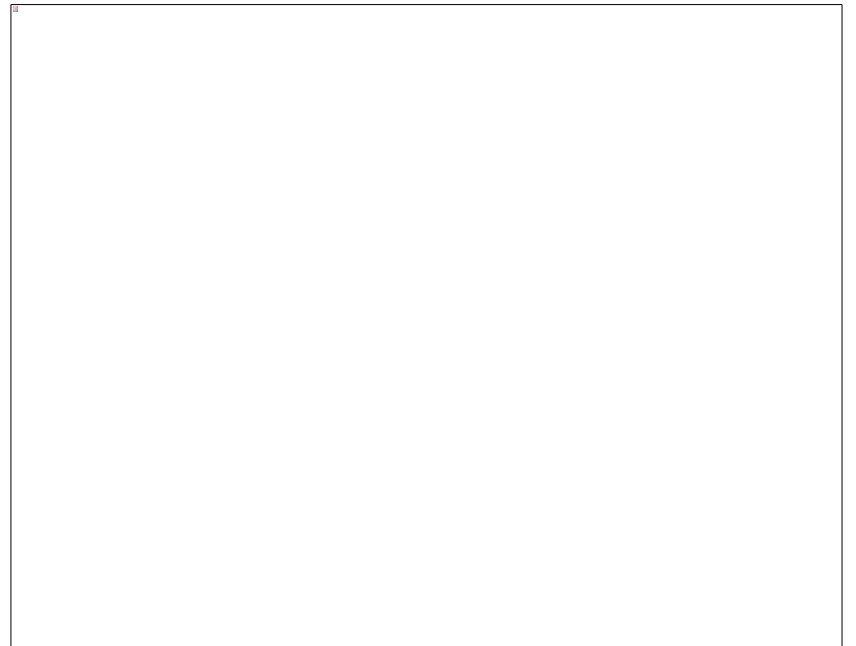


Automating the supply chain
- a new bookseller's perspective

Simon Edwards
The Little Ripon Bookshop

Agenda

- Introduction
- About The Little Ripon Bookshop
- An Automated Supply Chain
- What we do
- E4books accreditation
- Conclusion



About Ripon

- No other independent bookshop
- Small WHS, charity shops, supermarkets etc.
- Population 16,000
- Cathedral city and market town
- Grammar school, middle class, educated, retired, quite affluent, Tory?



About The Little Ripon Bookshop

- Started trading 7th July 2009
- <500sqft general bookseller
- 2 computers, 1 cash desk, 2 scanners
- 3 printers (1xA4, 1 receipt, 1 book tokens receipt)
- Credit card payment terminal
- Touch Sensitive Screen
- EPOS system – itemised till receipt, ISBN+Title
- (also tells you what change to give!)

THE LITTLE RIPON BOOKSHOP



The automated supply chain

- What does it look like?

- Products

Printed books, maps, audio books on CD, audio books as a digital file, and ebooks

- Communication

Electronic links with suppliers

- Processes

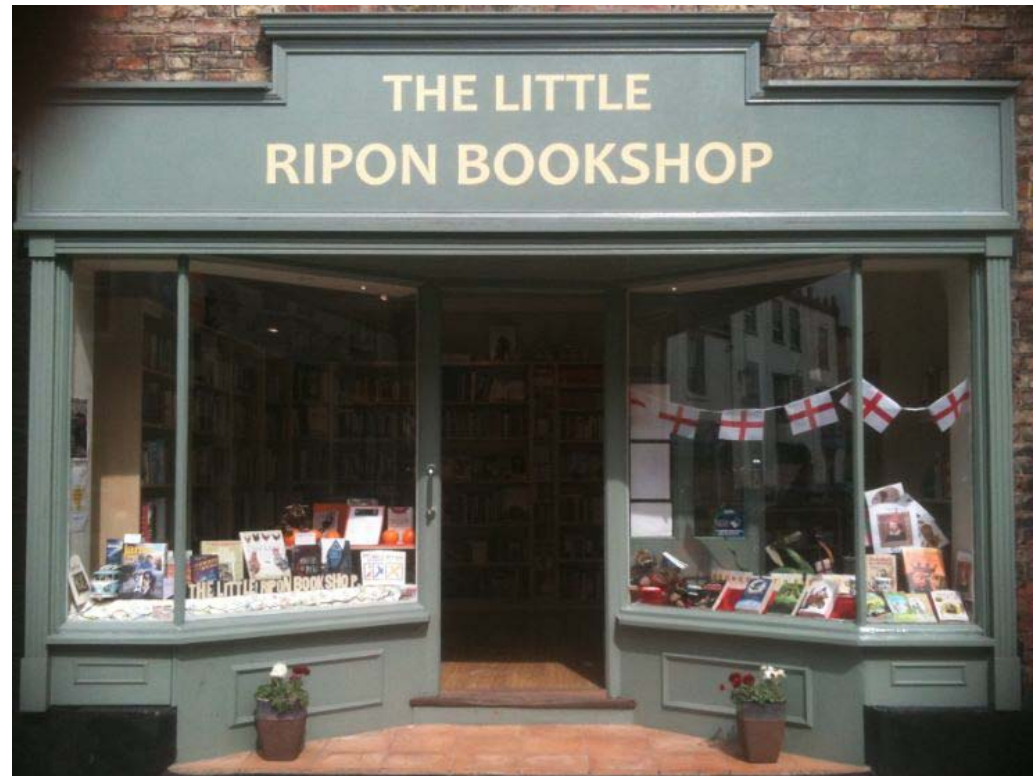
Make routine tasks simple, efficient, quick

