



RUSSIA

TRIAD

Responds to Trends

Anna Schirochenskaya, director of Triad Christian Publishing in Moscow, Russia, describes trends publishers must address to meet the needs of readers in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and surrounding countries.

The church in Russia and in neighbouring countries has experienced dynamic development in the past decade. The number of Christian colleges and universities in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries has increased dramatically. In Russia, Ukraine and Belarus there are now thousands of new Protestant churches. The Baltic republics, where the population widely uses Russian language books, have also experienced substantial church growth.

There are four key trends Christian book publishers in Russia must address to stay in tune with the situation.

1. Missions

Russian and CIS churches are placing strong emphasis on missionary and evangelism work among Muslims and the general population, no longer relying on evangelism done by foreigners. This is one of the first signs of the development of a national evangelism movement. Missionary and evangelistic methods will change in

founded in late 1992, publishes evangelistic materials. Original titles include *We Must Enter As Children* and *An Ordinary Man. A Journey from Darkness to Light*, by Olga Goryainova, was originally published by Russian Resources Press. Titles for use in Muslim evangelism are under consideration.

Because Russian missionary efforts require solid apologetics, Triad publishes resources to help Bible students understand and respond to critics of the Christian faith. For example, some titles address perceived conflicts between science and faith: *Does God play Dice?* and *The Galileo Connection* are both translations of InterVarsity Press titles.

A leading secular newspaper in Russia published a review of *The Galileo Connection*, calling it "the best book about science and religion."

Other books in the Triad list discuss Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Effective apologetics books can be evangelistic tools to reach secular university students.

Triad works on videos too. This year, the staff will begin the Russian language dubbing for Moody Science videos designed to appeal to both children and adults.

Triad will address the controversial topic of rock'n'roll and religion in publishing a revised book by Steve Turner, *Hungry for Heaven: Rock'n'roll in Search of Redemption* (IVP). The Russian edition will be enriched by contributions especially for CIS readers. The book has a very clear Christian message, and serves as an unorthodox evangelistic tool.

2. Leadership

Many Russian Protestant churches, especially ones founded by foreign missions, are undergoing a stage of self-discovery and rediscovery, reevaluating which Western church practices work in the CIS and which do not. Triad's editorial plans include books dealing with rediscovering church and building strong national churches. Triad is also packaging its books as a "Good Shepherd's Library", a series of tools for pastors. The series will include books tackling everyday concerns such as counseling, church growth, spiritual warfare, preaching, church management and finances.

Many pastors in the CIS do not have an adequate theological education, but Triad is uniquely qualified to publish high-level books to meet the needs of church

Provide resource materials for believers involved in leadership and evangelism.

In a few years, CIS churches will be having the first generation of trained national pastors. More educated people and more students are attracted to the Bible and evangelical churches. Despite economic and political difficulties, in many cities, Russian Orthodox churches are undergoing renewal. At the same time, former CIS countries with a Muslim orientation have adopted a number of laws and regulations against Christian influences.

response to specific CIS situations. Publishers must realize the importance of providing resource materials for pastors, Bible students and lay people involved in evangelism and missionary work. Books for the Russian Church must enable Christians to learn principles of missionary work, the history of missionary movements, the mistakes and successes of previous generations.

Triad Christian Publishing, a non-profit Christian organization in Moscow

leaders. Triad's professional editorial staff holds 18 years combined experience in the Russian publishing industry. Much of the original work published by Triad is prepared for church leaders. For instance, *Good That You Asked*, by Maya Mikhaluk, is a handbook written specifically for home group leaders; *Module 101: Loving God* is a home group program leaders can use to teach new believers to follow Christ; and *Bible Overview and Study Methods* by John Hamilton provides teaching helps and a chronology of Bible events.

3. Discipleship

Church growth should be accompanied by deeper spirituality within the church. The feeding of spiritual milk is over for many Russian believers who aspire for a deeper spiritual understanding of their life in Christ. Devotional classics from outside CIS countries must be translated and published in Russian for the widest possible Christian audience.

Books on discipleship and devotional how-to's comprise the bulk of Triad's backlist. Still, potential is tremendous and therefore Triad's publishing plans for 2000 include a number of titles in this area. One of these, *Life in a Sex-Mad Society*, by Joyce Huggett, was originally published by InterVarsity Press. However, to adequately address Russian concerns, the English text was revised by Russian experts and some new chapters were added. In reading translations and devotional classics, publishers must carefully evaluate their usefulness for the believers in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic republics. Most

books must be heavily contextualized for this market.

Books on marriage and parenting are also a priority, and collaboration between Christian publishers and non-profit organizations addressing family issues, especially those utilizing twelve-step models, are on the increase. Along these lines, Triad has published *When I Grow Up ... I Want to Be An Adult: A Christ-centered Recovery Workbook for Adult Children*, by Ron Ross (originally published by Recovery Publications).

4. Fiction

The majority of the CIS population are avid readers, brought up on devouring plenty of fiction. One of the most effective tools for evangelism is Christian fiction. The most popular genres are fantasy, detective stories and children's books. Fiction is the most far-reaching product that publishers can offer. It appeals to Christians and non-Christians alike, as well as to their children.

In 1996, Triad added a print shop. Its state-of-the-art desktop publishing equipment and in-house printing machines allow designers to produce unique, attractive artwork suitable for children's literature. Its binding options allow for spiral, stapled and perfect-bound books.

Though Triad's backlist includes illustrated, full-color books for children, it will place greater emphasis on Christian fiction. Publishing plans for 2000 include three volumes of Stephen Lawhead's *Pendragon Cycle* series (Lion Publishing). In 2001, Triad will publish some Christian detective novels.

Responding to the need

Triad seeks to spread God's Word in Russia and neighboring countries. It does this through printed materials and other media by publishing quality products for Russian-speakers.

It is fully self-supporting, as the profits from its printshop are reinvested in new titles.

And publishers who want to reach the secular market must realize the need there is even greater. Christian book publishers in Russia must address key market trends to reach more people.❖

Christian publishers in Russia can attain self-sufficiency.

In Russia, a Christian publishing house, with proper marketing and distribution, may be able to attain self-sufficiency after it has about 120-150 titles of its own. Triad has approximately 50 titles, and more on the way. But, many more titles are needed to meet the needs of the Russian church in the areas of fiction, discipleship, missions and leadership.

Tracts for Nepal

Nepal Every Home Concern (NEHC) wants the gospel to reach Tibetan Buddhists in the Himalayas and Hindu and Muslim people groups in the lowlands of Nepal. Since 1998, NEHC has made gospel tracts available at no charge to church and mission groups that distribute the tracts through evangelistic campaigns. For example, in October 1999, Youth With A Mission workers distributed 15,000 NEHC tracts to four villages in the Khotang district of Nepal. In that outreach, almost 2000 houses received tracts and almost 12,000 individuals heard the gospel. Christian fellowships began in three of the four villages where tracts were distributed.

To provide free gospel literature, NEHC has sought funding from a variety of sources. 50,000 copies of the tract, *The Way to God*, were printed with financing from the World Missionary Press. This year the Nepal Bible Society will print 500,000 gospel tracts for NEHC, as well as a four-color gospel poster to clearly convey the message of salvation.

—Solon Karthak, NEHC, Kathmandu, Nepal