to on product data management!

Birlinn was established in 1992 and is BookSource's largest client publisher with 1508 titles across 7 imprints, and publishes approximately 100 new titles each year.