

# TRIPLE 7 COMMUNICATIONS BARNES & NOBLE PR PLAN

---



February 2022

Rachel Lin, Sue Kim, Camryn DiCostanzo, Sophie Perry, Rachel Dirksen, Tongcai Zha,  
Mathew Khan

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- RESEARCH (5)
  - Barnes & Noble Overview (6)
  - Company Key Milestones (7)
  - Brand Foundation (8)
  - Business Problem (9)
  - Media Audit (10)
  - Stakeholder Analysis (25)
  - Trends Report (26)
  - SWOT (30)
  - Competitors' Audit (32)
- ACTION PLANNING (45)
  - Product/Cause Deep Dive (46)
  - Goal (47)
  - Communication Objectives (48)
  - Audience Persona (49)
  - Insights (50)
  - PR Strategies (51)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- COMMUNICATION IMPLEMENTATION (53)
  - Action Steps (54)
  - Tactics Communication: Paid, Earned, Shared, and Owned (55)
  - Crisis Plan (66)
  - Budget (81)
  - Timeline (85)
- EVALUATION (88)
  - Monitoring (89)
  - Measurement (97)
- SOURCES (98)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***Triple 7 Communications*** is comprised of seven innovative and resourceful individuals: Rachel Lin, Sue Kim, Camryn DiCostanzo, Sophie Perry, Rachel Dirksen, Tongcai Zha and Mathew Khan. With members from various demographics, we strive to incorporate diversity in our PR plans and provide an inclusive space for people of all backgrounds to enjoy. Our team has experience in the beauty, healthcare, magazine, non-profit and tech industry. We are delighted to add bookselling to the list.

This Barnes & Noble PR Plan aims to improve outreach with various stakeholders and connection with local communities that we already have while streamlining untapped opportunities through digital initiatives.

Again, we are thrilled to be a part of the Barnes & Noble family. Let's prove that Barnes & Noble is and will continue to be the largest retail bookseller!



# RESEARCH

# BARNES & NOBLE OVERVIEW

- Barnes and Noble is an American bookseller. It is a Fortune 100 company with over 600 retail locations and has gained over 6.5 million in loyalty membership.
  - Suffered from years of declining revenue as Amazon's dominance in online retail grows
  - Trying to make improvements and adjustments by curating its shelves to its local taste
- Barnes & Noble is the world's largest retail bookseller and has been selling educational products, digital resources, and more since 1886.
- Barnes & Noble's headquarters in New York City.
- Barnes & Noble suffered from years of declining revenue as Amazon's dominance in online retail grows and is just now seeing a rise in revenue from publics.
- Barnes & Noble's annual revenue was \$1.50 B for 2021.

# COMPANY KEY MILESTONES

**1971**

Barnes and Noble acquired by bookseller, Leonard Riggio, combining it with other retail bookstores

**1997**

Created first website

**2003**

Purchased Sterling Publishing

**2016**

Introduced prototype stores with a new modern design

**1873**

Charles M. Barnes started a bookstore in his home, eventually creating the flagship Barnes and Noble store in NYC in 1917.

**1993**

Became public company

**2001**

Purchased SparkNotes

**2009**

Launched Nook, their version of an E-book

**2019**

Acquired by Elliott Advisors, going private

**BARNES & NOBLE**  
BOOKSELLERS

BRAND FOUNDATION

# Barnes & Noble

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/>

Barnes & Noble is the world's largest retail bookseller and a leading retailer of content, digital media and educational products. The Company operates over 600 Barnes & Noble bookstores in 50 states, and one of the Web's premier e-commerce sites, BN.com. Our Nook Digital business offers a lineup of NOOK® tablets and e-Readers and an expansive collection of digital reading content through the NOOK Store®.

12,000+  
Employees

Privately Financed  
Company Structure

## Barnes & Noble CORE

### Brand Mission

To operate the best omni-channel specialty retail business in America, helping both our customers and booksellers reach their aspirations, while being a credit to the communities we serve.

### Brand Vision

Barnes & Noble strives to be more than a conventional bookselling corporation to a dynamic and easy-to-use store for everyone.

### Brand Purpose

The company aims to be more than just books by providing access and engagement opportunities to knowledge and information.

## Barnes & Noble in ACTION

### Brand Promise

To make every customer a "customer for life" by providing extraordinary customer service, offering online customers the Web's premier destination for books, and give customers an easy way to find precisely the books they are looking for.

### Brand Values

Barnes & Nobles values customer service, quality, empathy, respect, integrity, responsibility, and teamwork.

### Brand Personality

Warm, cozy, open-minded, relaxing, inviting, comfortable, imaginative, adventurous, family-friendly

## Barnes & Noble CONSCIOUS

### ESG Initiatives

#### BNED (Barnes & Nobles Education)

a leading solutions provider for the education industry, driving affordability, access, and achievement at hundreds of academic institutions nationwide and ensuring millions of students are equipped for success in the classroom and beyond. Through its family of brands, BNED offers campus retail services and academic solutions, a digital direct-to-student learning ecosystem, wholesale capabilities, and more. BNED is a company serving all who work to elevate their lives through education, supporting students, faculty, and institutions as they make tomorrow a better, more inclusive, and smarter world.

#### My Favorite Teacher:

annual My Favorite Teacher contest offers middle and high school students the opportunity to tell their communities how much they appreciate their teachers. It features one winner designated as the Barnes & Noble National Teacher of the Year.

#### Holiday Book Drive

invites customers to purchase books for donation to children in need at Barnes & Noble bookstores nationwide during the holiday season. Our stores collected and donated over 1.2 million books to more than 630 local charities across the country that provide services to disadvantaged children during our 2018 Holiday Book Drive.

#### Book Fairs

stores host thousands of book fairs each year, raising funds for the benefit of local schools and libraries.

#### Summer Reading Program

We sponsor a Summer Reading Program that fosters literacy and puts more than 1 million books in the hands of children each year.



# BUSINESS PROBLEM

As Amazon arises, Barnes & Noble cannot compete with the deeper discounts, infinite selection of books, and easy delivery. Instead, the company should continue to build on its current strengths that make them stand out.

Going hand in hand, the relationship between authors and their readers is becoming rarer in the publishing scene, weakening stakeholders' connection to Barnes & Noble.

If the company refocuses its attention on how it can improve its relationship with its local community and consumers as well as cater to specific interests rather than trying to shift to a technological approach, it will become the superhero of all brands.

**OUR PR PLAN WILL HELP BARNES & NOBLE ADVANCE INTO THIS FUTURE.**



# B&N MEDIA AUDITS

# PAID MEDIA

## Campaigns & Partnerships:

- #Bookclub Campaigns
- NOOK Campaign: raise awareness of the book tablet and showed book lovers that they can enjoy a quick read with Barnes & Noble's digital discovery
- Kid Book Hangout Campaign
- Starbucks Partnership (in store cafes)
- Barnes & Noble On-campus stores at Universities and Colleges

- Billboards
  - Commercials:
    - Barnes & Noble TV Commercials:
    - "A Book is a Gift Like No Other"
    - "Nobody Knows Books Like We Do,"
  - Mailer Ads
  - Instagram Ads
  - Youtube Ads
  - Magazine Ads
  - Radio Ads
  - Transit Ads
  - BookTok Influencers & Sponsorships
-

# EARNED MEDIA

Barnes and Noble has had its fair share of earned media in the past year. For example, an [article](#) by the Washington Post criticized the company for its expensive pricing in comparison to Amazon.

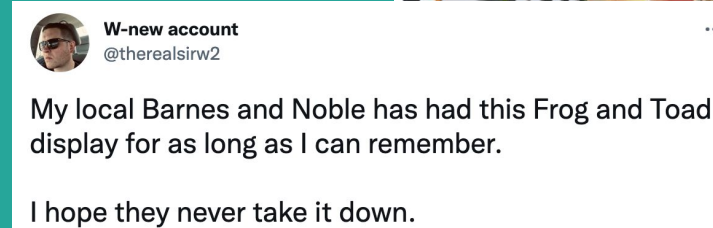
Another [article](#) by The New York Post highlights the increase of sales Barnes and Noble has had due to an increase of reading habits during the Covid-19 pandemic. The article claims Barnes and Noble's sales have been up 6% since 2019.

Earned media for the company is also done on a smaller, more local scale. This is shown in an [article](#) by The Patriot Ledger, a daily newspaper based in Quincy, MA. This article announces the closing of a Barnes and Noble location in Braintree, MA.

Another common example of earned media regarding Barnes and Noble is mentions of the company on customers' social media accounts. On Twitter, for example, customers often voice their opinions and share recent purchases or experiences.

# EARNED MEDIA (CONT.)

One tweet shows a customer expressing appreciation for a display that has been in their local Barnes and Noble "as long as I can remember". This exemplifies a customer sharing a personal connection to the company. The second tweet shows a customer sharing a positive experience of leaving Barnes and Noble with more than they anticipated.



# EARNED MEDIA (CONT.)

A New York Times article published on April 15, 2022 paints Barnes & Noble in a new light, by highlighting how the company went “from villain to hero”. This was positive coverage and earned media attention for the brand. In the article, the reporter states what is unique about Barnes & Noble compared to its big competitor Amazon, their authentic mission, and their rise to success.



