

A RIGHTSCENTER MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Book-to-Screen Marketplace Insights

2019 – 2026

Inside the adaptation marketplace during Hollywood's most turbulent stretch in modern history, from the literary rights platform the industry runs on.

What the Data Shows

Since 1999, the entertainment industry has relied on Rightscenter for film/TV rights intel on literary properties. Drawn from every rights check request submitted from 2019 on, this is the largest and clearest available picture of the literary IP Hollywood considers for pursuit.

■ The market turned to the **proven**.

- Pre-publication requests **fell** from a peak of 18.3% to 5.5%
- Backlist titles **climbed** to nearly 2/3 of all requests

■ Hollywood is **not a monoculture**.

Six user types pursue on different clocks, from film studios looking at one-year-old titles to publishers championing decades-old backlist.

■ Consideration is mostly **solitary**.

Nearly 75% of requested titles are inquired after by only a single user. Genuine competitive situations are the less frequent, identifiable exceptions.

■ And the **data is live**.

In the first half of 2026:

- Female protagonists comprise the single largest share across all genres
- Translated fiction is up
- LitRPG breaks out from its niche

One pattern runs through every finding: Hollywood has shifted its acquisition philosophy to **PROVEN** readership.

A Census, Not a Sample

Rightscenter's users aren't a limited survey; they comprise the vast majority of the adaptation marketplace itself. This report draws on behavior captured before any pursuits become public.

500

TITLE RECORD VIEWS / DAY

every business day,
on average

41,771

REQUESTS

rights checks run for
clients since 2019

26,570

TITLES

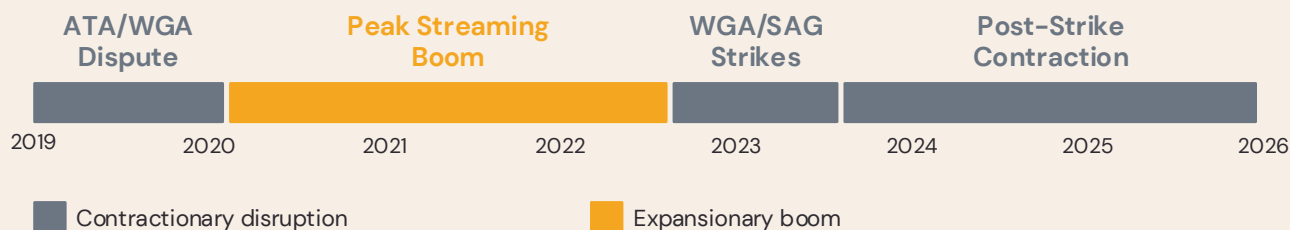
in the dataset
request pool

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT

We capture intent before it surfaces. Every rights check request is the market showing what it's evaluating — before a property is pursued in earnest. We are uniquely privy to a bird's-eye view of this private behavior in aggregate.

THE PERIOD

The most turbulent stretch in modern Hollywood history, and the backdrop for everything that follows.



Passive Looks, Active Interest

Not every look is intent. The data separates passive views from active consideration and reveals where interest converges.

TWO SIGNALS

A VIEW

PASSIVE INTEREST

A user opened a title's record to check its rights history and contacts.

A REQUEST

ACTIVE INTEREST

A user is evaluating it; we re-verify current rights status and contacts on their behalf.

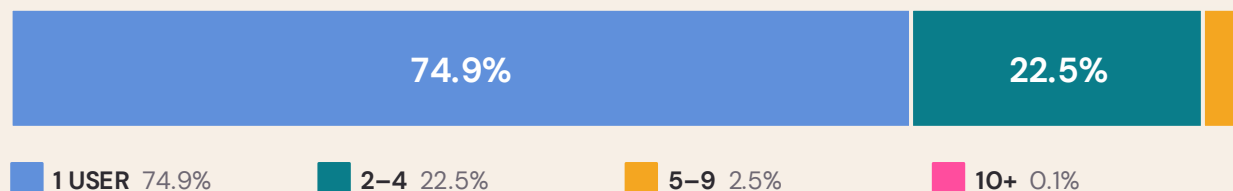
15.5 views : 1 request

Most looks don't convert, which is exactly why the ones that do signal intent.

A NOTE ON WHAT FOLLOWS Unless stated otherwise, every figure in this report is drawn from requests, not simply record views.

HOW MANY USERS REQUEST THE SAME TITLE?

Consideration is overwhelmingly solo. Nearly three-quarters of requested titles are inquired after by a single user. A convergence of interest by 5 or more requesting users occurs with less than 3% of titles, and our data can name them.



Hollywood is not a hype-chasing monoculture, it's a layered ecosystem in which different players are looking for different things.

