## BIC DIGITAL SUPPLY CHAIN COMMITTEE MEETING – Minutes

CILIP Building, 7 Ridgmount St, London, WC1E 7AE  
Thursday 22nd January 2015, 2pm

### Present

- Alaina-Marie Bassett, BIC  
- Graham Bell, EDItEUR  
- Johanna Brinton, OverDrive  
- Katy Gibson, BIC  
- Ingrid Harrold, Dorling Kindersley  
- Alex Ingram, EDItEUR  
- Ruth Jones, Ingram Content (Chair)  
- Martin Klopstock, Kogan Page  
- Karina Luke, BIC  
- Prashant Narekuli, Datamatics  
- Simon Pallant, Gardners  
- Barry Richardson, Nielsen  
- Alan Trewartha, HarperCollins

### Apologies

- John Bell, HarperCollins  
- Matthew Cashmore, Blackwells  
- Tom Chalmers, IPR License  
- Ashley Holloway, Penguin Random House  
- Sarah Lambert, Hachette (Deputy Chair)  
- Mark Majurey, Taylor & Francis Group  
- Peter Mathews, Cambridge University Press  
- Roger Miah, ePubDirect  
- Nicola Torode, Dorling Kindersley  
- Julian Wilson, Wiley

### 1. Introductions and apologies

RJ welcomed the Group to the meeting and read out the list of apologies, noting a disappointing amount of absentees. Johanna Brinton of OverDrive was welcomed to the Group as was Ingrid Harrold of Dorling Kindersley, Nicola Torode’s delegate. It was noted that Nicola Torode and Julian Wilson were unable to attend this meeting and, as such, will be welcomed to this Committee at the next meeting. AB noted that new representatives for Blackwell’s and Penguin Random House are being sought and will hopefully be present at the next meeting. 

**Post-Meeting Update:** Tom Cox has now agreed to join this Committee, taking Matthew Cashmore’s place as Blackwell’s representative, and Julia Midwinter will take the place of Ashley Holloway as Penguin Random House’s representative.

It was noted that John Bell has now missed three consecutive Committee meetings without sending a delegate to attend the meeting in his place. The Group were reminded that it is in the Terms of Reference for this Committee that members should attend all meetings, or else send a delegate in their place in the event that they are unable to attend personally.  

**ACTION:** AB to contact John Bell regarding his attendance of this Committee.

### 2. Review of actions from the last minutes

KL noted that, since the last meeting, BIC has approached the suggested contacts from various organisations to ask them to join this Committee. The Group were informed that Sainsbury’s eBooks do not feel that they can join the Committee at this time. AI noted that he knows Richard Green of Sainsbury’s eBooks and suggested that he would contact him to encourage their involvement in BIC and this Committee.
ACTION: Al to contact Richard Green of Sainsbury’s eBooks to encourage him to join this Committee. RJ questioned whether a representative from Amazon might be sought out. GB informed the Group that an Amazon representative, Sharat Gaur, sits on the UK National Thema Group. KL noted that Amazon are loyal BIC Members and suggested that they should be approached nonetheless.

ACTION: AB to contact Amazon to nominate a representative for this Committee.

RJ noted that she will supply AB with contact information for Georgie Stone of Pearson. The Group suggested that representatives from libraries as well as retailers should be approached; they specifically suggested Bowker / Proquest and EBSCO. AI suggested that Apple may be a good candidate for this Committee, though it was noted that they are not BIC members and do not have an extensive UK staff presence. AI suggested that the audio book side of Amazon might also be good candidates and noted that he has a potential contact that he could approach. KL commented that this was a good idea as there is a temptation to look solely at specific digital products, such as ebooks, on this Committee but that the scope of the Digital Supply Chain goes beyond this.

ACTION: RJ to forward Georgie Stone’s email address to AB.
ACTION: AB to approach Bowker / ProQuest, EBSCO and Apple to join this Committee.
ACTION: AI to approach his audio books Amazon contact for a representative for this Committee and forward to AB.

3. Update on current Task & Finish Working Groups’ activity

- **Acquisitions and Divestments Task & Finish Working Group (T&FWG)**
  KL informed the Group that this T&FWG met for the first time on Wednesday 3rd December 2014 and that the next meeting will be held on 19th February 2015. KL noted that a call has been sent out to find a consultant who will take on the role of Project Leader for this project and noted that until someone is hired in this role she will act as the temporary Chair. The Group discussed how much time a consultant would need to spend on the project. They agreed on one day (7 hours) per week. KL noted that the response rate had not been extensive and questioned whether to send out a subsequent call-for-volunteers. The Group agreed this should happen.

