



David Marlin

co-founded MetaComet® Systems in 2000. Beyond his expertise in the world of royalty automation, David is committed to enhancing the technological capabilities of the publishing world through his work as the founding co-chairman of the Book Industry Study Group's (BISG) Digital Sales Reporting Committee and a former co-chair of the BISG Rights Committee. He is a regular speaker and contributor to industry events and symposia.

Prior to founding MetaComet Systems, David spent 3 years as a technology consultant for publishers working with companies such as Random House, Penguin, HarperCollins, Holtzbrinck, Macmillan, Scholastic, Time Warner and many others. Before that he spent several years managing marketing initiatives for American Express in New York. David earned both his MBA and BA from Columbia University in New York.

Paperless Royalty Management and Sustainability: How Automation Cuts Environmental Impacts

Sustainability in publishing is under closer scrutiny than ever before—and with so many consumers acutely aware of environmental impacts, all businesses face mounting pressure to get greener.

The increasingly tough questions are the result of growing global awareness of sustainability issues. Activist movements around the world, and high-profile individual campaigners like Greta Thunberg, have helped to drive environmental issues into the mainstream.

Alongside this, analysis of environmental impacts has intensified. With around 690 million print books sold in the US last year, the enormous paper consumption of the publishing industry is obvious, while other elements of production like ink and transportation increase the carbon footprint.

Publishers are responding to the pressure to reduce their impacts. Many companies have pledged improvements through new environmental policies, and industry-wide schemes in the US like the Green Press Initiative have tried to start momentum for change. There has been a particularly notable shift towards use of recycled paper and more responsible sourcing practices.

Set against the vast scale of paper consumption, reducing the environmental impact of royalty management might seem like a minor victory. But by using digital technology to automate royalty administration and streamline processes, publishers can accelerate the journey towards better sustainability.

Using a web-based platform to collate sales data and calculate money owed to authors helps to make royalty management a paperless operation. By providing digital statements rather than physical ones, and sharing them via email or online platforms like MetaComet's AuthorPortal, publishers can substantially reduce their paper, printing and costs. MetaComet's best estimate is that switches to online statements have saved around 400,000 pages of printing a year for its clients, and there is significant potential to increase that number further. Paying by electronic transfer rather than check meanwhile cuts postage costs, and any follow-up correspondence between author and publisher can be conducted online too.

As well as helping the industry reduce its carbon footprint through better royalty management, MetaComet is committed to improving its own work on sustainability. The managed cloud service that drives MetaComet's systems, Connectria, is now carbon neutral, reducing energy consumption by up to 95%. Environmental gains like this and the automation of royalty management won't solve publishing's sustainability challenges on their own—but they are important steps in the right direction.

For more about MetaComet's royalty management solutions, visit www.metacomet.com.