



Tyndale Español Invests in Bibles and Fiction

By Jorge Julio Gonnzalez

Jorge Julio Gonzalez directs [ChristianEditing](#), a company offering Christian editorial services and project development, both for traditional publishing houses and ministries as well as for individual authors. He is author of [En verdad te digo...](#) (Truly I tell you...), a well-known blog on Christian literature in Spanish. He is also the online editor of [LaBibliaWeb.com](#), the Spanish portal for United Bible Societies.

Although Tyndale Español began just two years ago, Tyndale House Publishers has more than 40 years of proven editorial excellence with Bibles, books, videos, audio products and other publications for the church and family.

With all that experience behind it, Tyndale Español is ever bolder in the immense task of trying to satisfy the spiritual needs of 20 million Spanish-speaking people in the United States, and 400 million worldwide, aiming at three foundational areas: Bibles, family topics, and fiction.

Andres Schwartz, director of Tyndale Español, was pleased to answer a few questions for this exclusive story for *CookPartners*.

Why Christian fiction?

“The fiction genre has not been explored much in the Spanish-speaking evangelical world. And so far it hasn’t had much success. I believe this is due to two main reasons: no publishing house has approached the market with a good fiction line, with good authors and a high-quality presentation. A few publishing houses have

done a little here and there, but none has invested enough in the fiction genre.

“The second reason,” continues Schwartz, “is that among Hispanic evangelicals there is still the view that fiction and Christianity are two words that cannot be linked. Therefore we are now in the process of showing pastors, leaders and the general public that there is a need for this literary genre of Christian fiction.

“There are more than 250 parables in the Bible,” the Tyndale executive affirms, “and the principal example of the use of parables, which are really fiction stories, comes from Jesus himself, what He taught us through the power of the stories He told. That is what we want to do with our books: teach Bible truths through the power of stories.

“The fiction genre,” says Schwartz, “is able to do certain things that are more difficult with other genres. We complain that many people in Latin America do not read. In the evangelical medium, especially, that is because there is no fiction literature. Young people and adults who are not in the habit of reading are not going to begin reading with a complicated book, a book on theology or doctrine or a Bible commentary. They will start with fiction.

“A baby does not start eating steak,” explains Schwartz, “but with milk. And though this is not a perfect comparison, it is clear that Christian fiction is easier to digest. It is also good for evangelism. Most pastors tell stories in their sermons by giving examples. Many unbelievers would not accept a Bible study book, but if we give

them an interesting story, this opens the door to evangelism. It is healthy entertainment that also teaches Bible truths.”

Is Tyndale Español planning to publish works of fiction by Hispanic authors?

“So far we have only published fiction that is translated from English, but we want to publish Spanish-speaking authors as well. As an intermediate step, we are publishing the works of bilingual authors who write in English, but who are closer to the Hispanic market and culture. It is not easy to move forward on this task, but we are advancing.

“Christian fiction has not had much success in the Hispanic market, but I believe this will change,” declares Schwartz.

“Tyndale Español is positioning itself to be the leader in this area.”

In terms of sales, what books have been Tyndale Español’s top performers so far?

“I would love to be able to say that every one of our books has been a publishing success, but the normal ratio is that 20 percent of your books will generate 80 percent of your income. In our case, two of the books that have surpassed our expectations are Dr. Gary Chapman’s *Las cuatro estaciones del matrimonio (The Four Seasons of Marriage)* and Randy Alcorn’s *El Cielo (Heaven)*.”

How do you select books in English to bring them to the Spanish market?

“Let me tell you how I choose a book, and not just any book, to translate. I ask myself the following questions:

- Does the book conform to what the Bible says?
- Does the author live what he [or she] teaches?
- If the book is published, will it meet the spiritual needs of people?
- Does this book fit with Tyndale Español’s focus?

- Does this book have the sales potential that is necessary to justify our publishing it?

In the case of a translation, the questions include the certainty that this book will speak to the Latin culture.”

Is there a great deal of competition between publishing houses seeking to obtain the Spanish rights for best-selling authors?

“Yes and no. Within the Spanish market, in certain categories there is a great deal of competition, but in others there is not. Christian living and leadership are two categories where everyone fights to obtain the best authors, but fiction is a category where, for now, we can select the authors and [the best] books without competition. That is within the Spanish market, because in the English market there is a great deal of competition for Christian fiction.

“When it comes to translations,” says Schwartz, “the competition for rights does not begin on the Spanish side. The main evangelical publishing houses in the United States work hard to attract and retain the best authors. The Spanish divisions of those publishing houses have the first choice in publishing book from those authors.

“This means that those Spanish publishing houses that do not have the backing of one of the U.S. evangelical publishing houses, and that depend on translated books, are at a disadvantage.”

Tyndale Español is working on a new Bible translation. What is special about this version? What stage is this work in?

“It is a version that corresponds to the New Living Translation (NLT), and it is being developed by Tyndale Español in partnership with the Luis Palau Association and Unilit. The Nueva Traducción Viviente (NTV) has been in the works for over six years and will be launched in 2009.

“It is the Word of God, and that is a great responsibility,” declares Andres Schwartz. “That is why the NTV Bible is subject to an extensive revision process with auditing panels and lay readers, so that we can be sure that the common reader understands it, that it does not sound translated but as if it had originally been written in Spanish, without regionalisms.

“A feature of our NTV, by the way, is that it is designed to be read out loud.

“In March 2008,” announced Schwartz, “the NTV will be presented first with the publishing of the Gospel of John, followed by the book of Romans at the end of the year. The NTV New Testament will be published in its entirety at the beginning of

2009, initiating the publication of the complete text.

“Tyndale Español will produce a complete Bible line,” he said, “from inexpensive Bibles to study Bibles with fine leather covers; youth Bibles, parallel Bibles, compact Bibles and large-print Bibles. But we are not just going to have a complete line of our TNV translation, but also of other important Bibles.

“We hope that the NTV will have the same impact for ministry in the Spanish-speaking world that the NLT has in its market. It has become one of the most popular translations of the Bible in English.”

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