booklog news

Season's Greetings and Holiday Savings

All of us at Booklog wish you and your entire staff season's greetings and best wishes for a joyous New Year!

In appreciation of your support and encouragement throughout the past year, we are pleased to offer you 10% savings on all Booklog standard version software purchases. This includes interfaces, additional licenses and upgrades purchased by December 31, 2013.

For more information, contact Gwen at 800-977-8212 ext. 229 or gwen@booklog.com.

Upcoming Events

Booklog staff will be attending the following trade shows. Please stop by our booth to chat and ask any questions. We look forward to seeing you in 2014!

Book Expo America
May 28–31, 2014
Javits Center
New York, New York

International Christian Retail Show
June 22–25, 2014
Georgia World Congress Center
Atlanta, Georgia

ComputerWorks of Chicago, Inc.
800-977-8212
www.booklog.com
info@booklog.com

A Note From the President

As the end of 2013 approaches, Booklog is celebrating both the upcoming holiday season and our 30th anniversary in the bookstore market. Booklog was started in 1983, and for several years, I did all the sales, tech and design work. Today we have a staff of over 25 in our programming, technical support, installation and training, quality assurance, sales and administrative areas. Some members of our staff have been with us for over 20 years, some newer staff began using computers in grade school!

As all of you know, there have been huge changes in the book industry in the last 30 years, overshadowed, perhaps, only by the enormous changes in technology. Fortunately, however, booksellers have not changed! A few weeks ago, I attended the Heartland Fall Forum in Chicago, the joint trade show of the Great Lakes Independent Booksellers and the Midwest Independent Booksellers, and was very encouraged to see the enthusiasm and energy of established store and new store owners and managers — both young and old. It was great to visit with old friends from Dragonwing, Mystery to Me, Fenton Open Book, Common Ground, Book Barn (although I personally missed Bob), Left Bank, Bookworm, Sister Wolf, Snowbound, Wabash College, Loganberry, and Watermark, and to meet the staff of one of our newest and local stores, Stephanie and Mary from The Bookstall at Chestnut Court in Winnetka.

We are grateful for the many relationships that have grown over the years. In this issue, I want to pay special tribute to our neighborhood bookstore, Women and Children First. It was out of my association with Women and Children First that Booklog was created. When I saw Ann Christophersen and Linda Bubon with their 10 or more shoe-type boxes of 3″ x 5″ index cards, I knew something had to be done. They were willing to share their experience and ideas with me to develop Booklog. In 1983, no computerized database existed, and only a few books had OCR bar codes. It took about five days to enter their poetry section into the computer — and it's worth noting that the poetry section was by no means one of the larger sections of the store.

Women and Children First grew out of Ann and Linda's graduate school days in literature at UIC. Over the years, up to 135 women's bookstores opened, yet today no more than five are still in operation. The Chicago store was always one of the largest. Its success in surviving the large chains, online book sales and economic downturns has been due to their focus on a diverse population, a great deal of local support, and the tireless efforts of Ann and Linda and their wonderful staff. Because the store is one-half block from Booklog's offices, it has often been the site where we test various changes to our software.

As many of you may be aware, Ann and Linda have decided to sell their nationally known bookstore. All of us at Booklog wish them the best with this new chapter in their lives. We will continue to work closely with the new owner(s) of the store. Thank you, Ann and Linda, for all your feedback over the years, and providing our neighborhood and Chicago with a great bookstore and resource.

As we say goodbye to Ann and Linda, we welcome the new year and the prospect of adding many new customers to our Booklog family. We thank you for your continued support, and wish you a wonderful and successful holiday, and peace throughout the new year.

