



## The Content Machine

Towards a Theory of Publishing  
from the Printing Press to the Digital Network  
*Michael Bhaskar*

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*This book is also available as an ebook.*

### Description

**A ground-breaking study that demonstrates how publishing can survive and thrive in the digital age.**

*'[A] sophisticated approach to what most interested readers would agree is an exceptionally daunting task. The book is detail-rich but capacious in its selection of examples and its synthesis of what the author argues are the essential elements tying together publishing circumstances that many might consider discrete or incompatible. [...] Bhaskar's treatment of familiar problematics [is] refreshingly well-reasoned and well-argued.'* —Aaron McCollough, *Journal of Electronic Publishing*

*'In his bold and innovative book Michael Bhaskar tackles some of the big questions that surround publishing. He takes the reader on a quest for a unified theory of publishing, arriving at the Content Machine, which takes account of both its history and the challenges it faces from digital media.'* —Angus Phillips, Director, Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies

*'Scholarly yet utterly lucid, the dazzling generosity of Bhaskar's historical reference is matched by his incisive understanding of contemporary challenges.'* —Alex Butterworth, Founder/Managing and Creative Director, Amblr

*'Michael Bhaskar brings his considerable experience as a digital publishing professional to inform a fascinating theory of publishing with broad historical scope.'* —Dan Franklin, Digital Publisher, Random House Group

This ground-breaking study, the first of its kind, outlines a theory of publishing that allows publishing houses to focus on their core competencies in times of crisis. Tracing the history of publishing from the press works of fifteenth-century Germany to twenty-first-century Silicon Valley, via Venice, Beijing, Paris and London, and fusing media theory and business experience, **The Content Machine** offers a new understanding of content, publishing and technology, and defiantly answers those who contend that publishing has no future in a digital age.

**Readership:** In addition to publishing professionals, potential readers include students and scholars of publishing, media and the history of the book.

### Contents

Acknowledgements; Introduction: Useful Middlemen; Chapter 1: The Problem of Publishing; Chapter 2: The Digital Context and Challenge; Chapter 3: How Content Works; Chapter 4: The System of Publishing; Chapter 5: Models; Chapter 6: Addressing Problems, Meeting Challenges; Conclusion: Inside the Content Machine; Bibliography; Index

### About the Author

**Michael Bhaskar** is the digital publishing director at the independent publisher Profile Books. He has written and talked extensively on the topic of digital publishing at numerous conferences and universities, and in blogs, journals, magazines and newspapers. He has worked at several publishing houses, a literary agency and an economics research firm, in addition to founding a web start-up and reviewing books for a national newspaper. Bhaskar has a degree in English literature from the University of Oxford and is a British Council Young Creative Entrepreneur and a Frankfurt Book Fair Fellow. He is on Twitter as @ajaxlogos.

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