**Make the Grade in the Homeschool Market**

**By Brian Jud**

The academic market is an opportune segment for publishers because it uses books as a foundation for its existence. It includes, but is not limited to schools, foundations, research organizations, professional associations, libraries, students, and individual educators. This marketplace impacts people of all ages, from preschoolers to professionals. Regardless of grade, age, major, and choice of home, public, or private education, people’s need for books is ubiquitous.

But, you say, “Public schools are closed, and no one is sure when they will reopen. How can this be an opportune time to sell to them?” The answer is to sell to the homeschool sub-segment of the academic market.

There are over two million homeschooled students in the United States, and the homeschooling trend is expanding as parents are looking more closely at the quality of education their children are receiving, as well as at the environment in which it is being administered.

Homeschooling is not one, homogenous market, but as a market comprised of manageable segments, each with diverse buying needs. The following is a partial list of several of these smaller, homeschool market segments.

■ Categorical Associations. There are several associations that cater to specific demographic groups within the overall homeschooling market. For example, there is a Jewish Home Educator’s Network (<https://a2zhomeschooling.com/religion/jewish_homeschooling/>) and a National African-American Homeschoolers Alliance ([www.naaha.com](http://www.naaha.com)).

■ Online Directories. There are online directories that serve as homeschooling resource guides. They offer newsletters, support groups, message boards, tips-of- the-week, products, and online courses. Use these directories such as Homeschool.com ([www.homeschool.com](http://www.homeschool.com)) to bring exposure to you and your book, which will bring you one step closer to another sale.

■ Publications. The media also serves this market segment. For example, there is the Home Education Magazine, the LINK Homeschool Newspaper www.homeschoolnewslink.com), and Homeschooling Today ([www.homeschooltoday.com](http://www.homeschooltoday.com)). Additionally, the Old Schoolhouse Magazine ([www.thehomeschoolmagazine.com](http://www.thehomeschoolmagazine.com)) provides many ways to reach homeschooling families. It has a store, a print magazine with a circulation of 40,000, and three websites, including home- schoolblogger.com, which boasts 10 million page views.

■ State, National, and International Associations. There are many sales opportunities at state-level homeschool associations. Most states have a parent-educator association, or a homeschool association, network, or organization. Examples include:

0 Florida Parent Educators Association: www.fpea.com

0 Smoky Mountain Home Education Association: www.smhea.org

0 California Homeschool Network: www.californiahomeschool.net

0 Washington Homeschool Organization: www.washhomeschool.org

Additionally, there are national homeschooling organizations such as the National Homeschool Association (https://nationalhomeschoolassociation.com), the Association for Experiential Education (www.aee.org). You may be able to utilize NHA’s free email newsletter and discussion list to spread the word about your books to homeschoolers, media contacts, and education officials. He also used NHA’s list of support groups and organizations as a resource for setting up personal presentations, when appropriate.

Finally, there are also international homeschooling associations. The following are a sampling of such organizations around the world:

0 Alternative Education Resource Organization: www.educationrevolution.org

0 Alternative Learning Organization: www.alternative-learning.org

0 Education Otherwise: www.education-otherwise.org

0 Home Education Advisory Service: www.heas.org.uk

■ Book Fairs and Conventions. When the market for trade shows and conventions reopens, homeschooling book fairs and conventions will present excellent opportunities to sell books, and they occur annually across the country. For example, the Homeschool Fair ([www.homeschoolfair.com](http://www.homeschoolfair.com) ) occurs each Memorial Day in Ontario, California.

If you look diligently and strategically you may find a great source of revenue in non-traditional segments of the academic market, like homeschools. Remember to break the mass market down into manageable sub-groups and keep looking for new places in which you can sell your books.

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