

## Speech: FutureBook Conference

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### CEO Jen Porter BeyondTheStory

#### *Harnessing technology for the competitive edge*

Intro Jen Porter (Slide Logo video)

Thank you for the invitation to speak at this *FutureBook* conference and allow us to take you through what we believe *is* the future of books. I'm not talking about partially animated apps or apps with gimmicks, or book apps that aren't based on any underlying text, or apps attempting to replicate a physical book in digital, BUT actually evolving storytelling into something that can be educational or informative or entertaining or even enlightening. Why? Because we believe single-mindedly in the 'Future of the Book' and that is precisely what we are doing, and why we are here today at *FutureBook*, and we are immensely proud to be part of it.

It's great that digital companies like BeyondTheStory has the opportunity to contribute to the debate and share some of our own experiences in using technology for commercial edge.

As Dan Franklin, from Random House recently commented: "There has to be a change of mindset by publishers – replicating the physical market in digital is not enough. What we need is a great platform to innovate."

Here, at the tail end of 2013, there are many organisations in our commercial space offering digital services to the publishing industry. These services are typically about taking edited manuscripts and transforming them into electronic formats for reading on handheld devices. Books on screens.

But we approach this from a different philosophical angle. Our desire is not to be simply another 'final mile' solution for publishers. We're going back to the nature of storytelling itself, and giving the storytelling industries a new means to connect with readers and audiences.

Storytelling, in person, is a conscious act by those gifted to do it, engaging others around them. It's not a one-way train, but rather a relationship between the storyteller and the listener. Even though only one person may be doing most of the talking, it's interactive, with the storyteller modifying the ebb and flow of the narrative as he or she studies the faces and reactions of those listening.

Skilled storytellers have a dynamic way with words, and the reader is a key participant. Real storytellers cannot hide behind a typewriter or a word processor. For their full story to be told in its deepest colours, they must have that relationship with the reader.

Imagine J.R.R. Tolkien, having put out the last coals on the hearth on a wintry evening, sitting up close with his excited sons as he told them – as he did – the early forms of the tales that would go on to become part his Middle-earth cycle. The sleepy children are engaged with the story, hanging off every word, questioning every turn, and sending their father off on tangents he had not prepared. This is storytelling at its best, at its most personal, and, indeed, at its most truthful.

We can't bring Professor Tolkien into every child's room. But we can provide storytellers with the means to expand their stories beyond words themselves, to give

new digital readers the opportunity to explore great stories using the technology they keep close to them throughout the day. This is why we're developing the Beyond The Story publishing platform, to capture stories as they come to life, to bring the new reader closer to the context and colour of the story.

So fast has been the evolution of print-based stories and content to digital experiences, that the new technology is as awe-some AND awe-inspiring as the stories of magical realism and new objectivity. As Matthew Stretcher articulates

#### Quote

"What happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe."

#### Anne Frank clip

Here we see the story of the evolution of storytelling from words to pixels, from page turning to touch.

As technology has evolved, so the commercialisation of digital devices has opened up new possibilities. We can now bring stories and ideas to life with images, active links, audio, video and 3D content.

#### Infographic BeyondTheStory: from text to pixels

So, it's a no brainer right? Well, not necessarily. Talking with our book buying public, authors and publishers, there is still a lot of confusion (and I would suggest commercial inertia) out there about the environment we're working in.

So - we put this infographic together to reflect the marketplace

#### Infographic: Reading for the touch generation

We see an environment of vendors, libraries and devices – and on those devices a range of interactivity.

Problem is everyone has their own marketplace – and this makes for a troubled landscape and further challenges as the sector addresses disruption.

We've heard of various models and pathways today.

The good news is publishers have never had the potential for this degree of collaboration or such a powerful workflow before.

The challenge is - how publishers use it.

We hear a lot about “disruption” and the new “big” idea – but to be honest, apart from one or two examples, we've not seen much evidence of this – in fact all we've heard are a lot of ‘words without actions’.

Imagine a situation where authors, publishers and everyone in the workflow of a successful book, can work together using a simple, time and cost-effective process.

#### Infographic: One simple digital solution across all platforms

So - we have been developing *BTS Publisher Plus* to answer exactly this challenge.

This offers one simple digital solution across all devices – a digital publishing solution that is truly agnostic – that means the ability for the industry to share great stories.

Publisher Plus allows for the creation of all digital formats of your books, from a physical book, to a standard ePub to an immersive 3D apps, from within one single word-processing application.

Slides: showing the deployment of Anne Frank across devices from content-rich to simple.

This provides a business model that can address the current disruption in publishing. So, not just 'talk' ... not empty 'rhetoric' but a platform for our time – for *this* time.

BeyondTheStory has developed the perfect solution for *all* publishers and storytellers.

For the first time ever, Publisher Plus allows our partners to generate new income streams from their assets using one software solution. No more do authors, editors; curators, designers and developers need to use a multiplicity of tools to produce a printed book, an e-book or an animated app. One system ... all working in concert and allowing people to work concurrently cutting the process by a third (if not more)

Publisher Plus which will be launched in early next year will provide publishers and media companies with their own licensed version of the platform, with revenues derived from the development, together with transactional and licensing income. Imagine – all this, and all yours - to command and control.

The disruption of precedents from other sectors is there to excite our thinking – look at the business models of Netflix, iPlayer, Napster and Spotify.

The challenge for the publishing sector is well stated by Friedrich Nietzsche:

*And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music.*

*Friedrich Nietzsche*

In publishing we can have it all, but one thing we can not have is an ability to stop evolution in whatever forms it is taking right now.

So the questions begs - How insane are you?

BeyondTheStory WW1 video

Ends

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