## How Barnes & Noble Went From Villain to Hero

To independent booksellers, the enormous chain was once a threat. Now it's vital to their survival. And it's doing well.

# SHARED MEDIA

- Instagram

- Has an official company page for the company as a whole, as well as pages for each of their branches around the country (@barnesandnoble)
  - 751k followers
- Frequency of posting varies between all branches, and is fairly consistent for the official company page
- They post mainly pictures on their company page, leaving the videos to TikTok.
- Promoting authors and their books here
- Showing their favorite finds, and recommending books
- They post books that they have just got into their stores

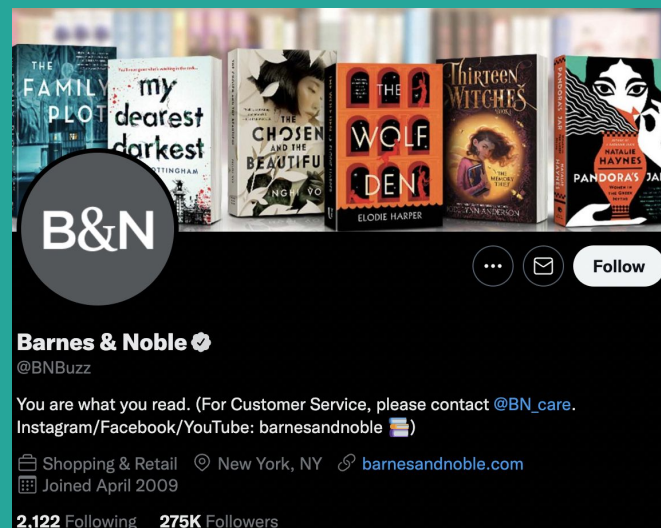
- TikTok

- Has official brand pages for many of their branches around the country as well as the overall company (@bnbuzz)
    - 85.2K Followers
    - 1.3M Likes
  - Posts book recommendations as well as trending content
    - Addressed the possible 'book bans' in the south by posting a video to one of their branch pages of them creating a special table in the store for books that are voted to be banned
  - Frequency of posting varies between all branches
    - not necessarily consistent.
  - Some customer interactions, will reply in comments
  - A lot of their videos are catered towards the more "social media centric" generations, such as gen z and millennials.
    - lean towards Gen Z catered trends and topics
-

# SHARED MEDIA (CONT.)

## Tumblr

- Has an official company page
- Posts their support for important issues
- Promoting books here
- Book recommendations



## Twitter

- MULTIPLE accounts for different reasons
  - BN\_care for their customer service (4.7K Followers)
  - BNbuzz for their news and updates and book recs (272.6K Followers)
  - As well as having pages for their company branches
- Posting is frequent, no set schedule
- Will be similar to Instagram, a lot of posts are probably set to post on both platforms at the same time
- Some posts will be different, more formatted towards Twitter.
- BNbuzz has some interactions with their followers.
- BN\_care posts fairly infrequently, but will reply to customers there with ways to help, and has replied to a customer as early as February 5.



# OWNED MEDIA

**WEBSITE:** The Barnes & Noble digital website provides resources that assist consumers as they navigate and explore what Barnes & Noble offers.

- About: Lists detailed information about the management team, history, sponsorships and charitable donations and quick facts
  - Includes mission statement, DE&I initiatives and fundraising opportunities such as book fairs
- News: Presents relevant updates, important events and press releases associated with Barnes & Nobles
  - Features content such as Black Friday specials, National Book Club Selection announcements and Book of the Year winners
  - Most prevalent news story is the opening of new stores amidst the pandemic

# OWNED MEDIA (CONT)

- Publishers & Authors: Establishes guidelines for publisher and author relations and emphasizes the importance of maintaining these relationships
  - Promotes the Discover Great New Writers program which supports up and coming writers
  - Explains how independent authors can sell books at the Barnes & Noble stores through easily accessible and readable steps
  - Author Promotions Department
    - Barnes & Nobles Press: Innovative, self-publishing and free platform that allows independent authors to publish both print and digital books for purchase or personal use
      - Available for purchase online at BN.com, on NOOK devices and in-stores
      - Gain access to Barnes & Noble's promotional opportunities

# OWNED MEDIA (CONT)

Vendors: Contains information regarding the Vendor Code of Conduct, Vendor and Product Compliance Requirements and Terms of Service

- Simplifies each section into multiple parts such as discrimination, environment and no harrassment

COVID Safety: Relates their COVID guidelines and displays proof through photos of how they plan on confronting this issue

- Offers alternative ways to order books such as online purchases and curbside pickups as well as Barnes & Noble's own distribution center
  - Virtual author events and storytimes on YouTube
-

# OWNED MEDIA (CONT)

- Our Stores and Communities: Underscores Barnes & Noble's vision that their bookstores reflect the community they're in and explicates how they'll realize this objective
  - Barnes & Nobles hosts more than 35,000 storytimes for children to hear their favorite books read by its author or illustrator and houses more than 1,000 children's book characters
  - Barnes & Noble gives back to educators by celebrating Educator Appreciation Days that includes workshops, product demos and special discounts
- Membership/Loyalty Program: Displays exclusive offers in-store and online for members. Membership is \$25 yearly.
  - 10% off in-stores, 40% off hardcover bestsellers, early access, special birthday offer, free shipping
  - B&N Kids' Club: 30% off kids' books or toys, \$5 reward for every \$100 spent on kids' stuff online, free cupcakes for café on kids birthdays
  - Barnes & Noble Educator Program: Free for K-12 educators.
    - Members save 20% off all eligible purchases for classroom use, online and in stores. Educators get up to 25% off during Educator Appreciation Days, as well as receive valuable email offers and information on special Educator events

# OWNED MEDIA

B&N Reads: Barnes & Noble's blog site offers a personalized perspective on the book community by connecting readers and other audiences to the meaningful content and enlightening experience of reading. All posts center around promoting the accomplishments of arising authors while encouraging people to read as an outlet for inspiration, empowerment, and education. This website contains three sections that allows Barnes & Noble to be on an interactive and conversational platform: B&N Reads Blog, Poured Over Podcast, and Sweepstakes

B&N Reads Blog: Casual, friendly publication with written posts that include monthly book picks, guest posts from authors, anticipated release lists, roundups, and other themed book lists to engage a wide variety of readers.

Ex) Ladies Celebrating Ladies: A Galentine's Day Reading List, It's Game Time, Readers: A Super Bowl Lineup for Non-Football Fans, Desire, Ambition and Complex Women: An Exclusive Guest Post From Julia May Jonas, Author of Vladimir, Our Most Anticipated New Kids' & YA Book Releases of February 2022, All That and a Bag of Chips: The Best Books of the 90s.

# OWNED MEDIA

Poured Over Podcast: Episodes released Tuesdays and Thursdays that give insight and engagement of the book/publishing community. Most episodes invite authors to talk in-depth about their book to extend the conversation beyond pages. Other content includes book recommendations, monthly line-ups, and reviews.

- Listen Up!: a subseries on the podcast that gives book recommendations and the hottest releases of the month:
- ex.) Celebrating Black History Month Year-Round: Recommending African-American authors and experiences in writing

Sweepstakes: Amazing prizes from some of the biggest authors and must-read books! Offers include signed copies of books, merchandise, gift cards, and other bundles. Depending on each book, the prizes vary based on the content to give incentive background. Examples:

- The Hebridean Baker: Recipes and Wee Stories from the Scottish Islands By Coinneach MacLeod. Pre-order to be automatically entered for the chance to win a trip to Scotland for two, including a 6-night stay at the Isle of Mull Hotel & Spa, two distillery tours, and ground transportation!
- The Flames of Hope (Wings of Fire, Book 15) by Tui T. Sutherland. Pre-order Wings of Fire to be automatically entered for a chance to win the entire Wings of Fire series signed by the author, Wings of Fire coloring book, a hat, and a signed poster

# OWNED MEDIA

BARNES & NOBLE APP: “Put the World’s Largest Bookstore on your iPhone!”

Aims to give book lovers a quick and accessible platform to the world of books. Users can open the application on their iPhone to search, browse, and shop for millions of items.

Features:

- Store locator that helps customers find the Barnes & Noble store nearest them, see upcoming events, and get directions.
- Explore exclusive Barnes & Noble content on vertical display including Product Details, Product Images, customer Reviews, editorial Reviews, best sellers, NOOK devices and more.
- Scrollable catalogue of millions of Books, Textbooks, Kids' books, Magazines, CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray, Toys & Games, Home & Gift items, Gift Cards and much more lists curated for individuals by experienced booksellers
- Search using an iPhone camera by scanning the product barcode or by typing your search criteria
- Access purchase history and manage Barnes & Noble account
- Reserve items to be picked up in Store

# SUMMARY

Barnes and Noble has a consistent two-way communication with their stakeholders, often interacting on social media.

The communication is consistent, with the same helpful tone in all of their communications.

The two-way communication fulfills the brand's vision of prioritizing "customer service, empathy, and respect".



# STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholder Group	Relationship with the Organization
Customers	Positive – on the social media pages, store reviews, and general public presence, the comments are positive, leading to a positive relationship
Employees	Neutral – There is a mix of positive and negative commentary on Glassdoor with a 3.7 rating
Media	Neutral – There is both positive and negative thoughts about Barnes & Noble in the news media and earned media. This balance shows that the company is seen in a neutral light.
Members	Positive - Supplied with a golden card, the loyalty program grants lots of benefits and rewards to registered members.
Authors & Publishers	Positive - authors and publishers have many benefits and resources to distribute and promote their book through the store, pointing to a positive relationship
Starbucks	Positive - Barnes & Noble Café is in partnership with Starbucks, providing both companies with more business and creating a mutually beneficial relationship

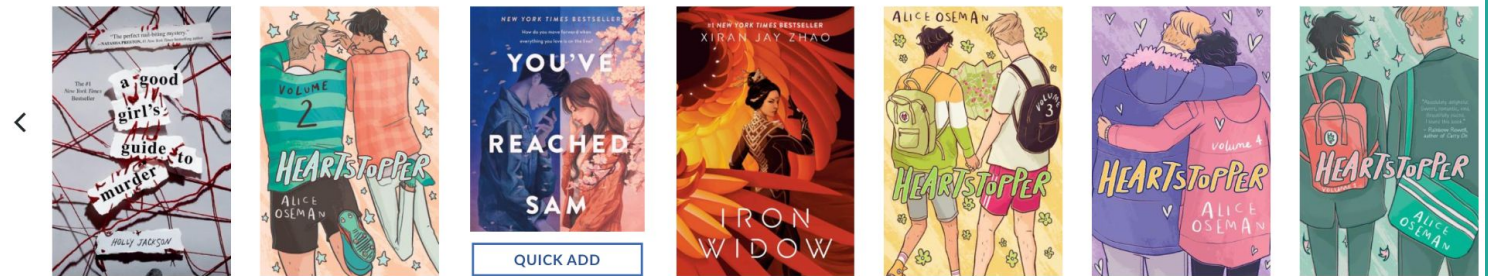
# TREND REPORT: BOOKTOK/BOOKTUBE

- What is BookTok?
  - Corner of TikTok where users, typically young women, post videos about reactions towards and recommendations of books
  - "It has become a trend that other users want to jump on and start creating their own content," she says. "Like the ice-bucket challenge that used to around on Facebook, these TikTok trends became a challenge in the same way, and you don't want to miss out on the zeitgeist, so you get the book that everyone's talking about." - Olivia Horrox, Simon & Schuster
    - Colleen Hoover, the author of *It Ends With Us*, saw 141% increase of readers according to Scribd

- Trending on #BookTok
  - Top section on Barnes and Noble online bookstore
  - More than 170 books featured

- **OPPORTUNITY** to promote their products and connect with younger audiences

Trending on #BookTok



# TREND REPORT: EBOOKS & AUDIOBOOKS

- Fastest growing segment of publishing industry according to GoodEReader
  - 43,000 new audiobooks released in 2015 compared to 20,000 in 2013
- Sales increased by 320% in 2021 according to PublishDrive
  - Growing amount of platforms on the market
  - Competition is getting bigger
  - Recommends publishers to take advantage of all formats, especially Ebooks or Audiobooks
- 3 out of 10 Americans read Ebooks or Audiobooks instead of print books according to Pew Research Center
  - 25% increased consumption from young adults from ages 18-29, adults with lower incomes and urban adults
- **THREAT** for Barnes & Noble *but* could be **OPPORTUNITY** if this is implemented properly

# TREND REPORT: USED BOOKS

- More and more independent booksellers are incorporating a used books program.
  - Donate old books for the stores to resell.
- “Book Thrifting”
  - Can even find used books in thrift stores for a cheaper price
- Used books can be purchased/rented from online sellers such as Amazon.
- Used books can be purchased/rented in college bookstores (textbooks or novels for classes).



# TREND REPORT: USED BOOKS (CONT)

- Trend is a huge **THREAT** to B&N.
  - B&N doesn't have this incorporated into their stores.
  - Buying/Renting used books is a cheaper option that more and more people will resort to.
  - Buying/Renting used books is especially easier for students on a budget

## STATISTICS

- "Overall, [the used book] industry revenue has increased at an annualized rate of 1.7% to \$2.6 billion over the five years to 2021..."

# SWOT ANALYSIS

## Helpful

## Harmful

### Internal

#### Strengths:

- The biggest conglomerate book store in America; a retail presence in every state
- High customer satisfaction
- Good returns on capital expenditures
- Stays consistent with trends in regards to popular culture
- Branded itself as one-stop outlet for printed material; second-largest retailer of magazines and newspapers
- Excels at social media on all platforms
- Strong branding
- Maintains customer loyalty
- Highly successful at go-to-market strategies
- Reliable suppliers
- Strong distribution network

#### Weaknesses:

- Fail to compete with E-Commerce brands
- Lack of investment into new technology
- A lot of B&N locations are closing down
- Loss of revenues from COVID-19
- Loss of customers from digital material including audiobooks, e-books and even piracy
- Unable to compete with competitors in terms of innovation
- Branding is not unique
- Inadequate product demand forecasting, resulting in higher inventory both in-house and in channel

# SWOT ANALYSIS

## Helpful

## Harmful

### External

#### Opportunities:

- Can invest in the supply of books for colleges and universities as they continue to outsource their bookstore operations
- More events catered to the local audience of each brick and mortar store; promotion of bookstores as safe spaces for all communities
- Offer digital alternatives to students at partnership bookstores with universities
- Promote new releases on BookTok and BookTube
- Collaborate with popular BookTok and BookTube creators
- New environmental policies that'll allow them to take advantage of technology and address sustainability

#### Threats:

- Time of consumers using multimedia had increased
- Amazon has higher rates in book revenue because of lower prices and convenience in shipping
- Amazon has more media coverage because it sells more than just books
- Independent bookstores offer cheaper books because they are second hand
- Independent bookstores have an upper hand in local communities because they emphasis fostering good relationships with their customers
- Loss of revenues from piracy of digital and print materials



# COMPETITOR ONE: AMAZON



# AMAZON OVERVIEW

Amazon was founded in 1994 in Seattle, Washington by Jeff Bezos. It was originally a book selling service but with the advancement of technology it has become one of the biggest companies with its expansion into other consumer needs and wants. Amazon is primarily an online service which marks it as a huge competitor because of how easily accessible it is to the consumer. The trend of audio and digital books is in their favor as physical books are becoming more obsolete. Products such as their kindles, (digital book products), are a popular substitute for traditional books.

# AMAZON PAID MEDIA

- Sponsored products
  - Movies
- Sponsored brands
- Sponsored events
  - National Cherry Blossom Festival
  - Amazon's Prime Video will air a 30-second ad during the Super Bowl to promote "Thursday Night Football"
- Video ads (attract mainly Gen Z)
  - Instagram
  - Youtube
- Billboard
- TV ads
- Online website ads
- Magazine ads
- Radio ads
  - Westwood One
  - Cumulus Media
- Transit ads
  - City bus ads
  - Digital kiosks: NY Subway riders can shop on Amazon while Underground
- Mailer ads
  - On-box ads
  - Direct mail



# AMAZON SHARED MEDIA

## TikTok

- Has an account for the whole company and two other accounts: Amazon, Amazon Home and Prime.
  - 542.7K Followers 3.5M Likes on whole company account
- Posts don't have a confined theme, include Prime day deals, new Alexa, amazon deliveries.
- Post at different frequencies, 'amazon' posts not frequently, 'Amazon home' posts frequently and 'prime' never post anything.
- A few interactions in the comment each video.
- Partner with some influencers on TikTok and the results are good (got more views and likes)

## Instagram

- Has an account for the whole company and multiple other accounts of branches.
  - 3.5 Million Followers
- Posts frequently.
- Posts about the products, reviews, as well as some videos about the delivery and shopping experience. Some videos are not in their TikTok.
- Some interactions. Reply some comments.

## Twitter

- 4.2 Million Followers  
Posts are the same as Instagram, except some posts about current politics, culture and heritage (Supporting humanitarian efforts in Ukraine, Black History Month, climate change).

# AMAZON EARNED MEDIA

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business-news/mindy-kaling-amazon-book-movie-deal-1235094715/>

Amazon has created a book publishing company in partnership with actress Mindy Kaling. Mindy's Book Studio will publish books chosen by the actress, with the goal of eventually turning the stories into films for Amazon's streaming service, Prime Video.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/03/02/amazon-closing-68-stores-ending-amazon-books-4-star-pop-up-shops.html>

Amazon has decided to close all of their Amazon Books locations. They are also closing their Amazon 4 Star stores and all pop up shops. This article shows how Amazon's transition into the brick and mortar space did not go as smoothly as they had hoped. This further shows how retail book stores may be in danger due to online shopping.

# AMAZON OWNED MEDIA

Blog: Amazon has a blog called Day One where they post Amazon behind the scenes, charity work, updates and more.

The most popular forms of Amazon's owned media are Amazon Prime Video and Amazon Music. These forms of owned media have added to mass conglomerate that is Amazon.

Amazon also has various forms of owned media regarding their original technology products such as Amazon Alexa, Fire Stick, and Kindles. They also provide AWS Online Courses that teach various subjects from trained professionals.



