

Discovering books in the digital age

Or: how to sell books when nobody knows about them and nobody cares

Michael Bhaskar 30.11.2010

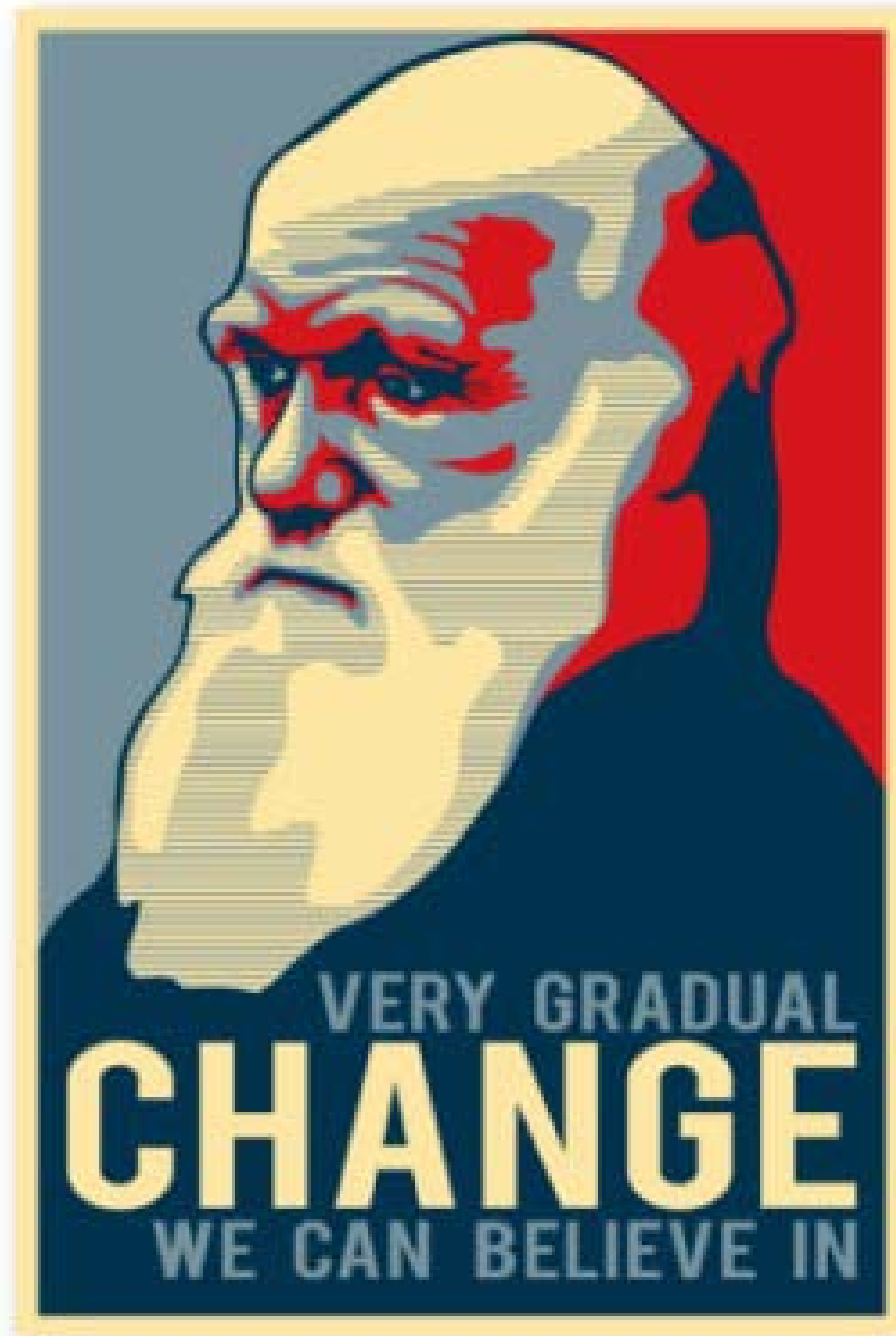


Everyone thinks everything has suddenly
changed

BUT IT HASN'T TOTALLY



This



Not this



But with some of these along the way...

