

Publishing, Except Software

(NAICS 5111)

SIGNIFICANT POINTS

- Writers and editors face keen competition for these highly sought-after jobs in the industry.
- The ability to meet tight deadlines is crucial for most jobs in this industry.
- Mergers will make firms more productive and limit employment growth; computerization will cause the number of newspaper printing jobs to decline.

Nature of the Industry

The publishing industry produces a variety of publications, including magazines, books, newspapers, and directories. It also produces greeting cards, data bases, calendars, and other published material, excluding software. Although mostly producing printed materials, the publishing industry is increasingly producing its material in other formats, such as audio, CD-ROM, or other electronic media.

Newspapers employ the largest number of workers in the publishing industry. With a staff of reporters and correspondents, newspapers report on events taking place locally and around the world. Despite the local nature of most newspaper reporting, the newspaper industry is dominated by several large corporations that own most of the newspapers in the country. It also is becoming common for companies to buy several newspapers in a single region, called “clustering.” In this way, newspapers can be produced more efficiently. For example, advertising sales agents can now sell advertising space for multiple newspapers, which also share the same printing plant.

Book publishing is also dominated by a few very large companies, primarily based in New York City. However, some midsized and small publishers across the country are thriving, particularly those that specialize in certain subjects. Textbooks and technical, scientific, and professional books provide nearly half of the revenues of the book publishing industry. The other half consists of adult trade—which is what is typically found in a bookstore—and juvenile, religious, paperback, mail-order, book club, and reference books.

Magazine, or periodical, publishers run the gamut from small one- or two-person shops to large media conglomerates that may publish dozens of magazines. There are two types of magazines—business-to-business, called “trade,” and consumer magazines. Trade magazines serve a particular industry, profession, or service, while consumer magazines are written for general audiences.

Although the content and formats may vary, most publishers follow similar steps to produce their publishable material. First, editorial departments must acquire the content, or material, to be published. Some publishers have a staff of writers, reporters, and editors who research and write articles, stories, and other text for the publications. Photographers and artists are also brought in to supplement the stories with photos and illustrations as needed. Other publishers purchase their material, which

may also include photos and artwork, from outside sources, mainly independent “freelance” writers, photographers, or artists. When this is done, the publishers obtain the legal right to publish the material from the content providers prior to publication. After the story or article is written, the manuscript is reviewed to check that the information it contains is accurate and then edited to ensure that it uses correct grammar and a writing style that is clear and interesting. Editors and publishers develop captions and headlines and design the pages and the covers.

The sale of advertisements, including classified advertising, is a major source of revenue for magazines, newspapers, and directories, such as the telephone Yellow Pages. While most commercial advertisements are produced by advertising agencies, small advertisers may require the help of the copywriters and graphic artists of the publisher’s advertising department staff to create an advertisement.

When complete, all of the content—manuscript, photos and captions, and illustrations and any other artwork, including advertisements—is collected at one location and, with the help of desktop publishing software, the pages are laid out. Most newspapers and many magazines have art and design staffs that perform this “prepress” operation; other publishers usually contract out their prepress to companies in the printing industry, along with the actual printing of the publication.

Newspaper publishers usually own the printing plants that print their newspapers. Over the years, this type of printing operation has become highly automated and the skill sets needed to produce a newspaper are changing with the technology. The dominant printing process used to produce newspapers is lithography. The process involves putting the pages of the newspaper on film, and then “burning” the images from the film onto a thin aluminum plate, which is then installed on a press. In the plant, rolls of paper are brought in from the warehouse, the plates are treated with chemicals, ink is mixed, and presses move the paper along the rotating inked plates at very high rates of speed.

Publishers’ publicity, marketing, and circulation departments are responsible for promoting a publication and increasing sales and circulation. Book publishers, in particular, promote new books by creating elaborate publicity campaigns involving book signings and public appearances by the author.

