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A bulletin from the world  
of global media distribution

*Edited by DistriPress, Zurich*



**DistriPress News**

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## Turning casual readers into loyal subscribers

intan, a German independent service provider for subscription marketing, subscription management and media sales, is looking for ways to make subscribing more sustainable.

The company, which has just had its 40th birthday, wants to focus on better keeping its 2m subscribers rather than mostly seeking new ones. It's attempting this through overhauling its subscription payment model, employing AI to identify termination risks, and to upsell products to increase loyalty.

There has historically been an 'unsustainable' way of renewing subscriptions in German-speaking nations, according to Gisbert Komlóssy, CEO and founder of intan.

"If there's somebody subscribing for one year and gets €100 as an incentive for staying, they will never stay longer because he knows that the next year, they can do the same and get €100 again. So, you're buying your subscribers back every year," says Gisbert. "That's the wrong way of doing it because it leads to less loyalty."

To tackle this, intan has trialled a payment widget that migrates customers from a manual renewal system to a recurring payment system such as PayPal. For intan's market, this is a big step.

"When you have to pay manually, you will lose customers – every invoice is a risk,' says Gisbert. 'If somebody pays automatically, the churn rate is always a lot less."

Initial emails to customers, resulted in an immediate 18% conversion rate to the recurring model. "It was a big surprise to

me that nearly 20% of the people reacted positively,” says Gisbert.

The business also advocates for knowing customers better, to upsell products to them that meet their interests, for example clubs or events. “Lately, we have also started a very promising project with the cross-marketing of events and seminars for subscribers.”

This can also be tailored to those at risk of termination, as determined by AI tools. “Times change and we change with them,” says Gisbert.



INNOVATION / AI / USA

## How AI can fuel better selling covers

Look at the two covers above. Which do you think attracted the most readers?

If you said the one on the right, you would be wrong. The simple cover on the left attracted 60% more readers in Barnes & Noble, who responded to the clear, benefit-oriented cover line. It sold over 12,000 more copies and delivered \$70,000 in additional sales.

It's insights like this that the AI-driven database tool Cover Rocket is aiming to provide to publishers, distributors, and wholesalers. Alan Centofante is CEO of Discover Rockets, the company behind the platform. "Publishers have relied on static spreadsheets, possibly matched with covers, but the sales reports don't give content creators needed insights that help to improve their cover selection process." Centofante says.

Discover Rockets has partnered with Barnes and Noble to enhance the tool with detailed sales data for each publication, providing great insight and value to content creators.

Krifka Steffey, Barnes and Noble's Director, Merchandise, Newsstand, and Media, has been the driving force behind the partnership at B&N. "I instantly saw it as an opportunity to increase sales because if publishers design better covers, our sales will go up," says Steffey.

Cover Rocket utilises point-of-sale data as the performance indicator and is updated in real-time. The AI tool enhancement recognises and categorises faces, objects, scenes, and coverlines, which allows for broader search options and discoverability.

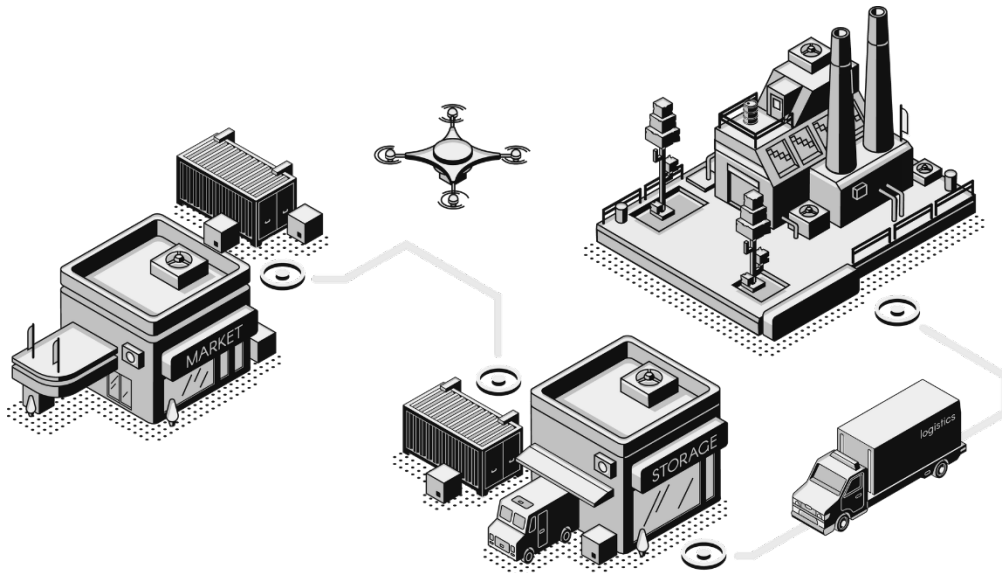
"You can look at your competitive set of magazines to see what has worked and learn from their successes and mistakes," says Steffey. "That gives you more clarity to it.

We're putting it in the hands of the content creators and letting them run with it."

Publisher Hearst is using the platform to inform its creative approach. Jim Miller, VP Retail Sales for Hearst Magazines, explains: "Our newsstand team uses the tool to research and inform the content team on previous sales and more recent trending."

Ultimately, Discover Rocket's goal is to take Cover Rocket international to a wider audience. "Now that we have the technology working, we would love to see if it could be applied in international markets."

