

Le Village eBook: A Guide to ePublishing at the Salon du Livre 2000

This article is a report on the leading electronic publishing companies in France at the time of the 2000 Paris Book Fair. The American site eBookNet.com published it on March 15, 2000. The site closed down in April of 2001. The following is an archived PDF of the Web pages.

I am reissuing the work of my father, the writer William Fifield. Preceding the article is a list of the books he published that will be of interest to students of French culture. The digital archive of his work also includes recorded conversations with Jean Cocteau and Marcel Marceau.

—*Donnali Fifield*
Times Two Publishing Company, San Francisco

December 21, 2001

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Works on French culture at the Times Two Publishing Company

The William Fifield Collection

timestwopublishing.com/wmfifield.htm

Disponibles en français

Jean Cocteau par Jean Cocteau

Jean Cocteau: A Self-Portrait (enregistré en français)

Available in English

Marcel Marceau Speaks (recorded in English)

Jean Cocteau, a monograph on the versatile artist

In Search of Genius, conversations with Cocteau, Lurçat, Giono, Marceau, Picasso, Chagall, and others on the creative process

The Devil's Marchioness, a novel based on the life of the Marquise de Brinvilliers

Encyclopedia of Wines & Spirits (with Alexis Lichine)

Other works

Modigliani, a biography of the artist

The Sherry Royalty, a history of the great sherry-making families of Spain

Matadora, a novel about a female bullfighter

The Sign of Taurus, a novel set in Mexico about a Jewish refugee, a skeptic who is forced to earn her living as a fortune teller

Short stories, articles, and essays

Essays and magazine articles, from the *Paris Review* to *Penthouse*

Short stories, including “The Fishermen of Pátzcuaro,” the winner of an O. Henry Memorial Award

To read more about these works, you can access the digital archive through the link to The William Fifield Collection above.



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Le Village eBook: A Guide to



ePublishing at the Salon du Livre 2000

Donnali Fifield
Originally posted Wed Mar 15, '00
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eBooks are taking center stage at this year's Paris Book Fair, France's leading book event, which starts today and runs through the 22nd. For the first time, the Salon du Livre has set aside exhibition space for eBooks. "Le Village eBook," co-sponsored by Adobe Systems and French online publisher 00h00.com, features a display area for eBook readers and a full program of speakers on electronic publishing.

00h00.com, jointly with ZaZieWeb and NTV Factory, is doing daily Webcasts from the event. A full list of events and exhibits is available at the [Salon du Livre](#) Web site.

American-made products dominate the exhibit, which features dedicated reading devices (the Rocket eBook, SoftBook, and Everybook), Web tablets such as Qubit, and PDAs adapted for reading books. Adobe has a display on how to produce and sell an eBook using Acrobat and PDF Merchant. Other U.S. participants include Microsoft, with its new Microsoft Reader, and Xerox, presenting its ContentGuard and other publishing service products.

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A recent white paper by NuvoMedia CEO Martin Eberhard.

RCFoC

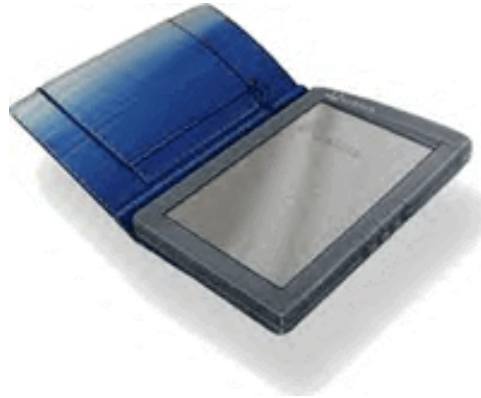
[From the Pages of RCFoC: Wireless Internet Wanderings](#)

Jeffrey Harrow predicts that wireless technologies will change the way we think about computing -- again.

But the star attraction isn't from the United States--it's an eBook developed by the Paris startup Cytale, which heralds the first European entry in the eBook reader market.

Cytale

The eBook, whose name has not yet been formally announced, is being introduced at the fair and will go into commercial production in the coming months.



The company says it designed it to be "easier to use than a TV remote control." It has four

operating buttons, and its installed modem lets users download content directly to the device, which weighs a little over 1.5 pounds. The 21 cm x 16 cm (about 8" x 6") touch screen is in color--representing the next generation of eBook readers, according to company CEO Olivier Pujol.

The device uses the Open eBook standard, and offers users a choice of font sizes. It comes with an integrated dictionary and a stylus for taking notes and underlining. The eBook has a removable leather cover, so that customers have the option of replacing it with one of their own choice.

A user can read for five hours before needing to recharge the device's lithium ion battery. The eBook holds up to 30 books of 500 pages in its internal memory. PCMCIA cards can boost the storage capacity even higher, up to hundreds of works more.

The eBook will cost about 4,000 francs (around \$590). Once it is on the market, buyers will be able to download newspapers, books, and magazines from the company's Web site.



00h00.com

This company's motto is "And what if we started over from zero?" 00h00--pronounced zero hour--set out



Aliske Webb Has a Kind Word for Trade Publishers

eBookNet welcomes Aliske as our newest columnist. See the eBook Business section.