  ACTION: KL to forward the received applications to RJ and send out another call for a consultant.

  RJ noted the importance of this project, noting that it will have relevance to both the physical and digital supply chains. KL agreed but noted that sponsors / contributions may be needed to finance the project if the costs go beyond the figure agreed by the BIC Operational Board. In the meantime, the Group will continue to work on the project at hand with KL as the Project Lead.

  ACTION: RJ to liaise with KL regarding progress of this project.

4. Round-the-table feedback from each committee member on new areas that this Committee should be exploring / researching

- **Intellectual Property (IP) and ISTCs**
  RJ questioned how IP in both digital and print products can be brought together in order to streamline the supply chain; she noted that ‘digital’ in this context refers to eBooks. GB noted
that work identifiers, International Standard Text Codes (ISTCs), are a good way of linking content. The Group noted that there has been concern regarding the linking of titles by some authors whose works are published by multiple publishers, in particular the publishers do not want their competitors to potentially gain advantage / sales from this linking process. GB commented that it takes time and effort to keep these links up-to-date, since they have to be updated retrospectively. MK agreed, suggesting that organisations should approach this process as they do subscriptions, so that the latest version of a book is always the most up-to-date one that can be ordered / distributed. RJ suggested an “upgrade path” may be useful, where licensing is “in perpetuity” but the content receives periodic revisions. MK noted that most systems do not accept substitute ISBNS so, should an ISBN become out of print, the new ISBN will not automatically be supplied. AI also commented that licensing causes additional issues with digital products in this context. GB commented that this linking of past and present editions is largely a marketing issue but noted that some consumers may have a legitimate reason for purchasing a past edition. The Group agreed that further discussion is needed on this matter and suggested that a best practice guidelines document may need to be produced. MK noted that there is a reluctance to remove older editions which does not facilitate the sales / discoverability of a new edition. He also suggested that validation issues may need to be addressed.

**ACTION:** AB to add this discussion as an item for the agenda of the next meeting.

- **Discoverability of mixed media eBooks**
  JB raised the issue of mixed media eBooks and their discoverability, questioning how to distinguish these books alongside their other available formats. GB noted that these titles can be distinguished in ONIX as an “enhanced eBook” with the code ENH. He noted that these titles should have different ISBNS to the regular eBooks since they are, essentially, different products. RJ asked whether consistent information is received from publishers. JB responded that there was no consistency or standard practice yet, as many of these multimedia editions are currently in test phases. He questioned how the signage on retail platforms for these products should work. GB noted that this was an issue which comes down to the retailer’s handling of the product(s).

**ACTION:** ALL to decide if this topic should be further explored (or not) by BIC at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** AB to add this as an item for the agenda of the next meeting.

- **eBook Inventory Reporting**
  IH raised the issue of inventory reporting, noting that eBook catalogues are getting larger and it is becoming a challenge to check what titles are on sale, the price at which they are listed (including different region pricing), and the related sales figures. She also noted that once the content/product has been handed over to either the retailer or the digital asset management organisation, no further information is returned to the publisher. IH noted that, currently, DK have to request an inventory from retailers, which can take up to two weeks to receive, by which time the inventory listed is out-of-date. Further difficulties include the current inability to check other territories’ sales of titles. The Group agreed that a solution is needed to resolve these issues. GB noted that the EDItX standard may already provide a solution to this issue. IH noted
that this would certainly be an incentive to use EDItX. The Group agreed, suggesting that this could be discussed in the forthcoming LBF15 seminar presentation.

**ACTION:** GB to check whether EDItX’s inventory reporting can resolve the above issues and if so, this to be included in the LBF EDItX presentation.

**ACTION:** AB to add EDI tX Inventory / Sales reporting as a separate agenda item for the next meeting.

- **ONIX file acknowledgement messages**
  GB confirmed that the acknowledgement messages for receipt of ONIX files have now been finalised and are ready for use. He noted any issues that may arise with this messaging system will be passed on to this Committee. He also noted that as well as forming a response / acknowledgement, the message can also report on errors. GB noted that he does not envisage a wide or rapid adoption of this system just yet, although the system has already been successfully implemented in France by Hachette and the National Library of France. He noted that information about this messaging system can be found on the EDItEUR website.
  
  **ACTION:** GB to report in the next meeting on any issues that may have arisen with the acknowledgement messages.

- **ONIX code lists**
  GB noted that the changes to ONIX codelists, Issue 27, was released in November 2014. He noted that the extensions to this code list included: changes to subscriptions and the addition of more granular job roles for comic / graphic novel publishers. There was also a late autumn update for the 3.0.1 ePub format.
  