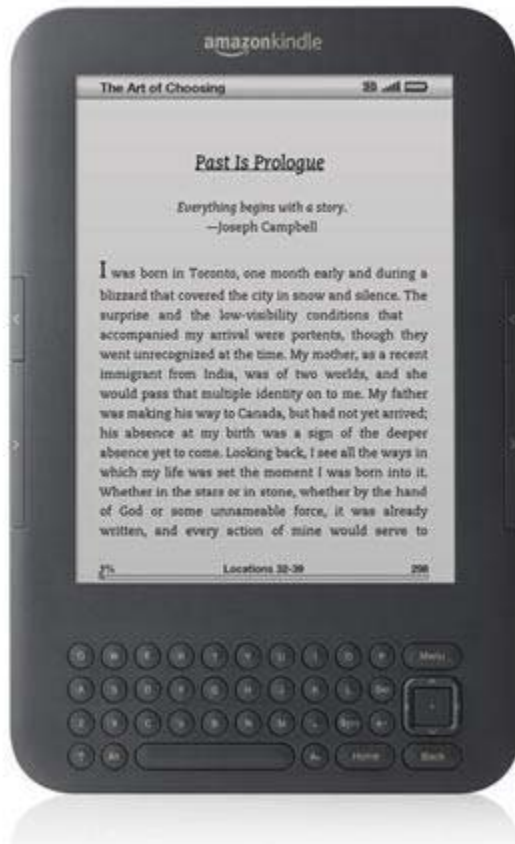


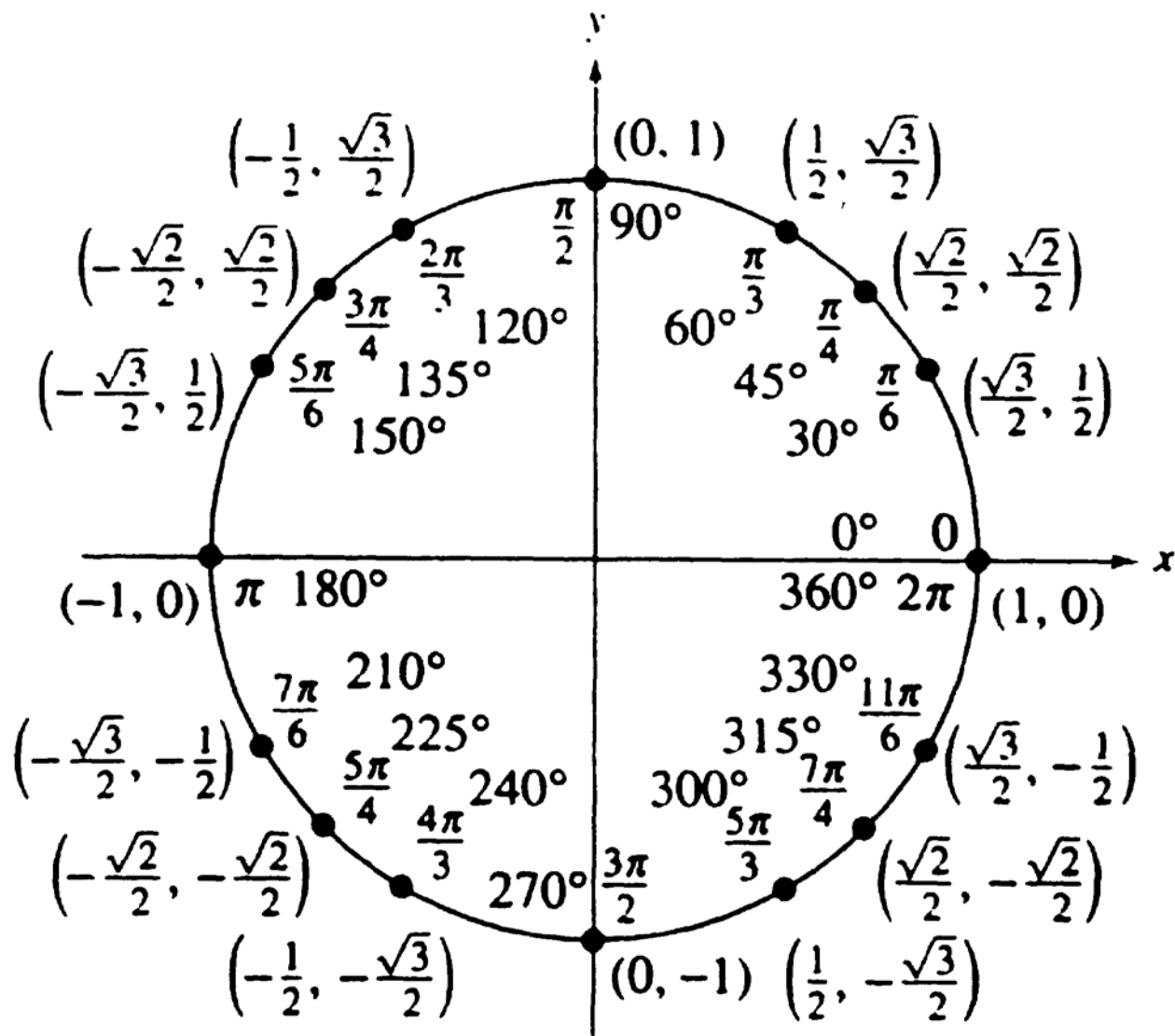
Rather than look at everything I am going to look at three things, snappily entitled:

- 1.) Internal Platform Dynamics
- 2.) Many to many microblogging
- 3.) The possibility of paracontent



Platforms =





The cycle

- A book becomes popular
- It gets in the charts
- Because it is in the charts it is promoted
- It sells more because it is being promoted
- It remains in the charts because it sells more
- Ad infinitum

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Top 100 Paid

- 112 days in the top 100
The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (Millennium Trilogy)
Stieg Larsson (Author)
★★★★☆ (771)
Available for download now
£2.68
- 111 days in the top 100
The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets' Nest (Millennium Trilogy)
Stieg Larsson (Author), Reg Keeland (Translator)
★★★★☆ (624)
Available for download now
£2.68
- 112 days in the top 100
The Girl Who Played with Fire (Millennium Trilogy)
Stieg Larsson (Author)
★★★★☆ (424)
Available for download now
£2.68
- 29 days in the top 100
The Confession
John Grisham (Author)
★★★★☆ (22)
Available for download now
£6.64

Top 100 Free

- The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes**
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Author)
★★★★☆ (28)
Available for download now
Free
- Fallen Idols**
Neil White (Author)
★★★★☆ (21)
Available for download now
Free
- Pride and Prejudice**
Jane Austen (Author)
★★★★☆ (157)
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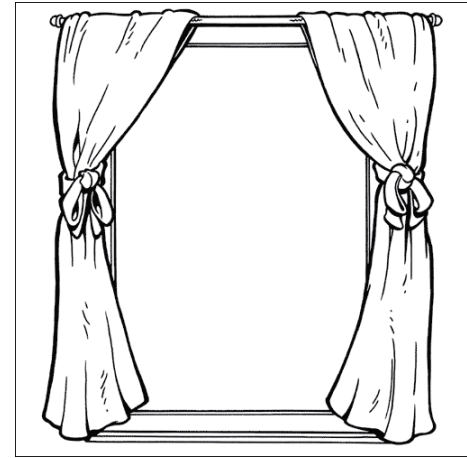
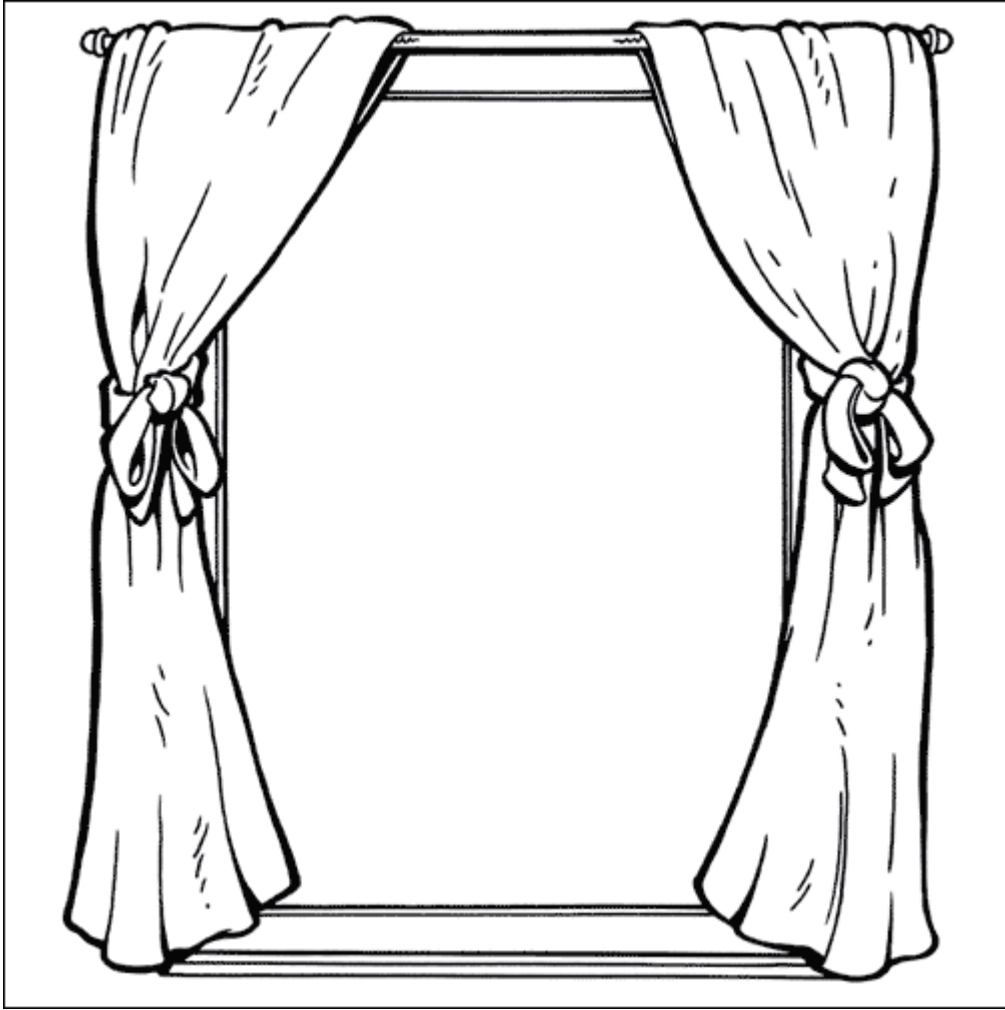
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THIS IS ABOUT USER BEHAVIOUR AND HOW WE ENGAGE WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