**PUBLISHERS
WEEKLY**

From the Pages of PW: St. Martin's Press to Accelerate eBook Efforts
"Eventually, every SMP title will be released simultaneously in print and in digital form," said Steve Cohen, vice president for finance.

to publish in a new way. According to the company, it was the world's first publishing house created specifically to be a commercial online publisher. Founded just two years ago, the startup has already released more than 500 books.

00h00 publishes original works, out-of-print books, and classics in the public domain. All are offered in PDF and in a print-on-demand version. 00h00 has also begun to format books for the Rocket and the Palm Pilot, and plans to add a Microsoft Reader edition when the software becomes available.



Bibliopolis

For the past ten years, Bibliopolis has been on a mission to put the entire canon of French letters in a digital format. It publishes reference works on CD and on the Web. And it manages a consortium of Web sites: La Bibliothèque des Lettres, a subscriber service for the humanities; LiLi, a free service for literature teachers, giving them access to classics and textual analyses online; and *Biblionet*, which publishes the complete texts of more than 100 French classics on the Web. Co-sponsored by Radio France, this site is open to the public.

Librissimo, a new division of Bibliopolis, publishes rare and out-of-print books in association with Phénix Éditions, a print-on-demand publisher. Librissimo has agreements with major French libraries to digitize their works for publication and sale. In return, the libraries get a free copy of the electronic version, along with 5% for each customer purchase.

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Edispher

Launched in 1996, this pioneer of the French eBook industry publishes books formatted for the Palm Pilot. They can be read with Liberciel, a downloadable program offered for free on the site.

Edispher also publishes articles for the Palm, in partnership with *Libération*, a major French daily. Jean-Louis Gassée, a former product chief at Apple, has a continuing series on life in Silicon Valley. Gassée now heads Be, Inc., a Menlo Park, California-based maker of software platforms for Internet appliances.



@folio

Still in prototype, @folio allows a user to download any kind of text from the Web to a computer, then push the Print button, which

sends the file through @folio's cradle to the device's black-and-white screen. The transferred text preserves all hyperlinks.

The device can also work with texts from other sources, such as an application or a CD. It does not consume much energy and is designed to be "low tech," according to the company. But the machine is still powerful enough to hold the equivalent of 25 books of 400 pages. @folio doesn't have any buttons--it has a touch screen for turning the pages, and the user adjusts the page layout and fonts on the computer before sending the file to the device.

Its inventor, Pierre Schweitzer, an architectural designer from Strasbourg, has developed a translucent LCD screen that will allow users to read text from both sides of the screen. @folio has an accompanying program, Mot@mot, which means "word to word," that can slice the texts of an electronic facsimile edition, such as for rare books, so that it can be read on the portable reading device.

Schweitzer is presenting @folio at the fair and hopes to get partnerships for its commercial release.

Resource sites



ZaZieWeb

Taking its name from the book *Zazie dans le métro* by Raymond Queneau, this lively site is a good starting-off point to learn more about French

publishing. Its home page has links to current news stories on electronic and print publishers. The site's archives section has an even greater collection of links.



Enssib

The acronym stands for L'Ecole nationale supérieure des sciences de l'information et des bibliothèques. The professional training school for librarians and information science specialists has set up a complete and regularly updated site on eBooks, with links to industry leaders, as well as to press stories and technical papers.



Libération

The newspaper's extensive online tech coverage includes a section dedicated to eBooks. The paper is running a series of articles on the book fair.

For further reading:

CyLibris

Print-on-demand publisher CyLibris, whose specialty is discovering unknown writers, puts out an email newsletter on trends in the publishing industry. The company recently posted a position paper on electronic publishing on its site.

Rapport Cordier

This is the informal name for the *Report on the Commission for Reflection on Digital Books*, released by the French Ministry of Culture last May.

Alain Cordier, the president of Bayard Presse, led a commission that studied the cultural, legal, and economic ramifications of electronic publishing. The French government drew up the commission to analyze these issues, although the Internet has not yet become as widespread in France as in the U.S. and in some other European countries.

According to the report, in 1998, the United States accounted for 80% of all Web sites; only 5% of sites were French, and just 5% to 6% of French households were connected to the Internet at the end of 1998.

This is changing quickly. In a survey published on the Internet on March 3 by the French magazine *Yahoo! Internet Life*, 11.7% of French households,

or 4 million users, are now online. The magazine projects that by the end of the year 16% of the French population will have access to the Web. French Web sites will multiply--as will the demand for French-language eBooks.

The commission addressed some of the problems that will come up when electronic books become standard. The report touches on such basic issues as copyright protection, price setting, and taxation. (A summary of the report is available in English on the site.)

The report also covers much subtler points: how, for instance, the fluidity of the Internet and the nature of hypertext might affect the creation of literature. As the repository of a culture, notes the commission, a country's literature must have enough stability and gestation time to develop fully.

The commission was made up of librarians, publishing professionals, and sociologists. In its analysis, the Rapport Cordier carefully doesn't pit ePublishing against the print industry. "Every media," it observes, "has come to exist as soon as it responds to a need, and does so when it responds to that need better or in a different way than its predecessors."

Donnali Fifield is the founder of Times Two Publishing, which is currently reissuing a series of works Fifield's father wrote on Jean Cocteau. The series includes a book-length interview with Cocteau in French originally published by Editions Stock. A recording of an interview Fifield did with Cocteau, also in French, is available on the Web. The William Fifield Collection can be viewed at <http://www.timestwopublishing.com/wmfifield.htm>.

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