Brill's Backlist Increases Visibility and Sees New Sales on Google Book Search

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Dr. Matthias Wahls
Brill's Business Development Manager

BRILL

About

Founded in 1683 in Leiden, the Netherlands, Brill has a long tradition in servicing the international academic community. Today the publisher focuses on such disciplines as Ancient Near East & Egypt, Middle East and Islamic Studies, Asian Studies, History, Biblical and Religious Studies, Social Science, Human Rights & Public International Law, and Science & Biology. It has a variety of imprints, including Martinus Nijhoff (international law), VSP (sciences), IDC (primary source and rare materials available on microfiche, microfilm, and online), and Hotei Publishing (books related to the visual arts of Japan).

Challenge

With offices in Leiden and Boston, Brill is a truly international publisher. Acquiring the right international visibility — particularly for Brill's backlist and niche titles — is an important element of Brill's marketing strategy and a key mission to its authors. In most of the markets in which Brill operates, books still play a significant — if not dominant — role, and the information published in these books remains relevant and valid for a long period of time.

Solution

Brill has participated in Google Book Search since July 2005, and today has roughly 6,000 backlist titles in the program. Starting in fall of 2006, all front-list titles will also be added to Book Search. The result thus far has pleased the publisher, which reports "unexpectedly high page visits" and clicks on the "buy the book" feature.

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"The overall results of Brill's one-year participation in Google's book search programme have been fantastic from a strategic point of view and have greatly exceeded our expectations."

Since joining the program, Brill has seen more than half a million visitors access its titles, with more than three million individual page views. After viewing these pages, roughly 5% of visitors click on the "buy the book" link—a figure which doesn't account for those readers who may choose to see the book in the library or to purchase the book offline or alternatively order it at a later date on the publisher's own website, or via another online retailer.

The publisher has also seen increased web traffic to their site thanks to Google Book Search, which always includes a link to the publisher's website next to the book. This adds to the general traffic already generated by Google.com, which accounts for about half of all the traffic driving users to Brill's website.

ABOUT GOOGLE BOOK SEARCH

Google Book Search enables publishers to promote their books on Google. Google scans the full text of participating publishers' titles so that Google users can see books that match the topics they are searching on. When users click on a book search result, they are taken to a Google-hosted web page displaying a scanned image of the relevant page from the book. Each page also contains multiple "Buy this Book" links, which enable users to purchase the book from online retailers. Users may also see contextually targeted Google AdWords ads on these pages. Publishers will receive a share of the revenue generated from ads appearing on their content.

For more information, visit
http://books.google.co.uk

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For example, Brill's well established titles *The Encyclopedia of Islam, 1st Ed (1993), Islamic Law and Finance (1998), The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (1996), and the *Kingdom of Kush* (1997), have all shown high "buy the book" clicks, and in 2005 and 2006 have shown continued sales at significant higher level than in previous years.

The success of their participation in Book Search has spurred Brill to make all of its front-list titles available via Book Search upon publication starting in fall 2006.

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