

Consumers Will Spend More for Publications Using Recycled Paper

BY NOELLE SKODZINSKI

The majority of consumers may be willing to absorb the extra costs some publishers have encountered in investigating a switch to printing on recycled paper. In a new study, 80 percent of consumers who had purchased a book or magazine in the past six months or who currently have a magazine subscription said they would be willing to pay more for a book or magazine printed on recycled paper.

But how much more? According to the survey, the following percentage of consumers said they are willing to pay:

- \$1 more per book: 42%
- 75¢ more per book: 4%
- 50¢ more per book: 14%
- 25¢ more per book: 19%

And for magazines, consumers said they are willing to pay:

- 75¢ more per magazine: 23%
- 50¢ more per magazine: 24%
- 20¢ more per magazine: 17%
- 10¢ more per magazine: 16%

Fourteen percent said they would *not* be willing to pay an additional amount for a **book** printed on recycled paper, and 6 percent said they didn't know whether or not they would pay more. For **magazines**, 16 percent of consumers said they would be unwilling to pay more, and 5 percent were unsure.

"While price premiums don't always exist, higher prices for recycled and [Forest Stewardship Council-certified] paper is the most common hurdle that prevents publishers from producing books more ethically. Hopefully, the results of this survey will help publishers see that moving in the right direction doesn't have to cost them more," says Tyson Miller, executive director of the Green Press Initiative (GPI), a nonprofit organization that helps book publishers improve their environmental impact and a co-sponsor of the study. The other co-sponsors are *Book Business* (formerly *BookTech Magazine*) and Co-Op America—a nonprofit organization that is helping magazine publishers improve their environmental impacts.

"We've found that magazine publishers don't always pay more to use post-consumer recycled paper," says Frank Locantore, director of the Magazine Paper Project at Co-op America. "This survey demonstrates that in the cases where a

New study shows more than 80 percent of consumers are willing to pay more for books and magazines printed on recycled paper.

price premium exists, consumers are willing to pay more to protect forests, ecosystems and human health."

"It is assumed that the results of the survey would also be true for publishers that incorporate FSC fiber in addition to recycled fiber," adds Miller.

"Some publishers have been concerned that consumers wouldn't support a move to recycled paper if it caused a price increase. But this survey definitely indicates strong consumer support. It's big news for publishers, retailers and recycled paper providers," says Noelle Skodzinski, editor in chief of *Book Business* magazine, *Publishing Executive* magazine (formerly *PrintMedia*) and SUSTAINPRINT.COM, an online publication providing information on Environmental Sustainability in Printing and Publishing.

Opinion Research Corp., an independent survey company, conducted the survey by telephone. Survey calls were made Nov. 18-21, 2005, to a random sampling of 1,033 adults—515 men and 518 women, 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the United States. The margin of error at the 95-percent confidence level is plus or minus three percentage points.

WHICH CONSUMERS WILL SPEND MORE AND WHERE ARE THEY?

According to the survey, factors such as age, geographic region, education level and income do not reflect a significant change in respondents' willingness to spend more on publications printed on recycled paper.

Three percent more women than men would pay more for a **book** printed on recycled paper. For a **magazine**, however, 3 percent more men than women said they would pay more.

Responses varied little with education level. Between 77 percent and 81 percent of respondents at various education levels indicated that they would cough up additional dough for **books** printed on recycled paper. For **magazines**, responses varied from 78 percent (college incomplete) to 86 percent (high school incomplete) willing to spend more on recycled-paper magazines.

Age was a bigger differential in respondents' willingness to spend more. Ninety-one percent of respondents ages 18-24 said they are willing to pay more for a **magazine** printed on recycled paper, while 64 percent of the 65-plus age group indicated a willingness to pay more.

For **books**, 35-44-year-olds were the group most willing to pay more for a book printed on recycled paper. Eighty-six percent of that age group said they are willing to pay more. Sixty-six percent of the 65-plus age group said they are willing to pay more.

Respondents with children were more willing to spend an additional amount on books or magazines printed on recycled paper. Eighty-five percent of households with children said they would spend more on **books** using recycled paper, as opposed to 77 percent of those households without children. Eighty-four percent of households with children said they would spend more on **magazines** printed on recycled paper, while 77 percent of respondents without children indicated they would spend more.

As for regional differences, more respondents in the North

Central United States (82 percent) said they would be willing to pay a higher price for a **book** printed on recycled paper than any other region. The other regions weren't far behind, with the West being the lowest at 78 percent.

Respondents in the Northeast showed the most willingness to spend more on **magazines** printed on recycled paper (82 percent), but other regions' responses varied by just 6 percent, with the North Central region being the lowest at 76 percent.

