American Booksellers Association

ANNUAL REPORT — 2025 —



Uncle Bobbie's Coffee & Books, Philadelphia, PA


Wild Rumpus, Minneapolis, MN

Helping Indie Bookstores Thrive for 126 Years

OUR MISSION

ABA works every day to help independent bookstores across the US survive and thrive.



Andover Bookstore, Andover, MA

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LETTER
from the CEO



ABA was honored to support our members this past year, and I'm proud to present ABA's 2025 Annual Report.

2025 was another banner year for independent bookstores. ABA's membership grew by 19%, and 605 new brick-and-mortar, pop-up, mobile, and online stores opened across the US. The majority of stores also reported year-over-year increases in sales for 2025 over 2024. These numbers are part of some incredible momentum for the indies; ABA membership has grown 151% the past 6 years.

2025 was also the most challenging year for indies on record as our members faced rising costs, tariffs, the impact of ICE and the National Guard in communities, discriminatory laws, the impact of climate change, book bans and challenges, and free speech harassment in addition to the perennial challenges of thin margins and Amazon's monopoly and monopolistic chokehold on our industry.

Despite these challenges the independent bookstore channel grew, sales were up, and the stores continued to do the important work they do in the world: countering school budget cuts, book challenges, and national book legislation that threatened the right to read, deterred access to books, and attempted to silence LGBTQIA2S+ and BIPOC stories; providing an antidote for the loneliness epidemic; championing diverse and debut authors; contributing to the local economy; and putting books in readers' hands that could change their lives.

"ABA's membership grew by 19%, and 605 new brick-and-mortar, pop-up, mobile, and online stores opened across the US."

For our part, ABA continued in our mission to help independent bookstores survive and thrive. Our foundation was strong — a committed and diverse team; a clean audit from an independent auditor; 80% of our resources dedicated to programming; all while on budget — and we exceeded our Key Performance Indicator benchmarks with increased participation in our Winter Institute, the book industry's largest conference; ABACUS, ABA's financial benchmarking survey and report; sales reporting to BookScan and regional/national bestseller lists; Batch, the industry payment platform that frees booksellers up to sell books; Banned Books Week; and Independent Bookstore Day, our annual celebration of independent bookstores. Stores also continued to benefit from ABA's emphasis on financials: financial education, ABACUS workshops, one-on-one financial coaching, and publisher advocacy efforts like Indies First.

In 2025 ABA expanded our business discounts for members, revamped our education for Institutes to better serve members' needs, added a concierge to BookWeb.org to help members find what they need, launched the first IGNITE, a pre-con for BIPOC booksellers ahead of Winter Institute, and PATHWAYS, a pre-conference gathering for BIPOC booksellers ahead of Children's Institute; featured an exhibit on the history of Black-owned bookstores at Wi2025 in Denver; and renewed our important partnership with League of Women Voters.

ABA's free expression team was busier than ever in 2025. We greatly expanded our anti-censorship advocacy, supporting freedom to read bills (in Colorado, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, and Rhode Island), helping quash censorship bills (in Florida, Texas, New Hampshire, and elsewhere), offering a total of 18 free expression

education sessions over 12 months (half in-person, half online), supported dozens of stores facing intimidation and threats, and produced new resources like our curation policy and staff training and customer privacy policy guidelines.

On the advocacy front, ABA continued lobbying for the Credit Card Competition Act, legislation that would end the Mastercard/Visa duopoly by allowing competitors into the market to help lower swipe fees. We also supported federal ADA legislation to stop frivolous lawsuits aimed at small businesses that force them to settle for upwards of $20K. ABA is asking Congress to pass a law that clarifies ADA website regulations while also providing businesses with a grace period to fix compliance issues before facing litigation for damages. In addition, ABA continued its antitrust efforts. These efforts are ongoing and can't always be shared publicly, but they included meeting twice with the Federal Trade Commission Chair's office to discuss how price discrimination is impacting the bookselling industry.

IndieCommerce 2.0, ABA's e-commerce platform for members, reached full momentum in 2025, with 90% of IndieCommerce 1.0 stores having successfully migrated by year-end. We continued to enhance the platform's design and functionality, which included continuing to deploy security features to counter an increase in bot activity. We also helped stores optimize their e-commerce presence through one-on-one support and dedicated sessions at Winter Institute 2025 — efforts that ultimately culminated in a 21.52% increase in IndieCommerce sales over 2024.

"It all adds up to a kind of alchemy, a magic that independent bookstore communities and customers know and love, as do we."

ABA continued to be a lifeline for members faced with challenges. In 2025, we helped individual stores one-on-one with reorganizing debt; facing harassment; dealing with copyright disputes; quelching frivolous ADA compliance lawsuits; and liasoning with publishers on behalf of our members.

All of this was accomplished thanks to the incredible team of people who work for ABA. We continue to be motivated and inspired in our work by the amazing work of the independent bookstores we support. We visited 160 independent bookstores across the country and watched hundreds more online, witnessing firsthand their creativity, individuality, authenticity, resilience, and passion. It all adds up to a kind of alchemy, a magic that independent bookstore communities and customers know and love, as do we.

