

## The Abebooks Story

Abebooks, a private company based in Victoria, British Columbia, began as a mere scribble on a notepad. In 1995, Keith Waters, then a government web programmer, and his wife Cathy were running a used bookstore in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Cathy often spoke of how difficult it was to find certain out-of-print titles for her customers. She knew the books were available in bookstores somewhere, but how to find them?

A short time later during a rather dull business meeting, Keith began to scratch out a solution, one that combined books, databases and the Internet. He sought the help of Rick Pura, a senior programmer and database administrator, and together they came up with the "Advanced Book Exchange", a collective of independent booksellers united by the Internet through a massive searchable database.

Abebooks.com was launched in 1996 with four bookshops and quickly found immediate success by providing booksellers with an affordable means of selling to a worldwide market. Today, over twelve thousand booksellers list over 45 million titles on Abebooks. The Abebooks team has grown to 100 people working hard to pursue new customers and develop new markets. The acquisition of Germany's JustBooks in 2001 has resulted in the development of Abebooks.de in Germany, Abebooks.fr in France and Abebooks.co.uk in the UK. These sites feature language-specific customer service and purchasing features while still listing all the books offered by Abebooks booksellers.

Prestigious organizations such as Forbes Magazine ("best of the best in the rare book category"), the New York Times ("a true Internet success story"), and The Guardian newspaper ("a dotcom chapter of success") have recognized Abebooks' efforts.

Through strategic partnerships with Amazon, Barnes & Noble, eBay and other global resellers, Abebooks has become the most important virtual supplier of used books. With offices in Canada and Germany and services in French, German and English, Abebooks has become the world's leading source for out-of-print and hard-to-find books. And it all began as a scribble on a notepad.