

Keyword of E-Commerce Platforms in 2024: Driving Growth

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Looking back at 2024, China's book retail market showed signs of sluggish growth amidst intensifying industry competition. Low-price battles among e-commerce platforms prompted some publishing institutions to unite in protest. Live streaming and short videos remained pivotal sales channels for books, with more publishers and book companies investing in broadcasting and collaborations with influencers. Platforms like Douyin (China's TikTok) saw robust growth in book sales, posing significant threat to niche e-commerce platforms specializing in books.

This article examines the market foundations, sales data, key areas of focus, annual book rankings, and marketing strategies of Dangdang, Douyin, Tmall, and JD Books in 2024.

Dangdang: 500 Titles Generate £46.94 Million in Annual Sales

On January 8, Dangdang, a 25-year veteran of the book market, hosted the “Dangdang 2025 Publishers Summit”, reviewing its achievements and market changes in 2024 while outlining priorities for 2025. According to Dangdang's data, shelf-based e-commerce remains the foundation of growth, showing stable performance. Among Dangdang's external platform sales, growth was generally rapid, except for Douyin, which remained stable. Exam-focused and literature categories aligned with overall market trends but grew at rates exceeding the industry average, with youth literature and anime books seeing double-digit growth.

In 2024, Dangdang's top 500 titles generated ¥4.2 billion (£46.94 million) in sales, with e-commerce contributing 80%. Notable exclusive titles include the *Young Academic Tour* series (“少年游学”), which was sold over one million copies, and *Poetry Tours for Youth* (《少年诗词游》), which reached over ¥10 million in gross revenue. Translated exclusives like *The Magic School Bus* (《神奇校车》) and *Genius School* (《天才学校》) also performed exceptionally well. Building on a strong base of children's book consumers, sales in primary and secondary school supplementary materials grew by 53%.

Dangdang also capitalized on the explosive growth of “live streaming+short video” sales. From mid-2023, it began investing heavily in traffic-driven book promotions. In 2024, its investment in traffic-driven books increased by over 50%, with more than 1,000 titles selling over 10,000 copies each. Over 40,000 titles were actively sold, and growth rates exceeded 100% for several suppliers.

Recently, Dangdang released its “2024 Best Books Year-End Rankings,” including categories like bestsellers and new releases in fiction, non-fiction, and children's books.

Douyin: Annual Book Sales Exceed 730 Million Units

On January 10, Douyin released the *2024 Douyin E-Commerce Book Consumption Report* (《2024 抖音电商图书消费报告》), which shared insights into the past year's book consumption on Douyin, covering book sales, user purchase preferences, and publisher development. The report showed that Douyin's e-commerce platform sold over 730 million books in total, with an average of 3 million books sold per day. The number of users purchasing books grew by more than 130% year-on-year, and over 50 publishers saw their livestream sales doubled. Popular new books in the livestreams included *To the Windy Wilderness* (《去有风的旷野》) and *Letters to Humanity* (《人间信》).

Douyin continues to leverage its advantage in full-

spectrum interest-based e-commerce, connecting quality books with readers through livestreams, short videos, and other content channels, as well as through mall and search functions. In 2024, Douyi's book-related livestreams accumulated over 31.3 billion views, and livestream sales accounted for 45% of the total book sales. The number of active book-selling merchants on Douyin grew by 48% year-on-year, and over 50 publishers saw their livestream sales doubled.

At the same time, publishing institutions, writers, and book influencers collaborated on livestreams to create many “blockbusters”, ensuring that new and popular books reached readers in a “two-way” interaction. Over the past year, more than 50 writers and celebrities, including Mo Yan, Yu Hua, Alai and Mai Jia, appeared in Douyin livestreams. In March 2024, Mai Jia, with his new book *Letters to Humanity*, joined livestream host Dong Yuhui on Douyin's “Time with YuHui” channel, attracting over 250,000 viewers simultaneously. The book sold 68,000 copies on its first release.

Regarding the age demographics of readers, those born after the year 2000 showed the greatest enthusiasm for buying books, with purchases increasing by 163% year-on-year. They favored books in the fields of language, literature, and psychology. Readers born in the 1980s and 1990s saw their purchasing numbers grow by 70% and 88% respectively, with a preference for educational reference books, family education, and children's literature. Meanwhile, readers born in the 1970s were more focused on food and nutrition books, with purchases growing by 125%.