Getting the publication to the readers is a function of the distribution department. Major book publishers often have large

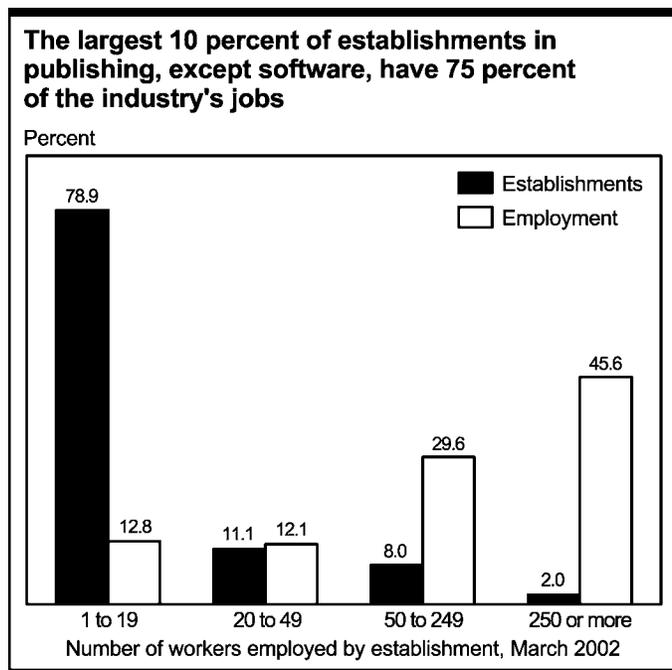
warehouse operations, where books are stored and from which they are delivered as needed. Newspapers and magazines, however, distribute each issue only once. Immediately after they are printed, newspapers are folded, filled with inserts, bundled and wrapped. The newspapers are then transported to distributors, who deliver the newspapers to newsstands and individual carriers. Another major function of the department in newspapers is making sure that the newspaper is delivered on time at readers' doorsteps. Magazines are mailed to subscribers after printing or shipped to retail distributors. Many magazines and some newspapers contract out their distribution.

Much of the publishing industry is venturing online. Newspapers, in particular, and some magazines have extensive Web sites that are updated around the clock as news breaks. These Web sites may have their own writers and editors to supply content, but, for the most part, they reformat material developed by the print publication's regular staff. Books are also beginning to be reproduced electronically, so that they can be read on handheld "readers" or on computers.

Table 1. Establishments and wage and salary employment in publishing, except software, by detailed industry, 2002

Industry segment	Establishments	Employment
Total	100.0	100.0
Newspapers	36.8	54.6
Periodicals	32.8	22.0
Book publishing	15.1	11.8
Directory and mailing lists	9.2	7.2
Other publishers	6.1	4.4

Computerization, in particular digital technology, is having a significant impact on the publishing industry. Digital photography eliminates the need for film processing and allows for easy manipulation of images. Electronic mail also allows advertisers to send their ads directly to the publisher's production depart-



ment for insertion. In the latest print technologies, computers use lasers to burn images and text into the printing plate, eliminating the need to produce a film negative of each page.

Working Conditions

Meeting deadlines is one of the primary conditions of employment in this industry. Magazines and newspapers, in particular, are published on a very tight schedule and workers must be prepared to meet these deadlines. This can often make for a very chaotic and stressful environment, and employees frequently may be required to work overtime. Working nights, weekends, and holidays also is common, especially for those working on newspapers. The average nonsupervisory worker in newspaper publishing worked 33.0 hours per week in 2002, compared with 33.9 hours per week across all industries. Within periodical publishing, nonsupervisory workers worked an average of 36.1 hours per week, and 39.5 hours per week in book publishing. Part-time employment is significant in this industry, with 17 percent working part time. Newspaper distributors and drivers usually work 5 to 6 hours a day, often in the middle of the night. Also, some telephone advertising and classified sales representatives work part time.

Writers, editors, reporters, and correspondents have the most varied working conditions. Many work from home, particularly in book publishing, sending manuscripts back and forth using electronic mail. For most writers and reporters, travel is required to perform research and conduct interviews. News correspondents for large metropolitan newspapers or national news publications may be stationed in cities around the world, reporting on events in their territory.

