



Samantha Cohen

Director

Digital Content Development

SIMON & SCHUSTER

Recently, we **combined our eBook production and desktop publishing/composition groups**, the latter an important point of convergence in digital and print workflows.

The merging of the two groups is a reflection of larger, **organization-wide integration of digital, or ebook-conscious, processes into all aspects of book-making.**

Because we are working as a whole organization, rather than as an isolated ebook department, files--from manuscript to mechanical--are prepared as much for print as for ebook. That whole-process collaboration allows us to **make a greater percentage of our books in-house without adding to staff, and make them well.**

We still outsource most of our reflowable ebook conversions. But **with tools, software, and highly capable staff, we make all of our fixed-layout ebooks, ebook originals, and a growing number of simultaneous print books in-house.**

Print and ebook production
methods and tools are converging



We can accomplish much of the work in-house on the same resources*

*if we want high-quality results.

Outsource: Team needed to prep files – font management, art management, and directing vendor’s work – communicate with vendor and track files, review the product, make or request changes, and manage the relationship.

Insource: Designer/compositor sets up files in InDesign in an ebook-conscious way. **It’s the same work they’ve always done; they’re just doing it differently.** Tools like software and scripts aid in making an InDesign-exported epub cross-platform compatible. Ebook specialist makes additional changes to finalize the book, and another staff member with a production editorial approach reviews the final file.

We can expend resources paying a vendor to convert files or invest in training staff.

Initial training will take significant but worthwhile effort.

If you have these processes in place and your team is skilled and nimble, new products will be easier to produce. (Think back to Fall 2010, when everyone scrambled to make fixed-layout ebooks.)

A truly unified process will allow bookmakers to go painlessly from print to digital *and* digital to print.

A mixed approach works in favor of flexibility, quality, and expense.

We may always need vendors for our backlist books.

Tools are invaluable. And they will continue to become more print- *and* ebook-friendly.