— Jean Fishbeck, president
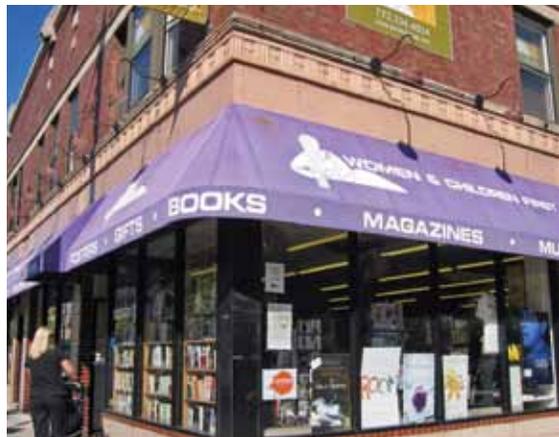
Best Wishes to Nancy Crane

On June 28, 2013, our longest-serving sales director, Nancy Crane, retired. Nancy was in charge of Booklog's trade and Christian sales for 20 years. Her soft-spoken, nonaggressive sales manner served us well for those two decades. When she started at Booklog, Bill Clinton was president, and you could greet an arriving passenger with flowers at the gate of an airport! And we were still using floppy disks.

We already miss Nancy and her quiet but steady presence. It was always an obvious tribute to Nancy when at trade shows, bookstore personnel would come to the booth to connect with her because they felt they had established a real friendship with her.

Now Nancy is going to relax, spend time at her cottage in nearby Michigan, and hang out with her charming Havanese puppy, Hannah. Thank you, Nancy, for all that you gave to Booklog and for your friendship.

Rental Scanners

Make your reservation early for our hand-held inventory scanners so you have time to complete your year-end inventory. Supplies are limited.

Our hand-held scanners allow you to move through your store and complete inventory by section with ease. These rent for $300 per scanner for 10 days (plus overnight shipping).

For more information or to schedule a scanner rental, contact Debi at 800-977-8212 ext. 221 or debi@booklog.com.

Customer's Corner

In this issue of Booklog News, we are pleased to feature Buttonwood Books and Toys located in Cohasset, Massachusetts. Buttonwood has been a Booklog customer since February 2012.
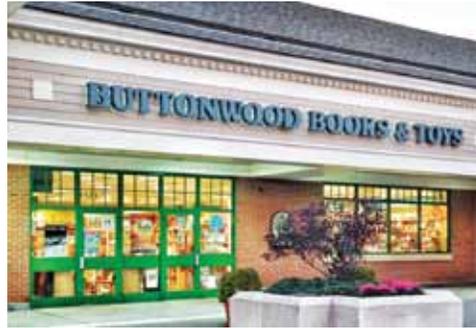
After 25 years, longtime bookseller Betsey Detwiler passed the keys to Buttonwood Books and Toys to her daughter-in-law, Kathy Detwiler, and Arna Lewis. Kathy began her retail experience when Buttonwood first opened in 1988; she created and managed the toy department and continues in that role as a co-owner. Her background in social work makes her the perfect resource for children's books and toys/games. Arna, who taught in the Cohasset school system for eight years, manages the book department, and, according to Kathy, is a magnet for any customer seeking just the right book. Together, Kathy and Arna make a wonderful team to carry on the tradition that Betsey established when she "rooted the bookstore in the community." Their experiences make them extremely helpful to therapists, grandparents and parents looking for the perfect book, toy or game for their special young one.

The seaside community of Cohasset is located about 26 miles from Boston, on the corner of the South Shore, where greater Boston Harbor ends and Massachusetts Bay begins. The town's name came from the Algonquian word Conahasset, meaning "long rocky place," which is very fitting since the shore of the town is rocky, with many small ledges and rocks lying off shore.

Buttonwood Books and Toys is so much more than an independent book and toy store; it is the heart of the reading community for local readers of all ages. Betsey named the store after the large buttonwood (sycamore) tree that distinguished her 1600s home. The store is "dedicated to putting the right book in your hands, and helping you discover the best toys for kids." With books for all ages, toys for kids and teens, a large assortment of puzzles for adults, and gifts for all occasions, regular customers and visitors to Cohasset are bound to find something of interest.