Many advertising sales agents also travel in order to meet with potential customers, although some sell over the telephone. Rejection by clients and the need to meet quotas can be stressful for some agents.

At headquarters, many in publishing work in comfortable, private offices, while others—particularly at newspapers—work in large, noisy, cubicle-filled rooms. Classified advertising clerks and customer service representatives increasingly work in call-center environments, manning telephones much of the day. Newspaper pressrooms are manufacturing plants that can be noisy and dangerous if safety procedures are not followed, but computerization of the machines has reduced injuries. Occurrences of work-related injury and illness for 2002 in the publishing industry ranged from an average of 1.4 per 100 full-time workers in periodical publishing to 4.2 per 100 full-time workers in newspaper publishing, lower than the average of 5.3 for all private industry.

Employment

The publishing industry provided almost 714,000 wage and salary jobs in 2002. In addition, there were 39,000 self-employed workers. The industry does not include independent (or "freelance") writers, artists, journalists, or photographers, whose jobs are included in the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry, but whose contributions of content material to this industry are significant.

Newspaper publishing companies employ the largest number of people in this industry, because they write much of their own

material and typically print, and sometimes distribute, their newspapers. While newspaper publishing is done throughout the country, magazine and book publishers are based mostly in large cities. The largest concentration of publishers is in New York City. Although most establishments in this industry are small, most workers work at the largest ones. (See chart)

Occupations in the Industry

Most occupations in the publishing industry fall into 1 of 4 categories: Writing and editing; production; advertising sales and marketing; and general administration. (See table 2.) However, variations in the number and type of workers employed occur by type of publication. For example, most book publishing companies employ few writers because most of their content is acquired from freelance writers and photographers. In contrast, newspapers employ a number of writers and reporters, who supply the content for the paper. Also, newspapers generally perform their own printing, whereas most books and magazines are printed by companies in the printing industry. Differences also exist depending on the size of the company and the variety of media in which the company publishes.

Writing and editing occupations. Everything that is published in this industry must first be written. *Writers and authors* and *reporters and correspondents* write the articles, stories, and other text that end up in publications. Writers are assigned stories to write by *editors*. At newspapers and news magazines, reporters usually specialize in certain categories, or “beats,” such as education, crime, sports, or world news. Writers and reporters gather information on their topic by performing Internet and library research and by interviewing people either in person or by telephone. They must then organize their material and write it down in a coherent manner that will interest and entertain readers. Copywriters, who write advertising copy, also are common in this industry.

Editors are essential to a publication. They review, rewrite, and edit the work of writers. They may also do original writing, such as producing editorials for newspapers or columns for magazines. In book publishing, they oversee the acquisition and selection of material, often working directly with the authors to achieve the final product. Most publishing companies employ several types of editors. The executive editor generally has the final say about what will be published and how it will be covered and presented. The managing editor is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the editorial department and makes sure that material produced conforms to guidelines and that deadlines are met. Associate and assistant editors give assignments to writers and reporters, oversee projects, and do much of the editing of text. Copy editors review manuscripts or reporters’ copy for accuracy, content, grammar, and style.

Other occupations that work closely with the editorial department are *art and design workers* and *photographers*, whose work often complements the written material. They illustrate children’s books, photograph news events, and design book jackets and magazine covers, and lay out every page of publications. The *art director* determines the overall look of the publication, overseeing placement of text, artwork and photographs, and any advertising on the page, and selecting type sizes and styles, or fonts.

Production occupations. *Industrial production managers*, with the help of *production and planning clerks*, oversee the production of the publication. They set up production schedules and see that deadlines are met. They also try to keep printing costs under control while maintaining quality. The production manager also determines how much it will cost to produce, for example, a 300-page textbook or an advertising insert in a magazine. In newspaper publishing, the production manager also oversees and controls the entire production operation.