As for city vs. non-city spending attitudes, 80 percent of metro-area respondents said they would be willing to pay more for books or magazines using recycled paper, while 78 percent of non-metro area respondents said the same.

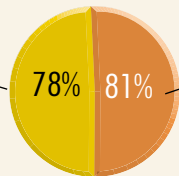
SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS FOR THE INDUSTRY

Some publishing companies have done their own research to determine whether or not their readers would support a move to recycled or FSC-certified papers. But this is the first time a general mass-market consumer survey has been undertaken for the book and magazine publishing industries.

Details of Book-Related Spending Attitudes

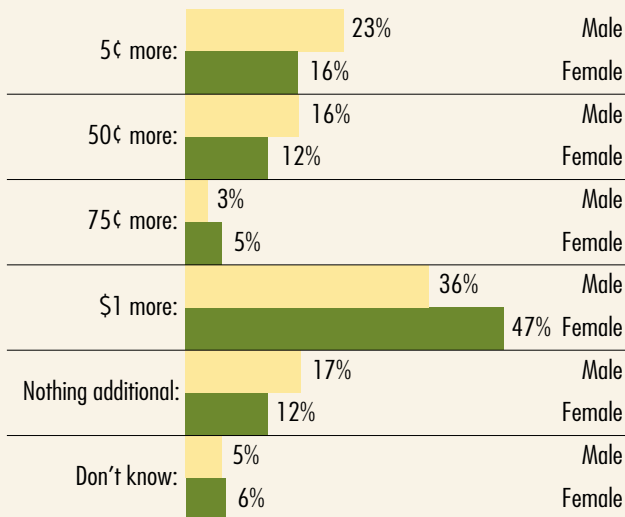
Male vs. Female Response

Percentage of *men* who would pay more for a book printed on recycled paper:



Percentage of *women* who would pay more for a book printed on recycled paper:

Percentage of males and females willing to pay *x-amount* more per book:



Age

Percent of each age group willing to pay more for a book printed on recycled paper:



Geographic Regions

Percent of respondents in each region who said they are willing to spend more on a book printed on recycled paper:



Household Income

Percent of each household-income level that is willing to pay more for a book printed on recycled paper:

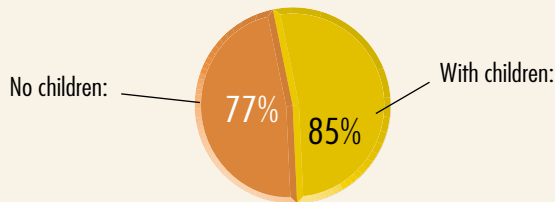


Percent of each household income level that is willing to pay more for a magazine printed on recycled paper:

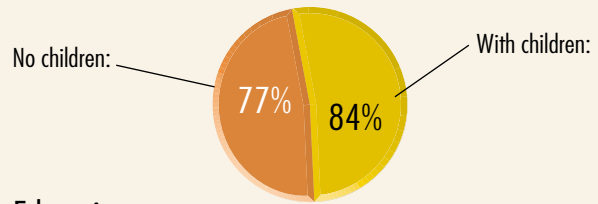


Family Size

Percentage of households with or without children willing to spend more on books printed on recycled paper:

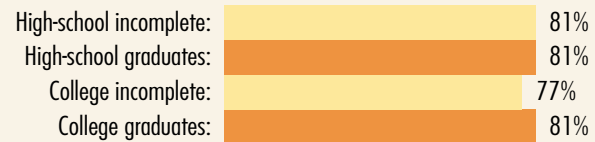


Percentage of households with or without children willing to spend more on magazines printed on recycled paper:



Education

Percent of each education level that indicated a willingness to spend more on books printed on recycled paper:



Percent of each education level that indicated a willingness to spend more on magazines printed on recycled paper:



Want More Information?

Co-op America

WWW.COOPAMERICA.ORG

Green Press Initiative

WWW.GREENPRESSINITIATIVE.ORG

Environmental Sustainability in Printing and Publishing

For more information on environmental sustainability, visit Environmental Sustainability in Printing and Publishing at WWW.SUSTAINPRINT.COM.

Live Help at Conference

At the 2006 BookTech Conference and Expo (March 20-22 in NYC), a special session called "The Business of Environmental Sustainability" will be held.

During the session:

- the survey results will be presented live,
- panelists, such as Dan Sayre, associate publisher, John Wiley & Sons, will share strategies for creating and implementing a corpo-

rate paper policy,

- benefits to the bottom line and beyond from improving environmental sustainability will be detailed, and
- panelists will offer tips for creating effective marketing efforts around sustainable achievements.

Register or view the conference program at BookTechExpo.com, or see the program polybagged with this issue.