

Books & The Supply Chain

There are many areas booksellers should consider in order to reduce costs, increase efficiency, cut waste and help the environment.

- Support the BA/PA's [Life Cycle of a New Title](#), which can deliver very considerable supply chain efficiencies.
- Use [BIC](#)'s website to find out how to become more e-commerce efficient.
- Apply for BIC's [Supply Chain Accreditation](#) to measure your progress.
- Use [Batch](#) for electronic invoicing and payments.
- Use [Nielsen BookNet](#) and [PubEasy](#) for electronic ordering.
- Find out what e-commerce systems are available from your wholesaler.
- Look to consolidate orders as far as is practical.
- Consider using tote boxes within 'closed distribution systems'.
- Audit your current transport operation.
- Larger retailers should review their intersite and depot to store transport policies to maximise vehicle utilisation.
- Consider other [environmental action](#) to reduce carbon emissions, energy consumption, packaging and plastic bags, recycle more and source environmentally friendly paper and other products.

Returns

In order to maintain cultural diversity and seek out future successes, there will always be a need for returns, but it is simply not good economic practice to return stock which would subsequently be reordered.

About 20-25% of bookseller supply chain costs are spent on returns processing, savings can be made by collaborative planning and demand forecasting between publisher and bookseller to agree quantities, minimizing overselling and overbuying.

Reviewing replenishment/reorder cycles to avoid overstocking and simplifying promotional strategies to concentrate on sell through not just volume purchased will also help reduce returns.

Booksellers should consider firm sale on deep backlist and known 'brands' with a sales history; use supplier/jointly funded markdown rather than incur returns costs and recycle books for sale elsewhere within their business (or use online sites).

Support the [Industry Returns Initiative](#).

Use the [Batch Returns](#) system – it is free to BA members.