Other production occupations found mainly in newspaper printing plants are *prepress technicians* and *printing machine operators*. Prepress technicians scan images and do page layout and camera work. They then process the film and make plates from it. Printing machine operators set up and run the printing presses and work with the inks. *Driver/sales workers* deliver the newspapers to newsstands and residential customers.

Sales, promotion, and marketing occupations. Magazines, newspapers, and directories, in particular, employ many *advertising sales agents*, who generate most of the revenue for these publications. Using demographic data produced by the market research department, they make presentations to potential clients promoting the use of their publication for advertising purposes. Increasingly, advertising agents sell integrated packages that include advertisements to be placed online or with a broadcast subsidiary, along with additional promotional tie-ins. This job can require substantial travel for some, while others may sell advertising over the telephone. Classified advertising sales are handled by *telemarketers* or *customer service representatives*, depending on who is making the call. *Advertising and promotions managers*, called circulation directors at some magazines and newspapers, study trends and devise promotion campaigns to generate new readers. They also work with the driver/sales workers to ensure that the publications are delivered on time.

Because books do not have advertising, book publishers generate sales through the use of publicity campaigns and a sales force. *Public relations specialists* promote books by setting up media interviews with authors and book signings, and by placing advertisements in relevant publications. *Sales representatives* go to places such as libraries, schools, and bookstores to promote the sale of their books.

General administration occupations. The publishing industry, as with most industries, has a variety of *general managers*, *accountants*, and administrative support staff who help to run the company. There are also *computer specialists* to keep the computer systems running and to implement new technologies. Others work as Internet site developers, who work with the design, editorial, and production departments in order to implement content changes and redesigns of Web sites operated by the publication. But the industry also has other occupations that are unique or important to its operations. For example, publishers are the *chief executives* of the company. Publishers are in charge of the business side of the organization and are responsible for implementing company policies. Subsidiary rights and permissions personnel are *business operations specialists*, who negotiate the copyrights for material and also license to others the right to reproduce or reprint copyrighted material. *Stock clerks* and *order fillers* and *customer service representatives* keep track of

Table 2. Employment of wage and salary workers in publishing, except software, by occupation, 2002 and projected change, 2002-12

(Employment in thousands)

Occupation	Employment, 2002		Percent change, 2002-12
	Number	Percent	
All occupations	714	100.0	-1.5
Management, business, and financial occupations	71	10.4	5.1
Top executives	17	2.4	1.7
Advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers	15	2.2	7.4
Operations specialties managers	14	2.1	4.9
Business operations specialists	11	1.6	9.4
Financial specialists	8	1.2	3.6
Professional and related occupations	191	28.2	5.7
Computer specialists	25	3.8	8.4
Art and design occupations	27	4.3	13.0
News analysts, reporters and correspondents	40	5.8	4.1
Editors	63	9.2	4.1
Writers and authors	11	1.7	4.1
Media and communication equipment occupations	8	1.0	-5.2
Sales and related occupations	103	14.5	0.0
Supervisors, sales workers	10	1.5	4.5
Advertising sales agents	49	7.1	4.1
Sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing	14	2.1	4.1
Telemarketers	16	1.7	-22.2
Office and administrative support occupations	180	23.0	-8.7
Supervisors, office and administrative support workers	11	1.4	-10.7
Financial clerks	21	2.6	-9.2
Customer service representatives	21	3.1	4.1
Material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupations	18	2.3	-8.1
Secretaries and administrative assistants	17	2.1	-13.8
Desktop publishers	14	2.4	20.6
Office clerks, general	22	2.7	-9.3
Production occupations	85	11.2	-6.2
Supervisors, production workers	9	1.3	4.1
Job printers	8	1.0	-4.5
Prepress technicians and workers	18	2.2	-14.5
Printing machine operators	19	2.5	-6.9
Other production occupations	18	2.4	-3.7
Transportation and material moving occupations	70	9.2	-6.0
Driver/sales workers	11	1.4	-6.3
Truck drivers, light or delivery services ...	12	1.7	1.0
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	14	1.7	-14.5
Machine feeders and offbearers	11	1.4	-6.3
Packers and packagers, hand	11	1.5	-6.5

NOTE: May not add to totals due to omission of occupations with small employment.

books in publisher's warehouses and respond to customer inquiries. Lastly, as publications, particularly books, are published

in more than one format, workers are needed to develop the new formats. Audio books, for example, require *sound engineering technicians* to transfer the books to tape.

