

## Postprint: Data Applications in Editorial Work

**Authors:** Hu Gang

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### Abstract

Data can assist editorial staff in making rational and optimized decisions throughout various stages of book publishing, including topic selection and planning, manuscript review, product marketing, and sales, thereby playing a crucial role in understanding market trends, uncovering reader needs, validating topic selection strategies, comparing product strengths and weaknesses, identifying selling points, analyzing target markets, implementing precision marketing, and enhancing publishing performance.

### Full Text

#### Research, Discussion, and Exchange: The Application of Data in Editorial Work

**Abstract:** Data can assist editorial staff in making rational and optimized decisions during various stages of book publishing, including topic selection, manuscript review, product marketing, and sales. It plays a crucial role in understanding market trends, uncovering reader needs, validating topic planning, comparing product strengths and weaknesses, identifying selling points, analyzing target markets, achieving precision marketing, and improving publishing performance.

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**By Hu Gang**

Data represents the results of facts or observations, the logical induction of objective phenomena, and unprocessed raw materials used to represent objective entities, encompassing numbers, symbols, text, audio, images, video, and more. In the era of big data, the abundance of data resources provides the

book publishing industry with greater convenience and reference points. Editorial staff can access substantial data from multiple channels to guide their work during topic selection, manuscript review, product marketing, and sales stages. By establishing a data-driven mindset and fully utilizing data for analysis and assessment, editors can make more rational and optimized decisions.

## 1.1 Using Data to Understand Market Trends

Market trends manifest in public opinion data. Public opinion refers to the sum of social attitudes held by the public—regarding political, social, and moral orientations—toward social managers, enterprises, individuals, and various organizations, centered around intermediary social events within a certain social space. It represents the collective expression of beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and emotions expressed by the masses about various social phenomena and issues.

Editorial staff must continuously monitor public opinion to understand hotspots and focal points of public attention, including high-rated television programs, front-page headlines in mainstream media, and highly discussed topics on mobile networks, mass media, and self-media platforms, as well as the frequency of mentions of particular subjects. These hotspots often reflect trends in the book market. For instance, following the introduction of slogans such as “Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation” and “Internet Plus,” books on entrepreneurship, innovation, and the internet quickly became market hotspots. After the standardization of “Ministry-compiled Textbooks” for primary and secondary schools, supplementary teaching materials aligned with the new curriculum standards became bestsellers. These market trends are hidden within public opinion data, and editorial staff must be adept at observing and identifying topic planning opportunities from these trends. Topics that align with market trends typically possess inherent advantages, including fewer competing products, higher public attention, and greater demand, which greatly benefit subsequent product development.

Market trends are also reflected in industry data. Book sales platforms such as JD.com, Dangdang, Amazon, Tmall, and major distributor platforms, along with industry journals and data platforms like OpenBook, provide editorial staff with substantial, timely, and diverse data resources. From these sources, editors can understand the overall book market situation and segment-specific conditions. The mass book market has clear professional segmentation, including primary segments such as art, literature, business and economics, technology, and children’s books, with numerous secondary segments beneath each. Editorial staff can obtain macro and micro data on specific topics within overall and segmented markets, including current and historical data. This encompasses annual market share changes for a topic, publication scale and topic distribution of major competing publishers, ranking and sales volume changes for specific topics in overall and segmented markets, pricing trends, bestseller lists on book sales websites, homepage recommendations, featured display positions, order volumes from distribution channels, and product prioritization. Through anal-

ysis of these data, we can assess the growth potential, competitive landscape, and popularity of a topic' s market, and accordingly revise and improve topic planning proposals.

## 1.2 Using Data to Mine Reader Needs

Target readers' purchase data and behavioral data can genuinely reflect reader needs and help editorial staff achieve precise planning. Purchase data includes what types of books target readers typically buy, which categories show increased purchase rates, what associated purchasing behaviors exist, what reviews readers post after purchase, and what unmet needs are revealed in these comments. Behavioral data includes which Weibo accounts, WeChat public accounts, communities, portal websites, and apps target readers follow; what key content they browse on these platforms; which issues receive high click-through and attention rates; what high-frequency terms readers use on public social platforms; what problems and confusions they face in daily life; what hobbies and interests they have; and what events generate high participation and discussion. Taking children' s books as an example, editorial staff can monitor which children' s book categories show sales growth and rising rankings, hot search themes and recommended columns on mainstream websites such as Sohu Maternal-Infant and Sina Parenting, article view rankings, popular children' s apps with high download rates, active maternal-infant forums, and viewership and discussion heat for movies and cartoons. Analyzing the themes reflected in and demands met by these popular movies and cartoons among children and parents provides firsthand information that can reflect target readers' key concerns, unresolved problems, or unmet needs, providing a basis for editorial topic planning.

## 1.3 Using Data to Validate Topic Planning

Topic planning encompasses defining a publication' s market positioning and value, planning content structure and framework, designing presentation formats, and developing marketing and sales strategies. It fundamentally determines the quality of future publications and serves as the "foundation" of editorial and publishing work, bearing extremely important significance. Precisely because of this, topic planning should not be decided by intuition alone, but should be based on investigations of public opinion data, industry data, and target reader needs. Only through data collection, organization, verification, and analysis can relatively objective conclusions be drawn.

