



BIC Brunch: How Better Metadata Drives Book Discovery - The Power of Thema

11th December 2025

@bicluk.bsky.social

#bicbrunch

Housekeeping

Questions for speakers - Questions will be taken after the presentations have finished. Please use the “Questions/Q&A” box to submit your question to the organisers at any time. Or the Chat box.

Recording - This event is being recorded for BIC to use in its marketing and to allow people who are unable to attend this session today to still enjoy the event later. Attendees will not be identified in the recording.

BIC is a neutral members organization.

#bicbrunch @bic1uk.bsky.social

Agenda

12 noon **Welcome and Introductions**
Karina Urquhart, Executive Director, BIC

12.05pm **Speakers**
Jeremy Neate, Head of Research and International Development at NielsenIQ BookScan
Kieron Smith, Ecommerce Director, Waterstones

12.50 pm **Question & Answer Session**

1.30 pm **Wrap up and Close**



A bit about us



About BIC

BIC (Book Industry Communication Ltd) is at the heart of the book industry, creating standards, delivering best practice and improving margin.

Our Vision

We make the UK book supply chain more efficient and sustainable by developing standards and encouraging their adoption. We define best practice and connect experts and stakeholders to enable measurable innovation.

If you are in the book industry supply chain, you need to be a member of BIC.

www.bic.org.uk

The benefits of using *Thema* Qualifiers

What they are and where to find them and why
to use them.

Jeremy Neate

Head of Research and International Development

Carlos Marfil

Post Graduate Intern for Nielsen Book



NielsenIQ BookData 

Agenda

- Intro – 6 Bite sized chunks for easier digestion
- 1 – Bibs - A Potted History
- 2 – What is *Thema*
- 3 – Regional Travel Guides
- 4 – Regional Cuisine
- 5 – Regional History
- 6 – Galapagos or Gibraltar
- A Final Summary – hopefully in 30 minutes or less

PART I

A Bit of Metadata history

From compiled publisher catalogues in 1858 to the current online access of over 50 million ISBNs and growing.



From Joseph Whitaker to Nielsen BookData

Two pioneers in the book industry, **Joseph** by launching the Trade Magazine, **The Bookseller** in **1858**. **Charles Dickens** 'Reading Tours'

David a 4th generation Editor of **The Bookseller** for driving through Industry Initiatives, not least the **ISBN**. And a fine judge of character!

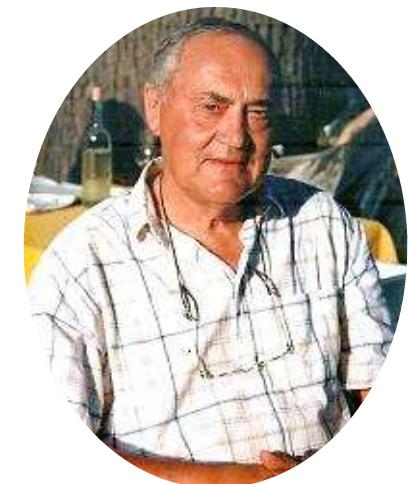


Charles Dickens
1812 - 1870

Joseph Whitaker
1820 - 1895

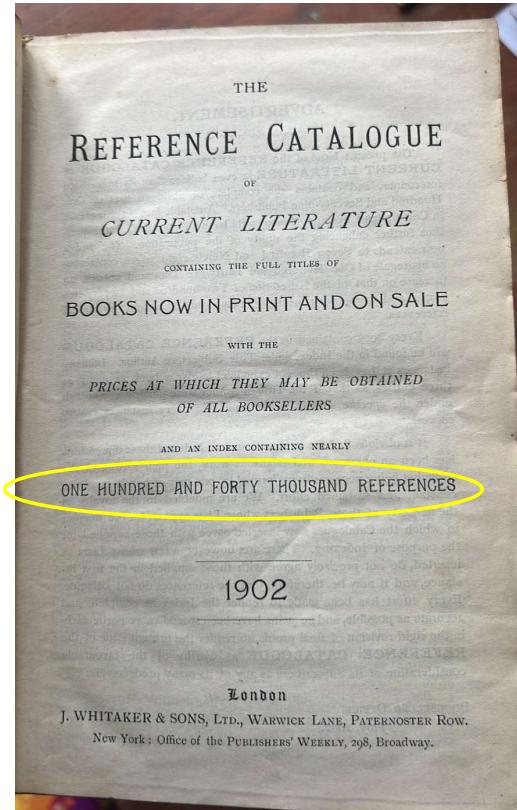


David Whitaker
1931 - 2021



1902 The Reference Catalogue of Current Literature

With 140k references across 183 Publishers Catalogues and running to 2 sizeable Volumes A – H and I to Z
Charles Dickens titles appear as does Aesop's Fables



About England with His Illustrators, Gregs	Chatto	6. 19
as an Educator, Hughes	Chapman&H.	35
Barnaby Rudge	E. Arnold	7
Battle of Life, Shorthand	W. Scott	3
Birthday Record	Pitman	9
Bleak House	Dean	0
Book of Nine Tales	W. Scott	4
Child's History of England	Dean	7
Chips from T. Mason	Routledge	18
Chips from, T. Mason	Houlston	19
Christmas Books	D. Bryce	27
Christmas Books	Chapman&H.	13
Christmas Carol	Methuen	3
Christmas Carol	Nelson	7
Christmas Stories	Putnam	14
Cricket on the Hearth	Chapman&H.	13
David Copperfield	Putnam	14
David Copperfield	Dean	10, 21
David Copperfield	W. Scott	25, 65
David Copperfield	Treherne	7
David Copperfield	Ward, Lock	16
Days with	Houlston	18
Dictionary, Pierce	Chapman&H.	10
Domby & Son	W. Scott	27
Hard Times	W. Scott	6, 40, 53
Illustrations	G. Allen	23
Key to the Characters	Chapman&H.	10
Letters of	Macmillan	32
Life, by His Daughter	Cassell	41
Life of, John Forster	Chapman&H.	7
Life of, Marzials	W. Scott	36, 51
Little Dorrit	W. Scott	49, 66
Little Nell	Nelson	7
Martin Chuzzlewit	W. Scott	51, 66
Master Humphreys	W. Scott	72
My Child Wife	Pitman	33

Notes on J. Blackwood's	Gall & Inglis	20
Fa Diče, A. Karr	Dulau	43
Fabeln für Kinder, Hey Lange	Bell	70
— für Kinder, Hey Lange	Whittaker	21
— und Erzählungen	Cambridge P.	51
— und Erzählungen	Hachette	66
Faber (E.) Mind of Mencius	Kegan Paul	21
Hymns selected from	Virtue	22
(Frederick William) Life of Washbourne	Burns & O.	12
Life and Letters	Art & Bk. Co.	8
Poems	Burns & O.	67
Poems, Complete Edition	Art & Bk. Co.	8
Sir Launcelot	Art & Bk. Co.	8
Works by	Burns & O.	5
Works by	Washbourne	12
Fabian Series	Richards	10
Fabiola, A Christian Drama	Washbourne	45
Cardinal Wiseman	Burns & O.	49
Cardinal Wiseman	Washbourne	12
Fabiola's Sisters, A. C. Clark	Burns & O.	51
Sisters, A. C. Clarke	Washbourne	12
Fable and Song in Italy, Clerke	Richards	7
— for Critics, Lowell	Gay & Bird	12
Fables, Aesop's	Bell	3
— Aesop's	Macmillan	28
— Aesop's	Milner	14
— Aesop's	Routledge	18
— Aesop's, Croxall	Nimmo	22
— Aesop's, S. Croxall	Warne	4
— Aesop's, ed. J. Jacobs	Nutt	5
Bidpai, ed. J. Jacobs	Bidpai, ed. J. Jacobs	5
Dryden	Nutt	5
— by Fal	Routledge	39
— by Florian	Duckworth	16
— J. P. C. de Florian	Hachette	41
— La Fontaine's	Macmillan	45
— La Fontaine's	J. Blackwood	2
— La Fontaine	Bohn's Lib.	11
— La Fontaine	Macmillan	45
— La Fontaine's, in French	Whittaker	10
— La Fontaine's, Gass	Hachette	41

Self Appointed Archivist

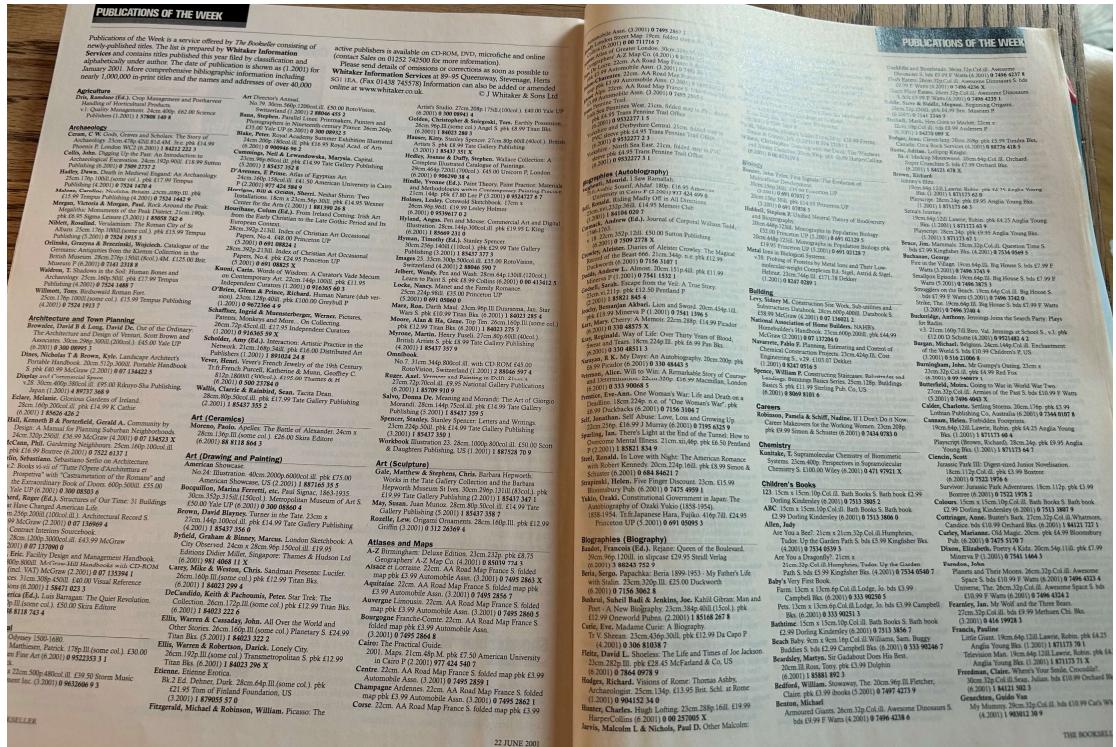
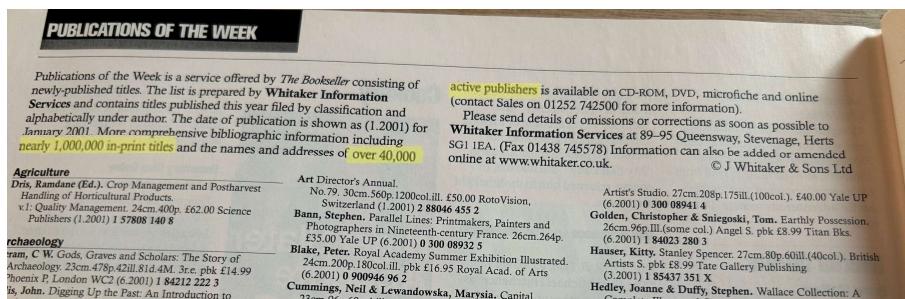
20th Century Publications

The weekly trade magazine, **The Bookseller**, had a section called Publications of the Week – often running to 20 pages and listing the newly released titles, sorted alphabetically by Author within one of 139 'Whitaker Categories'.

1995 - 550k titles – 20k Publishers

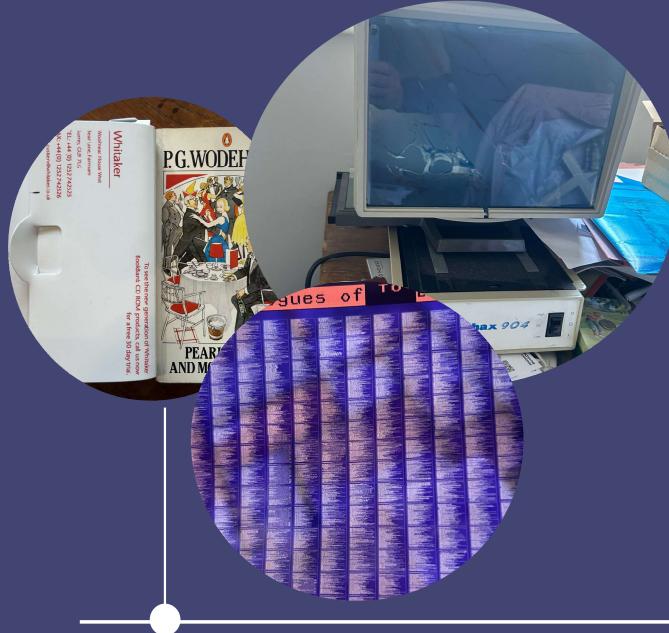


2001 – 1m titles – 40k Publishers



Book Data Evolution 1970s - Now

Global books in print sourced bibliographic data from the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, South Africa , etc.



Microfiche

1970s – 100k ‘pages’

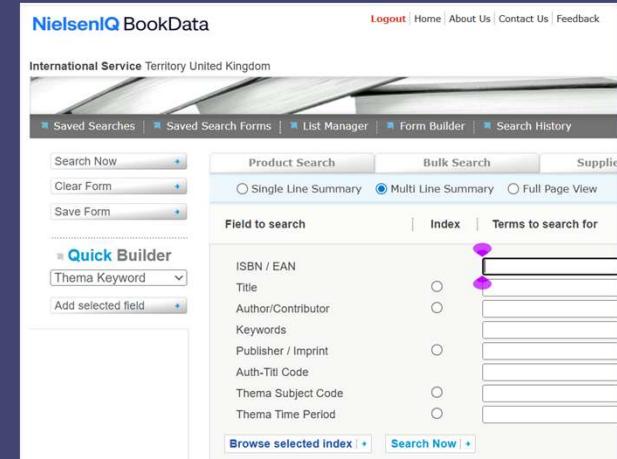
As more and more books were published paper turned into microfiche.