Training and Advancement

The ability to communicate well is one of the most important skills needed to enter the publishing industry. Although it is especially critical for those in the editorial and sales departments, it is also required for those in production, who may be called upon to compose text. Computer literacy also is becoming a requirement for almost everyone seeking work in this industry. And finally, the ability to meet tight deadlines is a must for most workers.

Writers, reporters, and editors generally need a bachelor's degree. Most people in these occupations majored in English, communication, or journalism. Some publishers, however, prefer graduates with liberal arts degrees or specific subject knowledge if the person will be writing about a certain topic or doing technical writing. For the most part, writers and editors need to be able to express ideas clearly and logically and to write under pressure. Familiarity with desktop publishing software is helpful.

Writers and editors often start as assistants, performing fact-checking, doing research, or copy editing along with clerical tasks. News reporters often start by covering local community events or criminal cases and advance to reporting regional or national news. Writers and reporters can advance to editorial positions, but some choose to continue writing and advance by becoming nationally known experts in their field.

A college degree is preferred for most advertising, sales, and marketing positions in which meeting with clients is required. Courses in marketing, communication, business, and advertising are helpful. For those who sell over the telephone, a high school degree may be sufficient. However, more important for success are excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Those in advertising and sales must be able to get along with others, as well as be self-motivated, well-organized, persistent, independent, and able to handle rejection. Enthusiasm and a sense of humor also help. One advances in these fields by taking on bigger, more important clients or by going into management.

Most prepress technicians and printing machine operators learn on the job by working alongside experienced craftworkers. Although a high school education is sufficient to get a job, taking classes in printing techniques or getting an associate's degree at a postsecondary institution will enhance one's credentials and make it easier to get a job and to advance. Computer skills and familiarity with publishing software packages are important because prepress work and printing are increasingly computerized. Training on new machines will be needed throughout one's career. Advancement usually comes by working on more complex printing jobs or by becoming a supervisor.

Most professional jobs in this industry require experience, especially if one wants to work for a top newspaper, magazine, or book publishing company. Experience can be obtained by working for a school newspaper or by performing an internship with a publishing company. However, most people start by working for small publishing companies or newspapers in smaller cities and towns and work their way up to better paying jobs with

larger newspapers or publishers. Others break into the field by doing freelance work.

Earnings

In 2002, average weekly earnings for workers in the publishing industry varied by type of publication. Average weekly earnings for those working in periodical publishing were \$595, for book publishing \$585, and in newspaper publishing \$483 compared with \$506 for all industries. Writers, editors, and reporters working on major metropolitan newspapers or those with technical expertise writing for specialized magazines usually have the highest salaries. Advertising sales representatives usually earn a base salary plus an amount based on sales. Earnings in selected occupations in publishing appear in table 3.

The Newspaper Guild is the major union representing most nonsupervisory employees in the newspaper industry.

Table 3. Median hourly earnings of the largest occupations in publishing, except software, 2002

Occupation	Publishing, except software	All industries
Editors	\$19.37	\$19.79
Printing machine operators	16.09	13.95
Advertising sales agents	15.83	18.11
Graphic designers	15.22	17.64
News analysts, reporters and correspondents	13.99	14.67
Desktop publishers	13.49	15.20
Prepress technicians and workers	13.07	14.98
Customer service representatives	12.98	12.62
Office clerks, general	10.88	10.71
Telemarketers	10.49	9.40
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	9.08	9.48

Outlook

Over the period 2002-12, wage and salary employment in publishing, except software, is projected to decline by 1 percent, versus growth of 16 percent for all industries. As the need for news and information continues to grow, the publishing industry will be in the forefront. Books, newspapers, and magazines, produced in a variety of media, will be needed to keep people informed. However, efficiencies in production and a trend towards using more freelance writers will cause wage and salary employment to decline overall. Keen competition for jobs also can be expected for most writing and editing jobs, as this industry attracts a large number of applicants, especially at nationally known publications. Writers with specialized knowledge and those who can write on subjects appealing to minority and ethnic readers will have better job prospects.