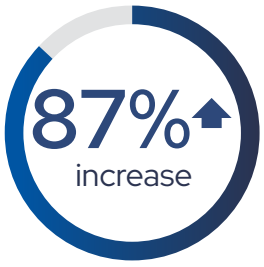
Looking forward, our industry is facing existential threats and disruption. But the history of independent bookstores is filled with stories of disruption and threats. We are confident that the passion, purpose, innovation, and resilience of independent bookstores not only ensures their long-term survival, but represents the future we all need. ABA will continue to mitigate risks and explore opportunities. We are honored to serve and support independent bookstores in their vital work.

—Allison K Hill, CEO

INDIES BY THE NUMBERS

The State of the Independent Bookstore

605
bookstore businesses opened in 2025



In stores opened from 2025 versus 2024

In case you missed it, the number of independent bookstores is on the rise. The growth in the indie channel continued in 2025 in record-breaking numbers. It's clear that indie bookstores are vital to communities across the country. Indies are not just the past: they're the present and the future.

45
Black-owned

399
storefronts

23
online

81
BIPOC-Owned

106
pop-ups

77
mobile

299
bookstores planning to open



In stores planning to open from 2025 versus 2024

31
Black-owned

38
BIPOC-owned

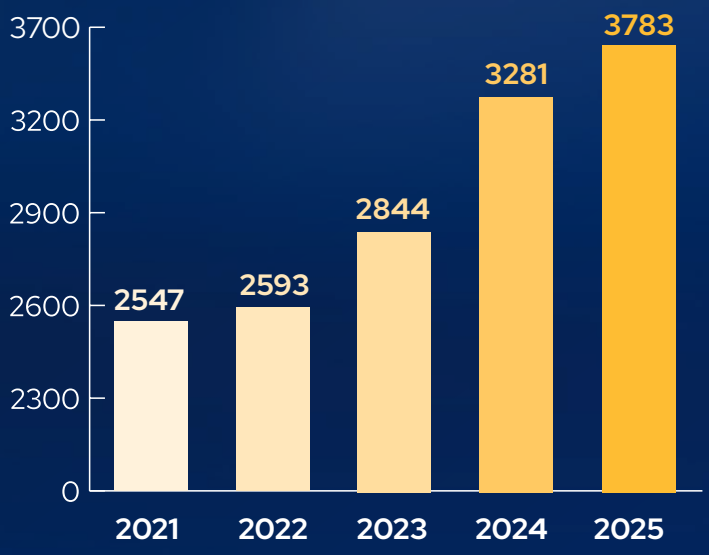
65
bookstore businesses closed in 2025

Note: all members do not share their racial identity.

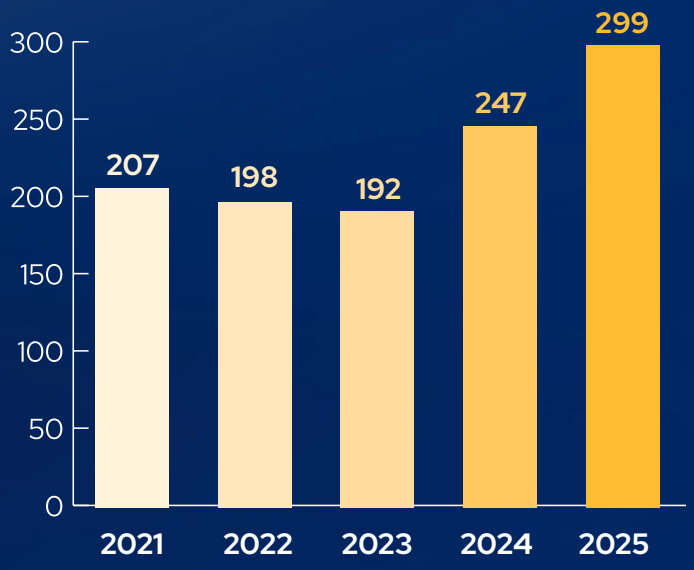
ABA BY THE NUMBERS

Membership

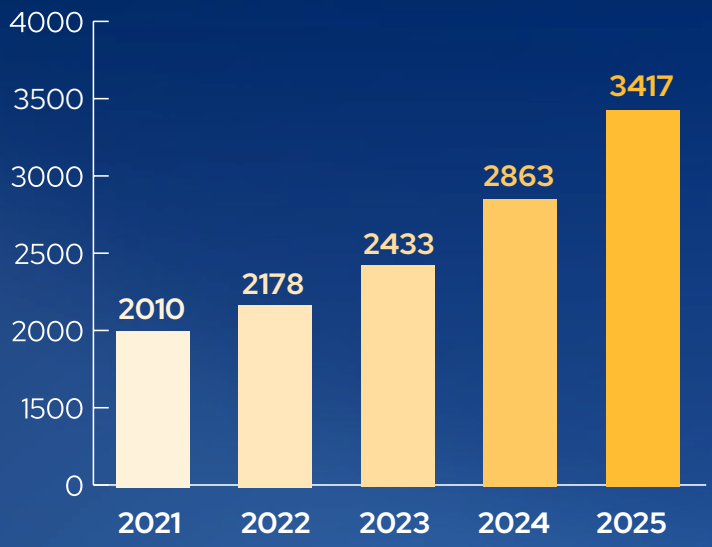
Member Locations



Provisional Members



Bookstore Companies



INDIES BY THE NUMBERS

ABACUS

ABACUS benchmarking is a vital tool, helping to support improved financial performance and long-term sustainability for ABA member bookstores.