But it's also a trend that applies across publishing and bricks and mortar retailing – the long tail isn't a myth, but it's no saviour









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ajaxlogos



Michael Bhaskar

@ajaxlogos London

Profile Books Digital Publishing. THIS many ideas, in this much space, with a stack of books to read that keeps getting bigger.

<http://www.michaelbhaskar.com>

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ajaxlogos Michael Bhaskar

[@theopen_road](#) Pleasure, very interesting and enjoyable way to start the day

59 minutes ago



ajaxlogos Michael Bhaskar

[@katepullinger](#) They are Hindu, but pre-partition lived in Lahore/Gujranwala - so Indian now, but previously Pakistani (before it existed)

59 minutes ago



ajaxlogos Michael Bhaskar

[@katepullinger](#) Sounds incredible out there, the Bhaskars originally hail from just outside Lahore

1 hour ago



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RT [@Londonist](#): BBC London takes a tour of The Shard

<http://bbc.in/tbsOA>

1 hour ago



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Did I mention the other day that marnie stern rules? I did? Well, I've mentioned it again.

About @ajaxlogos

2,006 Tweets 323 Following 368 Followers 19 Listed

Following 323 **Followers 368**

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George Walkley



thebookseller

The Bookseller



PenguinBooks

PenguinBooksUK

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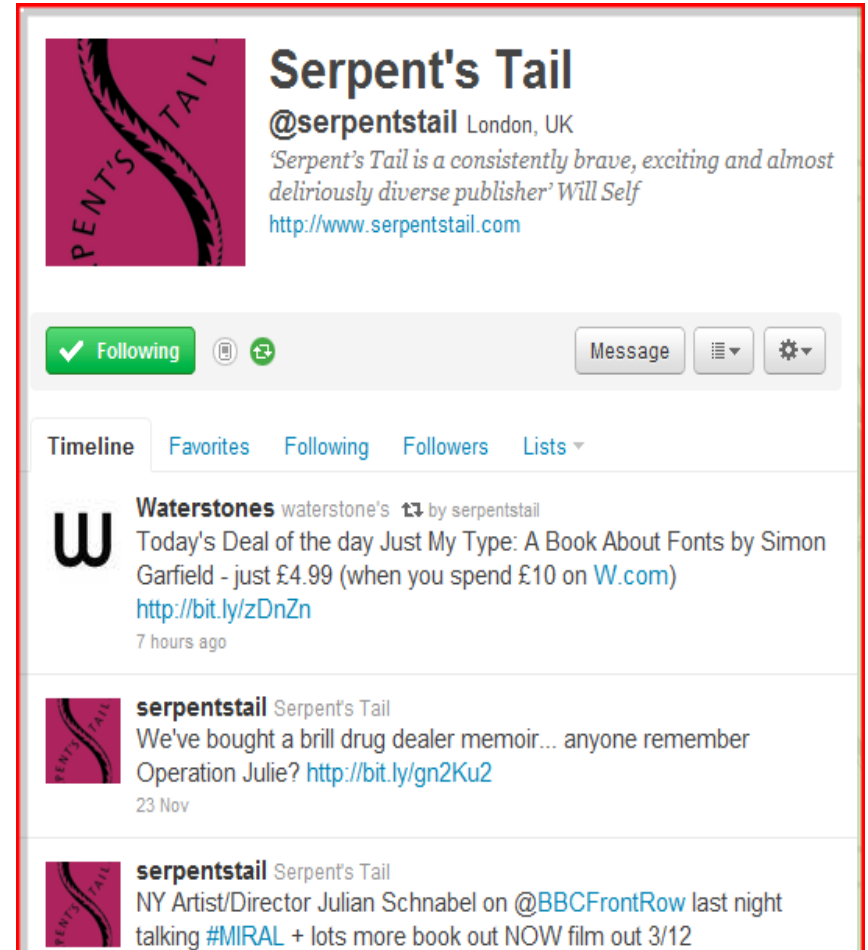


“SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY” IS OVER



Web 2.0 is so 2006

- Social networks have moved on
