

# MEDIA & MARKETING

## ADVERTISING

# Knopf Puts Some Muscle Behind Swedish Thrillers

*Departing From Industry Norm, Bertelsmann Unit Readies Campaign for Stieg Larsson's 'The Girl Who Played With Fire'*

BY JEFFREY A. TRACHTENBERG

**S** TIEG LARSSON'S "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," a thriller translated from Swedish that has gone on to sell a robust 225,000 hardcover copies in the U.S., was one of 2008's most successful debut novels.

Now, out to capitalize on the growing interest in the late Mr. Larsson, Bertelsmann's Alfred A. Knopf imprint is launching a six-figure marketing effort to support his second book, "The Girl Who Played With Fire," as well as the paperback edition of the first. Mr. Larsson completed a trilogy of mysteries six months before his death in 2004 at age 50.

The Knopf campaign is notable because publishers are traditionally stingy when it comes to promoting their books, preferring instead to focus on Web contests, author home pages, word of mouth and generating reviews.

Industry insiders say most book-related advertising doesn't seem to deliver significant sales gains and, they say, there's a reason for that. "What

they do is buy a single ad, but that's not a campaign," says Carol Fitzgerald, president of the Book Report, a closely held company that operates Web sites related to book publishing. "You have to do everything."

*'It's really a departure from what we've done in the past,' says Knopf's Stephanie Kloss.*

The number of books that get advertising is probably less than 5%, says Michael Norris, a book-industry analyst at media-research firm Simba Information. "It's too expensive, and too hard to reach readers," he adds.

The Knopf campaign is scheduled to start in June and will run until late September. More ads are likely in November, around the holiday season.

The campaign will include print ads in such publications as the New Yorker, the New York Times and The Wall Street Jour-

nal, mass-transit advertising in New York, Washington, Boston and Los Angeles and ads on such Web sites as USAToday.com, Politico.com, WSJ.com and NYTimes.com.

There also will be a marketing push on the social-networking site Facebook and the microblogging service Twitter, as well as in-store promotions in big bookstore chains.

"We need to broaden our existing readership," says Paul Bogaards, a Knopf spokesman.

The campaign will help kick-start the June 23 release of the paperback version of "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" by Knopf's sister imprint, Vintage. Vintage is publishing two paperback editions of the book totaling 600,000 copies. In late July, Knopf plans to issue 300,000 hardcover copies of "The Girl Who Played With Fire." The coming third book in the trilogy could also benefit.

"It's really a departure from what we've done in the past," says Stephanie Kloss, Knopf's advertising director. "We felt we needed something that looks different from traditional

book advertising."

**Hauser Advertising**, a Pacific Palisades, Calif., firm best known for its work on behalf of entertainment companies, created the campaign.

Cliff Hauser, the firm's owner, says Knopf wanted the promotion to have a movie sensibility. "They felt the main character in the series is a cross between Lara Croft and a female Jason Bourne, and they wanted a campaign that would be more like something you'd do for a film," he says.

The Larsson novels star Lisbeth Salander, a computer hacker and social misfit. "She's a heroine for our times," says Sonny Mehta, editor in chief and chairman of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. "Messed up, defiant, indomitable and without a trace of pity."

Rather than being text-driven, the campaign has strong visual elements. An ad for "The Girl Who Played With Fire" looks like a movie promo, with a prominent central image of a burning match and a dragon, complete with comments from critics.

FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL SENSATION  
*THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO*

STIEG LARSSON  
**THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH FIRE**

“WILDLY SUSPENSEFUL”  
—*The Washington Post*

“MESMERIZING”  
—*USA Today*

“A BLAZING LITERARY SENSATION”  
—*Vanity Fair*

“A SEXY ADDICTIVE THRILLER”  
—*Glamour*

Alfred A. Knopf

KNOPF www.aaknopf.com

A mock-up of ad for the coming release 'The Girl Who Played With Fire.'