ABACUS is ABA's annual survey compiling member sales and financial data. The survey results give ABA members invaluable insight into trends, the fiscal health of our membership, and external industry factors impacting independent bookstores.

ABA uses this data to inform programming, support our members, and best allocate resources. Stores that submit to ABACUS gain access to aggregate data for the year. This translates to better benchmarking and data-driven financial decision making. All participating stores receive a "report card" for their business with key performance indicators.

A total of 504 stores (601 retail locations) reported results for 2024*, the highest number of participants to date.

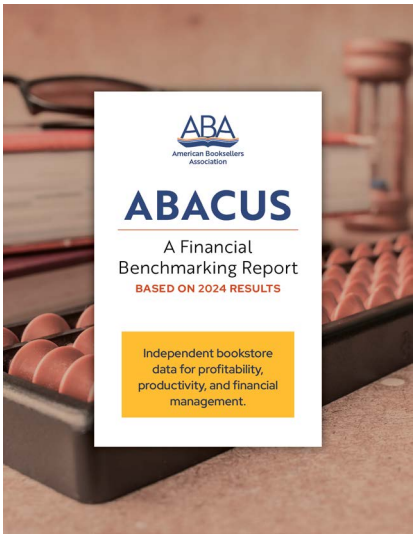
Overall, 2024 national results show that despite challenges, indie sales increased by 5.8% year-over-year, and net profit margin increased from .6% to 1.3% - a positive indication for the channel. Gross margin — a measure of revenue net of cost of goods sold — hit a ten-year high: cost of goods sold dropped by almost a full percentage point from the prior year, as member stores took more advantage of promotions and discounts, and expanded higher-margin non-book offerings, boosting profitability.

*Note: ABACUS covers the previous calendar year.

601
retail locations

504
bookstore companies

5.8%↑
increase from previous report



Education, Inspiration + Support: Strengthening Our Community

What makes an independent bookstore Indie? If you've ever visited an Indie, you've felt it: The place down the street with the beloved cat and a bookseller with the best staff picks. The bookstore-cafe with incredible lattes and the best art books. The bookstore with the latest plushies, totes, and candles that you need to complete your holiday shopping. The pop-up at the farmer's market sharing profits for the day with a local community organization. And the place you go when you need a good chat and to feel less alone when the world feels large and isolating. Independent bookstores do it all.

Independent bookstores are the heartbeat of their communities. They champion literacy, center joy against the world's hardships, and make their neighborhoods a better place.

Bookstores offer an alternative to online algorithms, multi-billion dollar investment companies, and cookie cutter neighborhoods. They offer authentic shopping experiences that align with customer values with an emphasis on community. They do all of this with one of the smallest profit margins in any industry. Nimble, agile, adaptive, they seek other streams of revenue to supplement the thin profit margins of books, carrying local art, games, and toys and making space in their stores through bars, cafes, and coffee shops. They use resources and participate in partnerships, like with Bookshop.org and Libro.fm. They form ties with their community by offering support in a variety of ways like food pantries, voter registration, book drives, pet adoption, and community organizing workshops.

Every day, independent bookstores go beyond business. They are community anchors, partners, and investors in their neighborhoods and communities.



Little Charity Book Truck, Minneapolis, MN

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

Winter Institute

FEBRUARY 23-26, 2025

Winter Institute is an annual gathering of independent booksellers, authors, publishers and others whose work makes selling books possible. Winter Institute offers industry-wide community, education, and networking in a different city every year.

Each time ABA hosts an Institute, we have an **Economic Impact** on the local community. **Our Economic Impact report from Visit Denver** brought us incredible news. Congratulations to all Winter Institute 2025 attendees on contributing **$3,948,611.09!**

ABA saw record attendance at the 21st annual Winter Institute in Denver, Colorado. Held February 23–26, ABA hosted 938 booksellers, 39% of whom were first-time attendees.

Winter Institute began with IGNITE: A BIPOC Bookseller Pre-Con, which included networking and education for attendees who identify as Black, Indigenous, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), Latina/o/x, Chicana/o/x, Hispanic, and BIPOC. Keynotes included Ocean Vuong (whose book *The Emperor of Gladness* was selected for Oprah's Book Club shortly after the Institute and the May 2025 Indie Next List), Brian Selznick (author of the May/June 2025 #1 Kids' Indie Next List title *Big Tree*), and a panel on the legacy of Black bookstores led by Char Adams (former NBC News reporter and author of the Indies Introduce title *Black-Owned: The Revolutionary Life of the Black Bookstore*).

Book-industry expert Brenna Connor of Circana also presented at the Institute, providing booksellers with data that proved the positive impact independent bookstores have on their community and customers. Education panels focused on providing bookstores with the skills needed for their stores to thrive: financial management, store and personnel operations, buying and inventory, and customer service. Education celebrated the diversity of business types. New members consist of romance, pop-up and mobile stores that reflect the needs of communities.





