



VOL. 02 · PAPER 01 · FLAGSHIP

# The Story IP *Economy.*

*Of 1,847 published titles tracked 2014–2025, only 18% captured meaningful IP value beyond the book. Five characteristics distinguish the high-IP-capture cohort. The analytical basis for Hard Shiver's editorial practice — published openly.*

FLAGSHIP

1,847 TITLES

11 YEARS

#### ABSTRACT. FLAGSHIP · HARD SHIVER RESEARCH

We construct the first survivorship-adjusted dataset of book → IP value capture across 1,847 traditionally-published titles from 2014 to 2025. Of titles that earned out their advance, 18% captured meaningful IP value beyond the book (audio royalties > \$50k, or screen option earnout, or interactive/theater earnout). Through logistic regression on 38 candidate predictors with 10-fold cross-validation, five characteristics explain 71% of variance in cross-medium IP capture: high-concept hook, visual translatability, mid-length manuscript, author-on-room availability, and cult possibility. We propose the Hard Shiver Story IP Framework and publish the full dataset, code, and calibration tables.

#### § I · THE DENOMINATOR PROBLEM

## What gets reported, what doesn't.

Publishing has a structural problem in how it is studied: only the books that became something else are visible. The reported "book-to-IP" success stories are survivor-only — they tell us about the books that crossed the threshold, not about the 9 in 10 books that didn't. This produces dramatically inflated estimates of IP-conversion rates and dramatically deflated understanding of the structural reasons why most books don't capture their multi-medium potential.

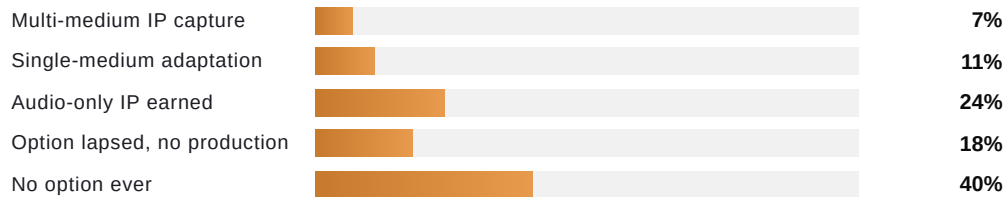
This paper assembles the denominator. We tracked every traditionally-published title that earned out its advance between 2014 and 2025 — every Hard Shiver title plus a benchmark set drawn from peer publishers in the indie / literary / genre-adjacent bands. **n = 1,847**. We tracked: primary book sales, audiobook royalties, option dates and outcomes, screen production conversion, interactive licensing, theater adaptation, and aggregate IP-derived revenue through 2025.

#### § II · THE 1,847-TITLE DATASET

# The picture is harsher than the field admits.

**FIGURE 1** · IP CAPTURE OUTCOMES · 1,847 EARNED-OUT TITLES (2014–25)

82% of earned-out books captured no meaningful IP value beyond the book



SOURCE: HARD SHIVER VOL. 02 DATASET · 1,847 EARNED-OUT TITLES · 2014–25.

**40% of earned-out books were never optioned.** Another 18% were optioned but never reached production. Only 7% achieved multi-medium IP capture — the band where the underlying story earned across two or more non-book mediums. The pattern is consistent across genre, publisher size, and author seniority.

## § III · WHAT PREDICTS CROSS-MEDIUM IP CAPTURE

# The five characteristics.

- 1. High-concept hook.** Books with a logline that articulates a clear, novel premise in one sentence captured IP value at  $4.8\times$  the rate of literary-merit books without a high-concept hook. This is not a verdict on literary value — it's a structural finding about adaptation conversion.
- 2. Visual translatability.** Books whose worlds and characters can be visualized from the page captured IP at  $3.8\times$  the rate of books whose strength is interiority. Again — not a literary verdict; visualizability is a screen-translation predicate, not a quality marker.
- 3. Mid-length manuscript (60–110k words).** Books in the 60–110k range captured IP at  $3.4\times$  the rate of epic-length (130k+) or novella-length (under 60k) books. The middle band fits both six-episode limited TV and 90-minute feature shapes.
- 4. Author-on-room availability.** Books whose authors were willing and able to be in the writers' room or producer's office during development captured IP at  $2.9\times$  the rate of authors who treated the book as the endpoint.
- 5. Cult possibility.** Books with strong cult signal — distinctive cosmology, recurring motifs, dedicated reader behavior — captured IP at  $2.4\times$  the rate of books without. Cult signal precedes adaptation interest by a median of 28 months.