- Twitter is the best way for companies to communicate
- Flexible, non-invasive, concise, neutral, multi-purpose, useful



These people

- Publishing houses/imprints
- Publishers and staff
- Authors
- Characters

Talk to these people

- Other publishers and industry people
- Journalists and bloggers
- Readers
- Interesting people in other industries





About @PenguinBooks

1,271

Tweets

156,619

Following

154,163

Followers

4,225

Listed



About @stephenfry

7,066

Tweets

53,097

Following

1,985,468

Followers

36,602

Listed

About @R_Nash

3,220

Tweets

722

Following

43,594

Followers

1,061

Listed



About @marvin_bot

896

Tweets

0


Following

746

Followers

48

Listed






Justin

@shitmydadsays

I'm 29. I live with my 74-year-old dad. He is awesome. I just write down shit that he says


<http://www.shitmydadsays.com/blog>



Timeline


Favorites Following Followers Lists



shitmydadsays Justin

"No. I want the salad...Live a little? I'm ordering lunch. I don't have a choice between salad or fucking skydiving."


11 Nov





Al

133 Tweets

Follow



Similar



Captain Random House

@GoodRandomHouse Wherever Books Need

Defending

World's Largest Freakin' Book Publisher, Defender of the written word, Slayer of Evil Andrew Wylie (and anti-trust practices)

<http://www.randomhouse.com>






Timeline

Favorites Following Followers Lists



GoodRandomHouse Captain Random House

We at [@goodrandomhouse](http://goodrandomhouse) are thankful for all the authors whose blood we continue to feast upon. I mean publish.



About @

681 Tweets | 1,000 Followers

Following 1





Similar to @



Emper

Empero



ljndaw

ljndaws

PARACONTENT

“Spreadable media”