# COMPETITOR TWO: INDEPENDENT BOOK SELLERS (TRIDENT BOOKSELLERS & CAFÉ)

# TRIDENT BOOKSELLERS & CAFE



The rise of independent booksellers and the reinvention of retail is one of Barnes & Noble's main competitors. Serving with an intimate, community-based purpose, these bookstores foster relationships with booklovers and publishers on a local scale. These retailers hone into the brick-and-mortar aspect of their businesses by aiming to create social interactions whilst giving glimpses into the world of book publishing. In the past decade, the number of independent bookstores in the United States has grown by more than 50%. Trident Booksellers & Cafe is a strong representation of indie stores that are thriving in the industry as they emphasize genuinity, openness, and welcomeness. This bookstore is local to the Boston area with both the latest and secondhand books. Similar to Barnes & Noble, they value promoting hubs for community based around people's shared love for reading. Trident paints themselves as a third place, providing cozy cafe dining, author events, and other features that resemble Barnes & Noble.



# TRIDENT BOOKSELLERS PAID MEDIA



Trident's advertising budgets are limited compared to Barnes & Noble due to it being a classic "Mom and Pop" store. They have no real paid media because they believe in an anti-capitalistic approach to their marketing and PR. Here is a testimony of their values:

"The simple answer is You, the customer, because if you appreciate what we do and what we offer, you will come back and hopefully make the Trident part of your life.

"The deeper answer is for us to stay open to you, our customers, work really hard, take the necessary risks, and continually change with the culture. At the Trident we strive to create an atmosphere of openness and genuineness. A place where people are welcomed and they can be themselves with dignity."

Trident's reputation as a small business heavily depends on its fair principles as they reject using money for media audits. They foster genuine relationships with their publics with an authentic display of their beliefs:

"The competition generally has more money and would like to 'take a larger share of the market,' a business euphemism for making other stores go out of business."



# TRIDENT BOOKSELLER OWNED MEDIA



Website (<https://www.tridentbookscafe.com/>): Trident's main media channel is their site. It has content on their store and cafe items—acting as a multifaceted platform for the business. They have a storewide rewards program that can earn you discounts, promotions, and more.

## Book Catalogue:

- Users can browse the books available at Trident through the online shopping tab
- Digital ordering and delivery is available
- Books are divided into categories for easy sorting
- An spotlight on bestseller books, sale books, featured staff books, and signed books
- Partnership with Libro.fm that allows for audiobook purchases
- *Book Matchmaker*: Trident employees help make personalized bookseller recommendations to customers through a survey

## Cafe:

- Information about Trident's cafe with a big all-day breakfast menu, veggie options & an assortment of coffee and tea
- Has options for delivery & pick up or to make a in person reservation
- Menu has over 50 unique items and an order earns you Trident Reward Points

# TRIDENT BOOKSELLERS OWNED MEDIA



Gifts & Cards: Presents a variety of gifts and cards that relate to the book universe and feature quirky themes. From stickers to kitchen trinkets, Trident offers a large selection of appealing items.

- Custom Gift Bundles: Offers personalized and thoughtful gift packages for adults & kids. Buyers get to work with gift sellers to make the perfect selection.
- Trident Merchandise expresses the brand's pride and indie personality

Events: The store hosts a different event almost everyday to create a bustling atmosphere of togetherness. Anyone is open to attend and Trident loves to host social gatherings. Both virtual and in-person, events include book launches, weekly trivia night, writing groups, open mics, art classes, author readings, and more.

Personal Shopping: Another personalized service where customers can schedule a private book consultation with booksellers who will guide you through a variety of titles we think you'll love.

Newsletter: Customers can sign up for email newsletters for events, promotions, updates, and more.

# TRIDENT BOOKSELLERS SHARED MEDIA



## Instagram

Has an official page for its location on Newbury Street (@tridentbooks)  
12.4K followers, 1,812 posts and frequent posts via stories

Promote upcoming events

(Open Mic Night, Trivia, Sip & Stitch, Trident Writing Camp)

Promote new books

Give information on their cafe (food pictures, deals)

## Twitter

@Tridentbooks

"Selling books and serving coffee since 1984"

6,838 followers

Interacts with other local, small businesses by retweeting their posts

Promotes special offers such as discounts and giveaways

Asks questions relating to books using #BookTwitter

# TRIDENT BOOKSELLERS EARNED MEDIA



Various articles and interviews have been conducted about Trident Booksellers

303Magazine wrote an article about its location in boulder and their strategy to “Deliver Mystery Book Bags” to stay afloat during COVID-19

Literary Hub conducted an interview with the Newbury location’s owner, Bernie Flynn and multiple other employees in 2015; asking questions related to the store’s audience, unique traits and employee experiences

Boston University featured the Newbury location in a 2021 article titled “Your Guide to the Best Local Independent Bookshops”. The article highlights the stand-out qualities of the lesser-known bookstore to appeal to college students in the area: their two-floor cafe, its collection of gifts and trinkets, and weekly events such as Friday Night Trivia, a Queer Board Game Night, Poetry Slams, and book clubs.

Time Out Market’s website has featured Trident multiple times in their “things to do” column. They focus in on the attractive events and cozy atmosphere that Trident expresses.

<https://www.timeout.com/boston/things-to-do/cookie-decorating-at-trident-booksellers-cafe>



# ACTION PLANNING

# B&N Loyalty Program

B&N Loyalty Program: Being a Barnes & Noble member gives you access to exclusive offers and benefits that feed your passion for all things books. Only \$25 a year, the membership provides in-store and online deals, early access to sale prices & events, discounts off of store products & café items, free shipping, and a personalized book shopping experience.

## User Jobs

An informal, general explanation of a product feature written from the perspective of the end-user. Its purpose is to articulate how a product feature will provide value to the customer.

### Functional job:

As a user, I want to easily buy books that are accessible and affordable.

### Social Job:

As a user, I want to be perceived as someone who is passionate about the store, the community it brings, and the benefits it provides me.

### Emotional job:

As a user, I want to gain more knowledge and educate myself about the world through reading.

## Emotional Connection to Brand

LEVEL ONE.

### Pain Points

Pain points are persistent problems with a product or service that can inconvenience customers and/or their businesses. Or to simply put it, they're unmet needs waiting to be satisfied.

### Financial Pain Point:

Some people spend way more on books and study tools than they should, either paying extensive amounts in shipping, or an unrealistic amount for the books in store.

### Productivity Pain point:

A lot of online bookselling services take too long to ship the book to the homes of the consumers. Some customers wait weeks, or even months. Not a lot of places have a "pick up in store" option.

### Support Pain Point:

Good customer service is hard to find in many online bookstores, or other bookstores in general. Some support channels will take days to respond to important questions.

### Security & Safety

Protocols and validation the products and experiences are tested.

✔ Privacy Policy/Terms of Service

✔ Copyright & Trademark section

LEVEL TWO.

### Pain Relievers

A User Pain Reliever is the Description of the solutions the product provides to solve a customer pain point.

### Financial Pain Reliever:

The user will never have to pay full price on any Barnes and Noble products with the given discounts when they join the loyalty program.

### Process Pain Reliever:

The user will receive extensive, easier to access customer support with the loyalty program.

### Process Pain Reliever:

The user will receive early access to new products and deals by joining the loyalty program.

### Credibility

validation outside of the company has been given to verify the caliber of the product.

✔ "In the Press" Logos

✔ Blog/Podcast, Affiliate Program

LEVEL THREE.

### Value Propositions

An informal, general explanation of a product feature written from the perspective of the end-user. Its purpose is to articulate how a product feature will provide value to the customer.

### Value Proposition #1:

When you invest in the Barnes and Noble loyalty program, you will become a part of a large community of book lovers who never have to pay full price to receive the items they love the most.

### Value Proposition #2:

Joining the Barnes and Noble loyalty program means that you will get special access to events and discounts that the general public will likely not see for weeks.

### Value Proposition #3:

Everyone loves birthday presents, when you are a member of the Barnes and Noble loyalty program, you will get exclusive birthday gifts in the form of a special offer that no one else will receive.

### Reliability

ability to trust the ongoing consistency of the product and provides transparency

✔ Customer Community

✔ Access to Customer Service

✔ Customer Policies

✔ Rating System/Customer Reviews

## Persona Transformation

Who does the user aspire to be after they use this product? How will this help them achieve self-actualization?



Purpose



Responsibility



Achievement



Growth



Advancement



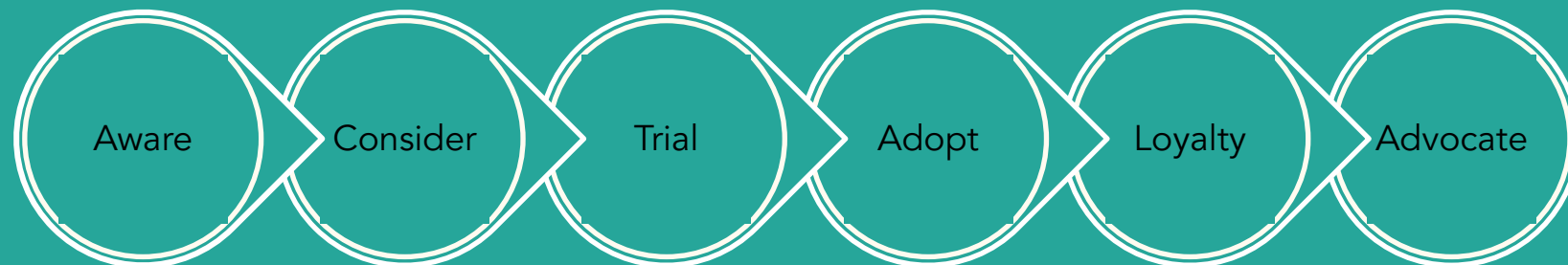
# GOAL

In two years, Barnes & Noble will increase the number of members in the B&N Loyalty Program by at least

**100,000.**

# COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

1. Increase awareness by 70% as measured by traffic on the B&N website and engagement on shared media about the B&N Loyalty Program by early 2024.
2. Spur trial by 30% as measured by traffic on the B&N Membership page on the website and the amount of first-time members who sign up for their free 14-day trial subscription by early 2024.
3. Encourage advocacy by 50% as measured by mentions on BookTok or BookTube and the amount of referred B&N Loyalty Program members by early 2024.