The store has approximately 4,000 square feet of selling space, in which over 20,600 titles, more toys than one can imagine, and a large number of sidelines are attractively displayed. Kathy and Arna are assisted by

11 part-time employees, some of whom have been with the store for over 20 years. The staff is always interested in developing new ideas and connecting with other booksellers throughout the region.

Special events at Buttonwood include a wide array of author events, book clubs, and other events focused on enhancing learning by residents of all ages. Among them are Game Night for teenagers, and a visit from Alice Brooks, the young engineer trained at MIT and Stanford, who, with her Stanford classmate Bettina, designed a fantastic line of building toys (Roominate) to motivate young girls to enter the fields of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). The staff also works with the town's schools and other local groups in a variety of ways.

When asked why Buttonwood chose Booklog as their point-of-sale/inventory management system, Sarah, the Booklog expert at the store who has worked there for 23 years, responded, "because Booklog had a printed manual that was very helpful and because of the excellent sales staff," and because Booklog could accommodate toys and a range of sidelines. The staff looks forward to expanding their customer loyalty program, the use of gift cards, and promoting online sales options.

All of us at Booklog are pleased to have Buttonwood Books and Toys as a part of our Booklog family of customers. We wish Kathy and Arna and their entire staff best wishes as they carry on the outstanding service that Betsey provided the Cohasset community. When traveling in this beautiful part of the New England coast, be sure to stop at this wonderful book and toy store. Buy a book or toy, and your purchase will come with free gift wrapping!

Booklog's New Features and Enhancements

Version 11 is a large transition and upgrade for many users, and we are still in the process of this transition. So while our major version number hasn't changed, we're still improving and adding functions to this version. Below are the new features, added within the last year, that have the most impact.

Campaign Management Module

The Direct Mail Marketing module has been completely revamped and repackaged into our new Campaign Management module. The new module allows you to create a custom marketing message as a template file, and then merge that template with the data retrieved. Once you build your campaign, you can print letters, send emails or print labels. Emails are sent using SMTP (simple mail transport protocol) rather than the old MAPI (messaging application programming interface). MAPI requires you to have a default mail program such as Outlook already set up on your computer, whereas SMTP only requires an email account and Internet service. Emails are sent to individuals instead of a group, which eliminates the need to manage the mass-mailing of a notice through your email program. The Campaign Management module has the added ability to filter your selected customers by user-defined code and user type.

If you collect cell phone numbers and the customer cell carrier, you can also send text messages using the results of your campaign build. To facilitate this collection of data, these fields have been opened for editing in the cash register. If you feel uncomfortable asking what cell phone carrier customers use, there are services available that will match your cell phone data with the correct carrier for a minor charge per number. However, by asking for your customer's carrier, you can broach the subject of allowing your store to send text messages. Text messages will only be sent to customers that have both a cell phone number and the carrier in their customer record.

The old Direct Mail Marketing feature is still available for backwards compatibility, but it will not utilize many of the new features provided by campaigns. It is unable to send email with SMTP, does not use the campaign templates you create, and cannot send individual emails. However, you can immediately open your old Direct Mail Segments into the new Campaign Management module and vice versa.

Retail PO by Item and Auto PO by Sales or Restocking Worksheet

We have revised the Auto Create PO feature to set order quantities equal to sales over a specified date range, and added a similar ability to the Restocking Worksheet report. Click the Send to PO by Item button while viewing the worksheet, and all items will be sent to the PO by Item window with their current sales quantities.

Buyers now have the option to send an Auto Create PO session to a PO by Item work list before generating individual POs for each unique vendor. The Auto Create PO window has been revamped to accommodate a number of new filters, and can output to individual POs or to the PO by Item window.

The POs by Item window allows you to review all items that you wish to order, and individually set PO vendors for each line item. Once you have set all vendor and quantity information, Booklog will create individual POs for you, and, if you like, finalize and transmit them via EDI (EDI module and vendor participation required). You may also send items back to the To Be Ordered list if you wish to order later.

