Interview — Mitchell Davis

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Random House, Simon & Schuster, and even Jay-Z winning a traditional industry award. When we made the move to BiblioBoard, they were the first to sign-up.

We are also working with other national libraries such as the National Library of Chile, and National Library of Columbia, as well as smaller museums and historical organizations like San Diego Air & Space Museum, Louisiana State Museum, and the Southern Food and Beverage Museum. The list of third parties using BiblioBoard to create digital products is growing so quickly it is hard for me to keep up with it honestly. We solve a huge problem for these organizations.

ATG: Other parts of the BiblioLabs family include BiblioBazaar and BiblioLife. How do they fit into what you are trying to accomplish?

MD: Geez, clearly we have too many Biblios. No, really these are all part of the same process. BiblioBazaar was the original company name in 2007, and we have essentially erased that name from our branding. No one could spell it. BiblioLabs is the parent company (corporate name), and BiblioLife is the brand we give to our in-house created Anthologies to differentiate them from third-party organizations. Hope that makes sense, but all that to say that the whole company (30 of us) are all razor-sharp focused on BiblioBoard, which is a product that we think is going to radically disrupt the current publishing and media landscape.

ATG: We know that building your own business takes a lot of energy but you’ve got to take a break once in a while. What do you do for fun? Is there an activity or hobby that really puts you into relaxation mode?

MD: I was lucky to find yoga in my early 20s. In many ways it, along with music and nature, saved my life. I still use it as a way to re-integrate experiences (business and otherwise) and stay focused. I am also lucky to be married to a phenomenal person who is a yoga teacher and nutritionist, and she keeps me healthy. She is also my creative partner, and we have a small production company called Organic Process. We produce really inspiring documentary projects, several of them award-winning. I also play in a Widespread Panic cover band called 54 Bicycles and try to go bodysurfing or SUP boarding whenever I can.

ATG: As someone who lives in Charleston, what would be on your “must see” and “must do” lists for the first time visitor to the Charleston Conference?

MD: I love this city. I still love riding bikes and exploring the backstreets of Charleston even though I have been doing it for 20 years. I think just hitting the city on a bike with no plan is the best way to experience it. Also, seeing some Jazz music. Charleston has a jazz history that pre-dates New Orleans by 40 years, but no one has really told the story well (at Organic Process we worked on a documentary that contributes to fixing that in the future). The music scene is incredible.

ATG: Where do I see the industry in five years? Goal I hope to achieve five years from now:

MD: I want to see BiblioBoard flourish and reach its potential over the next five years.

Most Memorable Career Achievement:

Most Memorable Career Achievement: Selling BookSurge to Amazon and playing a part in the successful integration was fantastic. Also, winning the Publishers Innovation Award along with the British Library on our first digital product is a big one. But, spending the last 18 months building BiblioBoard and launching it with the amazing team we have now trumps both of those.

Goal I Hope to Achieve Five Years From Now:

How/Where Do I See the Industry in Five Years: Libraries will be competitive with Apple and Amazon in terms of user experience. Rapid development of new types of user interfaces and sharing ecosystems will allow them to remain competitive over time. This is a key component of the library remaining relevant in the digital future. Once the user experience is competitive, the library will become a sort of Groupon; pooling the resources of its constituents to do group media buying and better leverage tax dollars, tuition, and membership fees (for private libraries, etc.).