COMPANY Barnes & Noble

ZIP CODE 60007

CITY Chicago, IL

COUNTRY United States

MAIN LANGUAGE English

## PSYCHOGRAPHICS



# Rebecca Martin

### The Maker

These are do-it-yourself types who are happiest when they're working on a project of some kind, be it a construction project, a car repair, or cooking. They eschew luxury goods for basic products that serve a purpose.

### Demographics Segmintation

AGE	23
EDUCATION	College Degree
ANNUAL INCOME	\$77k
MARITAL STATUS	Single
GENDER	Female
RACIAL ETHNICITY(S)	Caucasian

### Archetype

Rebecca Martin works for a publishing company in Chicago and is also a freelance writer of women centric creative fiction on the side. She has a hard time finding a community in the city with people who share similar interests as her.

### Goals

**Career Goal:**  
Eventually publish her own books

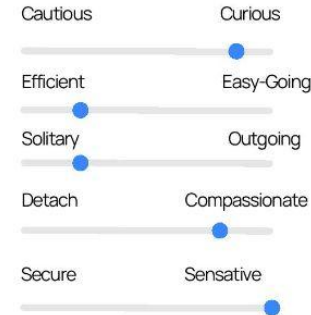
**Financial goal:**  
pay off student loans within 5 years

**Experience goal:**  
perfect latte art

### Interests

- social causes: sustainability, women empowerment
- active member in: - her college newspaper
- Spend quality time with: - her cat and her two roommates
- uses their free time to: - writing fan fiction, crochet, reading, writing, plant raising

### Personality Traits



### Motivations



## USER PROFILE

**Purchase Type** Regular user

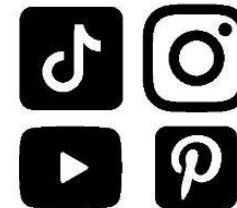
### Needs & Frustrations

- Purchases books from Amazon for the convenience, but is not sustainable
- Spends a lot of time on Book Tube and Book Tok but no in person community that shares same interests
- Needs a nice place to read and write and drink coffee without being crowded or overwhelmed

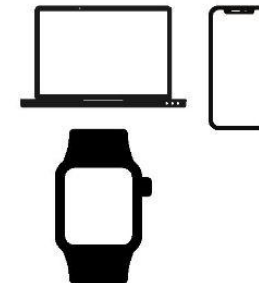
### Brand Influences

**Madewell**  
**Target**  
**Anthropologie**

### Social Channels



### Devices



# 3 KEY INSIGHTS

- 1) Our customers are creative and curious thinkers who are looking for specialized content, good prices, and accessible products/services that align with society's technological advances.
- 2) There is a disconnect between the public's growing desire and preference for efficiency versus B&N's traditional ways and unchanged services.
- 3) To gain success with our customers, we have an untapped opportunity to invest in not only new technologies and affordable programs but also foster an intimate relationship with the local community.

# PR STRATEGIES

- The target audience values *intellectual growth, personal achievement and creative expression*. Therefore, our communications will show how engaging with events, services, and deals at Barnes & Noble aligns with these values. If you support Barnes & Noble, then you are endorsing the development of knowledge, educational ventures and philanthropic undertakings.
- The target audience is most influenced by *mass media* such as BookTok and BookTube. Therefore, the plan will work with these third parties and popular channels to add credibility to the content.
- The target audience will best respond to the *social proof principle* of persuasion because they are easily swayed by what others are consuming and recommending; they are inspired by the trending products on social media.

# PR STRATEGIES

- The *journey and return storytelling approach* is well-suited for our target audience because they are curious and knowledge-hungry individuals who will demonstrate excitement and initiative for opportunities that Barnes & Noble presents. The diverse services that Barnes & Noble offers is a new and rare endeavor for our adventurous target audience.
- The *yes-yes approach* for crafting messages would work best because our target audience would need more convincing to shop at Barnes & Noble compared to Amazon. Through small steps we would prove that Barnes & Noble's quality products, services, and initiatives are unmatched to Amazon's distinguishing aspects.
- The audience would respond well to *one-sided content* because Barnes & Noble aims to go beyond promises and prove through action that the company always keeps the stakeholder's best interest in mind.
- The communications should occur during summer/fall when it is back to school season. The audience should hear from Barnes and Noble through this period to ensure that Barnes & Noble is at the forefront of their minds in regards to education, books and supplies. Within this time, the target audience would be most susceptible to helpful promotions, deals and programs.
- To encourage audience participation, communications will produce engaging and interactive content on social media channels that recognize the audience's wants and needs.



# COMMUNICATION IMPLEMENTATION

# A LOOK INTO B&N'S TACTICS

- 1) Spotlight Local Authors & Publishers
- 2) Membership Trials
- 3) Referral Programs
- 4) Partnership with @withcindy

# TACTICS ACTION I: CREATE REFERRAL PROGRAMS

Set up a program that when people sign up on our website or in store, they can get code that is unique to them. When they share that code with others who use it to purchase B&N products, both parties get a discount.

- A. Supports the objective of increasing brand awareness and engagement on social media by 70%.
- B. Leverages the strategy of building social proof to allow current members to share their love for the B&N Loyalty Program with their family and friends through authentic recommendations
- C. Persuades our target audience by offering rewards to both the referrer and the person that got referred
- D. Occurs in fall/winter to maximize the number of potential customers who are willing to be referred.

# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION I

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Paid Media	Social media ads on Instagram and Twitter about referral program	Refer a friend to join Barnes & Noble and you both get discount on your next purchase at B&N.	Ongoing for 3 months. When people are searching for bookstore or searching to buy books.	Increased brand awareness, more people know B&N, we have significantly more customers.
Paid Media	Google ad banners on websites advertising the referral program.	Refer a friend to join Barnes & Noble and you both get discount on your next purchase at B&N.	Ongoing for 3 months. When people are searching for bookstore or searching to buy books.	Increased brand awareness, more people know B&N, we have significantly more customers.
Earned Media	News pitch to reporters covering our referral programs	Barnes & Noble to launch referral program benefiting both the referrer and the referee.	Once	More people knows our referral program through the news and are led to our website, join the program eventually.



# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION 1 (CONT).

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Shared Media	Videos on Twitter, Instagram and Tiktok sharing how our new members feel about joining B&N by referral	Jenny became a member of B&N last week through our referral program last week. She got a great deal out of the program and her reading experience has been subversively changed. Here's what she said about it.	Twice a month	People watching the video find it interesting and want to join to learn more about it. They are led to our website and learn the details of it.
Owned Media	Barnes & Noble website explaining how our referral program works	Learn about our latest referral program. Introduce us to a friend of you and you both get dollars off on your next purchase.	Show on the website and stores as long as our referral program is on.	People join the program after learning the details of it.
Owned Media	Email newsletter to customers who subscribe directly on our website.	Weekly digest. Covering the latest promotion on our referral program.	Once a week.	People join the program after learning the details of it.

# TACTICS ACTION 2: SPOTLIGHTS AUTHORS & PUBLISHERS

Spotlight local authors and book publishers to establish a more intimate community that shares a love for reading. This will demonstrate that Barnes & Nobles values establishing relationships with their customers in each store, no matter the location.

- A. Supports the objective of increasing awareness of B&N's initiatives and missions by 70% by early 2024.
- B. Leverages the strategy of the journey and return approach because the target may be interested in becoming more involved in the community they are apart of. By venturing to a B&N store and learning about these unknown local authors and publishers, they will return more knowledgeable about and aware about their hometown. Customers who feel disconnected from their community's culture will find ways to fix that through Barnes & Noble. This action will help people form intimate relationships with authors that share a similar background as well as making them more prideful and passionate about literature.
- C. Persuades our target audience by featuring up-and-coming authors that are not as established in the community to leave space for potential growth. It will promote diverse authors that each have different backgrounds and educate readers more about the book scene in their area.
- D. Occurs around end of winter and beginning of summer because Barnes and Nobles wants to start integrating themselves into their local community and become the neighborhood bookstore people frequent when people have time to pursue personal interests.

# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION 2

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Paid Media	TikTok ads that spotlight local authors/publishing companies based on a user's area	The short sponsored ad will tell a brief description of the author/publishing company's affiliation with that specific town and explain how B&N is supporting them. It will tell the audience to join by going to buy their books at the nearest B&N store.	Stores will find and feature a new group of local authors every three months	Increased awareness of the community's book scene and create relations with more authors.
Earned Media	Pitch news release and obtain interview for local authors and companies	Announce the new section in B&E stores uniquely catered towards each town	Once	Trusted relationship between B&E and local communities. Measured through increased engagement and customer flow in brick and mortar stores
Shared Media	Campaign hashtags that is featured on all platforms including Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok	#BNLovesLocals Have local B&E accounts spotlight the authors they are featuring at their store and their connection to the hometown.	Consistently updated every two weeks.	Create positive commentary online about B&E and gain exposure on digital platforms.

# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION 2 (CONT.)

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Owned Media	Website that has a specific tab dedicated to the campaign and allows for readers to map where they live and find out which local authors are from there.	Gives information about B&E's new section of books catered towards local communities and lists all of them. Also states how the loyalty program grants people discounts and special deal on those books.	Publish website once and update it as more local authors get added on	Spark interest in people to join the loyalty program because of the perk

# TACTICS ACTION 3: MEMBERSHIP TRIALS

Offer special deals for a limited time to encourage trial members to transition to loyal members.

- A. Supports the objective of spurring trial by 30% as measured by traffic on the B&N Membership page on the website and the amount of first-time members who sign up for their free 14-day trial subscription by early 2024. This encourages people to transition from the trial to membership.
- B. Leverages the strategy of one sided content by demonstrating that Barnes & Noble cares about their customers' experience, which can be contested through membership trials.
- C. Persuades our target audience to join the B&N family by offering the membership trials for a limited time.
- D. This will occur summer/fall as many teachers and students return to school and are open to changes.

# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION 3

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Paid Media	Youtube advertisements promoting membership trials	Brief video showcasing some of the deals with a voiceover.	Three times a week of high advertisement frequency. Total of 3,000 times the advertisement is shown while the deals are active.	More Barnes and Noble interest from YouTube consumers.
Earned Media	News release about the exclusive deals and unique trial stage members get	Explain the deals.	Once.	Media coverage by digital publications.
Shared Media	Twitter and Instagram posts about exclusive membership deals	Retweets, reposts, likes, comments on the deals.	One post or tweet every other day.	More social media buzz.
Owned Media	Banner ads on B&N website/blog posts showcasing deals	"The prices for electronic books are falling just like the leaves! Click here to check them out."	Ongoing for three months as the landing page on the Barnes and Noble website.	Website traffic, increased number of people signing up for trials, engaging customers to increase loyalty by giving them an opportunity to become a member for a limited time.
Owned Media	Emails to customers about deals, along with physical mail sent to houses.	"The prices for electronic books are falling just like the leaves! Click here to check them out."	Every week to B&N Loyalty Program members	Foot traffic, increase number of people signing up for trails, increase awareness of deals

# TACTICS ACTION 4: PARTNERSHIP WITH @WITHCINDY

Work on a collaboration with up and coming BookTube and BookTok influencer @withcindy to promote B&N products and services.

- A. Supports the objective encouraging advocacy by 50% as measured by mentions on BookTok or BookTube.
- B. Leverages the strategy of mass media by engaging @withcindy followers through social media channels and increasing followers on B&N accounts
- C. Persuades our target audience by using uncensored, comical and honest reviews of books that promote our values such as diversity
- D. Occurs winter/spring to introduce a new initiative for the new year and the start of a new campaign

# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION 4

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Paid Media	Corporate advertisements (billboards, magazine clips, radio, etc)	Provide information on what the collaboration is and when it will be released	Consistently on various social media channels for one month after news release	Increase awareness, followers on social media channels and visits to Barnes & Noble website
Paid Media	Sponsored advertisements on TikTok and Instagram	Provide information on what the collaboration is and when it will be released	Consistently on various social media channels for one month after news release	Increase awareness, followers on social media channels and visits to Barnes & Noble website
Earned Media	News release	Announce partnership with summary of what the collaboration entails for Barnes & Noble customers and @withcindy fans	Once	Media coverage by content creators on BookTok and BookTube as well as book review bloggers



# PROMOTION TACTICS FOR ACTION 4 (CONT.)

	Method	What Will it Say?	Frequency	Desired Outcome
Shared Media	Joint updates to Barnes & Noble and @withcindy followers on what to expect through collab feature on Instagram	Introduce future developments both in-store and online including Cindy's Nook, a section dedicated to @withcindy's book recommendations	Every week in the month leading up to collaboration launch	Foster engagement with target audience on social media channels to get them excited about the collaboration
Shared Media	Promotional video on the Barnes & Noble YouTube channel featuring @withcindy	Offer details about the exclusive access B&N Loyalty Program members will have once the collaboration is released such as giveaways	Once	Drive consideration and spark loyalty for the B&N Loyalty Program
Owned Media	Feature promotional video on YouTube and host them on Barnes & Noble website, blog and newsletter	Boost interest for the promotional video as well as the collaboration	Every day for one week starting from when the promotional video is uploaded	Encourage Barnes & Noble customers to watch the promotional video and learn more about the collaboration



# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A crisis for Barnes & Nobles is a situation or scenario that causes distress or harm to customers, employees and other significant stakeholders. In the event of any crisis, the result is reputational and financial loss for the company as well as a decrease in the amount of public engagement or attitude.

## Operational Approach:

- **Monitoring:** social media tags or mentions, news coverage, customer reviews, employee check-ins, loyalty member satisfaction and ratings, product and service sales.
- **Identify:** book and publishing trends B&N should be aware of or involved in, any negative comments or attitudes toward company or products we sell, scandals or unethical partnerships with other companies, consistent employee satisfaction, negative customer reviews.
- **Prioritize:** fostering a well-rounded, positive relationship with all publics while also aligning with the company's brand values/mission
- **Analyze:** impacts on employees, customers, other stakeholders, local community relationships, customer service response, attendance at B&N hosted events, books and services profit, membership enrollment, DE&I initiatives, sustainability integration
- **Strategic planning and implementation:** (see attached scenario slides).
- **Evaluate:** changes in sentiment among loyalty members, employees, target customers; crisis responses from other competitors as an exemplar; business profit changes; patterns in regular customers; potential crisis situations that could happen in order to be prepared for similar occurrences

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION I

Situation: Spokesperson @withcindy makes racist remarks on social media

Operational Response: Company immediately issues a public apology followed by permanently terminating any further collaboration with @withcindy.

Communication Response:

Public A: Members

- What we hope to accomplish in our mission: To ensure that all members of the organization feel safe, valued, and respected by one another.
- Key messages: Barnes and Nobles has a zero tolerance policy when it comes to offensive, disrespectful behavior of any kind; regardless of the individual's standing with the organization. Furthermore, B&N encourages and welcomes diversity and people of all backgrounds.
- Ways to reach them: Owned media on website, blog, newsletter, social media and earned media to gain understanding on the responses toward the posts. Anyone directly affected by the comments should be personally contacted via email, mailed letter or phone call to address the issue and apologize.
- Spokesperson: CEO or other high-ranking individuals, DEI representatives

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SOLUTION I (CONT)

## Public B: Customers

- What we hope to accomplish in our mission: Reiterate and explain the company's core values
- Key messages: That @withcindy's actions are not a reflection of our company's values or beliefs and will no longer be associated with B&N.
- Ways to reach them: Social media, email, owned media, paid media, other representatives of the company that are positive reflections of its beliefs and culture
- Spokesperson: CEO, head of human resources

## Public C: Employees

- What we hope to accomplish in our mission: Employees feel valued, respected, and safe at all times.
- Key messages: B&N does not condone any sort of racial remarks or behavior. Anyone who violates these policies will be immediately be removed from any further
- Ways to reach them: Send out a company-wide email from the CEO apologizing and reiterating the company's values.
- Spokesperson: CEO, Managers of each individual store to communicate with employees

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 2

Situation: Barnes and Noble Twitter account is hacked, spreading hate speech towards LGBTQ community.

Operational Response: B&N immediately works to gain the account back, deleting all traces of the hack. The company then tweets a statement stating they were hacked and that none of the hateful communications were from them.

Communication Response:

Public A: Twitter followers

- What we hope to accomplish in our mission: To ensure that all members of the organization feel safe, valued, and respected by one another.
- Key messages: The hack was a serious event that could not have been predicted. Hate speech is extremely harmful and we will work to make sure this does not happen again, and continue to support our LGTbQ communities.
- Ways to reach them: A statement will be posted on all social medias of B&N and also on the company's news portion of their website.
- Spokesperson: CEO of company

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 2 (CONT.)