CD-Roms

1980s - Global

After few years, at the start of the '80s Microfiche was replaced by CD-ROM



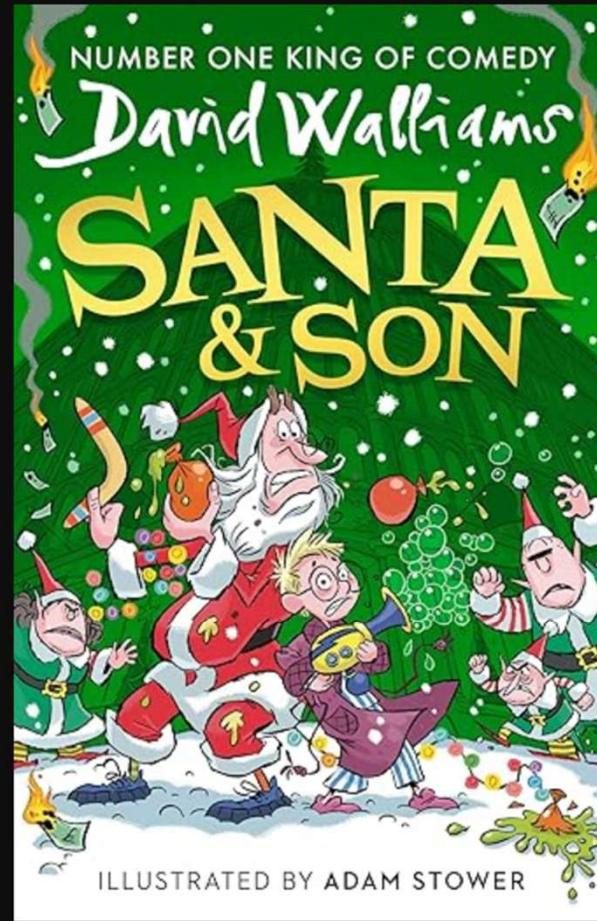
TODAY

Online Access

2000s – 50m + images

And in turn, the CD-ROM/DVD was replaced by Online access.

BDOL – Using *Thema* to find a specific Christmas Book



The more complete the record on the database, the more sales of the book are made.

4 Subject Groups

37 Product Groups
broken down into

247 Product Classes

Books can only have **One** Product Class

Introduced in early 2000's to replace
139 Whitaker Categories



NielsenIQ BookScan Product Classes

[Product Class: Authority List of Codes & Definitions: Version 4](#)

The NielsenIQ BookScan Product Class Scheme provides a means to analyse the book market simply and effectively by broad subject area, in conjunction with purpose or intended audience.

Under the scheme, the total market breaks down into four Broad Sectors:

- Adult Fiction
- Adult Non Fiction: Trade
- Adult Non Fiction: Specialist
- Children's, Young Adult & Educational.

NielsenIQ Product Classes in Detail

How and Why do we use them:

BROAD SUBJECT GROUPS

Under the scheme, the total market breaks down into four Broad Sectors:

- Adult Fiction
- Adult Non Fiction: Trade
- Adult Non Fiction: Specialist
- Children's, Young Adult & Educational.

3 of the 37 PRODUCT GROUPS

<i>T16</i>	<i>Food & Drink</i>
T16.0	Food & Drink: General
T16.1	National & Regional Cuisine
T16.2	Health, Dieting & Wholefood Cookery
T16.3	Vegetarian Cookery
T16.4	Wines
T16.5	Other Beverages
T16.6	Entertainment & Etiquette

<i>T5</i>	<i>History & Military</i>
T5.0	History: World & General
T5.1	Ancient History
T5.2	Regional History
T5.3	History: Specific Subjects
T5.4	Military History
T5.5	Archaeology
T5.6	Local History, Names & Genealogy
T5.7T	History: Textbooks & Study Guides

<i>T14</i>	<i>Atlases, Maps & Travel</i>
T14.0	General Atlases & Maps (not folded)
T14.1	Road Atlases & Maps
T14.2	General Folded Maps & Walking Guides
T14.3	Travel & Holiday Guides: General
T14.4	Phrasebooks
T14.5	Where to Stay / Where to Eat & Drink
T14.7	Cycling Maps & Guides
T14.8	Street Maps & City Plans

PART II

What is *Thema*

Thema is the single unified standard for the **Global Book Trade** and is the primary subject classification scheme preferred and used by BookData. Updated every two years, ***Thema*** provides the richest and most flexible means of book subject categorisation and is specifically designed to replace legacy national schemes such as BIC for every purpose and application.'

Thema is Latin for Topic which in turn has Ancient Greek origins.



Birth of *Thema* – some early press releases

A few of early press releases introducing Thema



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Karina Luke, 020 7255 0516, Karina@bic.org

New Global Subject Codes Standard Launches at Frankfurt BookFair

Collaborative effort is underway to internationalize book classification

Frankfurt, Germany (October 10, 2012) — Book industry representatives from 16 countries announced today the formation of a new, global standard to categorize and classify book content by subject. The project, initially known as "Thema," was first announced during the Tools of Change Supply Chain Conference taking place during the Frankfurt International Book Fair.

In the UK and North America, where well-regarded national schemes are more firmly established, change has been less dramatic, but awareness is growing. Nielsen reports that it has **over 10 million records on its database** classified with Thema; and the scheme is also provided by Bowker, BDS and Booknet Canada. Online retailers are expressing an interest, and BIC (the organisation) has announced that there will be no further updates of the BIC scheme - so in effect **Thema can be regarded as the new version of BIC**.

Other countries round the world are at various stages of adoption. As well as the English, German, Norwegian and Swedish versions, Thema has been translated (to various extents) into Arabic, Danish, Spanish, French, Italian, Japanese, Polish and Russian; and Greek, Turkish and Chinese translations await approval from the relevant authorities.

EDItEUR releases *Thema* subject category scheme

1st November 2013 – EDItEUR has published *Thema* 1.0, a new subject classification system intended for use throughout the global book and e-book trade.

Thema is a book subject classification scheme that meets the needs of the global book trade and can be used alongside or in place of the many national classification schemes – for example, BIC is used in the UK, BISAC in North America, CLIL in France, WGS in the German market, and prior to *Thema*, each country has had unique requirements. Using a single, globally-relevant scheme reduces costs and duplication of effort, increases metadata quality, streamlines the international exchange of metadata, and eliminates the need for complex and difficult to manage scheme-to-scheme mapping.

NielsenIQ BookData

30/10/25

The benefits of using *Thema* Qualifiers

What they are and where to find them and why to use them.

Jeremy Neale
Head of Research and International Development
Carlos Martí
Post Graduate Intern for Nielsen Book

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Global Standard Announcement
2012

Structure 1.0 design in place
2013

Being adopted in many countries but UK and US
2015

Today's Webinar
2025

THEMA

System

Sneak-Peak

Click here to roll the video →

Thema Subject Categories version 1.6



Previous versions of *Thema* are still available: [1.5](#) [1.4](#).

Browse the [Thema](#) subject categories hierarchy, or search for a specific term within the hierarchy.

Search

See the [search hints](#) below.

Notation	Category heading	?
A	The Arts...	*
C	Language and Linguistics...	*
D	Biography, Literature and Literary studies...	*
F	Fiction...	*
G	Reference, Information and Interdisciplinary subjects...	*
J	Society and Social Sciences...	*
K	Economics, Finance, Business and Management...	*

Thema Subject Categories: <https://ns.editeur.org/thema/en>

Thema Qualifiers

1 - Place and 2 - Language Qualifiers

1	Place qualifiers...
2	Language qualifiers...
3	Time period qualifiers...
4	Educational purpose qualifiers...
5	Interest qualifiers...
6	Style qualifiers...

1	Place qualifiers...
1A	World
1D	Europe...
1F	Asia...
1H	Africa...
1K	The Americas...
1M	Australasia, Oceania, Pacific Islands, Atlantic Islands...
1Q	Other geographical groupings: Oceans and seas, historical, political etc...
1Z	Space, planets and extraterrestrial locations...

1 – Travel Guides, Regional Cuisine, Sci Fi

2 - Linguistics, phrase books and sign

2	Language qualifiers...
2A	Indo-European languages...
2AH	Hellenic languages...
2AHA	Ancient (Classical) Greek
2AHB	Biblical Greek / Koine Greek
2AHM	Modern Greek
2AHT	Tsakonian

Thema Qualifiers:

3 - Time and 4 - Educational Purpose Qualifiers

1	Place qualifiers...
2	Language qualifiers...
3	Time period qualifiers...
4	Educational purpose qualifiers...
5	Interest qualifiers...
6	Style qualifiers...

3- History, Fantasy etc.

4 – Pre school, textbooks, key stage, Study & home learning

3	Time period qualifiers...
3A	Geological time...
3B	Prehistory...
3C	BCE period – Protohistory...
3K	CE period up to c 1500...
3M	c 1500 onwards to present day...
3P	c 2100 onwards...

4	Educational purpose qualifiers...
4C	For all educational levels...
4G	For international curricula and examinations...
4L	For language learning courses and examinations...
4T	For specific educational purposes...
4Z	For specific national or regional educational curricula...

Thema Qualifiers:

5 - Interest and 6 - Style Qualifiers

1	Place qualifiers...
2	Language qualifiers...
3	Time period qualifiers...
4	Educational purpose qualifiers...
5	Interest qualifiers...
6	Style qualifiers...

5 – Festive events Christmas & Ramadan

Graphic novels with explicit material

6 – Art, Antiques, Music

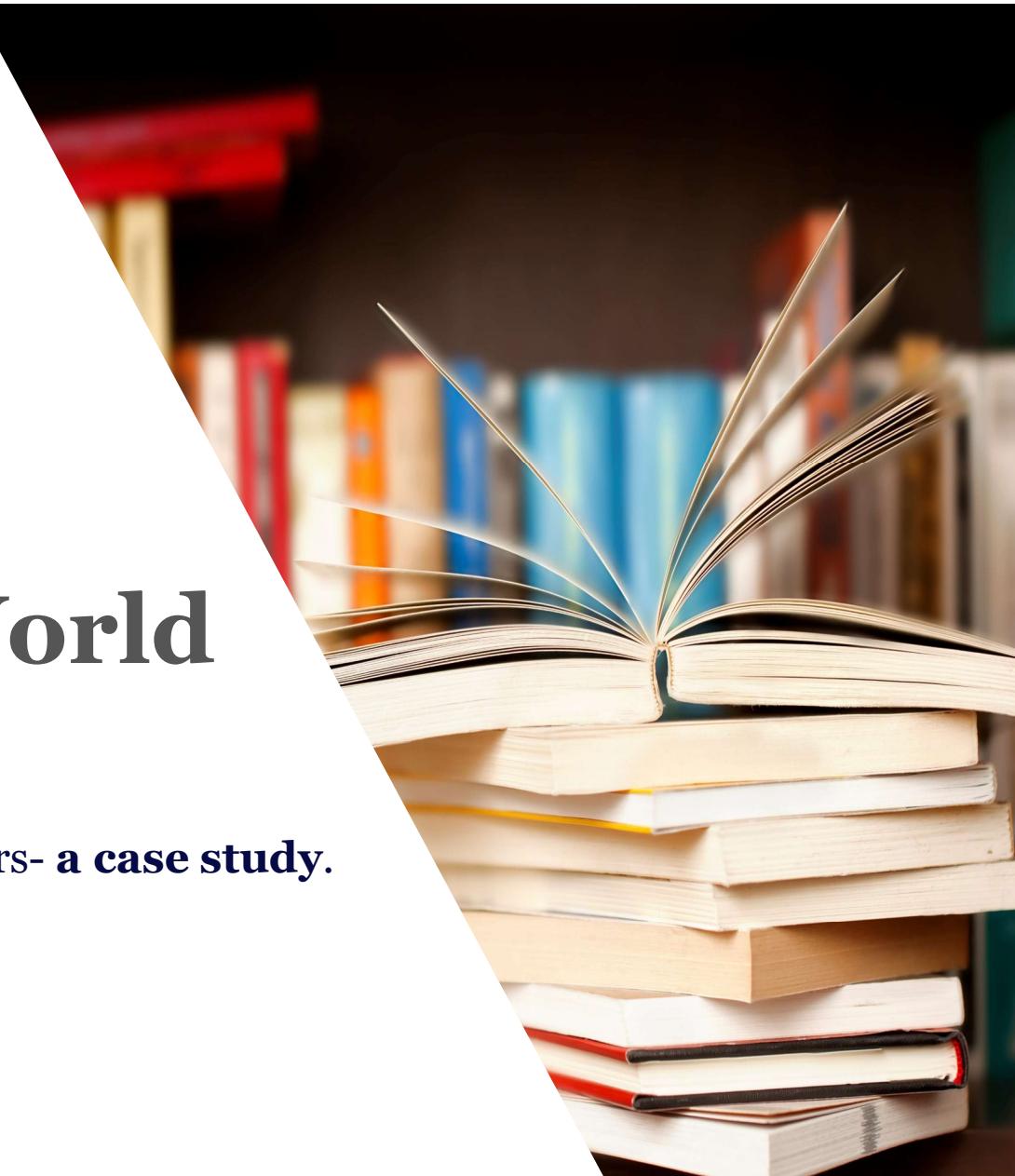
5	Interest qualifiers...
5A	Interest age / level (Content adapted or suitable for this age and above)...
5H	Holidays, events and seasonal interest...
5J	Subject matter intended exclusively for specific groups...
5L	Relating to the stages of life...
5P	Relating to specific groups and cultures or social and cultural interests...
5T	Literature of a country, territory or region (NOT used for setting)...
5X	Contains explicit or offensive material or content
5Y	Relating to special / particular aspects of the content...
6	Style qualifiers...
6A	Styles (A)...
6AA	Abstractism
6AB	Abstract Expressionism
6AC	Art Deco
6AD	Art Nouveau
6AF	Arts and Crafts
6AG	Academic style, Academism, Academicism
6AH	Aestheticism
6AJ	Altermodernism
6AK	Analytic Cubism
6AL	Arbeitsrat für Kunst
6AM	Art Informel
6AN	Arte Povera

Thema Subject Categories: <https://ns.editeur.org/thema/en>

PART III

A Trip around the World

with
Travel Guides coded to ***Thema 1 - Place*** qualifiers- a case study.