Registration sold out in under **1 hour**

938
booksellers



$3.9M
economic impact on the local community









COMMUNITY

Independent Bookstore Day

APRIL 26, 2025

We hope you made it to the biggest bookish party of the year! Celebrated annually on the last Saturday of each April, Independent Bookstore Day is a major holiday in communities around the country. Sales, indie bookstore exclusive items, book crawls and industry events all make up the celebration.

Indie Bookstore Day 2025 was the largest national celebration of independent bookstores to date with 1,645 stores participating from all 50 states and US territories!

Comedian and *New York Times* bestselling author, Trevor Noah, was the 2025 Independent Bookstore Day Ambassador. Noah shared, "It's an incredible honor to be chosen by ABA as its Bookstore Ambassador. Books are expansive and infinite worlds — even as a child they helped me envision lands and lives, real and imagined, far beyond anything I could see with my own eyes. Bookstores are where readers can go to find these magical portals into other universes and other minds. But they do more than that. Independent bookstores connect readers to ideas and stories, and they are the rare physical place in our communities where we can connect with each other."

ABA's comprehensive roadmap for Indie Bookstore Day, the **Indie Bookstore Day Planning Guide**, was a highlight in 2025's preparations. The guide features a month-to-month checklist, a how-to on throwing the best bookish parties, and marketing tips for Indie Bookstore Day.

Indie Bookstore Day 2025 also ran counter to Amazon's Big Book Sale day, turning the celebration into a consumer advocacy campaign featuring assets and a celebration of shopping indie and local.



Bronx River Books, Scarsdale, NY



ILYSM Books, Richmond, VA



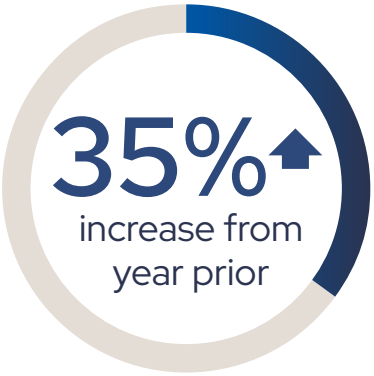
Courtney Wallace, Program Director of Independent Bookstore Day at Bookery, Cincinnati, OH



Little Boho Bookshop, Bayonne, NJ

1,645

stores participating from all 50 states!





Nefer Bookcafé, Bronx, NY



Split Rock Books, Cold Spring, NY

COMMUNITY

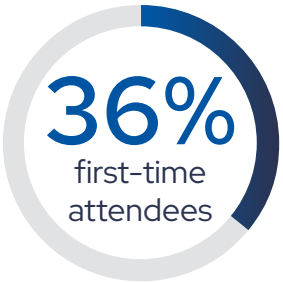
Children's Institute

JUNE 11-14, 2025

If Winter Institute is the Winter Olympics, then Children's Institute is definitely the Summer Olympics: same education, same community interaction and same commitment to the business of bookselling, but with a costume contest, drag karaoke and much better weather. Children's Institute is held every June in a different city across the country and celebrates children's books, authors, and booksellers.

ABA hosted 313 booksellers, 36% of whom were first-time attendees for the 13th annual Children's Institute in Portland, Oregon, held June 11–14. Three full days of educational programming featured keynotes by new Reading Rainbow host Mychal Threets and National Ambassador for Young People's Literature Mac Barnett, as well as education focused on financial management, children's reading levels, and free expression rights. The Institute ended with a rousing karaoke party hosted by Drag Story Hour.

313
booksellers



ABA also hosted a virtual encore of a highly-requested Children's Institute session, "Bridging the Gap In Teen Lit," to meet the needs of our booksellers.