*Samir "Mr. Magazine™" Husni, Krifka Steffey, and Alan Centofante will be presenting "The Art and Science of Adding Value to Your Magazine Cover" at the DistriPress Congress in September.*



INSIGHT / Research / Data

## **New DistriPress report on data in the supply chain**

“Data-Driven Supply in Newspapers & Magazines” is the title of a new report from DistriPress, written by Wessenden Marketing. As the traditional Newspaper & Magazine (N&M) supply chain has become more complex and is under more pressure than ever, the role and power of data are now critical for every player in the content pipeline.

Data is no longer a “nice-to-have”. It is now central to the future of the whole N&M industry: to help create better products & services and to deliver those products & services to the end consumer in the most efficient and user-friendly ways. The current challenge is that there is simply too much data. Also, it is often held in isolated pools and provides only partial insights into a much bigger picture of the end consumer.

There is a race on to join up the data dots and to leverage real value from the process. The players who get there first will exert much more control over the supply chain. In fact, they will be instrumental in driving the shift from SUPPLY CHAINS, where there is a stable series of structured “hand-overs” in a chain with clearly defined roles, to CONNECTED NETWORKS, where there is a complex set of relationships between publishers and consumers.

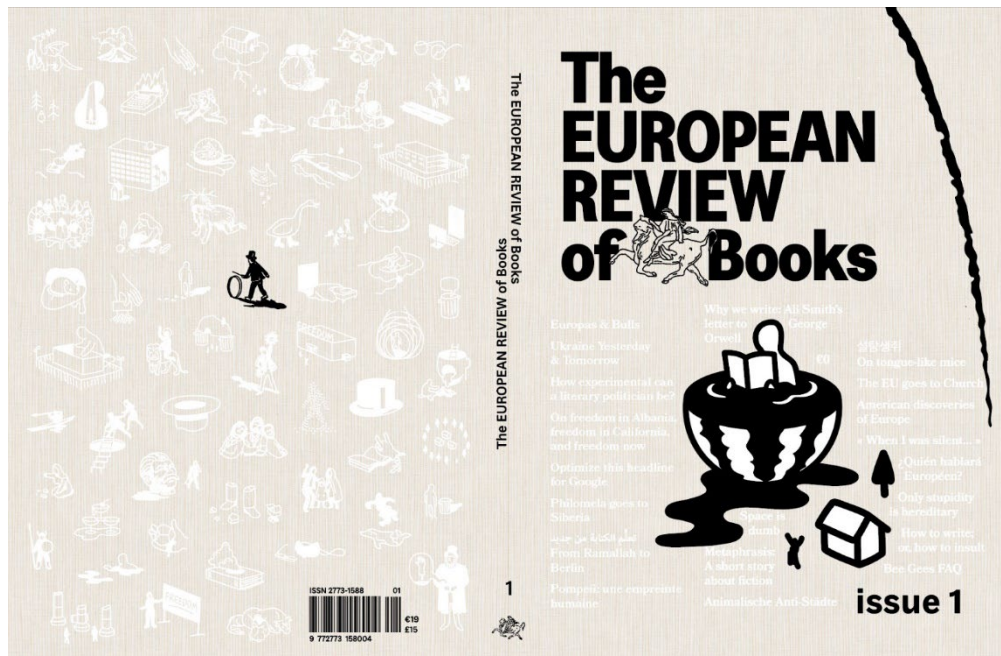
Data is the glue that holds these networks together. This opens up both new opportunities and challenges for DistriPress members in every link in the chain. Access to the summary and the full report for DistriPress members will be available in late July.

Data is at the core of Wessenden Marketing's alternate monthly news review, **wessenden briefing**.

This digs into the business models and developments behind the news headlines of the content distribution industry; newspapers & magazines, retail & subscriptions, print & digital.

What do the headlines actually mean? And where is the whole industry headed?

For a **free** sample issue, simply email [info@wessenden.com](mailto:info@wessenden.com) with the subject line 'Free Issue Offer'.



**MAGAZINES** / Out now / Global

# **Launchpad: *European Review of Books***

## **What's the elevator pitch for your title (describe *The European Review of Books* in 20 words or less)?**

A European magazine of culture and ideas, with well-known names and new voices, in a double-edged design like no other.

## **What's the story behind the inception of the magazine?**

We wanted to make a “European” magazine that’s adventurous, critical and lively. We wanted to meet readers where they were, and in the languages in which they live and think. We wanted an English-language magazine that stirs beyond national, linguistic, and generational boundaries. The editors have backgrounds in academia and in the magazine world. Dissatisfied with both, we decided to create a space for great writing that dives deep into culture and ideas—and that carries you with it.

## **Who is it aimed at?**

Both at new readers who have grown up in the digital Europe of Schengen and Erasmus grants, and at the old-fashioned reader who has seen serious critique reduced to consumer tips and meager op-eds. The ERB is aimed at serious readers who like to be surprised. Unserious readers who still like getting lost in ideas. Intellectuals who want to reach beyond the Anglo-American province. Younger readers with wide horizons, who feel undernourished by “feeds” but also want to be taken seriously.

## **What sort of articles can people read in the *European Review of Books* (other than book reviews!)?**

You’ll find writers from many corners – in Europe and beyond – and writing of many kinds. Good criticism and robust



reviews. Stories and poetry. Personal dispatches and original reporting alongside adventurous interviews and profiles. Well-wrought academic work from scholars who can tell a story. Deep, earnest thinking alongside glorious distraction.

**How would you describe the design of the magazine?**

A literally cutting-edge design! Making an old-fashioned method new, the magazine's pages are uncut. Cut the pages — easily done with a finger — to open a second layer, where depth, delight and digressions await.

**What are your ultimate ambitions for the magazine?**

To create a modern, multilingual *république des lettres* and to cultivate new voices, in Europe and beyond. Our ultimate ambitions are to be taken for granted as an essential outlet of culture and ideas.

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