Electronic links

- Controlling the business using the available services from these suppliers...
- Wholesalers (Bertrams and Gardners)
- Batch.co.uk
- PubEasy
- Nielsen Book
- National BookTokens
- plus Amazon, TBD, AbeBooks, Alibris websites

Scope

- Bibliographic supply
- Ordering
- Invoicing
- Payments
- Returns



Processes – Product Information

- Bibliographic search
- Use wholesaler websites, PubEasy, Nielsen BookData OnLine
- Don't just accept first book we find, do additional search on author links or other formats to be sure that we are ordering the right book e.g. the latest paperback
- Find books the customer is after
- Check price and availability
- Predict when the order should be supplied

Processes - Ordering

- Place orders electronically
- Manipulate orders to ensure they exceed wholesaler thresholds to avoid carriage charges £100 min (£150 Sat)
- Do customer orders first, then replenishment
- If at home and a book is highlighted on the news or recommended by friends – order immediately via website from home or iPhone.

Processes – Other suppliers

- Service to my customer is crucial; speed and predictability of delivery not price/discount
- Wholesalers need to be able to compete with Amazon Prime service (Free next day delivery if in stock at Amazon)
- 5% of customer orders not in print/available so we have to use the second hand market e.g. Amazon market place, The Book Depository, AbeBooks, Alibris, Biblio etc.

Processes - Buying

- New titles – use wholesaler buying catalogues
- Replenishment – average stock holding 1 copy
- Replenish by following morning
- High selling lines: stock holding up to 5 copies
e.g. 3x Wolf Hall, 3x third Larsson
- Ad hoc: use Nielsen BookScan Bold software to track top 50 sales in independents
- Check Nielsen BookScan Bold software to show mass market books with massive discounts (to be avoided)

Processes - Goods In

- Confirm order acceptance (View order Acknowledgements) – action if not available
- Track shipment and be alert to any delivery problems (3 or 4 occurrences in 9 months)
- Download Delivery Notes (Invoice Confirmations)
- Automatically updates EPOS stock file
- System automatically produces customer order slips with phone numbers
- System automatically emails customers where email address is given

Processes - Dues, Returns, Invoices, Payments

- Dues monitoring and order cancellation
- Returns requests (scanning barcode (ISBN) of books into wholesaler returns website)
- Returns authorisation – or reason for refusal e.g. not supplied by us – usually within 5 mins!
- Invoices and Credit notes received via Batch.co.uk
- Check them online
- Authorise payment of invoices and acceptance of credit notes with one click – payment by DD

Processes – National Book Tokens

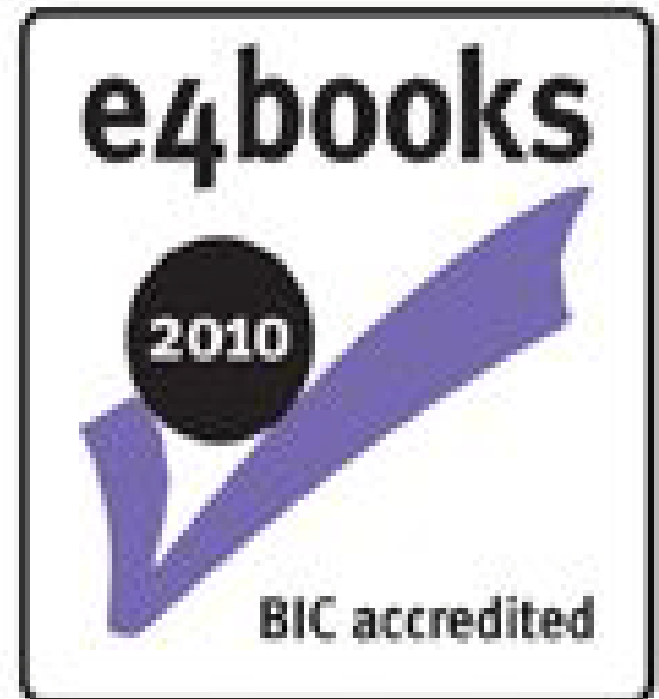
- Sell, top up and redeem National Book Tokens gift cards via NBT website
- Simple, efficient, reliable
- Reduced threat of stolen paper vouchers
- No monthly recorded delivery postage charge

Stats

- 95% of our orders are sent electronically
- 95% invoices paid electronically (Batch or CC)
- 80% we collect an electronic acknowledgement
- 70% achieve next day delivery
- 50% customers pay by credit or debit card
(we've received only 12 cheques in 9 months)
- 99% of our overstock returns are requested and authorised electronically

E4books Accreditation

In January 2010
The Little Ripon Bookshop
was accredited for
e4books by BIC



More to do?

- Lots of problems with bibs data – accuracy, consistency – We start with wholesalers then PubEasy. Publishers please check your data!
- Non availability/out of print is often confirmed by high prices for “used” on Amazon market place
- New wholesaler EPOS systems are available
- We need to do more with distributors
- Our e-commerce website is not yet live
- Roaming credit card payment machine for book fairs, external events would be useful

Conclusion

- We are not unique - many independents are now doing the same things
- Giving us a level playing field v. the chains?
- Helping independent booksellers to survive
- Many thanks to the wholesalers, the BA, PubEasy and Nielsen for the fantastic services mentioned above (Many of these services are provided at no extra cost)
- Big thanks to BIC for its work in the supply chain - acting as a catalyst for improvement

Thank You

Automating the supply chain
- a new bookseller's perspective

Simon Edwards
The Little Ripon Bookshop
13 Westgate, Ripon, North Yorkshire
HG4 2AT

Shop: 01765 606689
simon@littleriponbookshop.co.uk
www.littleriponbookshop.co.uk