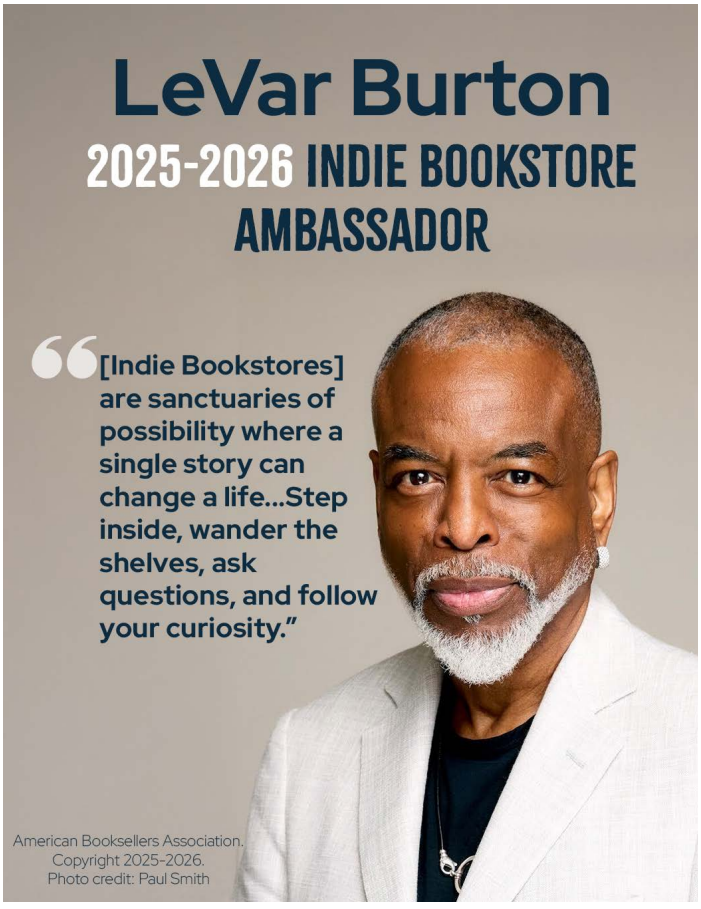


Indies First

NOVEMBER 29, 2025

2025 marked the 13th anniversary of the national campaign in support of independent bookstores in conjunction with Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving. LeVar Burton, a lifelong literacy advocate, actor, director, producer, and podcaster served as ABA's Indie Bookstore Ambassador and continues to serve as Indie Bookstore Day Ambassador for 2026!

Social media content creators played a pivotal role in this year's campaign. The campaign saw high engagement online and more readers using the Indie Bookstore Finder! Creators encouraged shopping at "indies first" through the whole weekend and shared book recommendations from the Indie Next List and Kids' Indie Next List.





COMMUNITY

Summer/Fall Regional Trade Shows

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER 2025

Fall means the open road for many ABA team members. This year, ABA was thrilled to offer two education sessions at every regional fall show!

One education session, "Measure What Matters: 5 KPIs for Turbulent Times," focused on the key performance indicators bookstores should look at to buoy their business during uncertain times. Using data from ABACUS, booksellers learned how to improve metrics for sales per square feet, sales per labor hour, inventory turn, average dollars per transaction, and gross margin. The presentation included case study data from member stores and actionable steps, including a KPI tracking template, that stores could immediately use after the show.

Another session, "Navigating Attacks on Your Store," covered best practices for stores facing harassment, intimidation, and threats because of their curation of books and events, because for many bookstores, preparedness can mean the difference between an uncomfortable encounter and a viral internet pile-on or physical protest of a store. Attendees walked through preparedness principles and a sample incident, followed by Q&A discussing recent incidents in stores.

In addition to these education sessions, at New Voices New Rooms (NVNR) 2025 in Atlanta, ABA's Associate Director of Advocacy Philomena Polefrone moderated the NVNR opening keynote "Heroes on the Front Lines of Book Banning," introducing authors Angie Thomas and Nic Stone, booksellers Cristina Nosti and Ali Rudolph, and representatives from DAYLO, a student free expression organization from South Carolina.

The ABA team met with regional boards, executive directors, attended workshops, addressed member concerns, met with booksellers, publishers and other industry folks in addition to visiting 62 member bookstores (and purchased an uncountable number of books and raffles).



The Well-Read Moose, Coeur d'Alene, ID



Ujamaa Community Bookstore, Indianapolis, IN



NEIBA 52nd Fall Conference, Manchester, NH



New Voices New Rooms, Atlanta, GA



Boulder Bookstore, Boulder, CO



Heartland Fall Forum, Indianapolis, IN



Book Bird of the Avondale Estates, Avondale Estates, GA



Lovestruck Books,
Cambridge, MA

Advocating for Independent Bookstores

Advocacy

Behind the scenes — on Zoom calls, in offices of the US Senate and the US House of Representatives — ABA's Advocacy Division has been actively working to make changes to help independent booksellers across the country.

Indies are facing big challenges: escalating swipe fees, ever-changing and misguided tariff policies, and Amazon's anticompetitive business practices. Our advocacy in 2025 directly tackled these issues.



Booksellers meeting with members of Congress for a Fly-In regarding swipe fees

The Advocacy team traveled to Washington, DC, to meet with Federal Trade Commission Chair Andrew Ferguson's office, and brought receipts from booksellers concerning Amazon selling books at or below cost. Advocacy rallied behind booksellers in Essex, Vermont, who were battling a proposed Amazon warehouse, and this included meetings with the offices of Senators Sanders and Welch in Washington, DC, to call attention to the issue.

Advocacy kept up the fight for swipe fee reform at both the federal and state level. Federally, ABA championed the Credit Card Competition Act (CCCA), a bill that would mandate the largest banks to require transactions from at least two unaffiliate networks (e.g., Mastercard/Visa and Shazam).

Advocacy also created checkout flyers to give consumers an idea of how much of each credit card purchase gets funneled to large banks, helping booksellers inform customers and share information on reaching out to lawmakers. ABA also participated in Fly-Ins in Washington, DC, in support of the CCCA, bringing in booksellers to meet with Senate offices.

Beyond swipe fees, the Advocacy team met several times throughout the year with multiple Senate and House offices in Washington, DC, to discuss a wide range of issues important to small businesses — such as Association Health Plans, and finding ways to stop frivolous ADA website compliance lawsuits. An 11-member ADA coalition formed to help advocate for a legislative solution to the issue.

At the state level, Advocacy worked to try to stop Mastercard and Visa from charging processing fees on the sales tax and the tips portion of sales, meeting with legislators in

Advocacy

states like Maryland, South Dakota, and Utah to get legislation introduced to prohibit swipe fees on sales tax and tips.