## Public B: LGBTQ community

- What we hope to accomplish in our mission: Reiterate and explain the company's core values
- Key messages: Barnes and Nobles supports and values all members of the LGBTQ+ community.
- Ways to reach them: Social media posts, pro LGBTQ+ content on website
- Spokesperson: CEO of company

## Public C: Employees

- What we hope to accomplish in our mission: Employees feel valued, respected, and safe at all times.
- Key messages: B&N supports and values all employees who are members of the LGTBO+ community.
- Ways to reach them: Send out a company-wide email from the CEO apologizing and reiterating the company's values.
- Spokesperson: CEO

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 3

Situation: Independent booksellers stage a protest against Barnes and Noble stores and encourage customers to boycott the chain

Operational response:

- Release statement about creating a foundation that supports independent booksellers
- Raise money for the foundation through online and in-store promotions
  - Ex) Cashier asking customer if they want to round up their purchase

Communication response:

Public A: Prospects

- What we hope to accomplish in our communication: Emphasize how Barnes & Noble supports the local community through previous and ongoing campaigns and reiterate their mission and values
- Key messages: We are not the enemies. We have and will continue to uplift and encourage small businesses especially those who share the same mission and values as us
- Ways to reach them: Earned media (news release), Shared media (social media channels), Owned media (website, blog, newsletter)
- Spokesperson: External affairs, community outreach chair



# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 3 (CONT.)

## ○ Public B: Members

- What we hope to accomplish in our communication: Reassure them that we are still transparent and trustworthy, underscore that B&N is still a valuable investment
- Key messages: We understand the shock and disappointment of this situation, we are actively rebuilding and revisiting our portrayed character by receiving feedback from our publics
- Ways to reach them: Earned media (news release), Shared media (social media channels), Owned media (website, blog, newsletter)
- Spokesperson: James Daunt, CEO of Barnes & Noble

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 3 (CONT.)

## ○ Public C: Employees

- What we hope to accomplish in our communication: We recognize the hard work of our employees, apologize for the negative association
- Key messages: Barnes & Noble respects and recognizes the importance of our employees, the criticism B&N is facing doesn't reflect the honest and honorable characters that make up our employees, propose team bonding event to uplift them
- Ways to reach them: Direct email from CEO, Company meeting with VP of Human Resources
- Spokesperson: James Daunt, CEO of Barnes & Noble and Michelle Smith, VP of Human Resources

## ○ Public D: Protestors

- What we hope to accomplish in our communication: We understand your perspective and will take initiative to recognize independent booksellers
- Key messages: We have created a foundation to raise awareness and money to make amends with independent booksellers who feel wronged
- Ways to reach them: News release (earned media), social media posts
- Spokesperson: James Daunt, CEO of Barnes & Noble

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 4

Situation: A child gets seriously injured at an children's book author event

Operational response:

- Secure medical care and personnel for the child through B&N funding
- Ensure all B&N events have on-call EMTs and medical response teams
- Release news statement about the incident that emphasizes safety protocols

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 4 (CONT.)

## Communication response:

- Public A: Authors/Publishers

- What we hope to accomplish: Reestablish trust in Barnes & Noble to host author events despite the incident. We don't want to discourage future partnerships and continue fostering these connections with authors/publishers
- Key Messages: B&N puts safety of their customers above all and will make the necessary changes to safety codes.
- Ways to reach them: Direct emails to parties involved (owned media), social media posts (shared media), news release (earned media), apology care packages
- Spokesperson: Jeff Miller, VP of Strategic Partnerships

- Public B: Employees

- What we hope to accomplish: We want our employees to understand that we care about their wellbeing and want to ensure their safety within the workplace.
- Key Messages: We are taking measures to maximize and improve our safety features in the workplace
- Ways to reach them: Direct emails to employees from CEO, safety & response workshop headed by HR
- Spokesperson: Michelle Smith, VP of Human Resources

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 4 (CONT.)

- Public C: Customers
  - What we hope to accomplish: We want to ensure that we take responsibility for this incident, as well as covering all of the proper safety measures for the future and regaining trust in the company from the customers.
  - Key Messages: B&N has learned from situation and prepared our staff in order to prevent or take care of future incidents like this. B&N has also improved safety protocols to ensure that these incidents are less likely.
  - Ways to reach them: Direct emails (owned media), social media (shared media), news release (earned coverage)
  - Spokesperson: James Daunt, CEO of Barnes & Noble

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 5

Situation: Barnes & Noble is discovered to have unsustainable production and printing methods of their books.

## ● Operational response:

- News statement that announces Barnes & Noble is investigating the current manufacturing companies they are working with and stop using such resources, along with a public apology.
- Partnership with environmental non-profit
  - Every time you buy a book, a tree is planted
- Hire a Head of CSR Initiatives with experience in environmentally friendly practices in a business setting

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 5 (CONT.)

## Communication Response:

- Public A: Customers
  - What we hope to accomplish in our communication: We recognize that our actions go against the values of many customers, we have learned from this situation and have implemented sustainable measures and are putting transparency in our company's principles.
  - Key messages: We now recognize the importance of sustainability and are an ethical company.
  - Ways to reach them: Social media (shared media), news release (earned media)
  - Spokesperson: Head of CSR Initiatives

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT SITUATION 5 (CONT.)

- Public B: Employees
  - What we hope to accomplish in our communication: We take full responsibility for the situation, we value the treatment of our employees and the company will reflect that sentiment with proper working conditions.
  - Key messages: B&N employees aren't to blame for this situation, we value their loyalty throughout this process. Employees are the company's greatest asset.
  - Ways to reach them: Personal speech and direct email from CEO (owned media)
  - Spokesperson: Head of CSR Initiatives, CEO and management, VP of Human Resources



# BUDGET

<u>Action 1: Create Referral Programs</u>	
Paid Media: Social Media Ads (Instagram & Twitter)	\$14,000
Paid Media: Google Ad Banners	\$19,000
Earned Media: Work Hours	\$11,000
Shared Media: Work Hours	\$12,000
Owned Media: Work Hours and Website Fees	\$11,000
Total Action 1	\$67,000

# BUDGET

<u>Action 2: Spotlight Local Authors and Publishers</u>	
Paid Media: TikTok Ads	\$50,000
Paid Media: Stipend for Sponsored Authors	\$200,000
Earned Media: Work Hours	\$50,000
Shared Media: Work Hours	\$100,000
Owned Media: Work Hours and Website Maintenance & Improvements	\$100,000
Total Action 2	\$500,000

# BUDGET

<u>Action 3: Membership Trials</u>	
Paid Media: Youtube Advertisements	\$5,000
Earned Media: Work Hours	\$11,000
Shared Media: Work Hours	\$11,000
Owned Media: Work Hours and Website Maintenance & Improvements	\$12,000
Total Action 3	\$39,000

# BUDGET

<u>Action 4: Partnership with @withcindy</u>	
Paid Media: (Corporate/Online/Sponsored Advertisement)	\$4,000
Paid Media: (@withcindy Contract Fee)	\$600,000
Paid Media: Sponsored Advertisements on TikTok and Instagram	\$14,000
Earned Media: Work Hours	\$10,000
Shared Media: Promotional Video Production	\$9,000
Owned Media: Website/Blog/Newsletter Fee, Work Hours	\$12,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$649,000</b>

Crisis Contingency	\$550,000
Evaluation	
Tactic #1	\$39,000
Tactic #2	\$39,000
Tactic #3	\$39,000
Tactic #4	\$39,000
Tactic #5	\$39,000
<b>Total Evaluation</b>	<b>\$195,000</b>
<b>Total Campaign Cost</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>

# TIMELINE

Key: Action 1 Action 2 Action 3 Action 4 Monitoring/Measurement

2022	Plan
Q3 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> Action 1 Begins</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Create website tab that explains referral program</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Develop news release pitch</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Send news pitch about referral program to reporters</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Release Google Ad Banners about referral program on websites</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Ongoing Ads for three months</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Create and email newsletter to customers that cover promotion on the referral program</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Write and send email newsletter once a week for two month</li> </ul>
Q4 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Post videos on TikTok, Twitter, and Instagram sharing how new members feel about joining B&amp;N by referral.</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) New testimonies posted twice a month</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Social Media Ads on Instagram and Twitter about referral program</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Ongoing social media ads on Instagram and Twitter for three months</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> Action 2 Begins</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Schedule and obtain interviews with local authors</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Design a new website tab about spotlighting local authors and publishers</li> </ul>

# TIMELINE (CONT.)

Key: Action 1 Action 2 Action 3 Action 4

Q1 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Sponsored TikTok Ads about local authors and publishers</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Develop news release pitch about new B&amp;NLovesLocals program</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Introduce new hashtag #BNLovesLocals on all social media channels, updated every two weeks</li> </ul>
Q2 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Send news pitch about spotlight program to reporters</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Release a new group of local author TikTok Ads every three months</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> Action 3 Begins</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Design a banner ad that goes on B&amp;N website about membership trials</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Design a banner ad that goes on B&amp;N blog page about benefits of membership trials</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Create Youtube advertisements with voiceovers explaining the membership trial deals</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Launch the banner ad that goes on B&amp;N website ongoing for three months</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Post Youtube advertisements three times a week for three months</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Launch the banner ad that goes on B&amp;N blog page ongoing for three months</li> </ul>
Q3 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Develop news release pitch about exclusive deals and unique trial stage</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Send news pitch about exclusive deals and unique trial stage</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Create a Twitter and Instagram post about the special deals</li> <li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Post a Twitter and Instagram post about the special deals every other day</li> </ul>

