

# NEWBOOKS Solutions and MVB Surpass Competition with New VLB-TIX Service

German-Speaking Booksellers, Publishers and End-Users Benefit from VLB-TIX Digital Book DiscoveryTool; MarkLogic Integrates Data so VLB-TIX Can Improve Service



## Company Overview

NEWBOOKS Solutions is one of the German publishing industry's leading software houses. Services provided to the industry include a new title alert and approval plan system, ONIX import and export systems, converter tools, shop-, platform-, library- and eProcurement systems development. By combining the title data for all new publications contained in the NEWBOOKS and VLB (German books in print) catalogues, the company's innovative product VLB-TIX can provide customers with comprehensive enriched and timely (marketing) information on new and forthcoming titles. Users - especially libraries and corporate customers - can also receive new title information on all new titles published in German and English in the German-speaking countries as new title alerts, as part of an approval plan and integrated in their eProcurement systems.

### CUSTOMERS

MVB,  
NEWBOOKS Solutions (partner)

### INDUSTRY

Information Provider,  
Media & Publishing

### CHALLENGES

Complex data,  
Disparate data sources,  
Search,  
Enterprise features

### FEATURES

Data integration,  
Search,  
Security

### CUSTOMER USE CASE

Heterogeneous data integration,  
Content delivery

### BENEFITS

Streamlining the book trade supply chain, enhancing online marketing and promotion, improving customer experience, completing and the merging of large quantities of data

## Challenges

NEWBOOKS Solutions and MVB (a subsidiary of the German Booksellers and Publishers Association) wanted to create a new revenue stream and open up a new market, improving the customer experience by digitizing published new books, previews and an ordering system with a complete new service, VLB-TIX. To accomplish this goal, the developers at NEWBOOKS required an infrastructure that could:

**Integrate and Manage a Wide Range of Data Sources and Formats.** NEWBOOKS needed to integrate data from its database and the VLB database, which together contained titles from 23,000 publishers and diverse data types such as bibliographic book metadata, and shared buyers' notes. NEWBOOKS also had to incorporate a large number of publishing partners into the process with different workflows and various data formats: the import of XML-based ONIX (the standard transport format for metadata in the book trade); format with enrichment through title bestseller lists; and exports from publishers' own in-house CMS/ERP systems. Lastly, in order to enable booksellers to use the system to place direct orders, NEWBOOKS had to provide interfaces to the content management and ERP systems of participating booksellers.

**Offer the Highest Levels of Customer Service.** NEWBOOKS processes large quantities of imported data and continuously has to communicate incremental updates quickly (such as when publishers report a change in a title's availability). The data also has to be easily discoverable without the need for time-consuming synchronization.



*“After realizing a relational database wouldn’t serve our needs, we discovered MarkLogic and the database surpassed our expectations. Our chief database developer was extremely enthusiastic about the range of functions and also the API. He was always able to find the right functions for any given task, whereas in earlier relational database projects we’d have had to do some re-development. After the initial success of VLB-TIX, we look forward to continuing to innovate on the MarkLogic database.”*

— Stefan Schwedt, CIO and board member at NEWBOOKS Solutions. As part of this role, software architect and head of development for VLB-TIX

**Support Future Growth with Enterprise Features.** The team also knew the existing three million documents within the databases would probably rise to 30 million within a year with internationalization so it required flexibility to easily and quickly incorporate this future information. With its growing content and customers, NEWBOOKS wanted to be able to scale affordably. For such an advanced project, NEWBOOKS also required support for ACID transactions, government-grade security, reliability and high availability.

**Provide Agility.** NEWBOOKS requires an agile infrastructure that allows the team to make complex and spontaneous changes quickly in order to remain competitive, such as expanding VLB-TIX to include functionality for publishers’ sales representatives. This explicitly is reflected by the fact that it’s not necessary to develop complex programs for the import of new data sources or formats.

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## The Solution

After attempting to build VLB-TIX on a relational database, the team rapidly realized the MarkLogic® database was more ideally suited to the task. The IT team was particularly drawn to the flexibility and agility of the MarkLogic database, as well as its data import and search capabilities and enterprise features. Today, the MarkLogic database runs VLB-TIX on-premise and contains new title announcements from all of the 23,000 publishers listed in the central German Book catalogues from NEWBOOKS and VLB.

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## Why MarkLogic?

With the help of the MarkLogic database, NEWBOOKS and MVB launched VLB-TIX to wild success. VLB-TIX is the platform for high quality, productive and up-to-the-minute communication about new books that goes beyond title listings or printed new books catalogues. At the same time, the system allows for the demand-driven and targeted selection of new title announcements and provides a hitherto unknown abundance of information. VLB-TIX represents a leap forward in the quality of information passing between publishers, booksellers, journalists, bloggers, institutional customers (libraries and corporate customers) and readers, and revolutionizes targeted purchasing in the new books jungle. Specific MarkLogic database benefits include:

**Rapid Industry Adoption.** Citing the system’s speed, search, alerting and enterprise capabilities, NEWBOOKS and MVB have seen widespread adoption of VLB-TIX in the German-speaking market. Additionally, by involving the industry in the development process, the industry effectively developed “its own” system, which led to a high degree of acceptance by users.

**Competitive Advantage.** According to NEWBOOKS, VLB-TIX’s unsurpassed and optimal search speed, especially across such large quantities of data and search results, has been a major factor in the success against competing products.



**Reduced Time to Value.** In relational databases, data import and conversion is time-consuming and complex. MarkLogic's database, with native XML support, reduces time, complexity and errors during data integration so VLB-TIX can get information to customers faster than before. Also, thanks to MarkLogic's integrated search engine, data can be made discoverable without the need for additional time-consuming synchronization. NEWBOOKS also cites the agility of the MarkLogic database in helping to remain competitive and deliver high levels of customer service as specifications, functions and workflows can be constantly rethought, adapted or even completely changed quickly and easily.

**Foundation for Future Growth.** VLB-TIX will be made available to end consumers and will also host other book-related products such as music, movies, sheet music, paper, and stationery. Additionally, VLB-TIX will provide users with market research data and sales reports. VLB-TIX is also available in English, and NEWBOOKS and MVB are currently looking to expand the system beyond the German-speaking market to countries such as the UK, Scandinavia, the Benelux and France.

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**MARKLOGIC CORPORATION**

999 Skyway Road, Suite 200 San Carlos, CA 94070 | +1 650 655 2300 | +1 877 992 8885 | [www.marklogic.com](http://www.marklogic.com) | [sales@marklogic.com](mailto:sales@marklogic.com)