The Advocacy team worked hard to track and respond to various regulatory and legal issues. This meant continuous monitoring and updating booksellers on changes to constant and poorly thought out tariff policy changes. The team addressed the United States Postal Service proposal to remove parcels as a shipping option from the Dominant Marketing List, a change that would significantly increase shipping costs and times for bookstores. Other work included releasing guidance on the US Treasury's requirements for business ownership information (BOI) reporting, and working with sponsors of New York Gift Card legislation to ensure protections for small businesses.

Advocacy sets many of its priorities based on face to face conversations with booksellers. We met with members to talk about advocacy and free expression issues during Winter Institute, Children's Institute, and the regional fall trade shows. Through our weekly column in *Bookselling This Week* and direct email blasts, Advocacy kept members informed, engaged, and organized on topics from health insurance Open Enrollment to legislative actions nationwide.



Booksellers Woods Prael of Gunzil and Bowser Children's Bookstore, Jeff Peters of East End Books, and Demetrius Frazier of Resist Booksellers pose in the Halls of the Capitol.



Booksellers Tamara Gatson of the Book Cellar and Heather Jeziorowski of Little Shop of Stories wait outside a Congressional Office before meeting.

Free Expression & ABFE

Booksellers led with grit in 2025 against increasing censorship efforts nationwide. Since 2021, book bans have become a crisis, totalling 23,000 bans during that period. School and library bans have threatened authors' ability to speak and make a living while making it harder for already marginalized voices to find their audience — bans targeting people or characters of color were at an all-time high along with silenced LGBTQIA2S+ voices, and non-fiction literature saw a precipitous and worrying increase in bans. School board meetings, state legislation, presidential executive orders, and proposed federal legislation all contributed to the increase in bans. ABA's Advocacy team and American Booksellers for Free Expression (ABFE), ABA's free expression initiative, worked in coalition with our allies to help booksellers meet the moment no matter where censorship appeared.

Legislative Advocacy

There was no shortage of bad laws introduced in 2025, and we helped booksellers speak up when legislation threatened to come between readers and their books. The Advocacy team tracked legislation, communicated with legislators, and organized turnout to committee hearings to support freedom to read bills in Colorado, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, and Rhode Island, including an advocacy day in Albany and collaboration with grassroots groups. Still, our focus was on stopping misguided bills that would make the book ban crisis even worse. We gave booksellers the information and guidance they needed to speak out, writing letters, making calls, and testifying in committee hearings. In Texas especially, this made the difference, stopping a civil liability law that would have buried stores in frivolous lawsuits. We tracked bills in over a dozen other states, helping defeat a strong majority of the year's book censorship bills.

ABFE's Support and Education

When bookstores wanted to stand up for their local librarians, teachers, and for themselves, ABFE was there with resources and assistance. We helped stores navigate online and in-store harassment, helped advise their local advocacy, and directly interceded with local governments, helping more stores than ever and spreading the word that stores should report incidents. (Stores whose curation or events have been targeted with intimidation or harassment should reach out to abfe@bookweb.org.)



EDUCATION, INSPIRATION + SUPPORT

Free Expression & ABFE

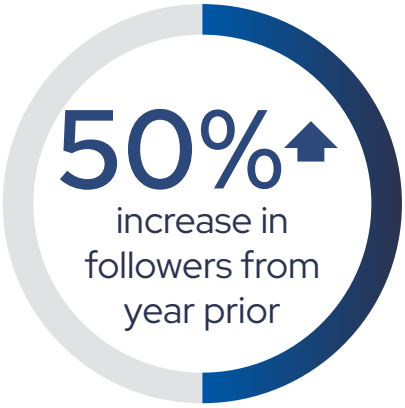
ABFE redoubled education on free expression, book censorship, and the benefits of diverse literature in multiple formats: webinars, online guides, and in-person education at Winter Institute and Children's Institute. We offered education sessions to hundreds of booksellers nationwide in 18 distinct sessions, half online and half in person. Supporting and building on this education, we released new resources on curation policies and staff training to bolster free expression preparedness.

With our bookseller members and organizational allies, ABA was a plaintiff in litigation to defend booksellers from invasive government censorship laws. In Texas, we kept mandated book ratings from going into effect as the case continued to move through the District and Circuit Courts. In Arkansas, we kept overbearing restrictions on store displays from being mandated statewide as that case also moved through the courts. ABA and ABFE also joined amicus briefs to support anti-censorship litigation wherever possible and within our mission.

ABFE's social media saw a 50% increase in followers in 2025 (that's over 2,000 highly engaged advocates and counting). We chatted with our fellow booksellers and free expression advocates, spread the word about things like the Banned Books Week kits and assets, raised awareness of upcoming events, and hyped the work of our allies and members.

2,000+

highly engaged advocates



EDUCATION, INSPIRATION + SUPPORT

Banned Books Week

OCTOBER 5-11, 2025

Every Banned Books Week, the literary community speaks out against censorship, and ABA annually provides members resources and education to help bookstores do their part. This year we sent out a record number of Banned Books Week kits (over 900 nationwide) and hosted our third annual Banned Books Week Display Contest. Leaning into the national theme "Censorship Is So 1984," we helped stores push back against censorship with awareness-raising displays. In addition, we contributed to public education events at the Brooklyn Public Library and online.

