



Book's Face

"People matter"

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Edmund Austigard, Chair of the Norwegian Publishers Association

Edmund Austigard's background was largely in the areas of technology and finance before he made his way to publishing. Having worked since the internet was new on digital business models and content he spent four years managing international M&A projects for Telenor, a telecom company, before overseeing the establishment of the Norwegian distribution database

for e-books. After joining the publishing house Samlaget as CEO/Managing Director in 2011 he chaired the Freedom of Speech Committee of the Norwegian Publishing Association (PA) from 2015 to 2019, when he became chairman of the PA. Austigard is also a keen author, and has written and published four novels.

1. Can you please describe your job in 100 words?

Someone is always writing. Someone is always reading. Some voices are kept quiet looking for a way out. Something is always happening. Something that could become literature and change the way we think and act. Managing a publishing house is arguably the most challenging and at the same time most enjoyable job one can have.

2. What did you want to be when you were five years-old?

My father was a bus driver. Those days safety came down to the driver, not seat belt and security measures. The countryside busses had a front engine covered by an isolated case. I was sitting on that case admiring how

the Scania bus scaled the steep mountains of west coast Norway, how my father was mastering the small and winding roads, stopping to put on chains on snowy and slippery ground, passing remote villages and scattered farms, providing a lifeline. I wanted to become a bus driver.

3. Can you describe a typical working day?

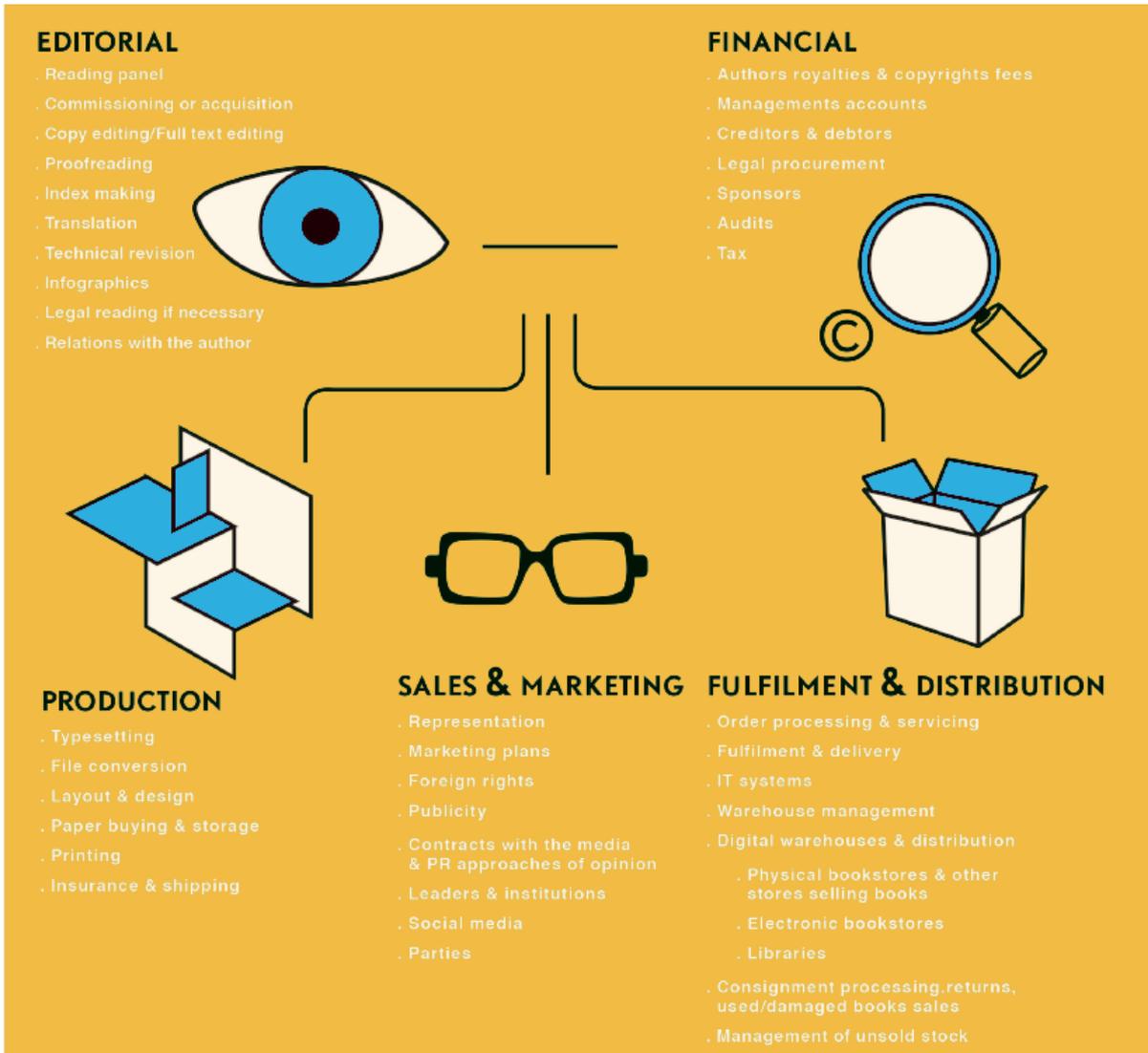
One where you get to do none of what you planned to do. On the other hand, I have the pleasure of coping with daily surprises. Like bumping into an author and spending the next hour exchanging views on trout fishing in alpine surroundings, and perhaps how that relates to literature.

4. What would happen to the book if you were not there?

There would have been an essential gap to fill in football literature. Aspiring young goalkeepers in Norway would not have had the book Ørjans keeperskule, written by Ørjan Nyland himself, at their disposal. Nyland is now keeper in Premiere League for Aston Villa, he was formerly with FC Ingolstad 04.

5. What is the most exciting /striking thing that ever happened to you in your job?

Publishing Jon Fosse in his mother tongue.



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