The need for workers in the publishing industry also varies with the economy. When the economy is depressed, advertising declines and publishers look to cut costs and personnel. In addition, when the economy is down, State and local governments cut back on spending on books for schools and libraries.

Newspaper subscriptions have been declining for many years, as more people turn to television for much of their news. Many people also are turning to Internet news sites. In addition, as the population becomes more diverse and spread out, newspaper publishers are finding that their costs are going up as they attempt to increase readership by adding more stories of interest to

ethnic and suburban audiences. However, mergers in the industry have also made newspapers more efficient. Reporters and advertising agents can now write stories or sell advertising for several newspapers at once and multiple newspapers can now be printed at one location. Those working in company administration also are more productive. Although the number of mergers is expected to decline in the next decade, additional efficiencies are expected to decrease the number of people required to produce a newspaper. These efficiencies will be particularly apparent in the printing plants. As computerization of the printing process becomes widespread, more printing plates will be made directly from electronic images of publications' pages, which have been developed, stored, and transmitted by computer. Employment of prepress technicians and printing machine operators is expected to decline because fewer will be needed to operate the new computerized equipment.

It also is anticipated that the Federal Communications Commission will relax the rules banning ownership of television stations and newspapers in the same market. If this happens, workers may be required to work in both the broadcast and print mediums. Photographers, for example, will also have to learn to use video cameras.

Periodical and book publishing, along with miscellaneous publishing, will likely grow more slowly than in the past. Although mergers are becoming less frequent within the book publishing business, they are expected to continue in magazine publishing, leading to more efficiencies and reduced labor needs. However, several types of publishing should see increased growth. The segment of the industry producing textbooks is expected to benefit from a growing number of high school and college students over the next decade and the need to implement new learning standards in classrooms. Technical and scientific books and journals also will be needed to relay new discoveries to the public. Custom publishing, in which a magazine publisher produces customized newsletters and magazines for clients, also is expected to grow, as more businesses and organizations use magazines to promote new products and retain customer loyalty.

Job openings for advertising sales agents will be in rough balance with the supply of workers, as this occupation is subject to more turnover than most. The need for more sales agents to sell for a wider range of mediums will be offset, at least in part, by the fact that mergers have resulted in fewer advertising agencies to deal with.

The best job opportunities in the future will be for those who have good computer skills and can work in multiple mediums. Most newspapers and magazines, in particular, now have Web sites that are regularly updated. Some of these sites require additional writers, reporters, and editors to update content. The sites also need Web coders and designers and other computer experts to maintain the sites. The production of e-books, which are likely to grow in popularity over the next decade, will require people skilled in incorporating graphics and other digital inputs.

Technological advances will continue to eliminate and change jobs in this industry. Prepress technicians and postpress workers (inserters, material handlers, and bundlers) will continue to lose jobs to automation. The production jobs that remain will require computer and mathematical skills.

Sources of Additional Information

For information about careers in book publishing, write to:

- The Association of American Publishers, 71 Fifth Ave.,
New York, NY 10003. Internet:
<http://www.publishers.org>

For information about careers in newspaper publishing, write to:

- The Newspaper Association of America, 1921
Gallows Rd., Suite 600, Vienna, VA 22182.
Internet: **<http://www.naa.org>**

Information on most occupations in the publishing industry may be found in the 2004-05 *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Among those occupations are:

- Advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers
- Artists and related workers
- News analysts, reporters, and correspondents
- Photographers
- Prepress technicians and workers
- Printing machine operators
- Writers and editors