Using data to validate topic planning involves assessing whether a topic aligns with market trends and reader needs, and if not, what improvements should be made—whether adjusting direction or structure, adding or modifying content, or changing presentation formats to better serve target readers' functional needs. It also involves judging market competition conditions and determining whether a topic merits publication based on publishing efficiency; forecasting

future popularity to propose reliable sales expectations and market returns; determining pricing space while balancing price advantages with reasonable profit margins; deciding first print quantities to both reduce inventory pressure and ensure adequate product supply; and evaluating whether marketing and sales plans are reasonable, whether target markets and groups are correctly identified, and whether specific sales strategies are feasible. Through these detailed and comprehensive analyses, the publishing value of topics can be scientifically validated.

## 2.1 Using Data to Compare Product Advantages and Disadvantages

After thoroughly reviewing a book product's main content and features, editorial staff can search for comparable books for comparative analysis, including the number of similar titles on the market, publication dates, pricing, reader reviews, main content, and features. Based on this analysis, they can assess whether their product holds advantages in scarcity, timeliness, author authority, content comprehensiveness, uniqueness, presentation format, and pricing attractiveness, and evaluate how significantly these advantages influence target readers' purchase decisions while considering how to expand and effectively leverage these advantages for optimal promotional impact. During this comparative analysis process, editors must clearly identify their product's disadvantages, assess whether they can be remedied, and determine how to address them, thereby gaining a clear and objective understanding of the product.

## 2.2 Using Data to Find Product Selling Points

A "selling point" refers to a product's unprecedented, innovative, or distinctive features and characteristics that serve as the breakthrough point for marketing activities. Promotional campaigns based on product selling points can often make a product stand out, effectively impress readers, and boost sales. So how can selling points be identified?

First, by matching reader needs and market hotspots. Based on target readers' purchase data, behavioral data, and market hotspots, editorial staff can understand readers' basic needs, core needs, and key concerns. By matching these needs with content tags from the book product, editors can identify the product's selling points—the elements most attractive to readers and the market, and the most compelling reasons to purchase. These may include new works by famous authors, award-winning titles, filling market gaps, or presenting the most advanced ideas, concepts, technologies, or methods. By leveraging these "what-I-have-that-you-don't" characteristics, products can gain differentiated competitive advantages.

Second, by analogy with similar books. Selling point mining can also involve tracking and analyzing data on similar books, such as which comparable titles have high purchase rates and attention, what selling points they emphasized in

their promotion, and what market response they received. By comparing these factors, editors can identify their own product' s selling points.

### 3.1 Using Data to Analyze Target Markets

Editorial staff can collect data on competitors and competing products in target markets, product sales volumes and cycles, discounts, and sales channels to study the competitive landscape for certain book categories, sales peak seasons, optimal launch timing, and mainstream purchase channels for readers, thereby adopting marketing strategies that align with target market characteristics. For example, children' s books experience sales peaks during winter and summer vacations, teaching materials see surging sales during school opening seasons, literary works receive boosted sales when their film or television adaptations become hits, and authors' works see increased sales when they win awards. Additionally, promotional events such as "Double 11" and "June 18" shopping festivals can significantly increase traffic and order rates. Only through deep understanding of target markets can marketing and promotion plans capture key points and timing, leverage trends, and achieve maximum results with minimal effort.

### 3.2 Using Data to Achieve Precision Marketing

Precision marketing requires accurate control of sales channels and clear understanding of end customers. Different channels exhibit markedly different sales effectiveness for different book types. Editorial staff must maintain clear knowledge of channels' sales capabilities, strengths, webpage views, click-through rates, read rates and conversion rates of push articles, and profit contribution rates to plan reasonable channel distribution strategies for products, continuously monitor sales changes, and clarify the sales impact of various marketing activities.

Customer orientation is key to marketing work. Using big data analysis, editorial staff can examine information such as the gender, age, occupation, hobbies, geographic distribution of readers for certain book categories, as well as readers' browsing records, favorites, purchase records, and review records. By studying target readers' reading preferences and habits, editors can create more scientific and precise reader profiles, efficiently locate customers, craft targeted marketing messages according to their needs, and provide highly relevant products and services.

### 3.3 Using Data to Improve Publishing Performance

From data feedback, editorial staff can obtain meaningful statistical information, such as gaps between actual and expected book sales, cost and discount situations, profit contribution rates, in-transit and inventory levels, sales trend changes, return rates, and readers' actual evaluations of books. Based on this data, editors can think in reverse, adjusting and optimizing their publication structure, avoiding low-value products, and improving single-title efficiency.

They can concentrate superior resources on key titles, intensify promotion, and continuously drive product sales; determine discounts for promotional activities based on costs to maximize profits; establish sales cycles, optimal inventory levels, and reasonable reprint timing based on sales changes; identify reasons for high product return rates and analyze causes of poor sales in distribution channels to find solutions. Through these efforts, editorial staff can truly transform data into utility and profit, gradually improving publishing performance.

## Conclusion

Driven by major developments in data collection, storage, and processing technologies, data acquisition, organization, and analysis have become increasingly convenient. Large-scale, multi-angle, high-value data provides editorial staff with comprehensive possibilities and approaches for exploring markets, deepens their understanding of readers, helps form comprehensive and objective perceptions of book products, and enables the formulation of scientifically sound and precise marketing and sales plans. Editorial staff should keep pace with the times, fully utilize data in their work, maximize the value of data resources, and better serve book publishing.

(Author' s institution: China Peace Publishing House)

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