The Full Journey

How to get from 581k active ISBNs in October to the Top 5 Travel Guides in London
(using NielsenIQ Product Classes + Thema Qualifiers)



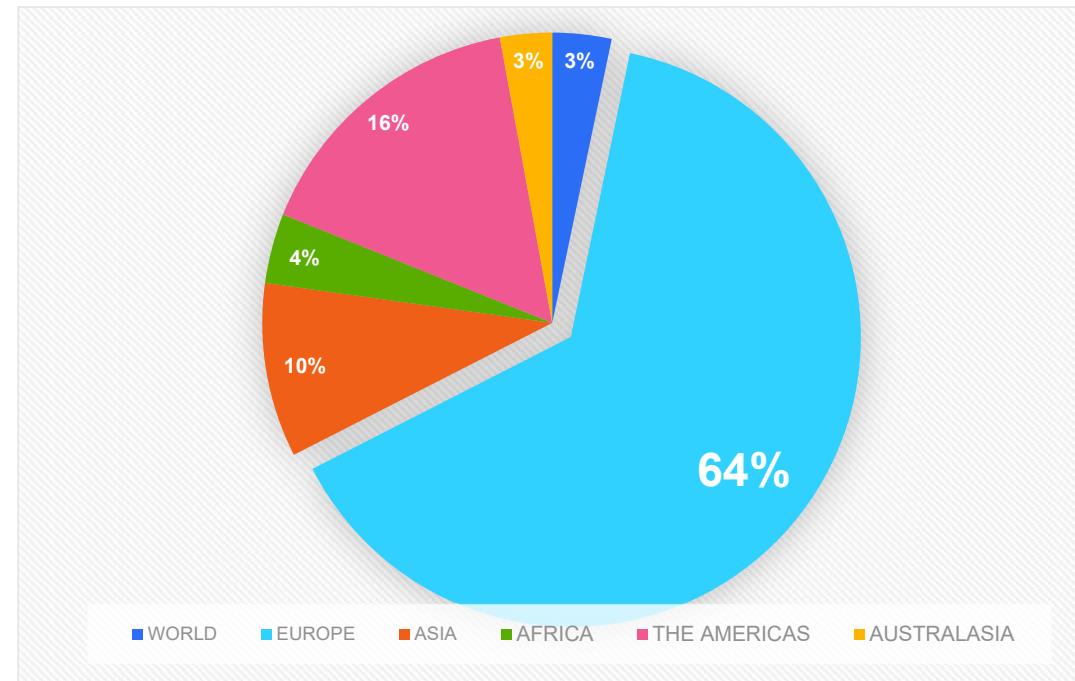
Thema Qualifiers: Travel Guides

14.3 Travel & Holiday Guides: TCM YTD 2025 1-40

ISBN Counts per Thema Place Qualifier 1. Almost 13k active ISBNs, of which 3k had no Qualifiers.

Title	THEMA Subject 1	THEMA Subject 2	THEMA Qualifier
2025 Philip's Easy to Read Multiscale Road Atlas Europe: (A4 Spiral bin	WTRD - Road atlases and maps	WTR - Travel maps and atlases	1D - Europe
Collins 2026 Big Road Atlas Europe: Clear and Detailed Map of Europe in	RGXB - World / regional atlases or maps	WTR - Travel maps and atlases	1D - Europe
Lonely Planet Epic Van Trips of Europe: Explore Europe's Most Beautiful	WTHY - Travel guides: road travel / road trips	WGCQ - Road and motor vehicles: Camper vans, Recreational vehicles	1D - Europe
Collins Rail Map of Europe: Plan Your Flight-Free European Adventure	WTHV - Travel guides: rail travel / railway journeys	WGF - Trains and railways: general interest	1D - Europe

Notation	Category heading	?
1	Place qualifiers...	*
1A	World	*
1D	Europe...	
1F	Asia...	
1H	Africa...	
1K	The Americas...	
1M	Australasia, Oceania, Pacific Islands, Atlantic Islands...	
1Q	Other geographical groupings: Oceans and seas, historical, political etc...	*
1Z	Space, planets and extraterrestrial locations...	*



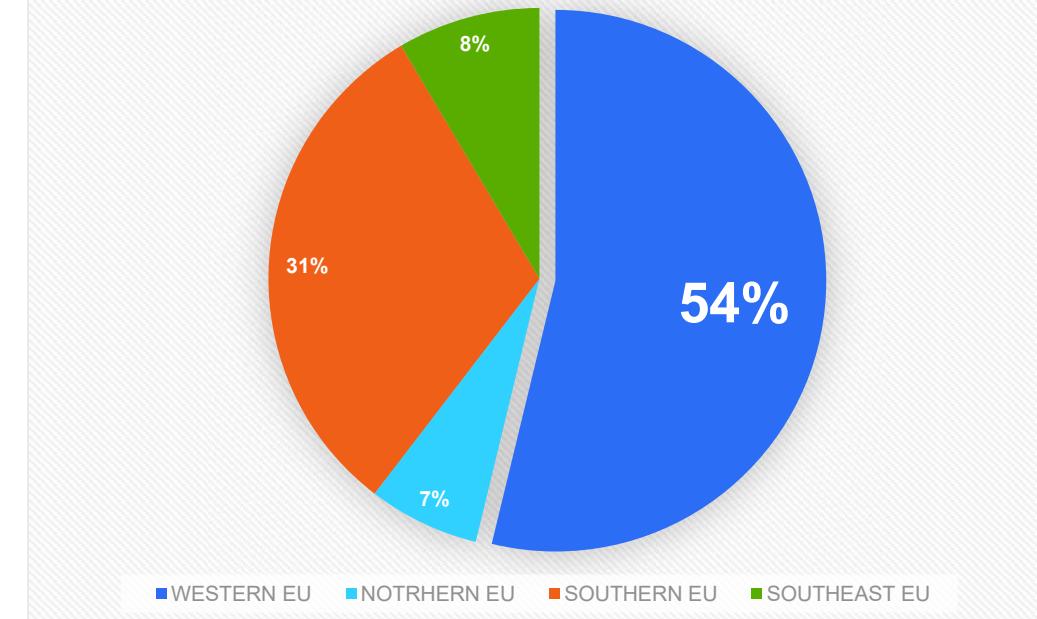
Thema Qualifiers: Travel Guides

Due to the Thema coding you can now drill down to see where specifically in Europe the guides are aimed at.

Title	THEMA Subject 1	THEMA Subject 2	THEMA Qualifier
DK Top 10 Copenhagen:Pocket Travel Guide	WT - Travel and holiday	WTHM - Travel guides: museums, history...	1DN - Northern Europe, Scandinavia
500 Hidden Secrets of Stockholm,The: The 500 Hidden Secrets	WT - Travel and holiday	WTH - Travel and holiday guides	1DN - Northern Europe, Scandinavia
Norway South 53T:Walking guide	WT - Travel and holiday	S - Sports and Active outdoor recreation	1DN - Northern Europe, Scandinavia
Going Native In Murcia 4th Edition:All You Need To Know About Visiting	WT - Travel and holiday	WTH - Travel and holiday guides	1DS - Southern Europe
Cabin Fever:Enchanting Cabins, Shacks, and Hideaways	WTHC - Travel guides: eco-tourism / sustainable tourism	AMK - Architecture: residential and...	1DN - Northern Europe, Scandinavia

Drilling into 1D - Europe

1	Place qualifiers...	*
1D	Europe...	
1DD	Western Europe...	
1DF	Central Europe...	
1DN	Northern Europe, Scandinavia...	
1DS	Southern Europe...	
1DT	Eastern Europe...	
1DX	Southeast Europe...	
1DZ	Europe: physical features...	



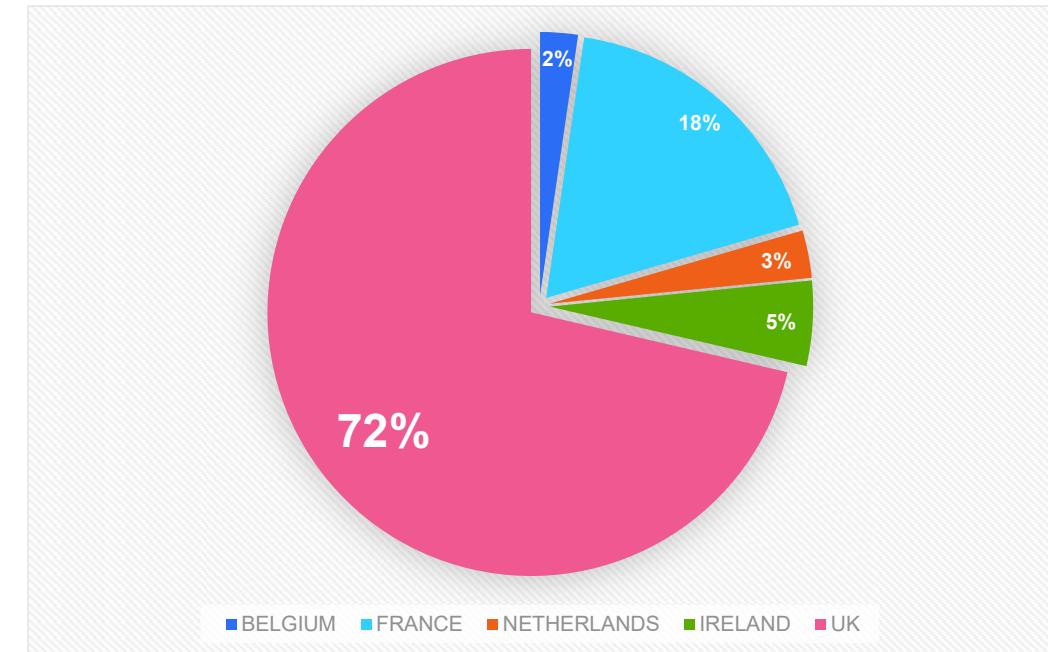
Thema Qualifiers: Travel Guides

Dividing Western Europe by Country

Title	THEMA Subject 1	THEMA Subject 2	THEMA Qualifier
DK Road Trips France:Travel Guide	WTH - Travel and holiday guides	WTRD - Road atlases and maps	1DDF - France
DK Loire Valley:Travel Guide	WT - Travel and holiday	WTHM - Travel guides: museums, art, culture	1DDF - France
Independent Guide to Disneyland Paris 2025,The	WTHT - Travel guides: theme parks and funfairs	WTH - Travel and holiday guides	1DDF - France
Wild Swimming France:1000 most beautiful rivers, lakes, waterfalls, ho	WTHA - Travel guides: adventure holidays	SPCS - Swimming	1DDF - France
Kids' Travel Guide - Paris:The Fun Way to Discover Paris-Especially fo	WTHF - Travel guides: holidays with children / family holidays	YNM - Children's / Teenage general	1DDF - France

Drilling into 1DD – Western Europe

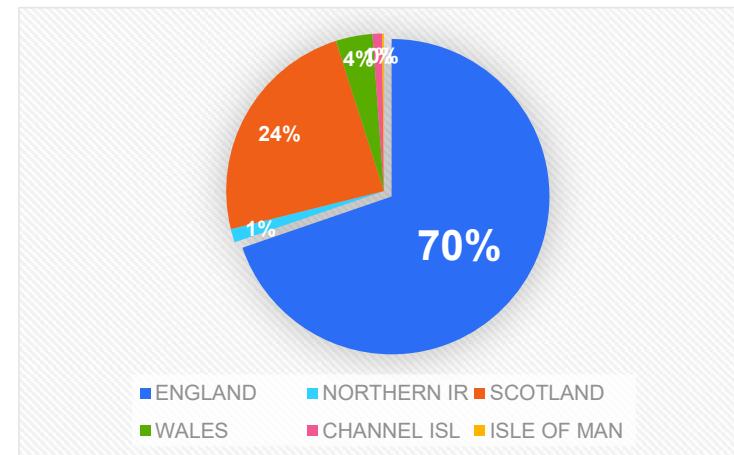
1D	Europe...
1DD	Western Europe...
1DDB	Belgium...
1DDF	France...
1DDL	Luxembourg
1DDM	Monaco
1DDN	Netherlands...
1DDR	Ireland...
1DDU	United Kingdom, Great Britain...



Thema Qualifiers: Travel Guides

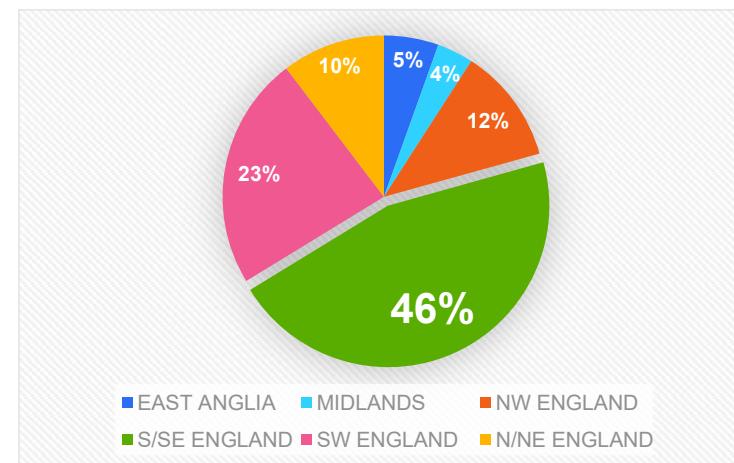
Drilling into 1DDU – United Kingdom, Great Britain

1DDU	United Kingdom, Great Britain...
1DDU-GB-E	England...
1DDU-GB-N	Northern Ireland...
1DDU-GB-S	Scotland...
1DDU-GB-W	Wales / Cymru...
1DDU-GB-X	Channel Islands...
1DDU-GB-Z	Isle of Man



Drilling into 1DDU-GB-E - England

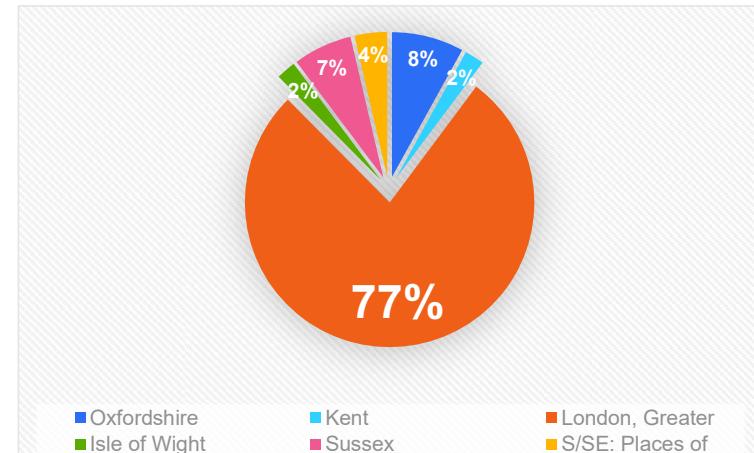
1DDU-GB-E	England...
1DDU-GB-EA	East Anglia...
1DDU-GB-EM	Midlands...
1DDU-GB-EN	North West England...
1DDU-GB-ES	South and South East England...
1DDU-GB-EW	South West England...
1DDU-GB-EY	North and North East England...