Six User Types, Distinct Clocks

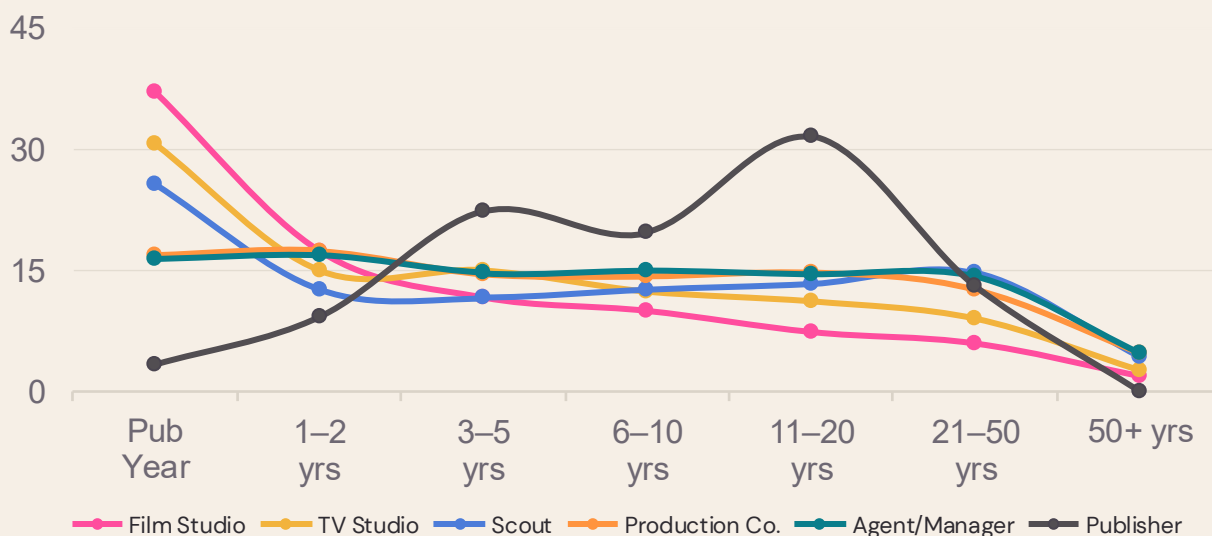
The same book means different things to different players. Each operates on its own timeline, visible in the age of the titles under consideration.

MEDIAN TITLE AGE AT TIME OF REQUEST



THE FULL DISTRIBUTION BEHIND THE MEDIANS

Share of each user type's requests, by title age. Studios spike on brand-new books, but **production companies and agents/managers have the most even distribution across age bands** – for them, a strong title is never too old to pursue for adaptation.



Publishers are a unique user type. Because they don't typically hold screen rights to their titles, they check availability and representation to *champion* their books to the film/TV marketplace, driving a process that can eventually lead to more book sales.

BEHAVIORAL SHIFT

The Pre-Publication Request Collapse

18.3%

PEAK PRE-PUB SHARE · 2021

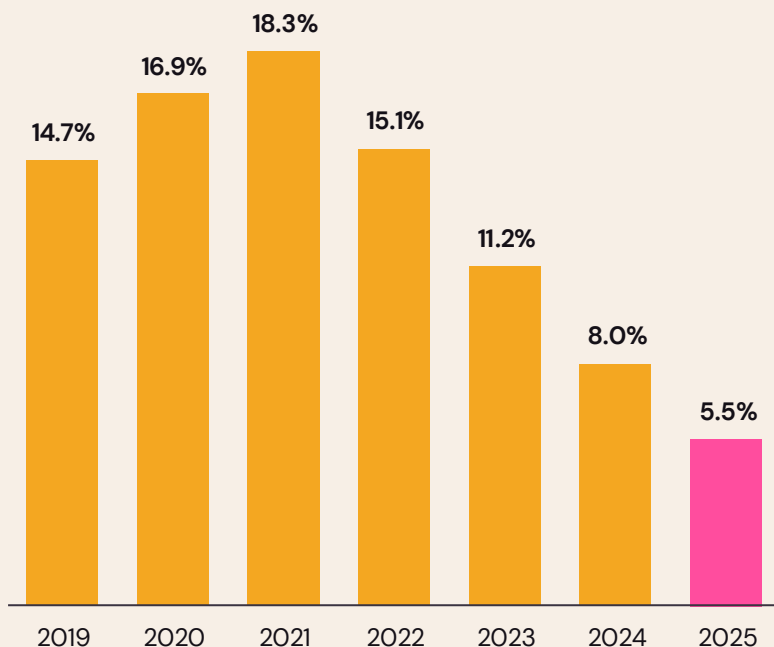
5.5%

PRE-PUB SHARE 2025 · DOWN 70%

Requests for titles made before their publication date peaked at 18.3% in the height of the streaming boom in 2021 and **fell by 70%** to just 5.5% by 2025.

