



Publisher's Day

Truth for a Postmodern Society

Thomas Bjerg Mikkelsen, publishing editor of Lohses Forlag (www.lohse.dk), a Danish book house, talked with freelance writer and editor Ann-Margret Hovsepian (www.annhovsepian.com) about the joys and challenges of getting Christian literature into the hands of his fellow Danes.

Lohses Forlag, located in Fredericia, Denmark, is the oldest Christian publishing house in the country. It was founded over 125 years ago as a publisher of spiritual books for laypeople. We have our basis in the Bible and in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church's articles of confession, which underline the importance of the Bible as

the Word of God and a Lutheran understanding of the sacraments. Lohses Forlag is owned by The Inner Mission, an organization of the largest revival movement within the Lutheran Church.

My job is to lead the company—which is quite small, with only 10 employees—and make sure that we produce 30 to 40 new titles

each year for all kinds of people. As publishing editor, a full-time position I have had since April 2003, it is my responsibility to ensure that in the future we will continue to make quality books to help people grow in Christ. Thankfully, I work with very talented staff who truly share my passion for Christian books.

I typically show up at the office, at The Inner Mission's headquarters, around 8:00 a.m. Every morning, all the people in the building gather for morning prayer and worship. This is the only sure thing in my workday. Normally I have two or three meetings during the day with, for example, authors, our sales department, a colleague or a designer. The rest of the time I do editing, work on our business strategy, deal with personnel matters and much, much more.

A keyword in my job is flexibility. In a job like mine you have to be very flexible.

I think it is a challenge for Christian publishers to

develop relevant literature for a postmodern world. My vision is to produce literature that gives people both inside and outside the Church an opportunity to hear and recognize the voice of the One who, through all our pain and the seeming meaninglessness of life, calls us to return to Him!

It is a huge privilege for me to work in Christian publishing. I work with so many interesting people who have one thing in common: Their greatest desire is to help people into a closer relationship with Christ. I find it very exciting and meaningful to collaborate with them to make Christ well known in our country.

The Danish market for Christian books is very small and I am afraid it will grow even smaller in the future. [Denmark's population is 5.5 million.] Today, more than 80 percent of all Danes are members of the Lutheran Church but only a minority, probably fewer than five percent, believe in the virgin birth. This situa-



tion causes great concern for the future of Christian publishing. We are challenged to find new ways of bringing the messages of our King not only to people outside the

provides companies with a competitive edge, but the story behind the product. In our marketing, therefore, we have to put a lot more focus on the context instead of the

Danish debate and to set the agenda in Christian issues. For this to happen, we need to be more aggressive in the marketing of our books and, in the future, we must show

book *The Heart of Success* [Hodder & Stoughton, 2002; 034078623X]. This is one of the best management books on the market. It gives seven “rules” to follow to ensure you balance your life and work and shows you how to identify and maximize your abilities.

In my opinion, it is important that we put the things that really matter—family, friends, and our spiritual life—first. Many of us strive for personal success. We shouldn’t! Our main goal should be to make a difference in people’s lives. ▽

Great marketing is not just ads; it is about storytelling.

Church, but also to those inside the emerging church.

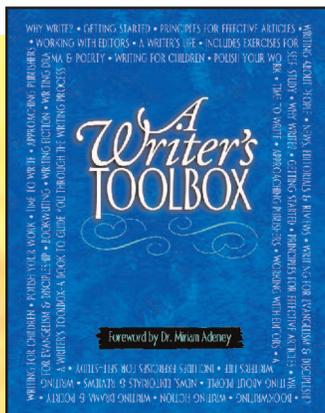
Another challenge has to do with the market. Today, it is not the latest product or the newest technology that

specific title. Great marketing is no longer a matter of appealing advertisements; it is about storytelling.

We have made it our aim to play a leading role in the

more willingness to run some great risks. I really hope we will succeed!

I highly recommend every leader and Christian publisher read Rob Parsons’



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