900+

Banned Books Week kit member store sign-ups



Books & Company, Oconomowoc, WI
Display contest winner



Banned Books Week event at the Brooklyn Public Library

INDIECOMMERCE

Driving Digital Success in 2025

In 2025, ABA continued to empower independent bookstores in the digital marketplace through its dedicated e-commerce platform, IndieCommerce. This not-for-profit e-commerce solution designed specifically for booksellers is a robust, enterprise-level platform. Its development emphasizes the role that online sales play in the modern bookselling industry, underscored by the dramatic shift in consumer behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2025, the IndieCommerce team successfully migrated almost all of the remaining IndieCommerce 1.0 stores to the 2.0 platform. The team also continued to add functionality, improve design, and mitigate security risks this year. The enhanced platform equips independent bookstores with the tools necessary to thrive in today's hybrid retail environment. It provides a more integrated experience with features like Local Store Inventory (LSI) integration to drive "URL to IRL" (In Real Life) foot traffic, handles 14 million pre-loaded titles via ONIX and Ingram feeds, and actively protects stores from modern digital threats like malicious bot attacks and AI scraping.

Performance data showed significant growth in 2025: stores experienced a 21.52% sales increase in 2025 compared to 2024. The platform also facilitated a surge in community gathering, with IndieCommerce event ticketing growing by 33% (from 17,000 to 23,000 tickets).

These successes reinforce ABA's strategic aim to bolster the e-commerce capabilities of its members. ABA remains dedicated to continuous improvement and innovation, operating a dedicated in-house IT department for its stores and offering 24/7 support for critical outages. With an e-commerce solution dedicated to the success of indies, ABA helps its members remain resilient as booksellers in the digital age.







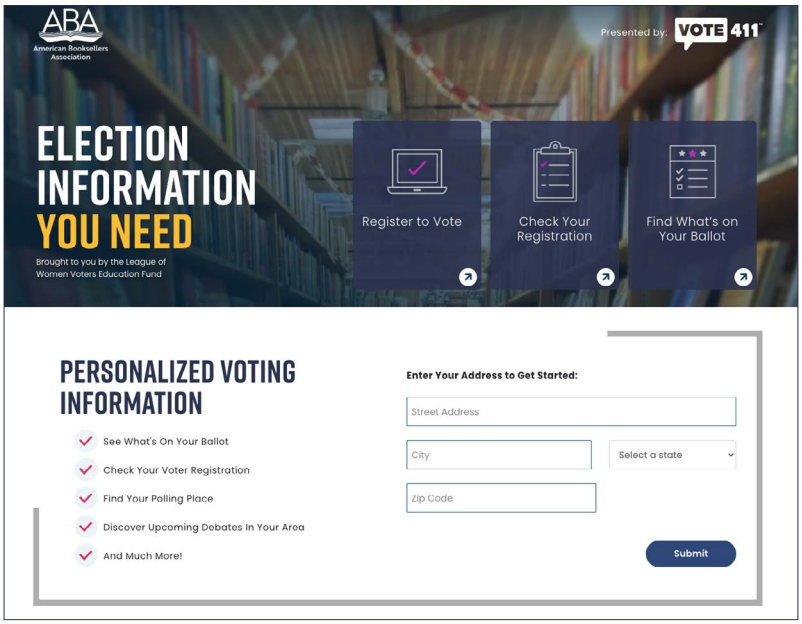
White Whale Bookstore, Pittsburgh, PA

Partners, Social Media + Marketing

Partners

League of Women Voters

So many decisions are made for independent bookstores during elections. Both local and national elections have far reaching effects. To help our members prepare for those elections American Booksellers Association (ABA) and League of Women Voters (LWV) renewed their partnership in 2025. The continued collaboration was part of ABA's member and community campaign, "Get Out the VOTE," which aimed to equip independent bookstores to engage with voters.



This partnership is directly related to our advocacy efforts. Most decisions that affect member stores take place on the local level. By helping our members effect change in their local communities, they can address book bans, taxes and other laws at the local level. Civic engagement benefits everyone.

Independent bookstores and state and local Leagues have collaborated in the past at the local level on nonpartisan civic programming, including promoting the League's online voter information tool, VOTE411.org. This partnership included hosting a webinar and distributing collateral materials at the regional fall trade shows.

National Book Foundation

ABA and the National Book Foundation continued our collaboration again this year. We partnered to promote Summer Reading to readers of all ages.



Bookshop.org

The launch of e-books on Bookshop.org marked a major intiative on behalf of independent bookstores. ABA was proud to be an investor in this project.

REPORT

Social Media

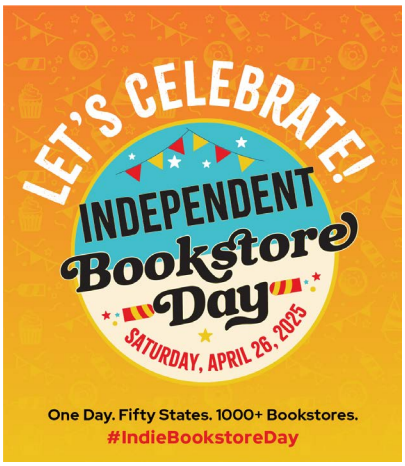
In 2025, we broadened our reach by promoting the Indie Next and Kids' Indie Next Lists (ABA initiatives where booksellers read and recommend their top choices — one of the many values of the Indie Channel) on ABA social media platforms, creating simple and sharp graphics and assets for booksellers to use, tapping into the latest trends to keep our content relevant, adding in more advocacy and calls to action, and expanding the reach of Indie Bookstore Day and Indies First.