Hollywood has shifted its acquisition philosophy to **PROVEN** readership.

PRE-PUBLICATION REQUESTS AS % OF TOTAL RIGHTS CHECKS



Our read on the forces at work:

01

Studios have become more risk-averse, demanding more certainty before pursuit

02

Producers new to the literary IP market often avoid speculative bidding wars; may have less awareness of pre-pub titles

03

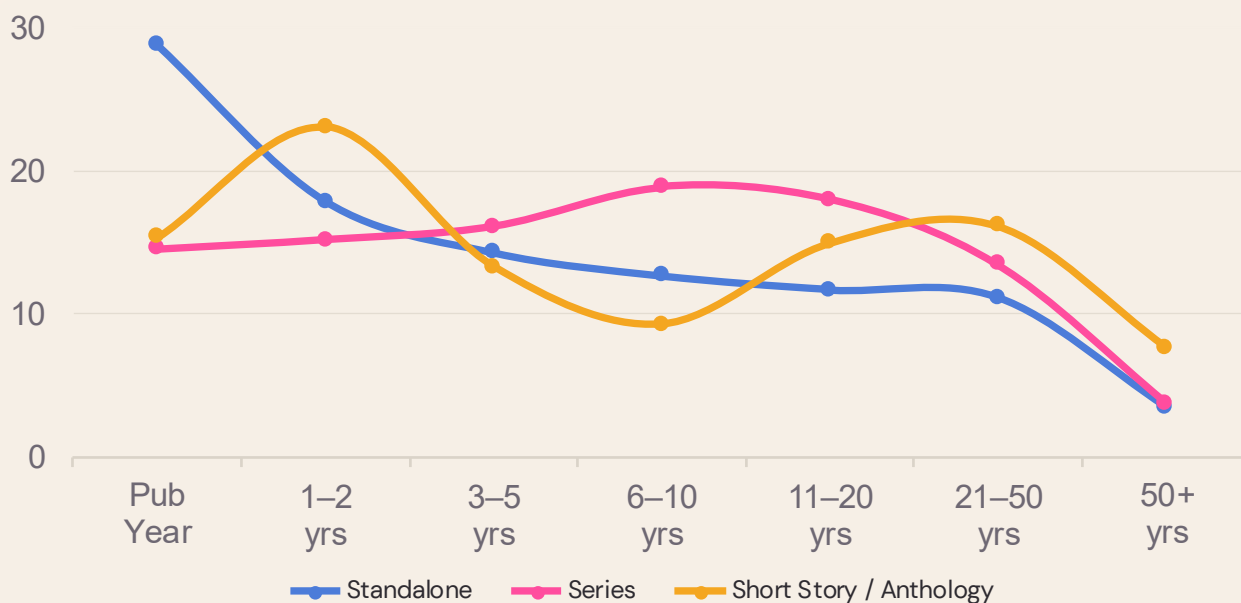
Agents increasingly wait for publication to submit for film/tv consideration, reducing early word of mouth in the market

BY FICTION TYPE

Sprint, Marathon, Encore

Three formats, three different shapes of screen interest as it ages.

SHARE OF EACH FORMAT'S REQUESTS BY TITLE AGE



STANDALONE

The Sprint

Interest is front-loaded, nearly half of requests land in the first two years from publication.

SERIES

The Marathon

Interest builds gradually, peaking 6–10 years from launch as the series matures and accrues readership.

SHORT STORY & ANTHOLOGY

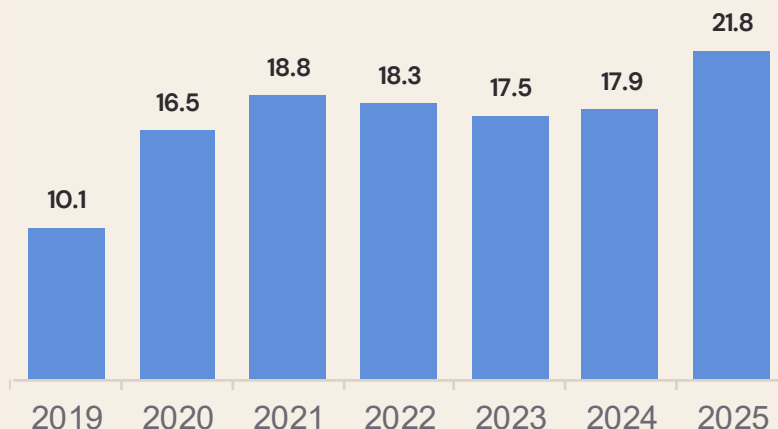
The Encore

Bi-modal; interest peaks in the first two years, then resurges as authors and specific stories enter the canon.

Series Fiction

Requests for series titles have **more than doubled in share since 2019**. Series are a rising share of what the market pursues.

