

## **Media information - For Immediate Release**

### **Barefoot Books terminates relationship with Amazon**

Barefoot Books, the award-winning independent children's publisher, today announced that it has terminated its relationship with Amazon in North America and the UK in order to focus on extending its offer via its flagship Studios, website store, and rapidly growing Ambassador network of home-based social sellers.

The publisher, which celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, has created innovative flagship Studios in Concord, Massachusetts and Oxford UK, and a boutique in New York City's world-famous toy store FAO Schwarz. Its Studios are thriving creative arts and family centres, which showcase and retail the complete Barefoot collection. Its Oxford Studio won Junior magazine's award for the best family café in 2012 and was recently shortlisted for the 2013 'Children's Independent Bookseller of the Year' by the Bookseller Industry Awards.

Barefoot Books confirmed that it will continue to sell to the education market and to independent book and gift shops, and that existing relationships with wholesalers would be unaffected.

The withdrawal from Amazon follows the publisher's 2006 strategic decision to stop selling via the big book chains in North America: Borders and Barnes and Noble. The year Barefoot Books pulled out of the chains in the US its sales increased by 40%.

Barefoot Books also confirmed that its Ambassador social selling community is now hundreds strong and is growing at a rate of 16% a month across North America, continental Europe and the UK.

Barefoot Books' Co-founder and CEO Nancy Traversy said, "As entrepreneurs, we admire Amazon and its ground-breaking accomplishments. However, Barefoot's commitment is to diversity and to grassroots values; to 'small is beautiful'. Living Barefoot is about creating a sustainable model which enables individuals to build small-scale businesses; it's about the vitality of intimate relationships and the power of connection. We believe our future success lies in growing our network of independent Ambassador distributors – a community where personal connections matter, where we can bring our books to life for families, and where we can stay true to the values that have defined our business since we started running Barefoot from our homes 20 years ago."

Traversy continued, "The challenges we have faced doing business with Amazon over the years are similar to those we experienced selling to the big box retail chains. Personal relationships with buyers are rare, particularly when you're a small publisher. Our books become commodities that are usually heavily discounted and Amazon often starts selling them before we have even received our advance copies from the printer. This way of doing business undermines the efforts of our fantastic community of Ambassadors and independent retailers."



Traversy confirmed that the Barefoot Books Studios are a key part of its strategy to connect with local communities and grow its grassroots following. The Studios have lively events calendars filled with nearly 100 family fun programs each month, including storytelling, music, arts, crafts, African drumming, yoga, puppet shows and much more. She said, “Our Studios in Concord and Oxford are real-life ‘hubs’, places where families can play, paint, read, explore, make friends, look at the world from different points of view, and discover new talents. We also use the Studios as laboratories, trying out new ideas and products, and getting direct feedback. Many events that happen here are replicated by our Barefoot Books Ambassadors in their own communities.”

Barefoot Books Ambassador Barbara Saunders Sims, said, “As a long-time Ambassador, I’m very pleased that Barefoot is no longer doing business with Amazon. All of my customers love to, and actually prefer to, shop for books in their own community. I know each of my customers well and have worked hard to create wonderful, lasting relationships with them. This is the way book buying should be.”

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**About Barefoot Books** Barefoot Books is an award-winning, independent children’s publisher with offices in Cambridge, MA, and Oxford England that specializes in carefully crafted books, gifts and digital content to help children on their journey to become happy, engaged members of the global community. Since 1993, Barefoot Books has created more than 500 books and complementary gifts for children that use timeless stories and captivating illustrations to encourage discovery, creativity and global awareness. The company’s goal is to create a world-wide network of story-lovers who believe in the importance of imagination in children’s lives. Barefoot Books are available on their website, through their grassroots community of independent home-based Ambassadors, in their Studios in Concord, MA, and Oxford UK, its boutique in FAO Schwarz, NYC, in schools and libraries, and through carefully selected retail partners. Visit [www.barefootbooks.com](http://www.barefootbooks.com).

**About the Barefoot Books Ambassador Program** The Barefoot Books Ambassador Program is a grassroots, community-focused approach to bringing the company’s award-winning, multicultural books and gifts to local families and schools. Ambassadors, who come from many walks of life and different backgrounds, run their own independent, home-based businesses selling Barefoot Books and offering their communities all kinds of simple, yet effective ways of supporting the imaginative development of children. Anyone can join – the company provides both hands-on and on-line training and support, with regular workshops and conferences that enable Ambassadors to play to their own creative strengths. Some become fantastic storytellers; some devise fabulous arts-and-crafts projects; some focus on sharing straightforward advice on what works best for them as parents. Ambassadors are invited to follow their own interests, translating imagination into action in all kinds of contexts: in schools, at farmers’ markets, at cultural festivals, in local community centers, at home parties and in partnerships that they develop with non-profit organizations. More information is at [www.barefootbooks.com/sell-barefoot](http://www.barefootbooks.com/sell-barefoot).