Thema Qualifiers: Travel Guides

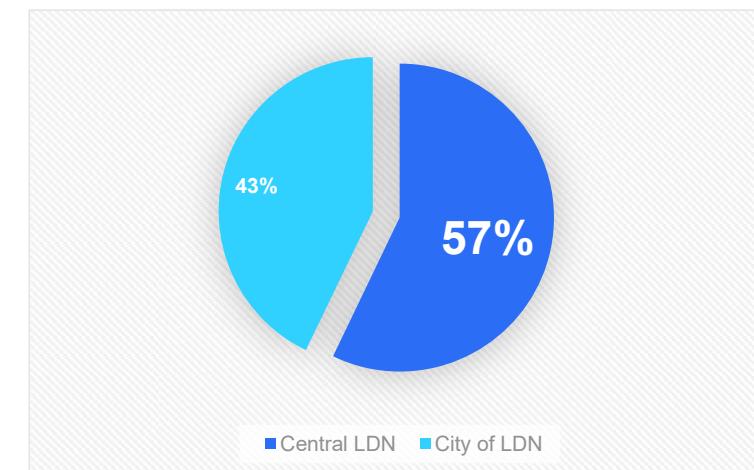
Drilling into 1DDU-GB-ES – South and South East England

1DDU-GB-ES	South and South East England...	*
1DDU-GB-ESB	Berkshire...	*
1DDU-GB-ESD	Bedfordshire	*
1DDU-GB-ESF	Oxfordshire...	*
1DDU-GB-ESH	Hampshire...	*
1DDU-GB-ESK	Kent...	*
1DDU-GB-ESL	London, Greater London...	*
1DDU-GB-ESR	Surrey	*
1DDU-GB-EST	Hertfordshire	*
1DDU-GB-ESU	Buckinghamshire...	*
1DDU-GB-ESW	Isle of Wight	*
1DDU-GB-ESX	Sussex...	*
1DDU-GB-ESZ	South and South East England: Places of interest...	*



Drilling into 1DDU-GB-ESL – London, Greater London

1DDU-GB-ESL	London, Greater London...	*
1DDU-GB-ESLC	Central London...	*
1DDU-GB-ESLF	City of London	*



Thema

Qualifiers:

Travel Guides

Product Class T14.3 - Travel Guides in London

THEMA QUALIFIERS CENTRAL LONDON/GREATER LONDON

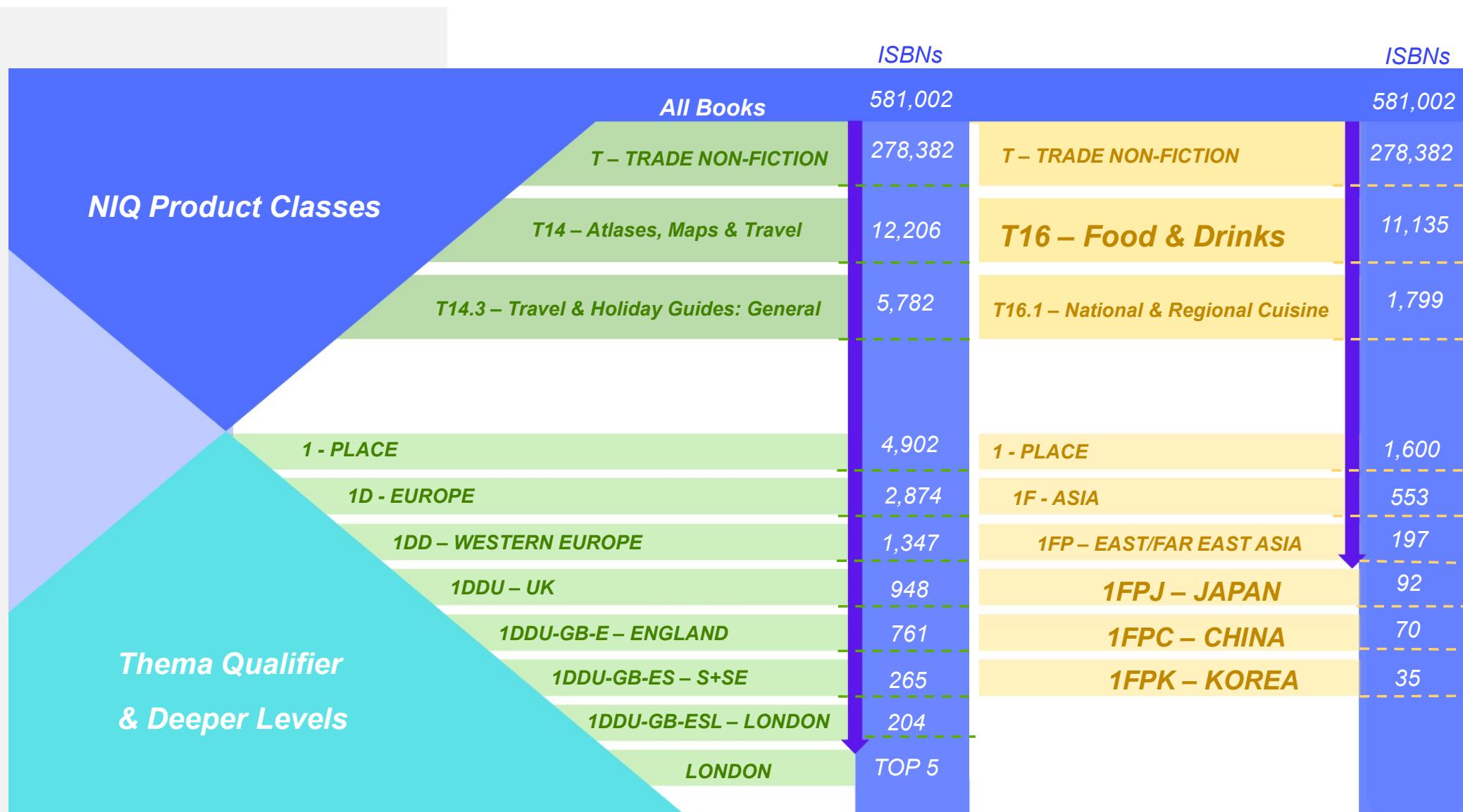


Bestsellers YTD 2025 in 1DDU-GB-ESL, 1DDU-GB-ESLC

ISBN	Title	Author	Imprint	Volume
9780711294981	London: The Hidden Corners For Curious Wanderers: The Sunday Times Bestseller	Chesher, Jack	Frances Lincoln	2,410
9780711277557	London: A Guide for Curious Wanderers: The Sunday Times Bestseller	Chesher, Jack	Frances Lincoln	1,927
9780714151052	Masterpieces of the British Museum		British Museum Press	923
9781837832798	Joolz Guides: Rather Splendid London Pub Walks: A Charming Trundle through London's N	McDonnell, Julian	Quadrille Publishing	816
9781914814667	Opinionated Guide to London Bookshops, An	Barber, Sonya & I	Hoxton Mini Press	598
9781787139602	Rather Splendid London Walks: Joolz Guides' Quirky and Informative Walks Through the Wo	McDonnell, Julian	Quadrille Publishing	507
9781914314803	Opinionated Guide to Swim London, An	Minihane, Joe	Hoxton Mini Press	473



(An opiniated Guide to) **London Bookshops** by **Hoxton Mini Press** is a better example of the size of the **MicroFiche Wallet** (containing 100k pages) than my earlier comparison using **Pearls, Girls & Monty Bodkin** by PG Wodehouse! And they have **London Pubs** in the 'opinionated' series!



PART IV

Sushi, Kimchi or Chow Mein

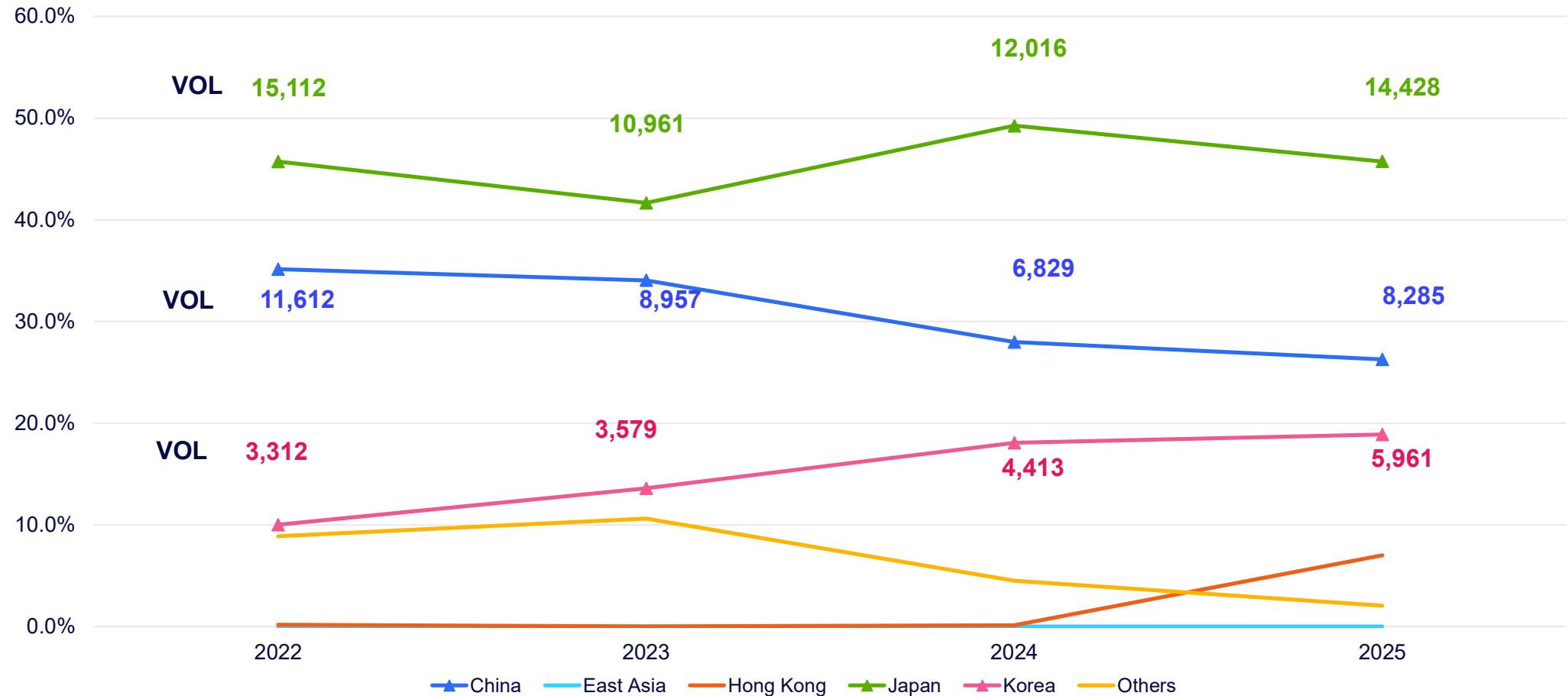
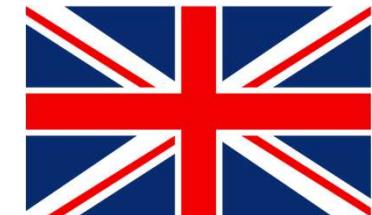
using *Thema* to measure the appetite for Far Eastern Recipe Books.