SERIES REQUESTS AS % OF TOTAL RIGHTS CHECKS



AND THE MATERIAL IS AGING

4

YEARS · 2021



8

YEARS · 2025

The median age of a requested series title has **doubled** over the last four years. Buyers are reaching deeper into established series, not just chasing new launches.

- **Depth attracts pursuit.** The series with interest growing fastest in 2024 and 2025 already had 4+ published installments.
- **Series build, standalones sprint.** Where standalone interest front-loads at release, series interest accrues gradually, peaking 6–10 years out.

A series doesn't peak at launch. Its pull compounds as it grows and each new book renews attention on the ones before it.

BY FORMAT

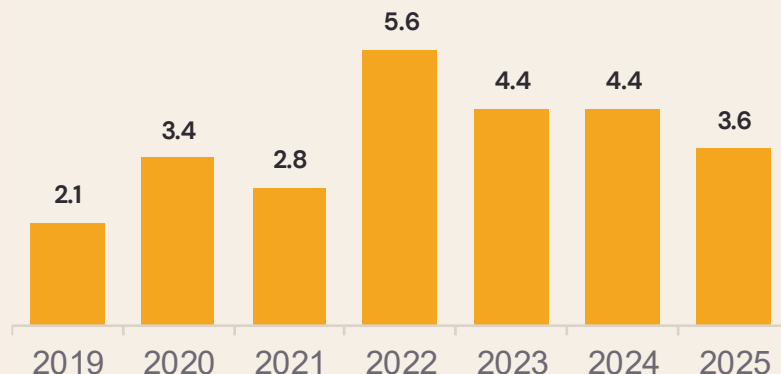
Comics & Graphic Novels

Graphic novels have matured into the mainstream. What peaked with producer interest in the streaming boom is now steady, studio-led demand.

Source: Rightscenter
proprietary user data
2019–2026

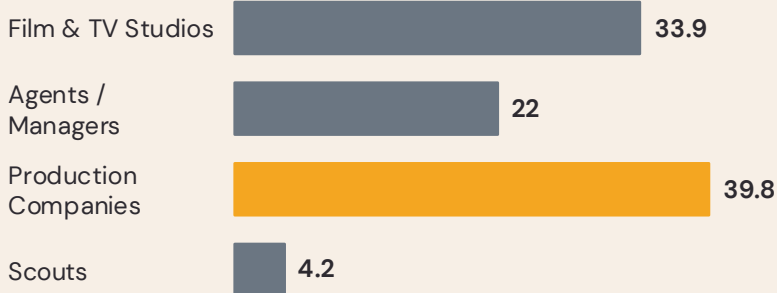
Requests for comics and graphic novels surged during the streaming boom, then settled into a steadier band. As it normalized, **user-type interest shifted.**

COMIC & GRAPHIC NOVEL REQUESTS AS % OF ALL REQUESTS

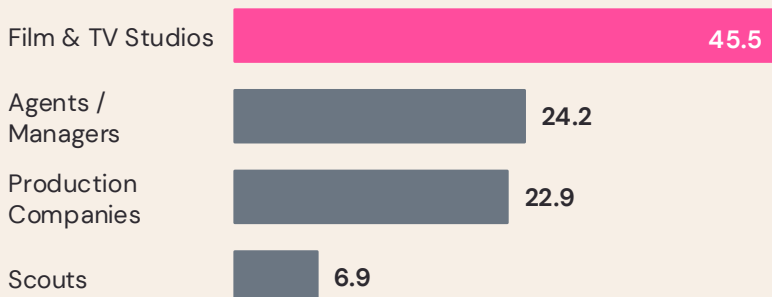


PEAK > NOW: % OF REQUESTS, BY USER TYPE

2022. Production companies led the spike at 39.8%.



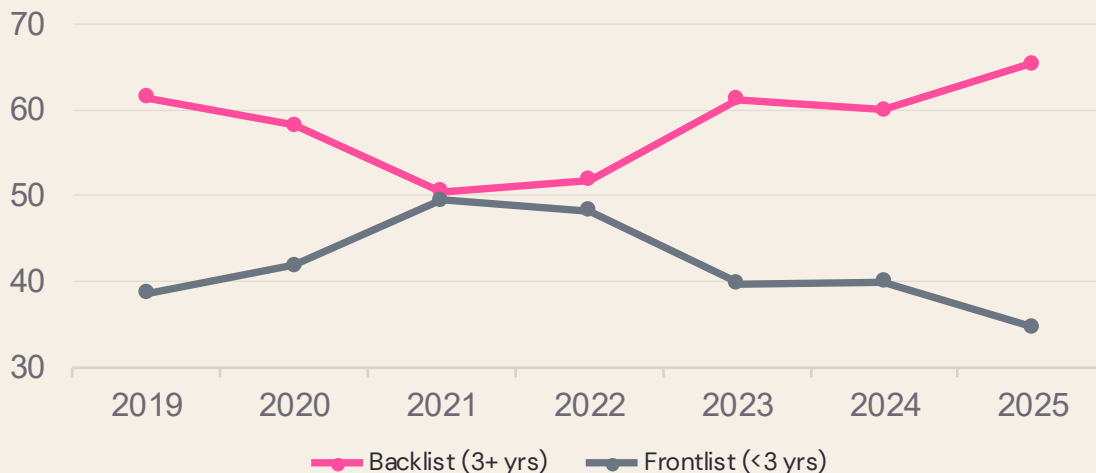
2025. The field shuffled, Film & TV studios took the lead.



