

Sector: Writing & Editing

1. Major change drivers impacting on the sectors in the industry, now and over the next five years.

Internal Industry Issues

a. Current

- Technological changes particularly related to digitalisation and on-line resources
- Blurring of boundaries between writers, editors and designers due to computer design programs
- Copyright of intellectual property issues related to material that is available through the Internet.
- Formation of the Council of Australian Society of Editors (CASE) as a nationally representative body will provide editing industry with national cohesive voice (expected to be formalised and operational by July 2005).
- Development of 'Standards for Editing Practice' (2001) provided structure of aims, standards and services to govern editorial practices.
- Promotion of editing profession
- The development of an editing industry recognised accreditation program has been discussed and was expected to be developed and operational by February 2004.
- Lack of a data available on working editors in Australia hinders analysis of the profession
- Australian Writers' Guild Association became registered industrial organisation in 2001
- Changing work practices - writers and editors working on multiple projects.

b. Future (next five years)

- Technological developments will continue to impact on working methods particularly the need for collaboration and understanding between writers, editors and designers.
- Incidence of free-lance writers and editors will continue especially as technological advancements increase the portability of work
- Editing and writing industries will become more formalised in terms of national cooperative bodies for the sharing of information particularly relating to legal and ethical issues

External Industry Influences

a. Current

- US Free Trade Agreement. If the Agreement were to go ahead it would have a particularly negative impact on the writing and editing industry.
- Public liability insurance issues for free-lance writers and editors
- Ethical issues particularly relating to the appropriate representation and reproduction of indigenous and other cultural groups work
- Fiction versus non-fiction debate claims that the public are reading fewer novels and leaning more towards non-fiction books according to retail book sales.

- Public interest in writing and editing can be measured through the increased incidence and popularity of writers' festivals.
- The significantly increased usage of text messages and e-mail has raised questions as to the 'death' of the formal use of the English language.

b. Future (next five years)

- Future issues are partly dependent on outcome of US Free Trade Agreement
- Public liability insurance issues will increase in significance
- Fiction versus non-fiction debates will continue without resolution
- Writers' festivals will continue to increase in popularity and more people will take on writing as a hobby
- Closer inspection on the usage and monitoring of language with a push to improve some grammatical practices and the abandonment of others.

2. Enterprise and sector strategies to address the impact of the change drivers.

Internal Strategies

- Public events such as writers' festivals increase profile of writing and editing
- Numerous formally accredited and hobbyist writing and editing courses are being offered at numerous institutions across Australia, formalising practices and industry standards
- Schemes such as the 2001 Lending Right Scheme which compensates writers and illustrators for the potential income they forgo when their books are held in a reading library are working to protect the interest of industry professionals.

External Strategies

- The Victorian writing and editing profession is working with other arts and cultural industries to lobby the Federal government to exclude the cultural industries from the US Free Trade Agreement.
- Organisations such as CASE working to inform members of implications of public liability insurance issues. Will also be addressed through training and accreditation programs

3. Implications of these strategies for training need over the next five years, both positive and negative.

Impact on Individuals

- Technological skills to use both writing and some design software will be essential
- Business skills particularly related to contract and risk management for free-lancers
- Project and time management skills to effectively work in a free-lance environment
- Collaborative skills to work with other areas of the profession
- Focus on language usage and grammar skills

Impact on the Industry Sector

- Promotional and commercialisation skills will increase to compete especially in an increasingly globalised market
- Legal and ethic knowledge particularly relating to copyright and royalties will increase in importance
- Use of website based resources and publications will increase changing the publication methods of the industry