

# **BIC ORDERING BEST PRACTICE**

## **Trading Platform Capabilities**

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*The Book Industry's Supply Chain Organisation*

In the book industry, knowledge of many regular and critical supply chain routines is passed on from colleague to colleague. Expertise becomes diluted over time. People adapt what they've learned to suit their preferred way of working, as well as overlooking other aspects of what they have learnt.

Technology usually has a part to play, but there's a reluctance to wholly delegate a task to a computer. If a task is delegated, there is a fear of a loss of control. Furthermore, when tasks are delegated, can we be sure that the right tasks are being offloaded? We should be able to confidently assume that how we work and how we engage with technology reflects the most efficient and responsive way to carry out tasks.

The ordering of physical books in the b2b supply chain is a classic example of how we may not be using technology to best advantage. We may think it is quicker to telephone urgent orders to suppliers rather than rely on electronic means. Nowadays order fulfilment is dependent on a whole range of criteria being met. A telephone order may not be despatched any quicker than an order placed using an electronic order platform. Similarly, phoning distributor customer service teams to check on a product's price & availability can be done more speedily by using an electronic order platform. Indeed, distributor customer service teams refer to the same information shown on the electronic order platforms to provide answers to many telephone queries.

Overleaf we have created a quick reference guide for booksellers to the most popular ordering platforms available in the UK and Ireland. This is geared towards the trade sector. These services may also be available in other territories. The purpose of the guide is to show booksellers the range of ordering services and functionality that separately or in conjunction with one another, help expedite ordering processes in a more efficient manner and provide a range of self-service options (such as order tracking) to help booksellers proactively manage their stock.

The information has been provided to BIC by the respective ordering platforms. It is a factual snapshot of the tools and functionality that each provides. BIC recognises that other service providers are available. Inclusion in this document does not proffer any preferred status. For further information on the platforms, please contact the service providers directly.

BIC members that have order platforms available to the b2b physical book supply chain are welcome to contribute information to the Capabilities table overleaf. This includes publishers and distributors with in-house maintained order input solutions, wholesaler portals and system providers with off the shelf ordering tools. Please contact BIC in the first instance via email: [info@bic.org.uk](mailto:info@bic.org.uk) or telephone: +44 (0) 20 4551 1570.

The Ordering Best Practice Resources page of the BIC website has more information on order related topics:

<https://www.bic.org.uk/232/Ordering-Best-Practice/>



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**Key information included in the table:**

**Platform Access Requirements.** All platforms require users to register before access is given. There may be specific criteria that need to be met. The means of access can vary, but secure web access is common.

**Product Discovery.** This captures the range and type of book or book related products that can be searched for on the platform. Popular search options and price & availability information are also shown. Booksellers may also be shown their business's personal price for orders (retail price less trade discount, dependent on commercial terms with the publisher or wholesaler).

**Ordering Options.** There are various options available for placing orders. These will suit different types of order (ad hoc, stock replenishment, new title) and business. The most common ways of placing orders are shown.

**Tracking Orders.** This shows the ways in which booksellers can track the status of orders placed (until they are fulfilled or cancelled).

**Receiving and Returning.** One of the most critical aspects of any bookstore is the efficient management of stock in and out, either to make sales or free up purchasing budget and retail space. Goods handling can still be done manually, but technology can speed it up.

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Platform	Platform Access Requirements			Product Discovery				
	Registration Required	Method of Access	Criteria	Scope of Metadata	Range of Products	Search Options	Price & Availability	Personal Price
<b>BatchLine</b> <i>Point of sale and stock management system</i>	Yes	Local copy/ cloud-based Windows application with secure log-in	Subscription license required	Limited to subscribers	Unlimited. Includes physical, digital, audio, gift and non-book products	All metadata elements	Yes	Yes
<b>Book Manager</b> <i>A stock management system for antiquarian, remainder and specialist mail order companies</i>	Yes	Windows application with secure log-in	Subscribers only	Limited to users	Physical, digital, non-book, antiquarian & subscriptions	ISBN, Author, Title and other metadata	Yes	No
<b>Booksolve</b> <i>A POS system for medium to large booksellers and library suppliers</i>	Yes	Windows application with secure log-in	Subscribers only	Limited to users	Physical, digital, non-book	ISBN, Author, Title and other metadata	Yes	Yes
<b>Edelweiss</b> <i>Online digital catalogue and stock management tools</i>	Yes, for full access	Secure website or compatible POS system	None	Available to all subscribers for participating publishers	Physical, digital, audio and non-book	All metadata elements	Yes	Yes