The Return to the Backlist

During the streaming boom, buyers chased more new releases. As the market turned cautious, they swung toward proven, older material.

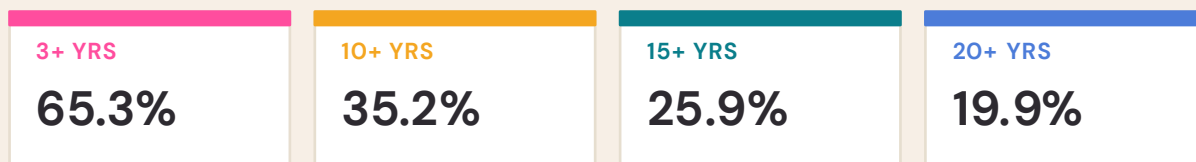
SHARE OF REQUESTS: BACKLIST (3+ YRS) vs FRONTLIST (<3 YRS)



Nearly 2 in 3. By 2025, backlist titles drew **65.3%** of all requests. At the streaming boom peak, the frontlist nearly closed the gap, but since then it has widened further than before.

WITHIN THAT BACKLIST: HOW DEEP?

The recovery reached every tier. From the 2021 low, request share climbed in lock step at about 40% at every depth, down to the 20+ year catalog. These are the shares for 2025.



The return to the backlist reaches the full depth of the catalog, but its center of gravity is in the 3–15 year window: recently-proven work that is old enough for a track record, current enough to still feel fresh.

Different Material, Different Windows

Requests in each age window are dominated by marketplace interest in specific types of material, or contains what is conspicuously absent in others.

0-2
YRS

Titles That Age Like Milk

All types of material draw consideration in the initial publication window. For a few categories, however, screen interest only declines from here.

- **Contemporary Topical Fiction** Titles tied to a cultural moment have the biggest initial wave of interest, followed by the steepest drop-off curve.
- **Mid-List Genre Fiction without Franchise Potential** Fades within a couple years if it isn't optioned. Standalone domestic thrillers are hot in publishing, but their screen consideration drops sharply after year two.
- **Formally Experimental Standalone Fiction** Awarded and admired, but few continue to consider challenging-to-adapt titles after their debuts.

3-5
YRS

Proven Readership Tested For Screen Viability

Launch buzz gives way to evidence: this is where books with sustained popularity receive their broadest consideration for adaptation.

- **Book Club Fiction** Requests concentrate around titles with high reader engagement as the market sorts them for screen viability.
- **Popular Fiction with Genre DNA** Whether commercial or literary, these survivors of frontlist burn-off share identifiable genre hooks.

6-10
YRS

The Rediscovery Zone

Material that peaks in this window has gradually accumulated attention in varying ways that is now paying dividends.

- **Prestige Rediscovery** Prestige titles resurface specifically with a new book from the author, or when a comparable title is successfully adapted.
- **High-Concept Genre Late Bloomers** Strong screen premises that weren't instant bestsellers, earning word of mouth in reader communities over time.
- **Maturing Series** Many series find their peak of interest here when their franchise potential is (re)evaluated. YA series were particularly abundant in this dataset, reflecting the genre's surge in the 2010s.

11+
YRS

Titles That Defy the Clock

The material that never really leaves the market's consideration.

- **Sci-Fi & Fantasy with Expandable Worlds** The world-building compounds as the series matures, and the buyer pool keeps growing. These are the longest-living properties in our data by a significant margin.
- **Literary Fiction with Identifiable Genre DNA** Titles with the highest consistency of interest over time sit at literary-genre crossover points.
- **Narrative Nonfiction with a Clear Protagonist Arc** The closer to a single-protagonist feature arc, the longer the window of consideration stays open.
- **Short Stories By Canonical Authors** The anthology wave draws initial consideration; becoming canon creates the long-term interest.

Screen interest doesn't follow one path. Some types of material burn fast and hot, while others sit in a durable tier that holds the market's attention indefinitely.

