

THE INDEPENDENT

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SMALL BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE WEEK

Barefoot has made big steps to help smaller booksellers



*Nancy Traversy chief executive
Barefoot Books*

“ We’ve just celebrated our 20th anniversary – we founded the business in 1992 with help from the Business Expansion Scheme to encourage small business development.

“Since then, we’ve published more than 600 books and tried to stay true to our belief that there were too few books for children with an emphasis on wonderful storytelling and beautiful artwork.

“Our approach has always been very different. From very early on, we tried hard to connect with parents and teachers, rather than the middlemen of the book trade.

“I don’t think it’s necessary for our business to sell to the big chains. We’ve stopped trading through Amazon. We had no human interaction with the company and it was often selling our books at huge discounts, which undermines the independent booksellers who have always been our partners.

“Social media makes it far more possible for us to connect with our customers. We’ve begun experimenting with the digital market. Apple recently picked its 10 best apps of all time; we were hugely proud that our Barefoot World Atlas app was one of them.”