Organizational and social tech tools can greatly increase productivity and communication in the bookstore and create a bridge between industry-savvy and tech-savvy team members. Panelists share which tools have worked best for their individual stores and discuss the importance of closing the technology gap among staff members.

**CONNECTING YOUR BOOKSELLERS TO THE WORLD AND EACH OTHER**

- Use consistent email among staff members (anyone who communicates outwardly should have a name@bookstorename.com)
- Something intuitive, widely used, and option-heavy
- We use Gmail addresses connected to our domain email addresses (email forwarding)
- Why?
- Access to Google Docs to share documents, schedules, staff rec templates, & other projects. (all staff has organized access to files at all times)
- Larger storage than most default email addresses
- Better search
- All booksellers on the same basic tech playing field.
- If you don’t know how to set up email forwarding, contact your website provider.

**STAYING ORGANIZED AND MANAGING PROJECTS**

- Trello Project Management Tool (http://www.trello.com)
  - A collaborative project management tool that can be edited by all on the team.
  - Free
  - Easy to learn/use
  - If you can drag and drop, you can use this program.
  - Think a whiteboard with many more options.
  - Easy to give access to others
  - Once staff is trained, it’s an easy way for everyone to know what the status of all projects are.
A personal Trello Board with my to-do list on it.

A returns Trello board that can be shared/edited with returns staff. This board can also be used each month by changing the title of the board.

TECH KNOWLEDGE & INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE

We work in an industry where the product we know and love hasn’t fundamentally changed, but we all know that the tools we use have. What are best practices for bridging the gap between industry knowledge and tech savvy that exists in some of our stores?

- Training manual - Make one! Use it!
- Standardized tools and basic training to use them (same email, same file sharing methods, etc.)
- Two way apprenticeships (long-time staff educate new staff on industry. New staff educate long-time staff on new technologies)
- Vulnerable conversations about tech savvy with long-time staff.
- Checking egos of tech-savvy staff
- What do you do in your stores?
USING INSTAGRAM TO EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS

With over 700 million monthly active users, Instagram is a tremendously powerful, free promotional tool for small businesses. If you’re unfamiliar with the app, developing a presence can feel like a daunting task. Though there is no one right way to use Instagram, today I’ll suggest some best practices for using it effectively.

1. Provide meaningful content: The booksellers at your shop have a tremendous depth of knowledge. Use it!

2. Showcase your personality: Show the world what makes your shop unique

3. Institute a schedule: Regularly scheduled posts will help you develop your brand and cultivate a following

4. Go behind the scenes: Create a sense of intimacy by showing the process behind building displays, preparing for events, etc.

5. Collaborate with publishers and other businesses in your community

6. Use hashtags to expand your reach

7. Crowdsources: Encourage your followers to participate in your feed through promotions and reposts

8. Share your posts across social media platforms

Examples of shops with successful Instagram feeds: @strandbookstore, @literati bookstore, @parnassusbooks @pilsencommunitybooks, @athousandbooks


UTILIZING EXCEL FOR ORGANIZING BACKLIST

- Utilizing Excel for organizing backlist is meant to provide an aide to your ordering and does not replace the tools your POS offers.
- One main benefit to keeping a list of core backlist titles for each of your major vendors, is that you can track sales numbers with ease.
- This helps me stay honest with my belief in a hot selling title rather than just guessing.
- No system for managing backlist ordering will work for every store. There is no universal magic bullet. Find what works for you and your staff.
- Another added benefit that this offers is a visualization of my store's core backlist, top hand sells, and staff favorites. This makes organizing my reorders significantly easier.
- Use the tools here in ways that work best for you.
USING SLACK TO KEEP LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN & FLOWING

WHAT IS SLACK?
Slack is an interoffice communication application. There is a mobile app, web based app and pc/mac version available. It is used to quickly and freely communicate to a team of people and replaces numerous short back and forth emails.

WHAT CAN I USE IT FOR?
- You can create Channels within your Slack Team to better organize departments and communicate quickly and openly. For example - channels for: social media, events, marketing, managers, departments, stores, displays, etc
- Receive nightly sales and closing reports from your closing staff. Helps inform the morning crew what they might be walking into the next day.
- Maintain communication with your entire team during an offsite event.
- Create a place to archive display ideas, marketing ideas, social media post ideas or flush out other ideas.
- Let your booksellers on the floor know about upcoming marketing/promotional plans and outgoing emails.

Slack is available in your mobile store or located at www.slack.com

FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PANEL PLEASE CONTACT: LARRY LAW (LARRY@ANDERBOOK.COM)