Articles

Agents / Managers

OVER-INDEXED

56.1%

OF ARTICLE REQUESTS · 2025

vs **29.7%** of all requests

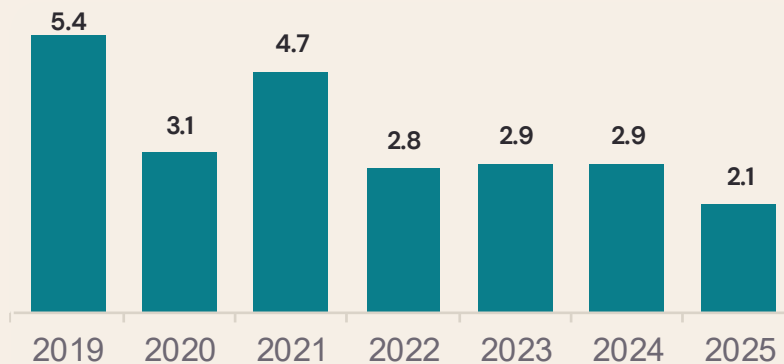
Article requests have dipped in share as well as volume. Talent attachment interest currently dominates, while acquisition-type interest is recovering as a share of a narrowing field.

Source: Rightscenter
proprietary user data
2019–2026

The New Yorker and *The New York Times* account for **22%** of article requests.

The rest of the top tier: *Vanity Fair*, *Rolling Stone*, *GQ*, *Texas Monthly*, *The Atavist*

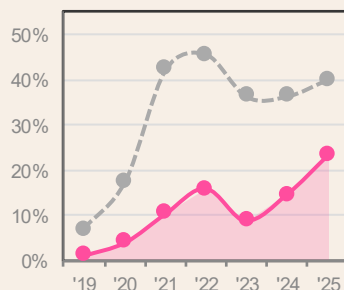
ARTICLE REQUESTS AS % OF ALL REQUESTS



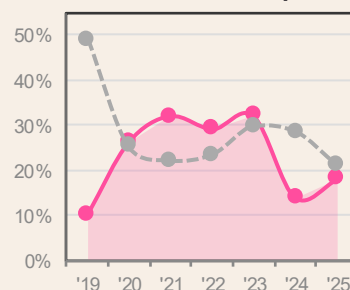
ARTICLE REQUEST SHARE VS. TOTAL REQUEST SHARE – BY USER TYPE

Agents and managers currently dominate article requests, checking pieces for their writer, director and actor clients. Production companies and scouts scaled up briefly into the streaming boom, while Film & TV studios have always been under-indexed but are returning to a narrower gap.

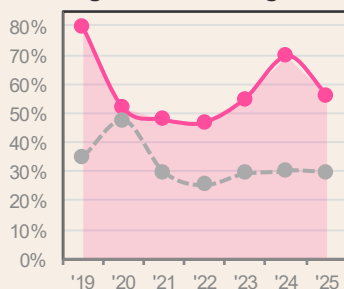
Film & TV Studios



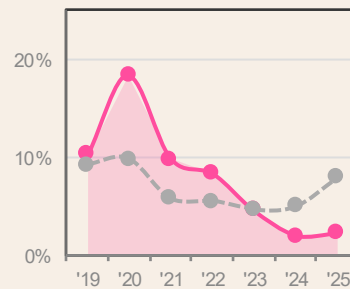
Production Companies



Agents & Managers



Scouts



■ Share of article requests ■ Share of all requests

What Is Moving Right Now

To separate real content trends from coincidence, titles with 2+ requests in the first half of 2026 were surveyed. Age and format trends were drawn from all 2026 H1 requests.

BY CONTENT

FEMALE-LED

The strongest market signal right now is female protagonists. It cuts across every genre, hitting **48%** of titles with 2+ requests this year so far (vs. *male-led or mixed ensemble*).

LITRPG

In just the first half of 2026, requests for LitRPG titles **were 1.6x the combined total of the previous 5 years**, signaling mainstream interest in adapting this internet-native fiction.

INTERNATIONAL

3.5x the amount of translated literature appeared in this year's convergence pool vs. the same period in 2025. Japanese titles increased the most, growing **4x** from last year.

BY AGE / FORMAT

BACKLIST

The backlist trend appears to reach a plateau, holding steady at **65.6%** of requests.

SERIES

Series interest accelerated in Q2, bringing the 2026 H1 total to **22.1%** of requests.

ARTICLES

Requests for articles are still on a decline, coming in at a new low of **1.5%** of requests.