Thema Qualifiers: Regional Cuisine

T16.1 National & Regional Cuisine

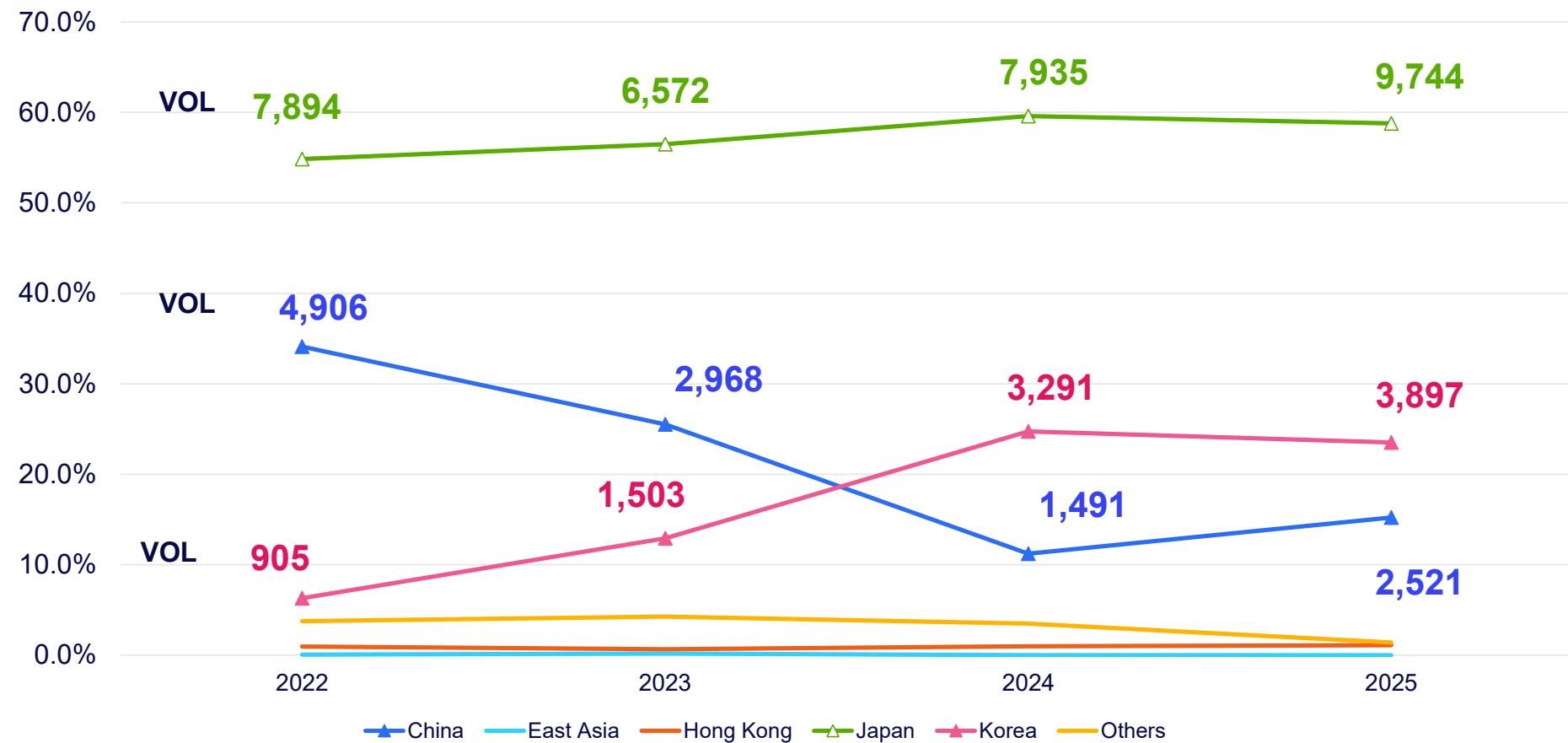
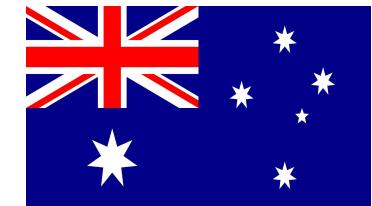
UK year to year of Asian Regional cuisine books



Thema Qualifiers: Regional Cuisine

T16.1 National & Regional Cuisine

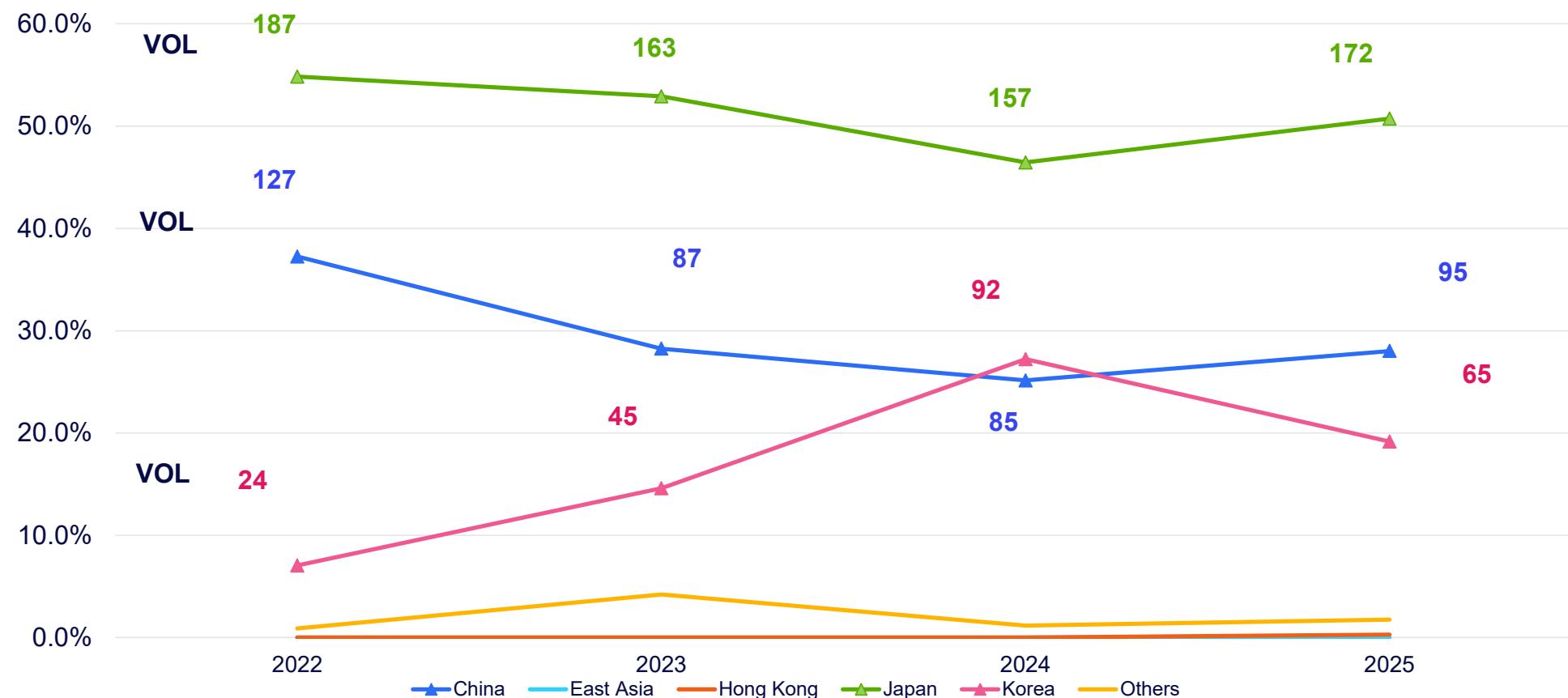
Australia year to year of Asian Regional cuisine books



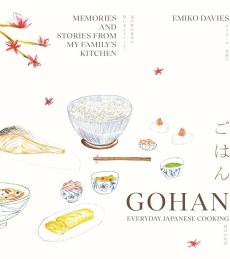
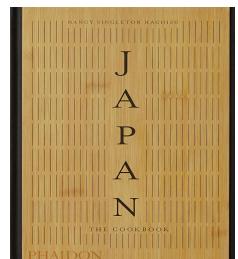
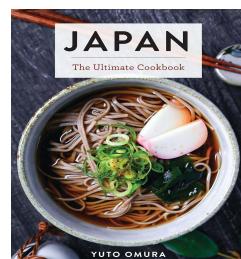
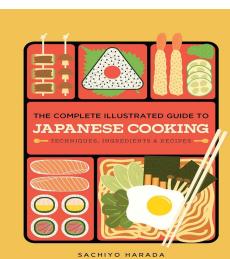
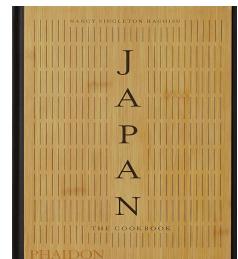
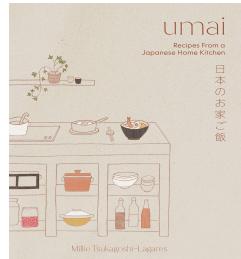
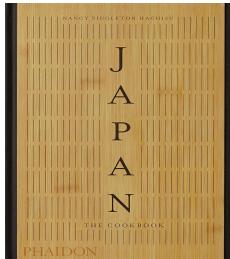
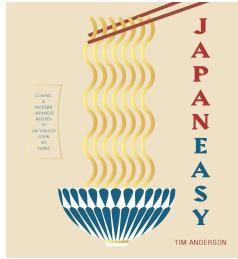
Thema Qualifiers: Regional Cuisine

T16.1 National & Regional Cuisine

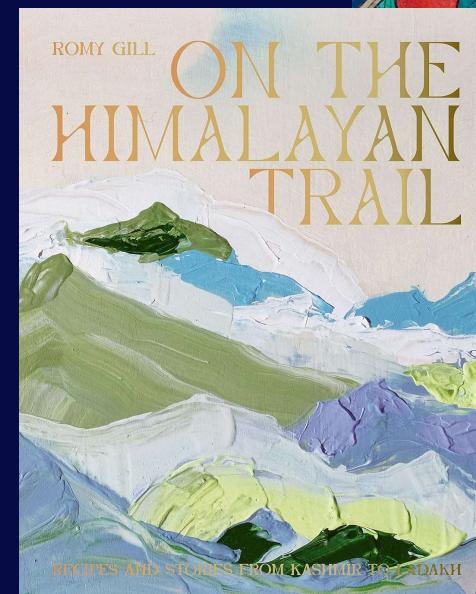
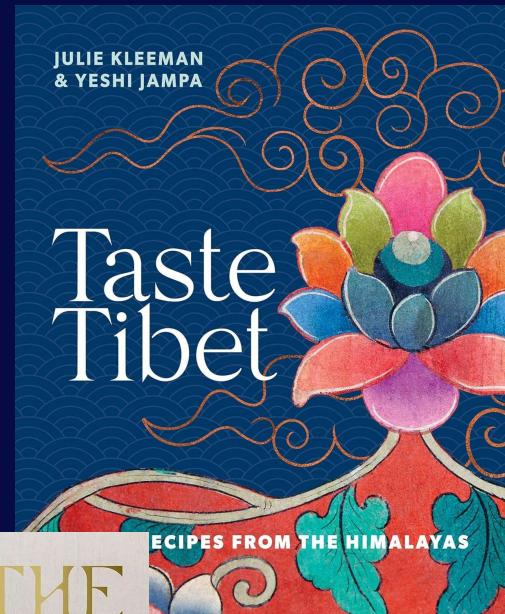
South Africa year to year of Asian Regional cuisine books



Best selling Japanese Cookbooks



2022 was a great year for Himalayan cookbooks. They haven't been back in the top 10's since then



PART V

There's a time and place for everything

Regional History titles with **MULTIPLE *Thema* Qualifiers.**



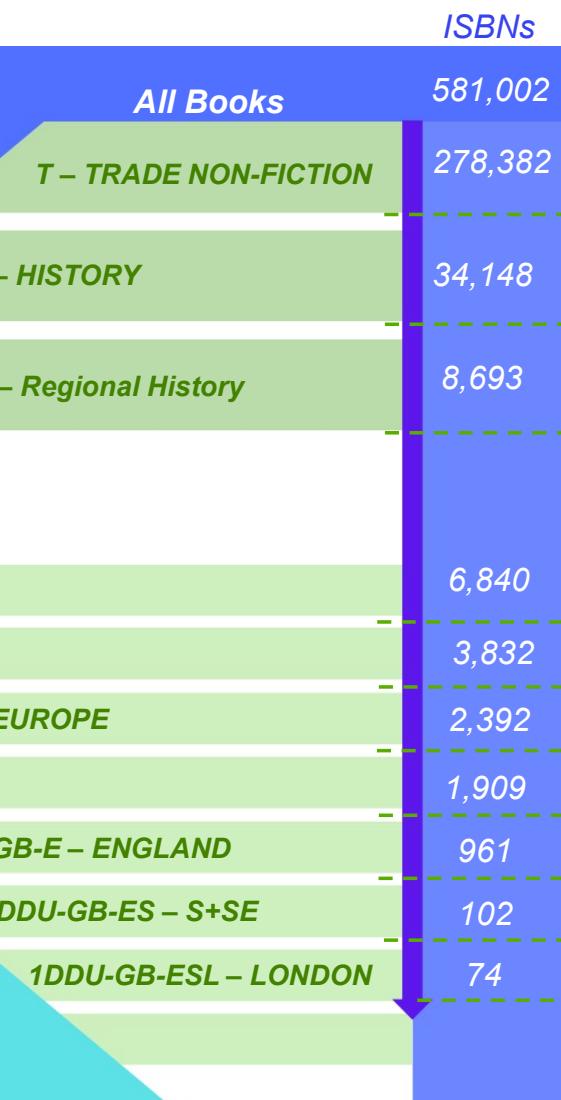
The Full Journey

Regional History

NIQ BookData

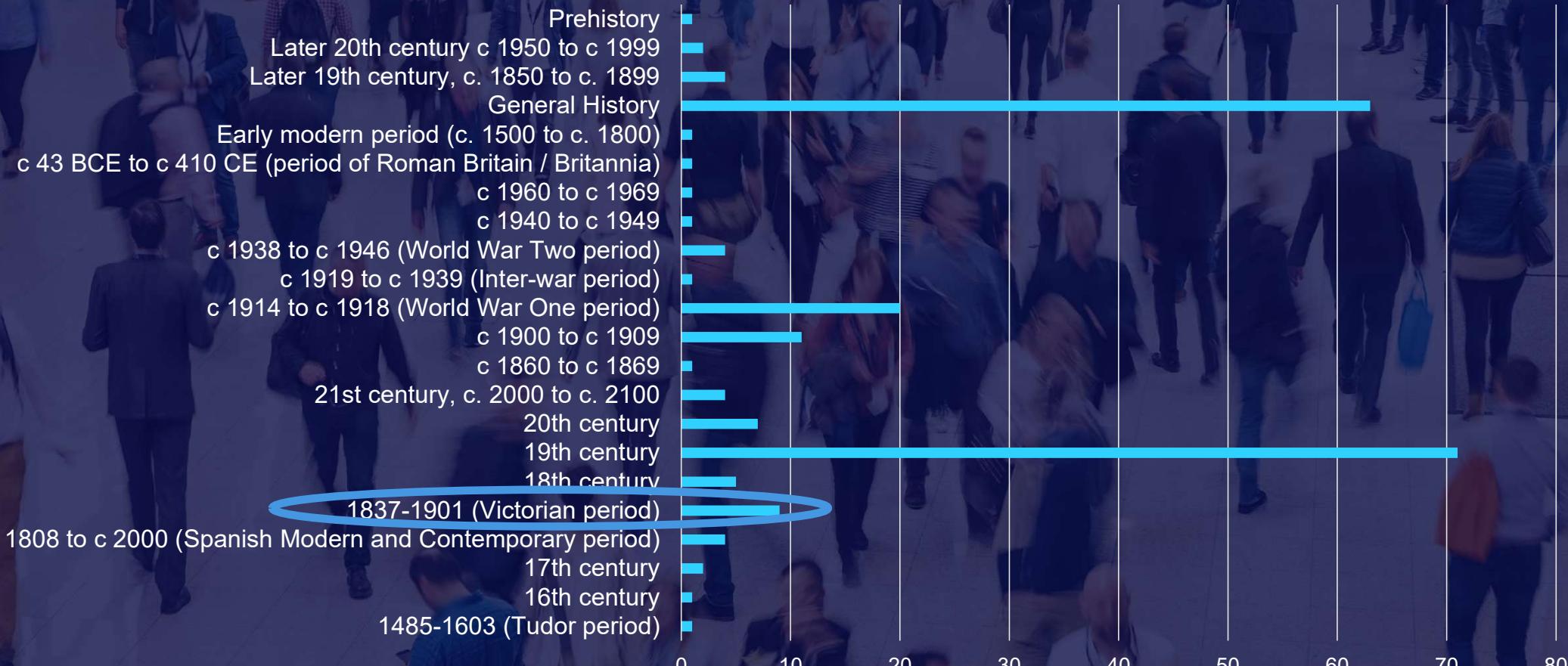
NIQ Product Classes

*Thema Qualifier
& Deeper Levels*



T5.2 - Regional History – PLACE - LONDON – 1DDU-GB-ESL TIME – VICTORIAN PERIOD – 3MNQ-GB-V

