

Rianne the recycler

“Freeing myself from books gives me satisfaction”

Rianne has always been an avid reader and book acquirer. She acquires books from flea markets, garage sales, and library sales. She isn't a collector though, at least not in the sense of someone who seeks out first editions, signed copies, and so on. She simply likes to read a lot and has acquired a lot of books.

About two years ago Rianne started to think she had too many books. She didn't see herself re-reading most of them, and no one else in the house seemed interested in reading them either. Besides, they were one more thing collecting dust in the house, and the space they were taking up could be put to better use. So Rianne set up an account on Amazon to sell books she was no longer attached to.

Over the next several months, she noticed newer books sold faster and fetched a better price than old ones, especially paperbacks. If the book was priced at \$1.50 or less, it really wasn't worth her time and effort. Rianne expressed this concern to a friend. He recommended that she sign up for BookMooch. Her friend thought that it would be a good way to get rid of her books that were not selling on Amazon.

Rianne has been a BookMooch member for 18 months now. She's been thrilled with the service, as it not only allows her to get rid of books, but she can get books for free in return.

Rianne not only mooches books for herself (she's finally completed her collection of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot novels), but she also has been able to get books for her husband, an ardent reader of espionage novels and true crime, textbooks for her children, and instructional books for her knitting club. Rianne has even sold books she's mooched, and since BookMooch links into Amazon's book database, it's made it easy for her to monitor two online inventories. She has even formed email friendships through her BookMooch transactions. The social dimension of BookMooch has probably been her biggest—and most pleasant—surprise.

Complementing her online book sales with swaps through BookMooch, Rianne has succeeded in recycling her inventory of books. BookMooch plays a pivotal role in the flow of books in and out of her home, though it's not the only tool she uses.

User Goals

- Getting rid of books in her house she and her family no longer want to read
- Getting rid of books that aren't selling or aren't worth selling on Amazon
- Clearing space for more books
- Sending her books to someone that will appreciate and enjoy them
- Obtaining more books to read, essentially free of charge
- Finding books for friends and family

Reading Activity

- **Reads:** Approximately 4 books per month
- **Favorite author:** Agatha Christie
- **Favorite genres:** Mysteries, Non-fiction
- **Acquires books from:** BookMooch, flea markets, garage and library sales
- **How she gets rid of books:** Sells on Amazon, swaps on BookMooch, gives to friends and family

BookMooch Activity

- **BookMooch member for:** 18 months
- **Logs in:** At least five days a week
- **Average mooches per week:** 2
- **Mooches books for:** Herself and family
- **Leaves feedback:** Always
- **Listing behavior:** always describes book condition as accurately as possible
- **Sending activity:** Sends 2+ books/week and within 48 hours of accepting mooch



Personal Information

- **Age:** 44
- **Position:** Technical writer
- **Hobbies:** Knitting, soccer mom
- **Personality:** Opinionated, giving, conscientious
- **Location:** San Diego, California, USA
- **Marital status:** Married
- **Children:** Two, 16 and 19
- **Education:** BA, English

Rianne

supporting data from the survey and diary study

General findings

- **Mostly female.** All diary study participants were female. Most BookMooch members are female.
- **Mid 30s-40s.** The majority (27%) of diary study participants were 35-44.
- **# of children varies.** 46% have children 15-years-old and older.
- **Well educated.** 47% have an undergraduate degree. 29% have a graduate degree.
- **Moderately experienced with BookMooch.** 49% have been a BookMooch member for one year or more. 51% have been members for less than one year.
- **Regular reader.** 43% read 3-5 books per month.
- **Logs in regularly.** 63% log in everyday.

On giving away books

- “I am happy a) to give somebody something they want. b) to earn more points. c) to get unwanted books off my shelves.”
- “I’m happy to share my books with others...it’s good to know that they are being used and not just sitting on my personal bookshelf collecting dust.”
- “I love to share a book that I really enjoyed. I love to get rid of a book that I didn’t enjoy and know that I’m turning it into another book without spending money....”
- “I like knowing the book will get more use than sitting in my house. It also feels great to be part of recycling/reusing versus consuming.”
- “Very satisfied that the book is going to someone who values it and will enjoy it.”

On postage

- “I think [the postage] expense is minimal compared to what I used to spend buying books. Or, at least, if it’s comparable, I get a lot more books for the money! When I sell books on Amazon or a local second hand shop, I consider that my mooch-mail money, so I don’t have to think of it as an expense....”
- “I am very judicious about accepting mooches from outside the United States because the cost of postage. However, I have had three happy circumstances where I was able to send to other countries (3 books in one package to the Phillipeans, 1 small book to Sweeden and 1 small book to England). I try to keep my average per book (per point) postage at under \$2.50. So far I’ve been able to do it.”
- “If I’m working steady and have a reliable source of income, I don’t worry too much about it. If I get a lot of international requests all at once, sometimes I have to ask people to wait. But usually the requests are spaced out just enough that I always have the money to ship them. Shipping has gotten a little high, but I still figure I’m saving a ton of money in the long run, I would not of been able to afford to buy all the books I’ve been luckily enough to get from bookmooch, especially some of the heavier texts we have used for homeschooling, and some books that just can’t be found here in the States.”
- “As postage goes up, it does become a little harder to afford to send books out, especially since I have so many requests. I used to send internationally, but the lastest rise in postage ended that, as most of my books weigh a pound or more.”

On feedback about a mooch

- “Comments like “great shape, fast, speedy, perfect, he loves it” were nice to hear. But there are still people who don’t write a single word—not even thanks—and that somehow disappoints me a little.”
- “Glad to hear they received the book—they just said thanks.”

On selling books through Amazon

- “[I] have a lot of books that I sell on Amazon, but I also had a lot that were unable to sell on Amazon - it is not worth it to me to list a book for \$.01, pay for shipping, and still let Amazon take their commission. So I sorted my books - all books that I can list over \$1.00 go on Amazon, the rest go on Bookmooch.”
- “They were not worth much on Amazon, but they were on people’s wishlists on Bookmooch....”
- “Not worth selling in terms of time and effort (and price received) on Amazon”
- “They were worth almost \$20 each, so it pays my BookMooch postage for awhile! They were also bigger, heavier books, so Amazon credits \$3.99 towards the mailing, where BookMooch gives the same point whether you have to pay more to mail it or not...”
- “I sold some on Amazon to recoup some of the money I paid for them...”
- “They were worth more on Amazon and it helps me pay my mooch postage”
- “... Not worth selling on Amazon in terms of time and effort and remuneration (selling for <\$1.50)”
- “One book was a title that the library could use, the rest I sold on Amazon to make money to buy more books!”