Platform	Platform Access Requirements			Product Discovery				
	Registration Required	Method of Access	Criteria	Scope of Metadata	Range of Products	Search Options	Price & Availability	Personal Price
<b>Gardlink</b> <i>EPoS and integrated stock management solution</i>	Yes, license to access software	Windows application with secure multi-user log-in	Gardners UK trade account	Licensed under Gardlink subscription	Physical, digital, Gardners non-book and local products	All metadata elements	Yes, using Gardners and PubEasy data	Yes, Gardners only
<b>gardners.com</b> <i>Online catalogue and order, management solution</i>	Yes, linked to Gardners trade account	Website, with multi-user logins	Gardners UK trade account	Limited to users	Physical, digital, video, music & gift products	All metadata elements	Yes	Yes
<b>Ingram iPage</b> <i>Inventory, ordering, tracking</i>	Yes	Secure website	None	Limited to users	Full Ingram US and UK stocked and POD inventory	All metadata elements	Yes	Yes
<b>Merlio</b> <i>A POS system for small to medium booksellers</i>	Yes	Windows application with secure log-in	Subscribers only	Limited to users	Physical, digital, non-book	ISBN, Author, Title and other metadata	Yes	No
<b>MVB (formerly Nielsen) PubEasy</b> <i>Secure website for direct ordering and customer self-service</i>	Yes	Secure website, API or integration with compatible systems	Subscribers only. Free for registered retailers	Limited to subscribed suppliers	Physical and some non-book	ISBN, Author, Publisher, Title, Keyword, Publication Date, Product Format, Availability	Yes	Limited to suppliers who choose to implement



Platform	Platform Access Requirements			Product Discovery				
	Registration Required	Method of Access	Criteria	Scope of Metadata	Range of Products	Search Options	Price & Availability	Personal Price
<b>MVB (formerly Nielsen) TeleOrdering</b> <i>Extensive order routing service</i>	Yes	Secure FTP, integration with compatible systems, API, Nielsen BookData Online	Subscribers only	None	Physical, digital and non-book	None	Confirmation file	No
<b>Nielsen BookData Online</b> <i>Comprehensive online bibliographic database</i>	Yes	Secure website	Subscribers only	All metadata elements. Complete Nielsen BookData database	Physical, digital	Multiple search options, complex searches	Yes	Very limited

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Platform	Ordering Options				Tracking Orders			
	Order Input Option (1)	Order Input Option (2)	Order Input Option (3)	Order Input Option (4)	Acknowledgements and Re-Acknowledgements	Order Status Option (1)	Order Status Option (2)	Order Status Option (3)
<b>BatchLine</b> <i>Point of sale and stock management system</i>	ISBN, Author, Title	File upload	EDI ordering via Batch order routing process	Copy and paste	Information on quantity ordered, quantity to be supplied, availability, dues, substitutions	ISBN, Author, Title	Order reference	Date parameters
<b>Book Manager</b> <i>A stock management system for antiquarian, remainder and specialist mail order companies</i>	ISBN, Author, Title, Journal No	Browse Nielsen BookData and import	File upload		No	ISBN, Author, Title, Journal No	Order reference	
<b>Booksolve</b> <i>A POS system for medium to large booksellers and library suppliers</i>	ISBN, Author, Title	Browse Nielsen BookData and import	Import EDI orders and quotes	API Integration	Yes	ISBN, Author, Title	Order reference	File upload
<b>Edelweiss</b> <i>Online digital catalogue and stock management tools</i>	From digital catalogue	Copy and paste	File upload	EDI via Batch		Via POS system	Via order management screen	Email
<b>Gardlink</b> <i>EPoS and integrated stock management solution</i>	Selection from Gardners and local catalogue	ISBN/ EAN, with quantity and line references, keyed	Copy and paste/ file importer	Reorder function from sales list	Confirmation of allocation and recorded lines	Order management screen	Backorder list	Electronic invoices to advise on shipped lines



Platform	Ordering Options				Tracking Orders			
	Order Input Option (1)	Order Input Option (2)	Order Input Option (3)	Order Input Option (4)	Acknowledgements and Re-Acknowledgements	Order Status Option (1)	Order Status Option (2)	Order Status Option (3)
<b>gardners.com</b> <i>Online catalogue and order, management solution</i>	Selection from search results	ISBN/ EAN, quantity and line reference added to basket	Copy and paste into list or order basket	File upload to order basket	Confirmation of stock allocation and backorders via email	Order history screen	Outstanding lines via the backorder screen	Recently shipped lines via the invoice download
<b>Ingram iPage</b> <i>Inventory, ordering, tracking</i>	ISBN, Author, Title	File upload	Copy and paste		Yes	Order reference	Date parameters	Ordering method (shows orders sent via iPage and other routes)
<b>Merlio</b> <i>A POS system for small to medium booksellers</i>	ISBN, Author, Title	Browse Nielsen BookData and import	Import EDI orders	API Integration	No	ISBN, Author, Title	Order reference	File upload
<b>MVB (formerly Nielsen) PubEasy</b> <i>Secure website for direct ordering and customer self-service</i>	On screen data selection	API, integration with compatible system	File upload	Copy and paste	Order line updates on screen, API	ISBN, Author, Title	Order reference, Order Date	API, integration with compatible system, supplier specific searches
<b>MVB (formerly Nielsen) TeleOrdering</b> <i>Extensive order routing service</i>	File upload	BookData Online	Integration with compatible system		TeleOrder confirmations file, from the supplier	Limited supplier tracking via BookData Online		
<b>Nielsen BookData Online</b> <i>Comprehensive online bibliographic database</i>	On screen data selection	ISBN	File upload	Copy and paste	TeleOrder confirmations file	Limited supplier tracking	TeleOrdering confirmations file	