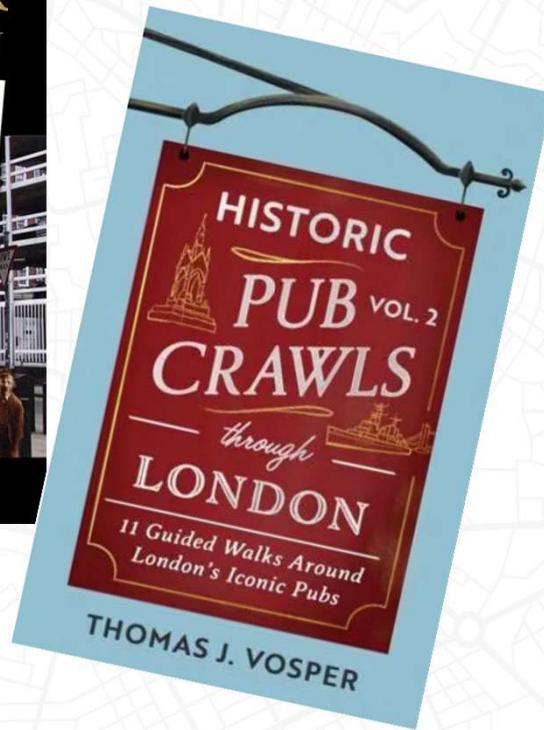
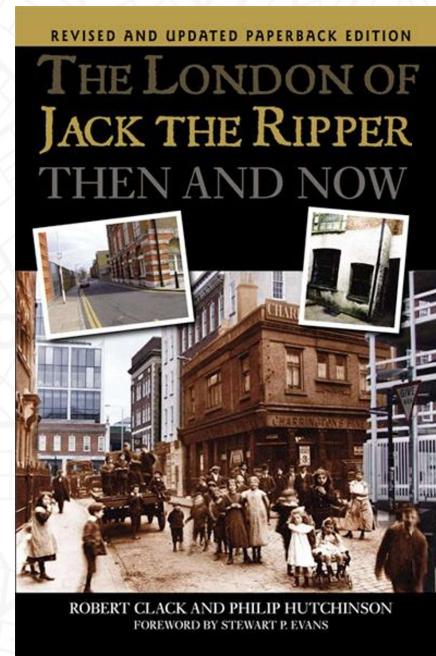
Count of ISBN per Thema **TIME** Qualifier
in London



T5.2 - Regional History – 1 - Place Qualifier London 3 - Time Qualifier Victorian



CHARLES DICKENS at his writing desk



PART VI

If you have any trips coming up...

examples with our readers in mind, especially if they are travelling to

The Galapagos or Gibraltar.

Reverse engineering – an alternative case study



Starting a search from *Thema*



Looking at *Galapagos...*

ISBN	Title	Product Class
9780008156732	Wildlife of the Galapagos: Traveller's Guide	T8.2 Natural History: Animal & Wildlife
9780008729745	Eden Undone: A True Story of Sex, Murder and Utopia at the Dawn of the Modern Age	T18.3 True Stories
9780226100195	Galapagos: A Traveler's Introduction	T8.2 Natural History: Animal & Wildlife
9780451533876	Where Are the Galapagos Islands?: Where Is?	Y4.0 Children's General Non-Fiction
978069170428	Wildlife of the Galápagos: Second Edition: Princeton Pocket Guide	T8.2 Natural History: Animal & Wildlife
978069217246	Galápagos: A Natural History Second Edition	T8.1 Natural History: General
978069233635	Pocket Guide to Birds of Galápagos, A	T8.2 Natural History: Animal & Wildlife
978095371777	Galapagos Islands Explorer: Visitor's Map of the Galapagos Islands	T14.2 General Folded Maps & Walking Guides
9781471280664	Shipped: If you're looking for a witty, escapist, enemies-to-lovers	F2.5 Romance & Sagas
9781471993373	Birds of Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands: Helm Wildlife Guide	T8.2 Natural History: Animal & Wildlife
9781566955478	Ecuador And Galapagos Islands: 1:750000: Travel Maps International	T14.2 General Folded Maps & Walking Guides
978160494954	Moon Galápagos Islands (Fourth Edition): Wildlife, Snorkeling & Diving	T14.3 Travel & Holiday Guides: General
9781724128423	Greater Than a Tourist- Amazon Rainforest Brazil: 50 Travel Tips from a Local	T14.3 Travel & Holiday Guides: General
978178250549	Galapagos, The	T8.1 Natural History: General
9781784777470	Galapagos Wildlife	T14.3 Travel & Holiday Guides: General
9781784778859	Galapagos Crusoes: A year alone with the birds	T8.5 Travel Writing

Notation	Category heading
1KLZTG	Galapagos Islands

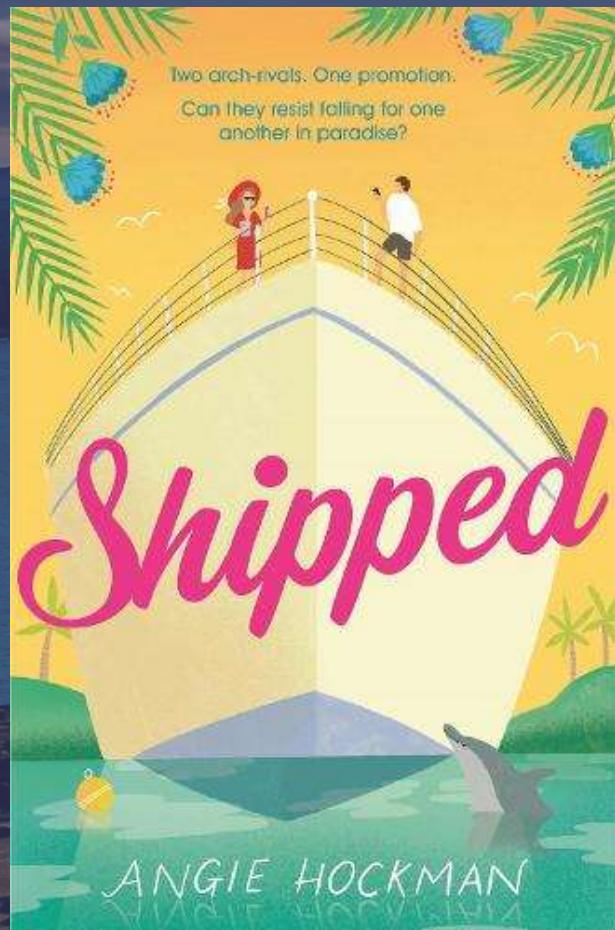
Notation	Category heading
1DSG	Gibraltar

...and *Gibraltar*

ISBN	Title	Author	Product Class
9780241396360	A Delicate Truth: The Penguin John le Carré Hardback Collection	le Carré, John	F1.1 General & Literary Fiction
9781801108522	Dead Ground: Spoils of War	Hurley, Graham	F2.7 War Fiction
9781801108546	Dead Ground: Spoils of War	Hurley, Graham	F2.7 War Fiction
9781913793005	Killing Rock: A Sullivan and Broderick Murder Mystery	Daws, Robert	F2.1 Crime, Thriller & Adventure

Galapagos

Shipped & Darwin's Dragons



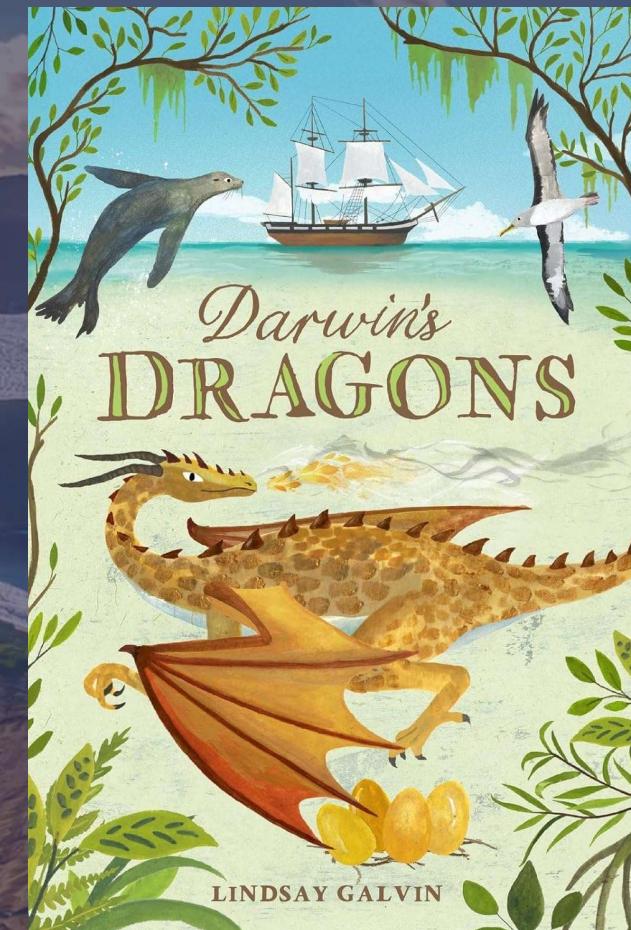
**Two arch-rivals.
One promotion.
Can they resist falling for one another in paradise?**

**The task: draft a proposal on how to boost bookings in the Galápagos.
The catch? They have to go on a company cruise . . . together.**

Shipwrecked on a Galapagos island, he makes a discovery that could change the world - and make his fortune. But should he share his find, or will it lead to the extinction of a legendary species?

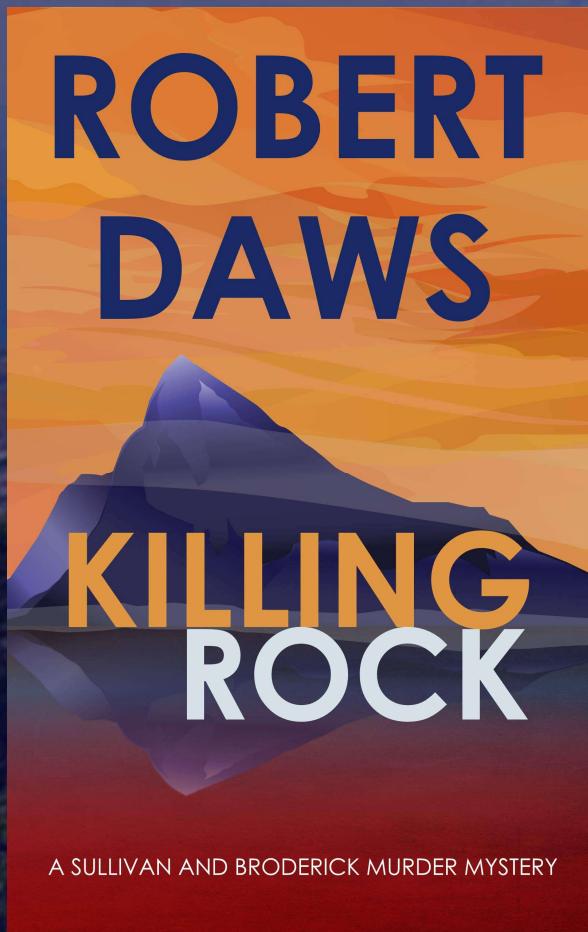
There's one person who could help, but he's busy writing a book ...

- Based on a true story and Charles Darwin's real journal!



Gibraltar

Killing Rock and A Delicate Truth



Plot [edit]

In 2008, Toby Bell, the [Private Secretary](#) to junior Foreign Office minister Fergus Quinn, becomes suspicious of his superior's behavior following a meeting with businessman Jay Crispin—founder of the [private security](#) firm Ethical Outcomes—and the company's financier, Miss Maisie, an independently wealthy, [Islamophobic](#) American [evangelical](#). Digging into Quinn's history, Bell learns that Quinn had previously been involved in a minor scandal related to Ethical Outcomes at his previous posting. Under the guidance of his mentor, Giles Oakley, Bell secretly records a conversation between Quinn, Crispin, and an intelligence liaison code named "Paul" about a planned [covert operation](#) codenamed *Wildlife*. When Bell attempts to turn the recording over to Oakley, who has been researching Ethical Outcomes himself, he tells him to forget everything he has learned and drop the matter.

Without Bell's knowledge, *Wildlife* takes place in [Gibraltar](#), where a company of British Special Forces under the command of a man named Jeb are tasked with helping an Ethical Outcomes team of American [mercenaries](#) with extracting a high-ranking [jihadist](#) arms dealer allegedly squatting in an abandoned vacation home. As Paul—acting as a neutral liaison between English and American intelligence—observes from a [blind](#), a strike team lays siege to the house. He is assured that the operation is a complete success and that the jihadist has been taken alive for questioning.

THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER

JOHN
le CARRÉ
A
DELICATE
TRUTH

'Brilliant' *Observer*
'Often imitated but never rivalled' *Financial Times*

'Perfectly paced' *Sunday Times*



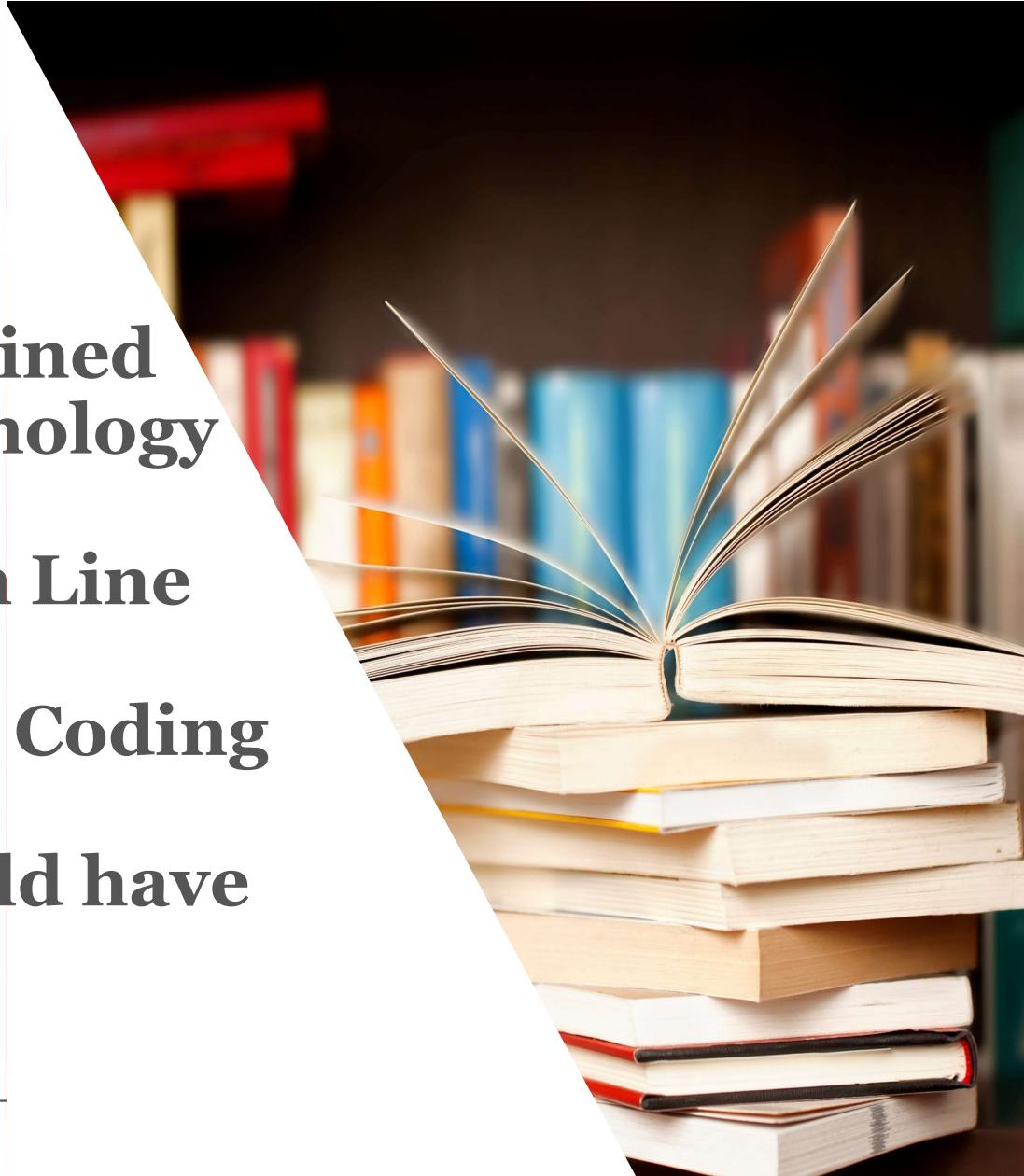
Final Summary

**The Book Trade have remained
at the Cutting Edge of technology**

Paper, Fiche, CD Rom – On Line

ISBN - Prod Class - *Thema* Coding

**2 Hrs more to present would have
worked**



How Better Metadata Drives Book Discovery – The Power of Thema

December 2025

Kieron Smith

Waterstones BLACKWELL'S

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FOYLES

Hatchard

HODGES FIGG'S
BOOKSELLERS SINCE 1768

Agenda

- What are we working on?
- How do these data look now?
- What works best?
- Why this will become even more important

Your power to merchandise



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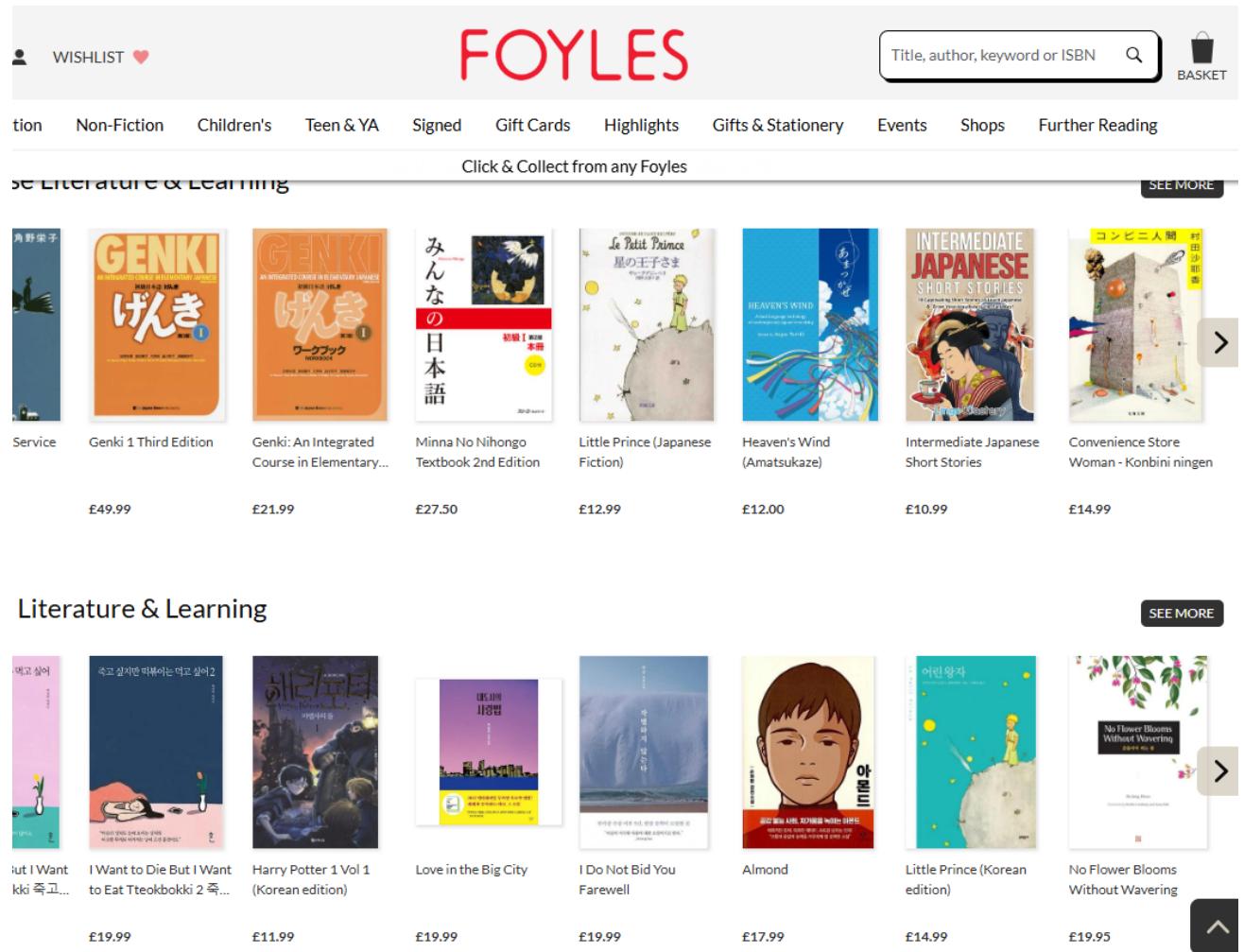
FOYLES

Hatchard's

HODGES FIGGIS
BOOKSELLERS SINCE 1768

Brands & Customers

- The more data we have access to, the greater we can tailor the experience across brands
- We're working on new browse hierarchies, hand in hand with the planned use of qualifiers within search filtering
- Examples include different use of category entry points
- Getting the balance right – browsing a bookshop that makes sense
- Getting the balance between offering granularity and maintaining authority



The screenshot shows the Foyles website with a search bar and navigation menu. The main content area displays a grid of book covers under the heading 'LITERATURE & LEARNING'. Each book entry includes the title, author, and price. A 'SEE MORE' button is visible at the bottom right of the grid.

Book Title	Author	Price
Service	Genki 1 Third Edition	£49.99
Genki: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese	Minna No Nihongo Textbook 2nd Edition	£21.99
Minna No Nihongo	Little Prince (Japanese Fiction)	£27.50
Little Prince (Japanese Fiction)	Heaven's Wind (Amatsukaze)	£12.99
Heaven's Wind (Amatsukaze)	Intermediate Japanese Short Stories	£12.00
Intermediate Japanese Short Stories	Convenience Store Woman - Konbini ningen	£10.99
Convenience Store Woman - Konbini ningen		£14.99

Literature & Learning

Book Title	Author	Price
But I Want to Eat Tteokbokki 2	I Want to Die But I Want to Eat Tteokbokki 2	£19.99
Harry Potter 1 Vol 1 (Korean edition)	Love in the Big City	£11.99
	I Do Not Bid You Farewell	£19.99
	Almond	£17.99
	Little Prince (Korean edition)	£14.99
	No Flower Blooms Without Wavering	£19.95

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Data scorecard

- Expanding the top-level category mapping significantly – (here taking inspiration from the Broad Street shop directory for example).
- Focusing on Thema today – but always worth a reminder that dimension data, jackets, country of manufacture, format etc are all equally important.

>Login Register Help

UK delivery included · Free click & collect to shops

Select currency £ GBP

BLACKWELL'S All books Find a book Advanced search

Basket £16.40

Bestsellers Books Signed Trending Rare Gifts Games Businesses Our Shops Events

General Fiction	Non-Fiction	Children's	
All Fiction	Art, Fashion & Photography	Gender Studies	Physics
Anthologies	Astronomy & Space	History	Politics
Classic Fiction	Biography & True Stories	Hobbies, Quizzes & Games	Popular Science
Crime & Thrillers	Biology & Life Sciences	Home & Garden	Psychology
Drama & Theatre Studies	Business & Finance	Language & Linguistics	Race
Fantasy	Chemistry	Law	Religion, Spirituality & Beliefs
Graphic Novels & Manga	Computing	Literature & Literary Studies	Self-Help & Mind, Body, Spirit
Historical Fiction	Dictionaries & Reference	Mathematics	Hobbies & Interests
Horror	Disability Studies	Medicine and Nursing	Reference
Modern & Contemporary	Earth Sciences, Geography & Environment	Music	Teenage and Young Adult
Myths & Legends	Economics	Parenting, Pregnancy and Childcare	Technology & Engineering
Poetry	Education	Pets	Transport
Romance	Film, TV, and Theatre	Philosophy	Travel & Maps
Science Fiction	Food & Drink		True Crime
Translated Fiction			

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Top Pages

Christmas
All Non-Fiction
New Books
Coming Soon
Paperbacks of the Year
Special Editions
Gift Books
Women's Prize for Non-Fiction
Baillie Gifford Prize

Art & Entertainment

Art, Fashion & Photography
Entertainment
Film & TV
Humour
Music
Vinyl

Biography & True Stories

Art & Entertainment Biographies
Historical & Political Biographies
Literary Biographies
Sports Biographies
True Crime

History & Politics

History
Politics

Home & Lifestyle

Food & Drink
Health & Lifestyle
Home & Garden
Parenting

Nature

Environment
Nature Writing
Outdoor Pursuits
Pets

Smart Thinking

Astronomy & Space
Business, Finance & Law
Computing & Internet
Language & Reference
Personal Development
Popular Science
Science, Technology & Medicine

Spirituality & Beliefs

Faith & Religion
Mindfulness
Philosophy

Sport & Hobbies

Hobbies, Quizzes & Games
Sport
Transport

Travel & Maps

British Travel
Maps & Atlases
Outdoor Pursuits
Travel & Holiday Guides
Travel Writing

Data scorecard

- We won't show a filter if it has fewer than 200 titles
- History, Travel and Children's have the most use of qualifiers – we've had to clean up and not use age qualifiers for adult categories
- Interest qualifiers are very lumpy some with significant use – others none or very little. This must be logical to book browsers.

c 1938 to c 1946 (World War Two period) - 708 Copies

c 500 to c 1000 CE - 271 Copies

c 1000 CE to c 1500 - 475 Copies

20th century, c 1900 to c 1999 - 1418 Copies

c 1811 to c 1820 (Regency period) - 445 Copies

[Refine by Interest:](#)

Relating to lesbians - 5278 Copies

Holidays, events and seasonal interest - 6326 Copies

Christmas - 543 Copies

Price:

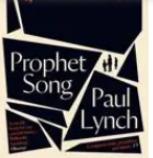
£0 £500

Publication year:

From: YYYY: 1785

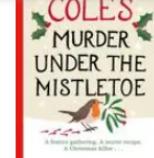
To: YYYY: 1812

[hu-Paul-Lynch/9780861545896](#)



Prophet Song
Paul Lynch
Paperback
Published 02 May 2024
£9.99

[Add to basket](#)



Murder Under the Mistletoe
Richard Coles
Hardback
Published 24 Oct 2024
£12.99

[Add to basket](#)



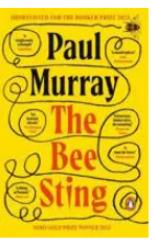
The Night Before Christmas at D...
Brian Baumgartner (a...
Hardback
Published 21 Nov 2024
Save £5.00
RRP £18.99 £13.99

[Add to basket](#)