In terms of the most popular book categories, educational reference books, children's books, social sciences, literature, and business management were the top five bestsellers on Douyin. Books related to computer science and the internet had the highest sales growth, with a 1137% year-on-year increase. Books in special-

ized fields such as fitness (853% increase), natural sciences (303% increase), industrial/agricultural technology (266% increase), and reference books/encyclopedias (265% increase) were also well-received.

Recently, Douyin published its “2024 Annual Best Books List” by integrating the data on book-related videos, including likes, shares, and sales, and selected 20 excellent works across various fields such as literature, history, philosophy, psychology, and economics.

Tmall: First Annual Book Recommendations List Released

On January 13, Tmall, in collaboration with renowned authors such as Mo Yan, Chen Chong, Ma Boyong, Liu Tong, Cai Chongda, Cai Gao, Liang Ning, and publishers including Guomai, Dedao Books, Hunan Literature and Art Publishing House, Beijing Boji Tianjuan Books, and Dook Media Group, jointly launched the “2025 Taobao Annual Trend Book List”. This marks the first time Tmall has released an annual recommended book list.

The list focuses on popular topics such as female expression, historical culture, self-reinvention, literary fiction, children's picture books, and business exploration, providing readers with a reading guide. Books are ranked in real-time based on their popularity score, which is calculated from users' browsing, purchasing, and other behaviors. By January 14, 2025, *Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI* (《智人之上》), published by CITIC Press in September 2024, had topped the list with over 31 million in popularity. This book, which took six years to develop, is a new work by the renowned bestselling author Yuval Noah Harari, following his *Sapiens trilogy—Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (《人类简史》), *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (《未来简史》), and *21 Lessons for the 21st Century* (《今日简史》). (Continued on L05)

Dangdang 2024 Best Book Year-End Rankings

Fiction Bestsellers		Fiction New Releases	
<i>The Last Quarter of the Moon</i> 《额尔古纳河右岸》	by Chi Zijian	<i>When History Meows 14</i> 《如果历史是一群喵14》	by Feizhi
<i>One Sentence is Ten Thousand Sentences</i> 《一句顶一万句》	by Liu Zhenyun	<i>Travel Afar From Home At Age Eighteen</i> 《十八岁出门远行》	by Yu Hua
<i>To Live</i> 《活着》	by Yu Hua	<i>The Vegetarian</i> 《素食者》	by Han Kang
Non-Fiction Bestsellers		Non-Fiction New Releases	
<i>We Live in a Huge Gap</i> 《我们生活在巨大的差距里》	by Yu Hua	<i>Waiting For Everything to Calm Down</i> 《等一切风平浪静》	by Liu Tong
<i>Happiness is Ha Ha Ha</i> 《快乐就是哈哈哈哈哈》	by Liang Shiqiu	<i>The Elephant Behind the Mosquito</i> 《躲在蚊子后面大象》	by Ernst Friedrich Hanisch and Eva Wendler
<i>My Altay</i> 《我的阿勒泰》	by Li Juan	<i>The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon Illustrated</i> 《漫画讲透黄帝内经》	by Zhang Jiaming and Wang Jing
Children's Book Bestsellers		Children's Book New Releases	
<i>Youth Reads Shiji</i> 《少年读史记》	by Zhang Jiahua	<i>Young Academic Tour</i> 《少年游学》	by Beijing Rizhi Books
<i>Math: Help Me!</i> 《数学帮帮忙》	by Daphne Skinner	<i>Treasure Hunting in China Series: Jilin</i> 《大中华寻宝系列31:吉林寻宝记》	by Jingding Animation
<i>Our Bodies</i> 《我们的身体》	by Adeline Bélboully and Barborini	<i>Detective Fox Mike</i> 《神探迈克狐》	by Duoduo Studio, published by Xiaoboji

Top 5 Recommended Books of Douyin 2024 Annual Best Book List

Ranking	Title	Author	Publisher
1	<i>To Live</i> 《活着》	Yu Hua	Beijing October Arts and Literature Publishing House
2	<i>Life and Death are Wearing Me Out</i> 《生死疲劳》	Mo Yan	Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House
3	<i>Retreat Notes</i> 《务虚笔记》	Shi Tiesheng	People's Literature Publishing House
4	<i>The Licchi Road</i> 《长安的荔枝》	Ma Boyong	Hunan Literature and Art Publishing House
5	<i>Moments We Shared</i> 《云边有个小卖部》	Zhang Jiajia	Flower City Publishing House