Platform	Receiving and Returning		Contact Information
	Receiving	Returns	
<b>BatchLine</b> <i>Point of sale and stock management system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Goods-in process via system</li> <li>- Full integration with Batch Payments (invoices processed electronically or manually)</li> <li>- Customer order slips automatically produced</li> <li>- SMS information for customer orders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fully integrated with Batch Returns</li> <li>- EDI returns request messaging to IRI standards</li> <li>- Authorisations received via EDI</li> </ul>	Visit <a href="http://batch.co.uk">batch.co.uk</a> for more information and complete the 'Contact Us' form, or email <a href="mailto:mail@batch.co.uk">mail@batch.co.uk</a> for further information
<b>Book Manager</b> <i>A stock management system for antiquarian, remainder and specialist mail order companies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manual entry</li> <li>- Receipt of purchase order</li> <li>- Excel file import</li> </ul>	Manual	<a href="mailto:info@bookmanager.co.uk">info@bookmanager.co.uk</a>
<b>Booksolve</b> <i>A POS system for medium to large booksellers and library suppliers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Via EDI files</li> <li>- Manual entry</li> <li>- Receipt of purchase order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Via Batch EDI returns</li> <li>- System generated</li> <li>- Manual</li> </ul>	<a href="mailto:info@booksolve.com">info@booksolve.com</a>
<b>Edelweiss</b> <i>Online digital catalogue and stock management tools</i>	Via POS system data	Via turnover reports	<a href="mailto:support@abovethetreeline.com">support@abovethetreeline.com</a>
<b>Gardlink</b> <i>EPOS and integrated stock management solution</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- import of EDI/ ASN files</li> <li>- Receipt against outstanding purchase order</li> <li>- Manual Scan</li> <li>- copy and paste/ file upload importer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Request direct to Gardners via EDI, with authorisation</li> <li>- Print and Email submission</li> <li>- FTP to Batch in EDI format with authorisation</li> <li>- Partial IRI compliance</li> </ul>	For more information visit Gardners <a href="https://www.gardners.com/Services/Gardlink">https://www.gardners.com/Services/Gardlink</a> , email <a href="mailto:Gardlink@Gardners.com">Gardlink@Gardners.com</a> or telephone Michael Plummer +44 1323 521 777



Platform	Receiving and Returning		Contact Information
	Receiving	Returns	
<b>gardners.com</b> <i>Online catalogue and order, management solution</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Download Invoices to confirm shipment</li> <li>- B2B Parcel Tracking links</li> <li>- B2C Order Tracking links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Copy and paste ISBN and quantity</li> <li>- File upload to new request</li> <li>- Authorisation available for download (Gardners Requests Only)</li> </ul>	For more information visit Gardners <a href="https://www.gardners.com/Help/Contact-us">https://www.gardners.com/Help/Contact-us</a> , email <a href="mailto:uksales@gardners.com">uksales@gardners.com</a> or telephone Michael Plummer +44 1323 521 777
<b>Ingram iPage</b> <i>Inventory, ordering, tracking</i>	Manual	Manual	<a href="https://getstarted.ingramcontent.com/">https://getstarted.ingramcontent.com/</a> to register
<b>Merlio</b> <i>A POS system for small to medium booksellers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Via EDI files</li> <li>- Manual entry</li> <li>- Receipt of purchase order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- System generated</li> <li>- Manual</li> </ul>	<a href="mailto:info@merlio.com">info@merlio.com</a>
<b>MVB (formerly Nielsen) PubEasy</b> <i>Secure website for direct ordering and customer self-service</i>	Manual	Manual	To be confirmed
<b>MVB (formerly Nielsen) TeleOrdering</b> <i>Extensive order routing service</i>	Manual	Manual	To be confirmed
<b>Nielsen BookData Online</b> <i>Comprehensive online bibliographic database</i>	Manual	Manual	To be confirmed

