

"Creativity, focus, and solid relationships are essential for small publishing houses," says Whaner Endo, of W4 (www.wendonet.com), and executive director of ABEC, the Brazilian Association of Christian Publishers. in São Paulo, Brazil.

"Kill a Lion Every Day"

Every day at W4 is different. There's a saying in Brazil, "We must kill a lion every day." Though we have abundant flora and fauna in our tropical forests, we do not have lions here. Still, each day we must find solutions for the problems that threaten our ministry—so we do not end up on the "endangered animals" list!

One key challenge we face working in such a large country, with an economy still in development and a growing evangelical church, is simply to make W4's work a reality. For our small publishing house's projects to succeed, we need creativity, focus, and solid relationships.

A little history

"In heaven, praise and worship will be led by Brazilians," says Bob Fitts, a well-known worship leader. He appreciates the freshness and vibrancy of Brazilian music, its lively songs with joyful rhythm, its lyrical depth. I love music. I've played the guitar ever since I was five years old, and serve as a worship leader in our Methodist church.

I realized we could combine our passion for Christian music and book publishing



"W4 combines our passion for Christian music and book publishing," says Endo.

to create literature that makes a difference and changes hearts. This editorial focus would differentiate our company from others in the Brazilian Christian publishing industry.

In 2000, we published *O que fazemos com este músicos* (What shall we do with these musicians?) by Marcos Witt. It gained full acceptance in the market. Worship leaders in local churches began to

use the book. Even today, it is our best-selling title.

So far we only have 20 titles in our catalog, but approximately half focus on music, the arts, praise, and worship. This is one of our main strategies: to keep W4's focus on the area where we have expertise and stand out.

Importance of partnerships

One of our first partnerships was with Vencedores

por Cristo (Winners for Christ), a widely-recognized missionary group. They train worship leaders, run a recording studio, distribute music, and represent the Vineyard in Brazil. Distributing our books allowed them to offer more to booksellers.

It is natural for us to participate in many praise and worship music events. Whenever there is a worship conference, our daily routine at our publishing house is completely changed. We wake up very early. We pack our books and drive to the city where the event is held. After four or six hours on the road, we arrive and unload all of our materials. We set up a stand to capture the attention of conference goers.

Many times we forget to eat lunch or even dinner. Conferences mean three or four days of non-stop presentations and sales. Sometimes, we have to wrap up early to be ready for another event the next morning. We try to have W4's books present at as many events as possible.

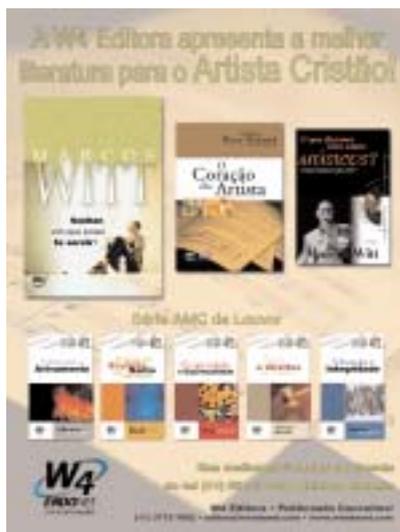
We also partner with the Associação de Músicos Cristãos (AMC), the Brazilian association for Christian musicians. They organize an annual training event for

music leaders, with lectures and courses, gathering a great number of young people. But, we saw that when the event was over, all the wealth of information brought by the lecturers was lost. That's why we began the AMC Praise Series. It started with five titles, transcripts of the teaching sessions given by musicians like Bob Fitts, whose ministry responsibilities do not allow time for them to make this material available in print.

Two years ago we participated in the São Paulo Bienal International Book Fair, one of the four largest book fairs of the world. It was a heavy investment for a small publishing company. Working from a small booth, we invited national authors to sing, talk with people, minister—and we launched two books in the AMC series.

Those 11 days were not easy... neither personally nor financially for W4. But daring to stand beside reputable publishers guaranteed visibility and brand recognition in the industry.

"We have the best resources for Christian artists," says Endo.



That year we also launched Rory Noland's *O Coração do Artista* (The Heart of the Artist). His book has already been translated into many languages, including Chinese. At an AMC worship event, we were pleased when he praised the quality of our edition.

More new titles are on the way: *Señor, ¿en qué puedo servirte?* (Lord, How May I Serve You?) by Marcos Witt; *Walk On, The Spiritual Journey of U2*, by Steve Stockman; *Imagine*, by Steve Turner; and others. We also have projects with some national authors.

Relationships

Brazilians are known for their joy and friendships. In our industry, for several years, a group of Brazilian publishers have forged close friendships—and it all began with an e-mail discussion list! After frequently discussing the challenges of working with literature, we started to visit about more personal subjects, such as church, ministry, family... and began getting together at a relaxed monthly meeting.

Though we are still competitors, we have become friends, even closer than brothers and sisters (Prov. 18:24).

In a large group, we have greater affinity with some people. In this case some of us decided to start the Feirão de Livros Evangélicos, an evangelical book fair.

Later, the same group began leading ABEC.

This constant exchange of experi-

ences among "lion-hunters" is part of our daily routine. Not a week goes by when we do not lunch with some publishers. We have become friends! In these lunches, besides having fun, we always discuss the market: new launchings, best-seller lists, training, movement of the market.

In 2003, at the annual assembly of our association, I was elected vice-president of marketing, a position that I left earlier this year after becoming ABEC's executive director. I am able to do this only because W4 is still a small publishing company, fighting for financial stability. Since February, I have spent half my time working with W4 and half with ABEC. This has given us the chance to understand the market, and all the links of the production chain.

For a small publishing house, training is essential, and our relationship with Cook has provided this. In September 2003 I had the privilege of participating in Cook's International Christian Publishing Institute for leaders of publishing houses. And in March, Ana Claudia, my wife, came to one on one marketing.

More than day-by-day

Beyond the day-to-day responsibilities of taking care of the finances, making payments, contacting shippers, developing marketing cam-



Ana Claudia Braun Endo works with W4 and with São Paulo's Methodist University publishing arm.

paigns, and maintaining relationships with authors, we have another priority. We want to maximize the creativity that the Lord gave us to face the lions that all small publishing company face: insufficient capital, deficient distribution, and lack of recognition in the market. We fight to keep our focus: in our case, to publish books in the area of the arts, music and praise.

As W4 grows and stabilizes, we want to keep good relationships with the people God has placed in our path, to grow professionally, to mature as Christians, and to testify of that the Lord has done in our lives. We want God to use our ministry to strengthen the Body of Christ in our part of the world!❖