  **ACTION:** No action required.

- **Thema 1.1 released**
  GB informed the Group that the English version of Thema 1.1 was also released in November 2014, and included 25 wholly new subject categories plus many more minor updates, details of which can be found here: [http://www.bic.org.uk/86/THEMA/](http://www.bic.org.uk/86/THEMA/). He noted that the publication of 1.1 has not invalidated the use of Thema 1.0.
  
  **ACTION:** No action required.

- **Schema.org**
  GB informed the Group about schema.org – a project that EDItEUR and BISG have been collaborating on. GB noted that schema.org markup embeds metadata into the URL for a book. It is hoped this will aid the discoverability of books using schema.org markup. He noted that the Group last met in early January 2015. He also noted that Google owns Schema.org and that it is being promoted by other large search engines such as Bing, Yahoo and Yandex. Further information about schema.org can be found, here: [http://schema.org/](http://schema.org/)

  **ACTION:** GB to circulate documentation about this project to this Committee for comment.

- **eBook Data from Bookscan**
  **ACTION:** BR will give an update at the next meeting regarding ebook data held at Bookscan.
- **Open Access Books**
  PN raised the issue of Open Access Books, which GB noted has been discussed by this Committee previously. He noted that there are several points to consider here including: the type of licence, who funds it, whether the book is free of charge or “unpriced”, what the text is, and where the repository is. He informed PN that open access books can be described in ONIX by selecting ‘free of charge’ under the ‘Priced Licence Type’, and flagging the title as ‘Open Access’. He also noted that further information about open access books can be found in the ONIX 3.0 user guidelines, though this license type cannot be expressed in ONIX 2.1. He noted that the repository can also be listed in ONIX 3.0 files.
  **ACTION:** ALL to decide if this topic should, or should not be explored further by BIC at the next meeting.
  **ACTION:** AB to add this topic to the agenda for the next meeting.

- **Territorial Sales Rights for digital products**
  SP informed the Group that Gardners are experiencing increasing challenges with regards territorial sales rights for digital products; specifically, he noted that the ONIX field for this purpose is frequently misused. RJ noted that there are ongoing issues with “open rights” too. SP suggested that this is perhaps an education issue rather than something being wrong with any standards. GB noted that the difference between sales rights and publishing rights are often misunderstood. He also noted that, if a title does not have world rights then it is necessary to list out every country where it is available (in ONIX3). GB commented that BISG and BIC do in fact have conflicting advice here, and suggested that the BIC Basic Guidelines should be reviewed and updated accordingly. The Group discussed whether a workshop might be suitable for education purposes, noting that a BIC Breakfast is out of the question since every organisation’s system is different. It was agreed that a workshop would not resolve this issue either and it was suggested instead that this item should be passed over to the Product Data Excellence Award (PDEA) Review Task & Finish Working Group for consideration. They also agreed that the date stamping of ONIX feeds and the turnaround time of ONIX feeds should be reviewed by this T&FWG too.
  **ACTION:** AB to add this discussion to the agenda for the next PDEA Review T&FWG meeting.

- **Generation BIC**
  AB informed the Group that the BIC Operational Board have agreed this project should be discontinued so that BIC can concentrate its time and resources on other more pressing projects. She noted that there had been relatively little interest in Generation BIC overall.
  **ACTION:** None required.

- **BIC Open Day**
  KL informed the Group that there had been a disappointing turnout for the annual BIC Open Day which was held on Friday 21st November at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), despite a high number of people being signed up to attend. KL noted that the purpose of the event is to inform both members and non-members about what BIC is doing and encourage their involvement. She noted that BIC’s communication with the book industry is better than it
has ever been previously and commented that perhaps this might have something to do with the poor attendance of the event in 2014. The Group suggested that the event may indeed now be redundant due to BIC’s much-improved communications. The Group suggested more targeted, specific events – such as workshops or seminars which would not last an entire afternoon – could be a better use of resources and be more attractive to attendees.

**ACTION:** KL to feed these comments back to the Operational Board, who are currently reviewing the future of the Open Day.