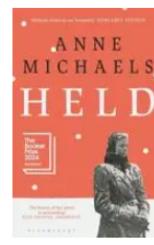
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz
L. Frank Baum (autho...
Hardback
Published 14 Oct 2021
Save £5.00
RRP £25.00 £20.00

[Add to basket](#)



The Bee Sting
Paul Murray
Paperback
Published 02 May 2024
£9.99

[Add to basket](#)



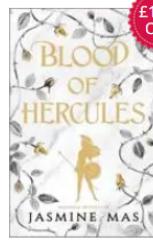
Held
Anne Michaels
Paperback
Published 26 Sep 2024
£9.99

[Add to basket](#)



Small Things Like These
Claire Keegan
Hardback
Published 10 Oct 2024
£12.99

[Add to basket](#)



Blood of Hercules
Jasmine Mas
Paperback
Published 26 Nov 2024
Save £1.39
RRP £15.79 £14.40

[Add to basket](#)

Qualifiers



[Image by freepik](#)

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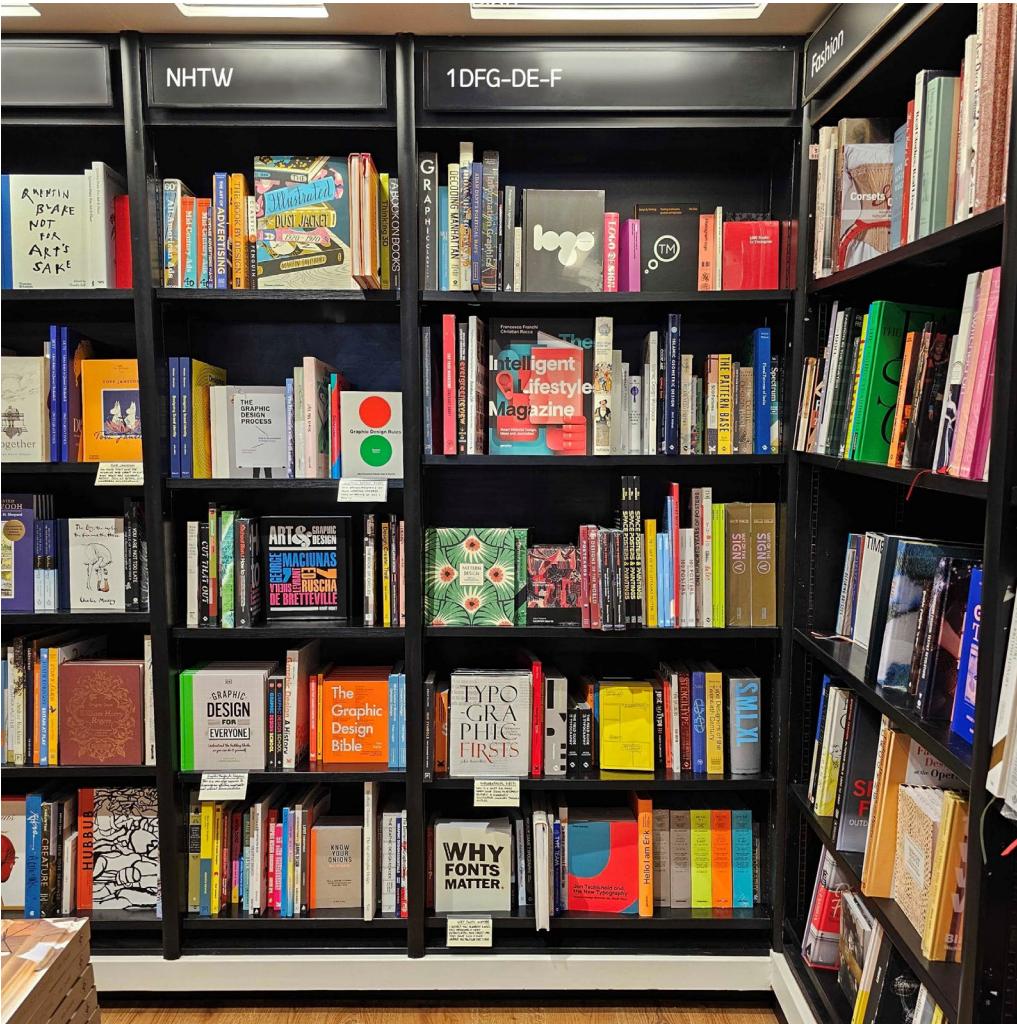
FOYLES

Hatchard[®]

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BOOKSELLERS SINCE 1768

The underused power of interest qualifiers (5*)

- The cultural context has changed, we're now in a world where purely hierarchical product classifications are not sufficient to meet the demands of the audience – themes, niches and identities are core to how we experience content and how we engage in discovery.



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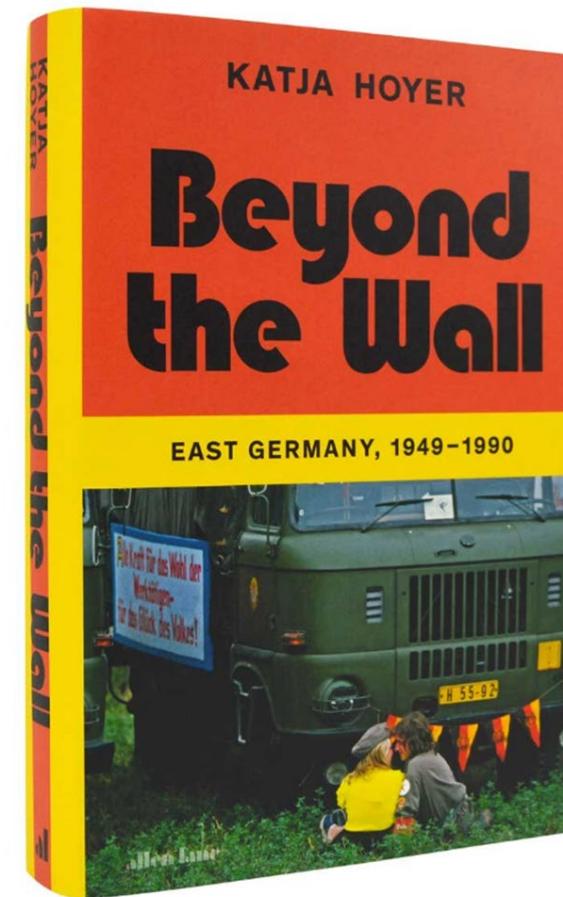
FOYLES

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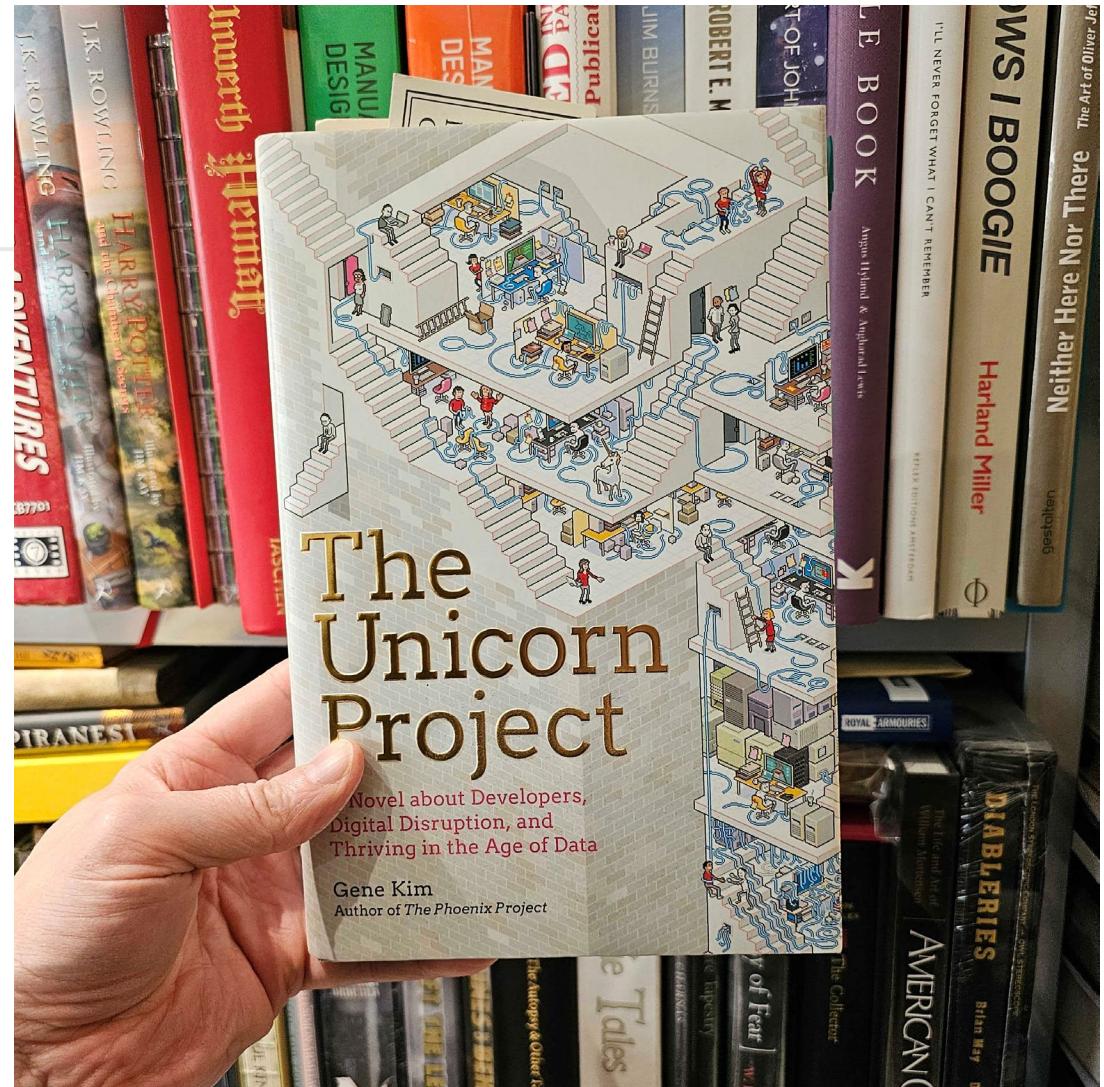
Example of progress

- "thema_qual": "East Germany, DDR|Later 20th century c 1950 to c 1999",
- "thema_qual_code": "1QBDL|3MPQ",
- "thema_subject": "European history|The Cold War|Marxism & Communism",
- "thema_subject_code": "NHD|NHTW|JPFC",



Problems & exceptions

- FHD: Espionage and spy thriller
NHTW: Cold wars and proxy conflicts
- FF: Crime and / or mystery fiction
- KJM: Management and management techniques
KJMB: Management: leadership and motivation
KNTX: Information technology industries
- FB: Fiction: literary and general non-genre





Victoria Scott
@Toryscott

...

@penny_author and I think it's high time @amazonbooks created a #disabilityfiction category for adult fiction. Here's our open letter explaining why. @philipdsjones @Soc_of_Authors @AmazonUK #WritingCommunity #AuthorsOfTwitter

To whom it may concern,
We are two British authors whose novels include characters with disabilities, and we're writing to request that Amazon Books introduce a new disability fiction category for adults to help readers find novels like ours.
It's estimated that around ten per cent of the world's population are disabled, and yet this is a group which is severely under-represented in fiction. We believe that introducing a chart for disability fiction within Amazon books could bring positive change in this area, and certainly increase the visibility of novels which feature the joys and challenges of living with a disability.
The absence of a disability chart for adult fiction seems to us to be a serious omission, given that you have several categories for child and YA disability fiction, and hundreds of other categories which focus on many niche subjects.
Disability is neither niche nor rare, and we believe that books which feature it positively help raise awareness and bring conversations about it into the mainstream, which can only be a good thing.
We are copying In The Bookseller magazine and The Society of Authors into this email.
With very best wishes,

Victoria Scott (author of *Patience*) and Penny Batchelor (author of *My Perfect Sister* and *Her New Best Friend*.)

Amazon.co.uk and 2 others

1:37 PM · Jan 12, 2022

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Relating to people with Down syndrome

[Home](#) > [Books](#) > [Interest qualifiers](#) > [Relating to specific groups and cultures or social and cultural interests](#) > [Relating to people with visible or hidden disabilities, impairments or conditions](#) > [Relating to people with Down syndrome](#)

[Sort by:](#)[Hide filters](#)**Price** £0 £500**Publication year**From: To: **Format** Paperback Hardback Audio**George and the Mini Dragon**

George Webster (auth...)

Paperback
Published 13 Feb 2025

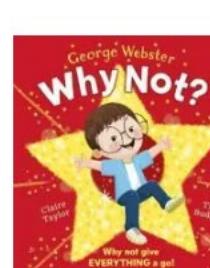
£6.99

**A Skeleton in the Closet**

Claire Hatcher-Smith...

Paperback
Published 27 Feb 2025

£7.99

**Why Not?**

George Webster (auth...)

Board Book
Published 13 Feb 2025

£7.99

**Marcel With a Splash**

Julia Sørensen (auth...)

Hardback
Published 20 Mar 2025

£14.99

What's your lens?

AK: Design, Industrial and commercial arts, illustration

TNK: Building construction and materials

UGB: Web graphics and design

UYZG: User interface design and usability

5PM anyone?



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How many?

Find the right balance for the number of subject codes you include for each title.

One subject code may be appropriate for some titles. Try to aim for a maximum of four subject codes per title and use excess choice of codes to improve descriptive texts or keywords.

Aim to add qualifiers whenever appropriate. Think about the target audience.



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This will become (even more) important

Move from browsers to agents.

Important role of facets in answering questions, moving from literal search keywords to semantic+natural language / conversational conversion.

Fight AI slop with detail.



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HODGES *figgis*
BOOKSELLERS SINCE 1768

Much more to come... thank you

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FOYLES

Hatchard

HODGES FIGGIS
BOOKSELLERS SINCE 1768



Q & A Session

(Please put any questions you may have
in the “Questions” box)



BIC Thema Webinars on YouTube

BIC's YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/@bookindustrycommunication7842

has a dedicated **Thema Playlist** featuring sessions on the following:

Adult Fiction

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Children, Teenage and Educational Material

Popular Non-Fiction

Academic Titles

Comics and Manga

and more...



Thank you for attending today

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