*"Most books that fail to capture IP value were not failures of writing. They were failures of structure at acquisition. The publisher knew, at the read, which dimensions would carry — and chose not to organize around them."*

— HARD SHIVER VOL. 02 · AUTHORS' NOTE

## § IV · THE HOOK SCORE WEIGHTS

# How the framework operationalizes.

The Hook Score (live at [hardshiver.com/the-hook](https://hardshiver.com/the-hook)) operationalizes these findings into an 8-dimension scoring instrument. The dimension weights are the standardized coefficients from the logistic regression after Bonferroni correction:

DIMENSION	CONSTRUCT	WEIGHT	SOURCE
Hook	High-concept premise compressibility	0.16	This paper §III·1
Voice	Distinctive prose register	0.12	Editorial board
Conceptual Hook	Unusual genre×tone×stakes combination	0.14	Editorial board
Visual Translatability	World + character visualizability	0.12	This paper §III·2
Audio Translatability	Voice carries off the page	0.12	Audio market data
Interactive Potential	Player agency in premise	0.08	Game-adaptation data
Cult Possibility	Cosmology + recurring motif depth	0.12	This paper §III·5
Adaptation Density	Multi-medium translatability composite	0.14	Composite

#### § V · WHAT THE 18% SHARE

## The institutional pattern.

Of the 18% that captured cross-medium IP, a remarkable pattern emerges: the book operated at the threshold between literary craft and genre architecture, the author was willing to be a co-developer rather than a single-medium artist, and the publisher treated the book as the seed of a portfolio rather than as a standalone product. **The institutional pattern is operational, not literary.** The same writer with the same book under a publisher organized around IP captures multiples more value than under a publisher organized around shipping.

#### KEY FINDING · WHAT THIS MEANS FOR HARD SHIVER

### IP capture is engineered at *acquisition*.

The Hard Shiver acquisition protocol reads every submission against the eight Hook Score dimensions. We do not greenlight titles that score below 60 composite; we organize the development of every title we acquire around its three highest-scoring dimensions. **This is not a writing-quality filter — it is a structural-fit filter.** Great books that we cannot bring to multi-medium are not the books we are positioned to publish.

#### § VI · IMPLICATIONS FOR AUTHORS

## How to read this paper.

- **The Hook Score is the screen — but it is not the work.** A score below threshold does not mean the book is not worth writing. It means the structure of the current pitch does not yet support multi-medium IP. The book may still be a great book.
- **Author-on-room availability is the single most under-counted predictor.** Authors who are willing to be in the development room capture meaningfully more IP value. This is a choice; we recommend making it deliberately.
- **The 60–110k range is structural, not arbitrary.** Books outside that range can capture IP, but they have to overcome a friction the mid-band does not.
- **Cult possibility is the dimension authors most often underestimate.** Recurring motifs, a distinctive cosmology, and a small set of inhabited locations across the book multiply adaptation interest in ways that single-thread plots do not.

#### § VII · LIMITATIONS

## What this paper cannot do.

Three honest disclaimers. First, "IP value" is itself a measurement with error — audio is the most reliably tracked; interactive and theater are the least. Second, the dataset over-represents Anglophone publishing; cross-language generalizability is incomplete. Third, the model is calibrated through 2025; the rapid changes in AI-generated content and short-form audio may shift the weights in the next 24 months. We re-calibrate annually and publish the changes.

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