Top Viewed Titles

2019 – 2026

1. **The Retreat** (*Detective Elin Warner*)
Sarah Pearse
2. **Demon Copperhead**
Barbara Kingsolver
3. **The Midnight Library**
Matt Haig
4. **Yellowface**
R.F. Kuang
5. **This Is How You Lose the Time War**
Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone
6. **Babel**
R.F. Kuang
7. **The Secret History**
Donna Tartt
8. **Chain-Gang All-Stars**
Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah
9. **The Song of Achilles**
Madeline Miller
10. **Fourth Wing** (*The Empyrean*)
Rebecca Yarros
11. **The House in the Cerulean Sea** (*Cerulean Chronicles*)
T.J. Klune
12. **Red Rising** (*Red Rising Saga*)
Pierce Brown
13. **A Court of Thorns and Roses** (*A Court of Thorns and Roses*)
Sarah J. Maas
14. **Bunny** (*Bunny*)
Mona Awad
15. **My Sister, the Serial Killer**
Oyinkan Braithwaite
16. **The Guest**
Emma Cline
17. **Trust**
Hernán Díaz
18. **Killers of a Certain Age**
Deanna Raybourn
19. **The God of the Woods**
Liz Moore
20. **A Visit from the Goon Squad** (*Goon Squad*)
Jennifer Egan
21. **I Have Some Questions for You**
Rebecca Makkai
22. **The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo**
Taylor Jenkins Reid
23. **The Will of the Many** (*Hierarchy*)
James Islington
24. **Butter**
Asako Yuzuki
25. **Ninth House** (*Alex Stern*)
Leigh Bardugo
26. **Tender Is the Flesh**
Agustina Bazterrica
27. **I Who Have Never Known Men**
Jacqueline Harpman
28. **Beach Read**
Emily Henry
29. **The Silent Patient**
Alex Michaelides
30. **Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow**
Gabrielle Zevin
31. **Mexican Gothic**
Silvia Moreno-Garcia
32. **The Love Hypothesis**
Ali Hazelwood
33. **A Little Life**
Hanya Yanagihara
34. **The Atlas Six** (*The Atlas*)
Olivie Blake
35. **The Bee Sting**
Paul Murray
36. **Our Share of Night**
Mariana Enriquez
37. **The Glow**
Jessie Gaynor
38. **Verity**
Colleen Hoover
39. **The Inheritance Games** (*The Inheritance Games*)
Jennifer Lynn Barnes
40. **The Poppy War** (*The Poppy War*)
R.F. Kuang

Top Requested Titles

2019 – 2026

1. **Exhalation***
Ted Chiang
2. **A Little Life***
Hanya Yanagihara
3. **Legendborn*** (*The Legendborn Cycle*)
Tracy Deonn
4. **The House in the Cerulean Sea*** (*Cerulean Chronicles*)
T.J. Klune
5. **The Midnight Library***
Matt Haig
6. **The Anomaly**
Hervé Le Tellier
7. **Shatter Me** (*Shatter Me*)
Tahereh Mafi
8. **Demon Copperhead**
Barbara Kingsolver
9. **My Sister, the Serial Killer**
Oyinkan Braithwaite
10. **Ninth House** (*Alex Stern*)
Leigh Bardugo
11. **Tender Is the Flesh**
Agustina Bazterrica
12. **The Cruel Prince*** (*The Folk of the Air*)
Holly Black
13. **The Guest List**
Lucy Foley
14. **My Heart Is a Chainsaw** (*Indian Lake Trilogy*)
Stephen Graham Jones
15. **The Kind Worth Killing** (*Henry Kimball/Lily Kintner*)
Peter Swanson
16. **Severance***
Ling Ma
17. **The Cartographers**
Peng Shepherd
18. **The Raven Boys** (*The Raven Cycle*)
Maggie Stiefvater
19. **People Who Eat Darkness***
Richard Lloyd Parry
20. **The Water Knife**
Paolo Bacigalupi
21. **The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo**
Taylor Jenkins Reid
22. **The Silent Patient**
Alex Michaelides
23. **Our Share of Night**
Mariana Enriquez
24. **The Lincoln Highway**
Amor Towles
25. **The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store**
James McBride
26. **Throne of Glass** (*Throne of Glass*)
Sarah J. Maas
27. **Educated**
Tara Westover
28. **The Left Hand of Darkness** (*The Hainish Cycle*)
Ursula K. Le Guin
29. **Piranesi**
Susanna Clarke
30. **I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have to Kill You** (*Gallagher Girls*)
Ally Carter
31. **Luster**
Raven Leilani
32. **This Is How You Lose the Time War***
Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone
33. **Red Rising** (*Red Rising Saga*)
Pierce Brown
34. **A Visit from the Goon Squad*** (*Goon Squad*)
Jennifer Egan
35. **I Who Have Never Known Men**
Jacqueline Harpman
36. **Mexican Gothic**
Silvia Moreno-Garcia
37. **Birnam Wood**
Eleanor Catton
38. **If We Were Villains**
M.L. Rio
39. **Our Wives Under the Sea**
Julia Armfield
40. **Bunny** (*Bunny*)
Mona Awad

* Requested in 7+ of the dataset years

Top Requested Authors

2020–2026

Ranked by number of **unique** requesting users each year. Authors who appear in multiple years are in **pink**.