5. **BIC Breakfasts Topics**

- **EDITX Sales Reporting**

  KL asked if any of the organisations who have requested this functionality are UK-based, suggesting that they could be useful contacts for the BIC Breakfast. GB noted that there had been a growth in the use of EDITX within the US but also noted that its most widespread use is in Germany and Sweden; he noted that new eBook vendors from these two countries led to an increase in demand for EDITX in these regions, though he also noted that they had started this process from scratch rather than migrating from EDI messages. KL suggested that a presentation on sales reporting / EDITX could be held at the forthcoming BIC Supply Chain Seminar at the London Book Fair 2015 (LBF15) and the Group agreed this was a good idea. GB volunteered to seek out suitable speakers for this presentation. RJ suggested that this presentation may encourage organisations to use EDITX as a way of streamlining their sales reporting, which will subsequently increase the demand for it in other organisations.

  RJ commented that some of the most passionate advocates of EDITX are amongst the members of this Committee. The apparent lack of demand for the standard was discussed. SP informed the Group that Gardners can ingest EDITX but cannot output it. RJ suggested that the ‘pain points’ of adopting standard need to be addressed. IH noted that embedding the use of the standard as a contractual clause would not necessarily work for publishers. KL commented that perhaps referring to the use of EDITX for sales reporting as the “preferred” option in a contract may be a solution. MK noted that there is a risk involved with EDITX, in that the organisations’ sales reporting may come to a standstill while it is being implemented. He also noted that the more fragmented the reporting systems get, the harder it will be to standardise. GB agreed, noting that organisations seem to currently be concentrating more on sales than looking at long term profitability. RJ suggested investigating how long the mapping to EDITX might take so that organisations can be informed of this.

  RJ noted that the locality of orders needs to be addressed and there needs to be a way of reporting this. MK also suggested that some research needs to be undertaken looking into why retailers are not adopting EDITX but continue to use less sophisticated means of reporting. KL questioned whether smaller organisations are even aware of EDITX but are not implementing it for varying reasons. KL questioned whether this Group is
evangelising the standard, rather than addressing a need in the industry. GB commented that
both Ingram Content Group and OverDrive are able to export EDItX in the US but noted that
there is very little demand for this in the UK but, again, emphasised the cost-saving benefits of
the standard. The Group agreed that further discussion is needed on this matter. The Group
suggested reconsidering a BIC Breakfast about EDItX after the Supply Chain Seminar at LBF15
has gone ahead.

GB commented that a press release regarding the changes to EDItX’s documentation was
mentioned in the previous meeting’s minutes but he noted that this press release is not
necessary and will not go ahead; the documentation will simply be revised. KL noted that she
will write a letter to BIC’s membership shortly to raise awareness about EDItX and to explain why
EDItX should be used / the benefits of its use. The Group agreed that this letter should be
released after LBF15. GB noted that OverDrive currently support a certain type of EDItX file –
which is good progress.

**ACTION:** AB to add this BIC Breakfast as an item on the agenda for this Committee’s next
meeting.

**ACTION:** RJ to check which of Ingram’s customers are using EDItX and report back to KL / the
Group before the next meeting.

**ACTION:** GB to provide suggestions for potential speakers for the Supply Chain Seminar from
international organisations that use / advocate the use of EDItX.

**ACTION:** KL to produce a letter for BIC members, as a follow-up to the Supply Chain Seminar at
LBF15, to encourage organisations to think about using EDItX.

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**New Topics for BIC Breakfasts**

The Group agreed that BIC Breakfasts on i) ISNIs, and ii) accessibility would be of value to the
book industry. AB informed the Group that these topics are currently under consideration by the
Training, Events & Communications Committee for BIC Breakfasts later in the year.

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6. **Implementation of EU VAT on e-Services**

The Group noted that this topic will need to be addressed at the next meeting, after the first reports
have been submitted.

**ACTION:** AB to include this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

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7. **Actions for the BIC Training, Events & Communications (TEC) Committee**

BIC Breakfasts, as discussed above. Nothing else was raised for consideration by the TEC Committee.

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8. **A.O.B.**

- **Sunset of ONIX 2.1**

GB informed the Group that the sunset date for ONIX 2.1 was 31st December 2014 and that the
12 month twilight period began on 1st January 2015. Documentation for ONIX 2.1 has now been
archived on EDItEUR’s website, and formal full support has been removed. Resources outlining
the details about how to ensure DTDs are validated were made available on the EDItEUR website
and GB reported that many downloads of this documentation have been registered. He noted that requests for long and short DTDs and XSDs were equal.

- **Consultants on Committees**
  The Group was informed that the BIC Operational Board has recently agreed that consultants should no longer sit on BIC Committees. The Group agreed this is a necessary measure and fully supported the decision.

9. **Date of next meeting**
    Thursday 21st May 2015.