Verifone MX 925/915 with Signature Capture, NFC and End-to-End Encryption

You may have already seen this announcement, but it's worth repeating. Booklog is now integrated with the Verifone MX 925 and MX 915 terminals for credit/debit card transactions and signature capture. The terminals have built-in support for Near-Field Communications (NFC is an industry-wide initiative that some processors will require support for beginning in 2015), allowing your customers using Google Wallet or PayPass/NFC-enabled credit/debit cards to wave their card in front of the reader instead of swiping.

Any payment type can require a signature and collect those signatures electronically through the MX 925/915. Signatures are stored in the Booklog database, so you no longer need to manage pieces of paper. Any time you need to reference a signature, you only need to restore the receipt in the Receipt Reprint window and reprint, if necessary.

If you still use PCCharge, you can reduce PCI compliance requirements and security resource needs by switching to Verifone PAYware hosted-payment service, installing an MX terminal, and enabling VeriShield Protect End-to-End encryption. Once enabled, VeriShield Protect encrypts cardholder data at the swipe on the MX. The MX transmits tokenized information directly to PAYware, so the real cardholder data is never transmitted over your local network. Booklog receives back from PAYware only a token representing the transaction and never stores or touches cardholder data. Coupled with the store-level option to never store credit card PANs, this solution immediately reduces your liability

from PCI SAQ level D to PCI SAQ level C. At this time, not all processors support VeriShield Protect or Google Wallet. Please check with your salesperson.

SAP/Sybase SQL Anywhere 12

All our multi-store installations will be required to move their database and clients to SAP/Sybase SQL Anywhere 12 when upgrading to Booklog version 11.

Although not required for non-multi-store installations, should you wish to upgrade your existing server computer and you are upgrading to Booklog version 11, consider upgrading your database to SQL Anywhere 12 as well. SAP/Sybase SQL Anywhere 12 offers better 64-bit Windows support and additional data indexing and query optimization over SQL Anywhere 10 that may improve your database performance. A full database unload/reload is required to take full advantage of the new query optimization. Contact sales or tech support for pricing and scheduling.

Surface Pro Tablet Support

We have had requests for tablet support. The Microsoft Surface Pro (not to be confused with the Microsoft Surface RT) runs a full version of Microsoft Windows 8 on an Intel i5 processor and is fully capable of running an unaltered Booklog client. We are taking a strong look at the Microsoft Surface Pro, and over the next year, will be making a number of improvements to further support the platform. Currently, our QA and tech departments have identified some usability issues to address, including better touch screen and work space resizing support. We already started by making the F4 search available on the toolbar in the Cash Register, Mail Orders, Special Orders and Bookfairs windows. In these windows you may also double-click on either the header (to bring up a customer search) or the line items (to bring up the inventory search). We added a Float Screen Bar option to toolbar placement available under Window > Toolbars when you are in any of these windows. The float option splits the toolbar into two and allows you to place the Screen Bar toolbar functions separately from the regular toolbar. Change your toolbar to display the text, and your toolbars will use more screen space to allow better touch screen use of the toolbar on the Surface Pro or any all-in-one that has touch screen support.
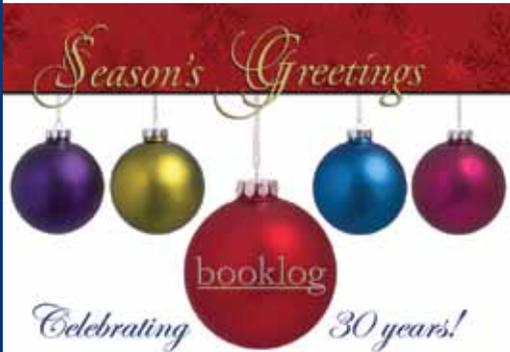
We have a number of improvements in development to support other devices as well. Some will simply be incorporated into the program, while other features may be added to a new add-in or completely separate module. Keep watching this space for more information.
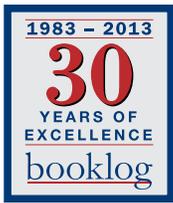
Season's Greetings

booklog

Celebrating 30 years!