2020

1. **Stephen King**
2. **Nnedi Okorafor**
3. Sarah J. Maas
4. Ursula K. Le Guin
5. Ottessa Moshfegh
6. Kim Stanley Robinson
7. C Pam Zhang
8. Jacqueline Woodson
9. Ted Chiang
10. **Silvia Moreno-Garcia**

2021

1. Taylor Jenkins Reid
2. **Stephen King**
3. Amor Towles
4. **Silvia Moreno-Garcia**
5. **Colleen Hoover**
6. Louise Erdrich
7. Holly Black
8. Skip Hollandsworth
9. Hervé Le Tellier
10. **Danielle Steel**

2022

1. **Colleen Hoover**
2. Sarah Gailey
3. **Stephen King**
4. David Baldacci
5. Madeline Miller
6. **Silvia Moreno-Garcia**
7. Ramona Emerson
8. V.E. Schwab
9. Emily Henry
10. Dan Simmons

2023

1. **Grady Hendrix**
2. James McBride
3. Ally Carter
4. **John Grisham**
5. Mary Kubica
6. Percival Everett
7. Lisa Jewell
8. Matt Haig
9. Nick Harkaway
10. Riley Sager

2024

1. **John Grisham**
2. **Freida McFadden**
3. Megan Abbott
4. Liz Moore
5. Jennifer Lynn Barnes
6. Janice Hallett
7. Peter Swanson
8. Stephen Graham Jones
9. **Nnedi Okorafor**
10. Rachel Howzell Hall

2025

1. **Stephen King**
2. **Freida McFadden**
3. **Grady Hendrix**
4. Rachel Kushner
5. **T. Kingfisher**
6. Ali Hazelwood
7. Ray Bradbury
8. Agustina Bazterrica
9. Ian McEwan
10. Jacqueline Harpman

2026 H1

1. **T. Kingfisher**
2. Asako Yuzuki
3. **Silvia Moreno-Garcia**
4. Patrick Radden Keefe
5. George Saunders
6. Gillian McAllister
7. Han Kang
8. Jennifer Hillier
9. Karin Slaughter
10. Kathryn Stockett

How This Was Measured

THE DATASET

Every rights check request submitted to Rightscenter from 2019 through H1 2026. Requests came from **692 unique users** at **365 unique companies**.

VIEWS & REQUESTS

A view is a user opening a title's record. Our view data begins in 2021. A request is a user asking us to verify a title's current rights status and contacts on their behalf. Our request data begins in 2019. Unless stated otherwise, every figure in this report is drawn from requests.

HOW TOP REQUESTED TITLES/AUTHORS ARE COUNTED

Per unique requesting user. Different users at the same company are counted separately as we cannot assume that shared employment means coordinated interest, especially when separated by a significant amount of time. Agents or managers at the same firm are typically requesting on behalf of different clients.

USER TYPES

Requests are attributed to six user types: film studios, TV studios, production companies, agents and managers, scouts, and publishers. Film and TV studios are reported separately where their behavior diverges by title age and combined where the comparison is by format.

TITLE AGE

Measured from first English-language publication date to the date of the request. Frontlist is classified as under 3 years old. Backlist is classified as 3 years or older.

TITLE TYPES

These categories are qualitative groupings assigned by our research team, informed by genre metadata and title-level knowledge. They are illustrative of the patterns we observe rather than discrete statistical segments.

TIME PERIODS

Annual figures are full-year tallies. Figures covering January through June 2026 are labeled H1.

WHAT IS NOT HERE

While requests are labeled by company type for this analysis, the actual identities of users and companies making requests are never disclosed. Current title-level activity, including whether adaptation rights remain available, is provided to subscribers and is not published in this report.

The Platform the Adaptation Marketplace Runs On

Since 1999, Rightscenter has operated a literary rights intelligence platform serving the entertainment industry. Studios, production companies, scouts, agencies, management firms and publishers rely on it to discover literary material, confirm who controls dramatic rights and determine availability – including option history that never made the trades. We're the only resource that combines status updates submitted directly by rights holders with an expert concierge research service, staffed by former literary media rights agents, development executives, and Hollywood book scouts.

PRESS & INQUIRIES

Anne-Elisa Schaffer

aschaffer@rightscenter.com
323-285-9330

Emily Parker

eparker@rightscenter.com
323-285-9330

CITATION

Rightscenter, *Book-to-Screen Marketplace Insights, 2019–2026* (2026).

PERMISSIONS

Figures and charts may be reproduced with attribution to Rightscenter.

Questions about methodology, requests for additional cuts of this data, and interview inquiries are welcome. We are always happy to serve as a data resource for journalists covering the literary adaptation marketplace.