



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Publishing and Writing

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Publishing and Writing** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **August 2024**. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Publishing and Writing market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ The UK is the largest exporter of books in the world, owing to the global ubiquity of the English language, the reputation of the UK industry and the strength of local copyright law. Economic headwinds have damaged the UK book publishing industry with **revenue anticipated to stall over the five years through 2024-25, standing at £6.9 billion**. (IBISWorld, *Book Publishing in the UK*, June 2024).
- ◆ Studies like those from the National Association of Writers in Education and Stora Enso have suggested that consumers are tired of digital media texts and may prefer to consume printed material solely or in conjunction with e-books. **Following the anomaly of 2020-21, e-books sales have since returned to a state of decline, with revenue forecast to drop by 2.2% in 2024-25**. (IBISWorld, *E-Book Publishing in the UK*, July 2023).
- ◆ When purchasing books around **56% of consumers consider price**. Economic pressure could see more turning to second-hand books market, a growing industry with **48% of book buyers planning to purchase more second-hand books** in the coming year. Avid readers who read multiple books a month may not always be able to afford fresh copies and second-hand offers a budget-friendly choice. (Mintel, *Books and E-Books*, 2022).
- ◆ Operating conditions in the Regional Newspaper Publishing industry have been difficult over the past five years, as the rise of digital media has made it easy for consumers to access a range of news articles and reports for free. **Industry revenue is expected to slump at a compound annual rate of 6.1% over the five years through 2023-24 to £1.6 billion**. (IBISWorld, *Regional Newspaper Publishing in the UK*, April 2024).
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is [Publishing Scotland](#). Other industry bodies include the [Independent Publishers Guild](#), [Writers & Artists](#), [Professional Publishers Association](#), [Society of Young Publishers](#), [News Media Association](#) and [Creative Scotland](#).



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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **IBISWorld – Children’s Book Publishing in the UK (Dec 2023)**. Parents still value children's books, despite the rise in digital alternatives, which has enabled the industry to succeed amid strong external competition. Furthermore, the rise of blockbuster book series and the success of British children's book authors, such as David Walliams, have created favourable demand conditions, with revenue estimated to grow at a compound annual rate of 0.2% over the five years through 2023-24 to reach £834 million. The market for children's books has expanded over the past five years, as e-readers and other popular devices, such as tablets and smartphones, have made books easier to purchase, read and store.
- ◆ **Mintel – Magazines UK (Jan 2024)**. The upward trend of consumers' financial confidence since late 2022, has helped magazine readership levels rise back to those seen in August 2021; prior to the start of rising inflation levels. Despite the struggles of the print magazine market, there is broad appeal across all generations, indicating that publishers should not dismiss the format.

Some other reports that we can access for your market are:

- ◆ **IBISWorld – Audiobook Publishing in the UK (February 2024)**
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Newspaper Publishing in the UK (April 2024)**
- ◆ **Mintel – National Newspapers UK (April 2022)**
- ◆ **Statista – Book Market in the United Kingdom (June 2024)**

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ **The Bookseller** (thebookseller.com) magazine is one of the UK’s longest-standing magazines and is devoted to events and trends in the book trade. They post regular news stories and blog posts on current industry events across all genres. News articles published online, July 2020 (link this).
- ◆ **Publishing Scotland** (www.publishingscotland.org) has their own publications providing news and statistics on the industry. Their most recent published data relates to 2022.

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

Last updated: August 2024

Updated by: Rosie

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