



Walter de Gruyter/Mouton–De Gruyter looks to reach an international audience through Google Book Search

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Prof. Dr. h.c. Klaus G. Saur
Managing Director
De Gruyter



For decades, the scholarly publishing house of Walter de Gruyter/Mouton–De Gruyter has been known as a respected publisher of superior academic and scientific literature. Annually, it publishes more than 250 new books, over 60 academic journals, as well as various electronic media.

Challenge

As an academic publisher, De Gruyter targets a very international audience consisting of researchers, educators, and students. “Our audience tends to be very Internet-savvy. It is also an audience that tends to search for information in small chunks – meaning, a section or chapter of a larger book on a niche subject,” says Prof. Dr. h.c. Klaus G. Saur, Managing Director. Catering to such an audience is particularly difficult with catalogues or traditional marketing models – a table of contents or an index, for example, only reveal so much about the subjects treated within a text.

Solution

Since signing up to participate in Book Search in September 2005, De Gruyter has made over 5,000 of its titles available – almost its entire catalogue – with an additional 1,000 to be added to Book Search in the coming months. This has helped its texts gain increased international visibility, and its backlist has been rediscovered by readers around the world.

Niche titles have clearly benefited from the new exposure. Principles of Visual Anthropology has been viewed 1,206 times, with 23.5% of viewers clicking on the “Buy this book” link after viewing a selection of pages.

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're 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>

“We know of no better online service to make readers aware of our product”

A similar phenomenon can be observed with the Enzyklopaedie des Maerchens, an encyclopedia of fairy tales that has been viewed 471 times since debuting on Book Search, and which has seen nearly half of its viewers (44.4%) heading to the “Buy this book” link.

De Gruyter, like many other publishers, initially wondered whether its dictionaries would be less marketable if viewers could view snippets or sections of them on Google Book Search. But the success of Kluge: Etymologisches Woerterbuch suggests otherwise. Over 8% of those viewing the dictionary's snippets have selected “Buy this book,” proving that a good definition from a good dictionary can lead to increased sales.

“We know of no better online service to make readers aware of our product,” says Patrick Alexander, VP and Publishing Director North America. He added

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that while other online retailers make significant contributions to the publisher’s sales, users must know exactly what title they are searching for.

With Book Search, in contrast, general subject searches can lead users to books they may not have known existed. For example, it’s not only a search term like “sociology Europe” that leads users to De Gruyter’s title *Sociology in Europe*; “British social theory” and myriad other terms and subjects found in this book will also work. And since Google Book Search only searches for relevant matches to a user’s search term, the right readers are getting matched up with the right book: in the case of this book, over 32% of them are clicking on “Buy this book.”