# TIMELINE (CONT.)

Key: Action 1 Action 2 Action 3 Action 4 Monitoring/Measurement

Q4 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> Action 4 Begins</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Send news release pitch about @withcindy collab</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Earned) Soft pitch media interviews with @withcindy to talk about partnership</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Joint updates of collaborations through "collab" feature on Instagram every week in the month leading up to collaboration launch</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Release corporate advertisements consistently on all media channels for one month after partnership announcement</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Paid) Post sponsored TikTok and Instagram ads about @withcindy collaboration consistently on social media for one month after partnership announcement</li></ul>
Q1 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Film video for B&amp;N Youtube channel with @withcindy</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Shared) Post video for B&amp;N Youtube channel with @withcindy</li><li>• <b>Tactic:</b> (Owned) Link promotional video on B&amp;N website, blog, and newsletter</li></ul>



# EVALUATION



# PAID MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
Corporate advertisements for @withcindy collab (billboards, magazine clips, radio, etc.)	Website views, new and unique visitors from a wider demographic, new members, subscriptions to email newsletter, mentions in social media	Reach a wide-ranged audience in the offline and online book community, increase visits to B&N and @withcindy's social media platforms, secure more brand deals with other similar influencers	Google analytics, Customer sales tracking	Ongoing, after each advertisement installation
Instagram and TikTok sponsored advertisements of @withcindy collab	Click through from TikTok to B&N website, views, likes, shares, comments	Increase awareness of collaboration and increased followers on Barnes & Noble and @withcindy TikTok & Instagram accounts; Demonstrate that B&N supports the BookTube and BookTok community	Instagram and TikTok analytics	Daily for one week before the release of collaboration

# PAID MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
TikTok sponsored ads that spotlight local authors/publishing companies based on a user's area	Click throughs rate, visits to TikTok account, views, likes, shares, and comments	Increase awareness of local authors/publishing companies, increase followers of Barnes & Noble TikTok account	TikTok analytics	Daily for one month
Youtube advertisements of membership trials	Click through rate, website visits through YouTube advertisements	Increase membership trials activation, increase visits to B&N's webpage	Youtube analytics	Daily for one month
Social media ads on Instagram and Twitter about referral program	Referrals being clicked on through social media platforms.	Increase referral program members, increase followers and visits on B&N's Instagram & Twitter	Instagram and Twitter analytics	Daily for one month
Google Ad banners on websites advertising the referral program	Referral program clicks through rate, new visitors on referral program page	Increase visibility and membership of the referral program, increase visits to the B&N website and program page	Google analytics	Daily for one month

# EARNED MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
News release pitches about the launch of the #B&ELovesLocals campaign amongst regional and national publications, along with pitched interviews with local authors	Reporter engagement, number of coverage clips per area, and number of interviews scheduled	News media mentions to effectively attract people on a local-level, demonstrate B&N's mission of connecting with the community, and show their efforts in creating intimate relationships with their stakeholders	Manual tracking of interactions, Cision to track published coverage, Google News analytics, follow-up emails from reporters	Check 1-2 times around each news release or interview
News release pitches about the exclusive deals and unique trial stage members get.	Coverage clips	In depth media coverage that shows the helpful benefits B&N offers	Google news alerts	Check 1-2 times around each news release

# EARNED MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
News release pitched to reporters about @withcindy partnership.	Coverage clips	Media coverage of partnership inspires users on BookTube and BookTok or the online book community to consider B&N as a brand/resource for their book needs	Manual tracking of interactions, Cision to track published coverage, Google News analytics	Check 2-3 times around when release sent
News pitch to reporters covering our referral programs.	Reporter engagement, coverage clips	More in depth media coverage of referral program to spread the word, increased customers who refer potential members	Manual tracking of interactions, Cision to track published coverage, Web analytics	Check 2-3 times around each news releases

# SHARED MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
Campaign hashtags that is featured on all platforms including Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok	Trending hashtags on Twitter, Instagram, and Tiktok, Instagram explore page, Tiktok FYP page, trending page on Twitter, number hashtag followings and click through rate, new followers	Establish an online awareness of local bookstores, authors, and publishing companies; Increase visibility and engagement on B&N social media accounts	Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok Hashtag Analytics Tool	Daily
Twitter and Instagram posts about the exclusive membership deals	Views, likes, shares, comments, new followers	Increase awareness of B&N Loyalty Program, encourage more people to sign up for the membership	Twitter and Instagram analytics	Daily
Videos on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok sharing how our new members feel after joining B&N by referral.	Views, likes, shares, comments, new followers, website traffic	Encourage more people to sign up for the membership, increase visibility about the B&N Loyalty Program	Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok analytics	Daily

# SHARED MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
Joint social media updates to Barnes & Noble and @withcindy followers on what to expect through collab feature on Instagram	Likes, shares, comments, new followers to B&N and @withcindy accounts	Increase online awareness of collaboration, create hype around exclusive membership deals	Instagram analytics	Every week in the month leading up to collaboration release
Promotional video on the Barnes & Noble YouTube channel featuring @withcindy	Likes, shares, comments, new subscribers to B&N and @withcindy channels	Increase online awareness of collaboration, create hype around exclusive membership deals	YouTube analytics	Once around one month before the collaboration release

# OWNED MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
Email newsletter to customers who subscribe directly on website informing about referral program	Opens, click through rate, website views, new and unique visitors, new members, following links from newsletter to website	Increase awareness of exclusive products and services including the B&N Loyalty Program	MailChimp, Right Inbox, Google Analytics on B&N website	After each email newsletter is sent
Barnes & Noble website explaining how our referral program works	Website views, website traffic, new and unique visitors, new members	Increase awareness of referral program, encourage more people to sign up for membership	Google analytics on B&N website	Ongoing after implementation of referral program

# OWNED MEDIA MONITORING

Tactic	KPI	Desired Outcome	Tool/Method	Frequency
Website that has a specific tab dedicated to the campaign and allows for readers to map where they live and find out which local authors are from there.	Website traffic, click through rate, new and unique visitors, new members	Customers show up to featured author book events in their area, become interested or purchase products by local authors; increase website traffic, visibility and membership	Google analytics	Ongoing starting from when the campaign is released
Banner ads on B&N website with blog posts showcasing deals.	Website traffic, click through rate, new and unique visitors, new members	Customers visit the website or store to take advantage of deals	Google analytics of blog, Google analytics of B&N's catalog page	Ongoing as new deals get released
Emails to customers about deals, along with physical mail sent to houses.	Website traffic, click through rate, new and unique visitors, new members	Customers visit the website or store to take advantage of deals	Google analytics, MailChimp	After each email and physical newsletter is sent out
Feature promo videos of collaboration with @withcindy on YouTube and host them on B&N's website	Click throughs from website to Youtube, content views, shares, comments, likes, time on site, new and unique visitors, increased visibility and awareness	Gain a larger following by merging audiences with @withcindy	Youtube analytics of interactions and insights	Weekly/monthly and whenever a new book is released and could be benefited from advertising



# MEASUREMENT

This plan will be successful if it is able to:

- Increase awareness by 70% as measured by traffic on the B&N website and engagement on shared media about the B&N Loyalty Program by early 2024.
- Spur trial by 30% as measured by traffic on the B&N Membership page website and the amount of first-time members who sign up for the free 14-day trial subscription by early 2024.
- Encourage advocacy by 50% as measured by mentions on BookTok or BookTube and the amount of referred B&N Loyalty Program members by early 2024.

If these objectives are met, they will contribute to the organization's goal of increasing the number of members in the B&N Loyalty Program by at least 100,000 by 2024 year.



# SOURCES

# WORKS CITED

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnkotter/2021/02/09/will-barnes--nobles-next-chapter-be-its-last/?sh=9624f3223d3e>
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/12/09/book-shop-prices-barnesandnoble-amazon/>
- <https://www.ibisworld.com/united-states/market-research-reports/online-used-book-sales-industry/>
- <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/>
- <https://www.barnesandnobleinc.com/>
- <https://www.forbes.com/companies/barnes-noble/?sh=57d7c6b55e96>
- <https://www.sapling.com/5750571/barnes-noble-swot-analysis>
- [https://www.dnb.com/business-directory/company-profiles.barnes\\_\\_noble\\_inc.04af1d2c5a7af7748ea64fe75b1476d6.html](https://www.dnb.com/business-directory/company-profiles.barnes__noble_inc.04af1d2c5a7af7748ea64fe75b1476d6.html)
- <https://www.barnesandnobleinc.com/management-overview/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/arts/barnes-noble-bookstores.html>

# WORKS CITED

- <https://www.youtube.com/c/withcindy/videos>
- <https://www.tumblr.com/tagged/barnes+and+noble?sort=top>
- [https://twitter.com/BNBuzz?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/BNBuzz?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)
- <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2015/05/21/how-much-does-adwords-cost>
- <https://www.amazon.com/>
- <https://www.tridentbookscafe.com/>
- <https://www.zippia.com/barnes-noble-careers-1337/history/>
- [https://twitter.com/BNBuzz?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/BNBuzz?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)
- <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/blog/>
- <https://www.boston.com/culture/books/2015/05/02/shop-local-read-local-15-authors-with-boston-ties-you-should-read/>
- [https://aalbc.com/authors/author.php?author\\_name=Sapphire](https://aalbc.com/authors/author.php?author_name=Sapphire)
- <https://bookriot.com/booktube-according-to-booktubers/>
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelkramerbussel/2021/12/31/2021-book-trends-show-the-power-of-booktok-and-rise-of-audiobooks/?sh=a0ce43b7f703>