

Harry Potter – sales magic

The fifth book in the Harry Potter series, 'Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix', by J K Rowling has become the fastest selling book of all time. Previous books in the series are now available in over 200 countries, and have been translated into around 55 different languages.

1 Complete the Harry Potter fact file using the figures in the box.

1.3 million	£30 million	317,400	192 million	1,777,000	£1.2 billion
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Fact file	
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	
First day sales in UK supermarket, Tesco	
First day sales in the UK	
First day global sales by online booksellers Amazon	
Projected author earnings	
Harry Potter series	
Gross earnings from the Warner Brothers films	
Total global sales of the previous four Harry Potter books	

2 Read the marketing update on Harry Potter and check your answers.

Marketing update

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

Launch: Booksellers in the UK opened their doors at midnight on Saturday morning, 21 June.

Initial sales: In the first 24 hours of going on sale, UK supermarket Tesco sold 317,400 copies. Barnes and Noble in the US were selling 80 copies per second. Scholastic, the US publishers, estimate that five million copies were sold on the first day alone. First day UK sales are estimated to be in the region of 1,777,000.

Print run: Even with a first US print run of 8.5 million, it is difficult to keep up with demand and some stores have already run out of stock.

E-commerce: It is reported that 1.3 million copies were dispatched by online booksellers Amazon, currently making the book the largest single item of e-commerce.

Harry Potter series

Merchandising: The spin-off merchandise from the Harry Potter franchise now includes videos and DVDs, computer games, dolls and toys.

Film tie-ins: The first two Potter movies have grossed £1.2 billion for Warner Brothers.

Cross-marketing initiative: Coca Cola, in a global marketing partnership with Warner Brothers, has launched a series of initiatives to celebrate the joy of reading.

Total sales: Thirteen million copies of the previous four books have been sold in the UK alone, and around 192 million worldwide, contributing to UK publisher Bloomsbury's £11 million group profits last year on a turnover of £68 million. J K Rowling is now the richest woman in the UK, and her new book is expected to bring her in £30 million.

3 Find words in the text meaning:

- a an agreement to sell a company's products or services, in exchange for payment
- b a new product, service, television programme etc that is based on another one that already exists
- c to earn a particular amount of money before taxes or other costs have been taken out
- d an important action that is intended to solve a problem
- e the value of the goods and services that a company sells in a particular period of time

Definitions from *Macmillan English Dictionary*. Text © Bloomsbury Publishing Plc 2002.

4 Discuss the following questions.

- Why do you think Harry Potter has become such a phenomenal global success?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of merchandising spin-offs for the producer and the consumer?