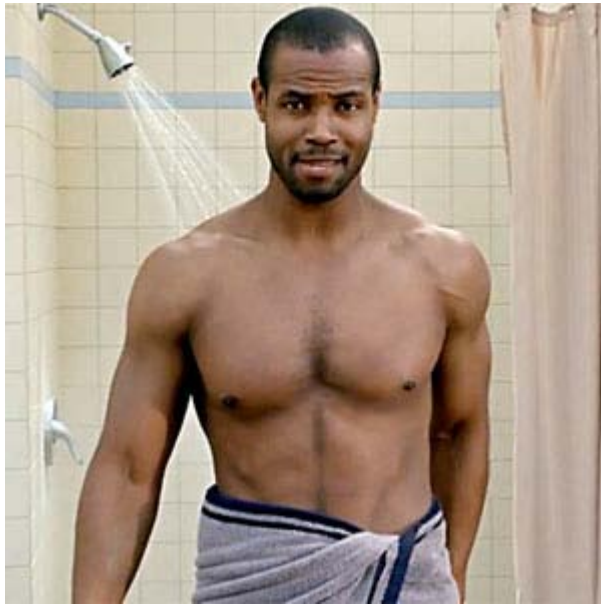


“Spreadable media is media which travels across media platforms at least in part because the people take it in their own hands and share it with their social networks.”

Henry Jenkins



Marketing becomes content



Content becomes marketing

Webpage Screenshot

The screenshot shows the 'Last Word Challenge' webpage. At the top, the title 'Last Word Challenge' is in large, bold, orange letters, with 'NewScientist' in smaller white text below it. To the right of the title are three small thumbnail images of quiz cards with titles like 'Do Polar Bears Get Lame?', 'Does Anything Eat Wasps?', 'Why Can't Elephants Jump?', and 'Why Don't Penguins' Feet Freeze?'. Below the title, a personalized greeting 'Hi Michael!' is displayed. To the right of the greeting is a small profile picture of a man. Below the greeting, there are three quiz results for 'Emily Louise Orford': 'The Winter Warmers Quiz' (6 out of 10 right), 'The Weird Science Quiz' (5 out of 10 right), and 'The Human Body Quiz' (6 out of 10 right). Below these results is a section titled 'Why don't penguins' feet freeze?' with three multiple-choice options labeled A, B, and C. Option A is selected. To the right of the quiz results is a section titled 'Endless mode' with a clock icon and the text 'Answer as many questions as you can'. Below this is a 'LATEST QUIZ' section with a list of quiz titles and star ratings. At the bottom left of the screenshot, the URL 'http://www.lastwordchallenge.com/' is visible.

Last Word Challenge
NewScientist

Hi Michael!

Emily Louise Orford got 6 out of 10 right in Why don't penguins' feet freeze? - The Winter Warmers Quiz

Emily Louise Orford got 5 out of 10 right in Do the living outnumber the dead? - The Weird Science Quiz

Emily Louise Orford got 6 out of 10 right in Why do men have nipples? - The Human Body Quiz

Why don't penguins' feet freeze?

A Penguins feet have a natural temperature more than double that of the rest of their bodies, meaning it would take an ambient temperature lower than absolute zero to cool them to freezing point.

B Penguins' feet are actually made of the same chitinous substance as their beaks, and contain no blood vessels or tissue. As such, there is nothing in a penguin's foot which could possibly freeze.

C Penguins' feet are covered in a thick layer of a waxy, organic substance much like goose fat. This ensures firstly that there is little heat loss through the penguin's feet and secondly that there is no fluid contact between the icy...

Endless mode
Answer as many questions as you can

LATEST QUIZ
Check back every Friday for a new quiz!

- ★ Skin and Bones Human Body Quiz
- ★ People are Strange Human Behaviour Quiz
- ★ Best of the Best Editor's Choice Quiz
- ★ Can it ever be true?

<http://www.lastwordchallenge.com/>





Enhanced ebooks: where publishing meets marketing?

- Paracontent is when marketing is separate from the book – yet fundamental to it
- In marketing theory this is related to the idea of the augmented product (which sees packaging and services around a product as integral to it)
- Content marketing has been taken to the next level
- The boundaries of the book itself have become porous – this is creatively interesting but also a commercial tool



So, to recap...

3 ways to discover
books in a digital age:



1. PLAY THE PLATFORMS, WORK THE SYSTEM AND GET YOUR BOOKS IN POLE POSITION



2. GET ON TWITTER; IN FACT, GET ALL OVER TWITTER



**3. DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE
DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONTENT AND
MARKETING – MAKE INTERESTING
STUFF**



**AS FOR THE REST, YOU'LL HAVE TO
WAIT AND SEE**

(Thanks for listening)



Michael Bhaskar

Digital Publishing Manager

Profile Books

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www.michaelbhaskar.com

www.10membranes.com

www.profilebooks.com

www.serpentstail.com

