Guided Journal Sales Rose 40 Percent in 2018, The NPD Group Says

This year is already shaping up to be another strong year for guided journal sales, which have grown by 30 percent from January through April compared to last year.

PORT WASHINGTON, N.Y. (PRWEB) May 13, 2019 -- Guided journaling is enjoying a renaissance these days. In fact, after eight solid years of double-digit growth, the overall journal category rose 27.6 percent year over year in 2018. Combined guided journal category sales—including both the self-help and activity categories—increased 40 percent, year over year, according to business information provider The NPD Group. Guided journals provide written prompts and design features, to steer the user toward the goal of the journaling exercise.

“The rise in journaling is an extension of the personal-growth and self-help trend that’s been heating up book sales for the last two years,” McLean said. “It parallels other health and wellness book trends that manifest readers’ desire for change and positive self-expression, including Whole30 and other diets, books about DIY home-improvement, aspirational travel, and personal organization, led by the phenomenal success of Marie Kondo.”

Continued strong journal category sales in 2019

This year is already shaping up to be another strong year for journal sales, as the category rose 30 percent year over year, from January through April 2019. In fact three times as many guided journals were sold during the first four months of 2019, as sold in all of 2012 when this trend was beginning. This strong growth was primarily driven by interactive journaling categories, including self-help, creativity, and guided journals in games and activity categories.

Keri Smith’s best-selling “Wreck This Journal” series was one of the early harbingers of the recent trend in guided journaling, bridging the coloring book phenomenon with the more recent trend in bullet journaling and other organizationally based journaling activities. The growth and expansion of the entire journaling category was kicked off by the success of Smith’s franchise, which has sold more than 3.5 million units as of April 2019. A new edition of Smith’s popular title was released with several variations in 2012 and embraced by major retailers, which in turn spurred other publishers to release similar interactive-creativity titles. Two of her titles remain in the top 10 best-sellers in 2019.

Rising tide lifts overall book sales and more

This rise in guided journaling tracks with the larger, sustained non-fiction growth trend in both the adult and juvenile categories in the U.S., which is helping offset recent losses in the adult fiction category and adding to the overall publishing industry’s 1.3 percent growth in 2018. In addition, sales of educational “how-to-journal” books for teens rose 11 percent year over year in 2018.

Book categories are not the only areas benefiting from the rise in journaling; however. The NPD Group’s Office Supplies practice has also noted strong 7 percent growth in sales revenue from appointment and planner books and organizers and an additional 7 percent growth in gel pens and other fine writing products.

About NPD BookScan
NPD BookScan is the gold standard in point-of-sale tracking for the publishing market, covering approximately 85 percent of all the print books sold in the U.S. through direct reporting from all major retailers including Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Walmart, Target, independent bookstores, and many others. Each sale of the more than 16 million units tracked on a weekly basis includes geographic information making it possible to identify key markets, map regional sales trends, and index the likelihood of purchase in 200 major metro areas. NPD BookScan is also the exclusive provider of ALR data for Barnes & Noble, Target, Walmart, and Sam’s Club to U.S. publishers.

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