Booklog Tech Tips

Remember Your Quick Lookup Keys

The holidays mean busier times and longer lines, so it is important to minimize the time it takes to walk through a transaction. Take a few minutes to review the shortcut keys that are built into the program, like F4 lookup or F3 next line in the register. These keys are built in to help eliminate the need to reach for the mouse if you don't want to. Each window has a different set of shortcut keys that can be seen by clicking on the EDIT drop-down menu. Every keystroke counts, and each shortcut can save a little time.

Reduce, Reuse, Reload
With Your Plastic Gift Cards

It's not too late to get PLI gift cards to your store for the holiday rush. PLI gift cards will design the cards for your store and format the bar code to work with Booklog, which is set up to let you reuse the cards multiple times. Your customers can also add value to the gift cards, which is tracked in the program. These cards are a great way to promote your business. For more information, contact PLI directly. There is no additional charge for this capability in Booklog.

Gift Receipts

Give your customers gift receipts with a click. When you make a sale and a customer asks for a gift receipt, all you need to do is click the boxes next to the items for which you want a gift receipt. Booklog will print two receipts for you, one with prices and a sales total, and a second one without them.

Credit Card Volume Increases

More and more people are using plastic, which can lead to longer transaction times for your credit cards. For those using either our PCCharge or Payware interface, we recommend checking that your timeouts are around 90 seconds, at the least, in Booklog. You can go as high as 180 seconds (three minutes). If you are on version 10.5 or lower, check this under Maintenance > Addins > Credit Card Interface. If you are on version 11, look under Maintenance > Workstation on the Payware or PCCharge tab. These values should be set on each workstation for which you take credit card transactions.

Customize Receipts With Your Logo

Give your receipts flair by adding your store logo to the top of the receipt. All you will need is a bitmap version of your logo. If you are unsure of the necessary bitmap dimensions needed, contact Booklog tech support.

Once you have the bitmap file, go to Maintenance > Store and click on the Receipts tab. Click to Add the Image as either the top or bottom image. Make sure that the file resides on each register that will print receipts. You should save it in the same directory on all computers, such as the blwin32 folder.

32-bit or 64-bit Processors

By default, most new computers are equipped with 64-bit processors. Booklog is fully compatible with 64-bit platforms, but adjustments are sometimes necessary in the initial installation. Booklog tech support is happy to help install Booklog on your new computers if you feel it's time to upgrade.

NOTE: Booklog is not supported on Home Editions of Windows 7 or Windows 8. Booklog is supported on Windows 7 Professional or Windows 8 Professional.

LIFO vs. Average Cost

By default, Booklog tracks cost using LIFO (last in first out), so each item in the inventory uses the last cost at which it was received. This can be overridden to use the average cost instead of LIFO, and in that case, the cost value is determined as a true weighted average, based on the cost of your on-hand items as they were received — it is not a lifetime average cost. To switch to average cost, go to Maintenance > Store > Defaults and check the Use Average Cost for Inventory box.

Changing SKUs? Use Alternate SKUs

Don't forget that as SKUs change, you can make the transition easier for your cashiers using the Alternate SKU tab. You can have an unlimited number of alternate identifiers for each item. When you create an alternate SKU, both bar codes can be scanned in the register for that one item. It makes the cash register line flow much faster.

There are three easy ways to create an alternate SKU. You can do so manually by going into the Item Properties screen and clicking on the Alternate SKU tab. If there is no line available, press the Insert key to add a new line. In version 10.5 and higher, the program automatically will ask you if you want to make the older identifier an alternate when you change it on the Item Properties screen. Finally, when you receive an item and change the SKU in the Receiving tab, the program will automatically move that SKU/ISBN to the Alternate SKU field in Item Properties.

ISBN vs. SKU in Item Properties

Do you have a general merchandise item listed with an ISBN in the Item Properties? If so, then you can change it to a SKU by going to the Miscellaneous tab in the Item Properties and change the selection to Yes for the Net Pricing field.