Global 50 CEO Talk 2021: 
Consolidation, Consumers and Communities: 
Making Sense of the Big Business in Books (and the Small Businesses). 
Wednesday, 20 October 2021, 14.00 to 15.00 CET

The Global 50 CEO Talk 2021 will investigate deep transformative shifts that currently re-define much of the international book business, notably the strong push in mergers and acquisitions, and the consumer centric business strategies with two pre-eminent guest speakers: New York based investment banker Robin Warner of Oaklin DeSilva+Philips, and Klaus Driever of Munich based Allianz Group, one of the leading integrated financial services providers worldwide.

Having closed more than 50 transactions focused on trade publishing, edtech and education information services, and healthcare to companies that include Amazon, Scribd, IPG (Independent Publishers Group), Oracle, Wiley and Macmillan, Robin Warner will analyze recent consolidation perspectives for the international book industry.

As a digital expert with experience in insurance as well as in in publishing and book retail, Klaus Driever will talk about remarkably similar patterns of digital change across industries.

Building on the new “Global 50 Ranking of the International Publishing Industry 2021”, the editors of Bookdao (China), buchreport (Germany), Livres Hebdo (France) and Publishers Weekly (US). The hybrid event in partnership with the Frankfurt Book Fair and with ReBoot Books will be moderated by Rüdiger Wischenbart.

The CEO Talk will shed light on a wave of major mergers and acquisitions is re-shaping the global business of books. Bertelsmann’s Penguin Random House is acquiring iconic US publisher Simon and Schuster, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is picked up by Harper Collins, and Workman is taken over by French Hachette – which in turn has been viewed by the other large media group in France, Vivendi, in what is expected by observers to grow into an acquisition bid at some point next year.

The dynamics are not at all limited to the big consumer book houses. Finnish Sanoma, a specialist in digital education, has acquired the respective activities of Spanish Santillana. In Germany meanwhile, a staggering process of consolidation continues with the largest book retail chain integrating smaller regional players throughout the country. And in Great Britain, Waterstones’ James Daunt has announced new shop openings for next year.

The context in which the earlier invitation to Hachette Livre had been made has changed, and therefore the programming of the CEO talk has evolved, in agreement between the organizers of the event and Hachette Livre.

A cooperation of four leading trade media outlets, the CEO Talk traditionally features the Global 50 Ranking of the International Publishing Industry, which is researched by Rüdiger Wischenbart Content and Consulting, and has been updated every year since 2007, currently representing around 50 companies that each report revenues from publishing of over €150 million. The Global 50 Ranking is sponsored by Bookwire (www.bookwire.de)

At Frankfurter Buchmesse, the CEO Talk is a long-established tradition.

The full Global 50 Ranking will be available at www.wischenbart.com/ranking and the participating publishing publications.

About Klaus Driever and Allianz Group: Klaus is a successful and experienced digital entrepreneur. Already in the 90s he founded his first digital startups and brought companies like buecher.de (Germany) and bol.com (Netherlands) to success. As editor-in-chief and Managing director, he
worked for leading companies in the media, retail and book publishing industry like Hubert Burda
Media, ProSieben and Verlagsgruppe Weltbild. After holding position as CEO of the direct insurance
Allsecur AG, Klaus is currently responsible for the strategically relevant digital projects at Allianz
Germany. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Freiburg University in Germany and is also Alumni
of Trinity College Dublin. Klaus lives in Munich and is active in honorary capacity for InsurTechHub
Munich (ITHM) and for BITKOM, Germany’s digital association representing more than 2.700
companies of the digital economy.

The Allianz Group is a global financial services provider with services predominantly in the insurance
and asset management business. Over 100 million retail and corporate clients in more than 70
countries rely on our knowledge, global presence, financial strength and solidity. In fiscal year 2020
over 150,000 employees worldwide achieved total revenues of 140.5 billion euros and an operating
profit of 10.8 billion euros. Allianz SE, the parent company, is headquartered in Munich, Germany.
Source: en-2021-10-fact-sheet.pdf (allianz.com)

About the magazines and their editors participating at the Global 50 CEO Talk: Sanguo Cheng,
founder and president of Bookdao (China), Lena Scherer, deputy editor-in-chief, buchreport
(Germany), Fabrice Piault, editor-in-chief, Livres Hebdo (France), and Andrew Albanese, features
editor, Publishers Weekly (US).

About ReBoot: ReBoot Books (www.rebootbooks.org) is a series of book industry and will be
represented by Carlo Carrenho. Its sponsors include KNK (www.knk.com) and BOD (www.BOD.com)

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