Overall, it was a strong year for our active accounts and our content.

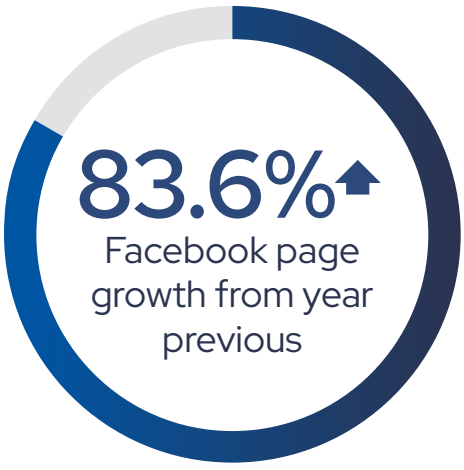
- The ABA Instagram account reach was up 176.5% versus 2024.
- The ABA Facebook page grew 83.6% from the previous year.
- The top marketing campaigns utilized by booksellers and engaged with on various platforms were Indie Bookstore Day, the quarterly Marketing Calendars, and the Winter Campaign: Shelf Care.
- The Let's Celebrate (Indie Bookstore Day) post alone reached over 300,000 people.

300K+

Indie Bookstore Day "Let's Celebrate" reach on social medis







RESOURCES

New + Continuous ABA Support

Here's what's new from 2025:

Education

- Measure What Matters: 5 KPIs for Turbulent Times
  - Presented live at the Fall Regional Association Conferences
  - Virtual Webinar
- Webinars:
  - Back to Basics: Edelweiss Tools in the New View
  - Bridging the Gap in Teen Lit – A Ci2025 Reprise
  - AABB New York Book Ban Briefing with Philomena Polefrone

New Business Services/Discounts for Members

- Indigo Maiden
- Apply Stickers
- DeleteMe
- The Democracy Security Project
- Morgan Swank Studio
- MVB US (Pubeasy/Pubnet)
- Punchkins
- R.I.S.E Cards
- Scattered Slime

See BookWeb.org for the full list for member discount, services, and partners.

Marketing Assets

- July Counter Prime: Be A Part of Our Community, Not Just a Data Point
- First Day of School: Back to Books
- Seasonal Holiday Campaigns
  - Fall Campaign: It's Giving
  - Winter Campaign: Shelf Care

- October Counter Prime: Decide Where to Make Your Next Book Purchase
- LeVar Burton Indie Bookstore Ambassador
- Here's What Happens When You Shop Indie

ABA Perennials

Education

- Winter Institute: Wi2025 Denver
- Children's Institute: Ci2025 Portland
- "Welcome to Bookselling" Onboarding Resource
- Developing a Bookstore Business Plan
- Suggested Steps to Opening a Bookstore

Virtual Networking

- Affinity Group Meetups
- New Member Series
  - Store Ownership 101
  - Intro to ABA Benefits
  - ABA Partnerships
- ShopTalks
- Dedicated ABA Children's Group ShopTalks
- ABA Open House/ABA Board Office Hours

RESOURCES

New + Continuous ABA Support

Marketing Campaigns & Assets

- Independent Bookstore Day
- Indies First
  - Support Indies First posters and social media graphics
- Indies Introduce
- Indie Next Program
  - Indies Next List
  - Kids' Indie Next List
  - Reading Group Guide
  - Indie Gift Guide for Genre Lovers
  - Matchbook Marketing Email Program for Indie Customers
- Indie Bestsellers List
- Marketing & Social Media Calendar Handouts
- Campaign to Shop Indies and not Algorithms
  - #SBADumpAmazon
- Seasonal Holiday Campaigns
  - Jólabókaflóð fall campaign
- Valentine's Day: Your Happily Ever After Starts Here
- Get Out the Vote campaign
- Best Books for Young Readers catalog
- Veterans Day Member Independent Bookstores graphic
- Building an Indie Future: A.B.C. Campaign
- James Patterson Holiday Bookstore Bonus Program
- Boxed Mailing
- Preorder Calendar
- Buzz Books Editors Panels
- IndieBound posters
  - Eat Sleep Read Local
  - Snack Nap Read

Supporters: Thank-yous

Thank you to all of the **publishers, authors, poets, illustrators, wholesalers**, and **business partners** who made ABA's work possible in 2025.

A special thanks to **James Patterson** and **Book Industry Charitable Foundation (Binc)** for their generous support of booksellers this year.

Bookshop.org®

And thank you to Bookshop.org for their continued support. In 2025, Bookshop.org helped generate around $9 million for indie bookstores – $5.1 million came from direct affiliate sales, and another $4 million was shared from the central earnings pool. They also helped spread the word about the importance of independent bookstores in communities and in the world. ABA is proud to be a Bookshop.org investor and we thank them for their continued efforts on behalf of our members.



American Booksellers Association

For more information on ABA programs, contact info@bookweb.org.

For press, contact press@bookweb.org.

View consolidated financials on BookWeb.org.

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