

W O R K S H O P

Know What You Own

Building Confidence and Control in
Rights and Permissions Management

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What We'll Cover Today

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10 min

The Rights Landscape

What you own
and what you
owe

2

15 min

When Rights Go Wrong

Real-world
failures &
prevention

3

15 min

Tracking What Matters

Contract terms,
durations &
payments

4

10 min

Aligning Your Systems

Title
management,
rights, royalties &
accounting

5

10 min

Unifying the Workflow

Across sales,
accounting &
beyond

Goal: Leave with a concrete action plan for centralized, scalable rights management

MODULE 1

The Rights Landscape

What you own — and what you owe

What Is a "Right" in Publishing?

The bundle of permissions embedded in every publishing contract



Key insight: Copyright is a bundle of sticks. Each right can be licensed separately — print to one party, audio to another, translation to a third.

Primary Rights vs. Subsidiary Rights

Know the difference — your revenue depends on it

PRIMARY RIGHTS (You Retain & Exercise)

Print (hardcover, paperback, mass market)

eBook / digital download

Audio (spoken word)

Large print edition

Book club edition

SUBSIDIARY RIGHTS (License to Others)

Foreign language translation

Film, TV & streaming adaptation

Serialization / excerpt licensing

Merchandise & brand licensing

Open Access / institutional licensing

 *Takeaway: Subsidiary rights are often the difference between a break-even title and a profitable one — yet most UPs leave them untracked.*

Practical Exercise: Your Rights Audit Checklist

Right Category	Granted to Publisher?	Sublicensable?	Currently Exploited?	Revenue Opportunity
Print (domestic)	✓ Yes	Limited	Yes	—
eBook / Digital	✓ Yes	Limited	Yes	Bundle deals
Audio	Check contract	Often yes	Often untapped	HIGH ★★★
Translation	Check contract	Yes	Usually untapped	HIGH ★★★
Film / TV / Streaming	Rarely	Yes	Rarely	HIGH ★★★★★
Open Access / Institutional	Check contract	Varies	Growing	MEDIUM ★★
Curriculum / Study Guides	Check contract	Yes	Often untapped	MEDIUM ★★

MODULE 2

When Rights Go Wrong

Real-world failures — and how to prevent them

Common Rights Management Failure Modes



Rights Granted Twice

Two licensees receive rights to the same territory or format. Often discovered only when both parties attempt to publish — creating legal exposure and relationship damage.



Missed Reversions

Out-of-print or time-limited rights revert to authors. Publishers using spreadsheets miss reversion triggers, losing control of valuable titles with no warning.



Uncollected Sub-Rights Income

Translation deals close but advances go uninvoiced for months. Audio rights sit dormant because no one knows whether they were granted. Revenue opportunity lost.



Broken Exclusivity Tracking

Exclusive licenses expire undetected; non-exclusive deals granted in conflict with existing exclusives. Both scenarios create breach-of-contract liability.

The Spreadsheet Trap: Why Manual Tracking Breaks Down

90%

of rights-related errors trace back to outdated or missing records

50+

titles is the threshold where spreadsheets become unmanageable

0%

of spreadsheets automatically alert you when a rights window closes

Why Spreadsheets Fail at Scale

- No conflict detection — duplicate grants go unnoticed until a dispute arises
- No expiration alerts — rights revert or lapse without warning
- Version chaos — multiple people editing different copies; no single source of truth
- No financial integration — advances and receipts tracked separately from rights grants
- No audit trail — who changed what, and when? Impossible to know

MODULE 3

Tracking What Matters

Contract terms, durations, and payments — in one place

Contract Terms: What Must Be Tracked

Rights Granted & Territories

Which rights (print, audio, translation, digital), in which territories, and in which languages? User-defined dimensions ensure nothing is missed.

Exclusivity & Conflict Detection

Is this license exclusive or non-exclusive? MetaComet flags conflicts when a new grant overlaps an existing exclusive license — before you sign.

Term & Expiration Dates

License start and end dates, with automatic expiring agreements reports. Never miss a renewal window or let a reversion trigger go unnoticed.

Advance & Fee Schedules

Track advance payment schedules, due dates, and earn-out status. Dual-date receipt tracking (receipt date vs. posting date) ensures accurate accounting.

Project Status & Milestones

Monitor where each licensed title is in the production pipeline — from agreement through delivery, publication, and royalty reporting.

Financial Tracking: Advances, Fees & Receipts

Advance & Earn-Out Tracking

- Track advance schedules and payment due dates
- Monitor earn-out status per title and per deal
- Unpaid Advances Report for collection follow-up
- Advance & Fee Schedule Report for forecasting

Receipt Management

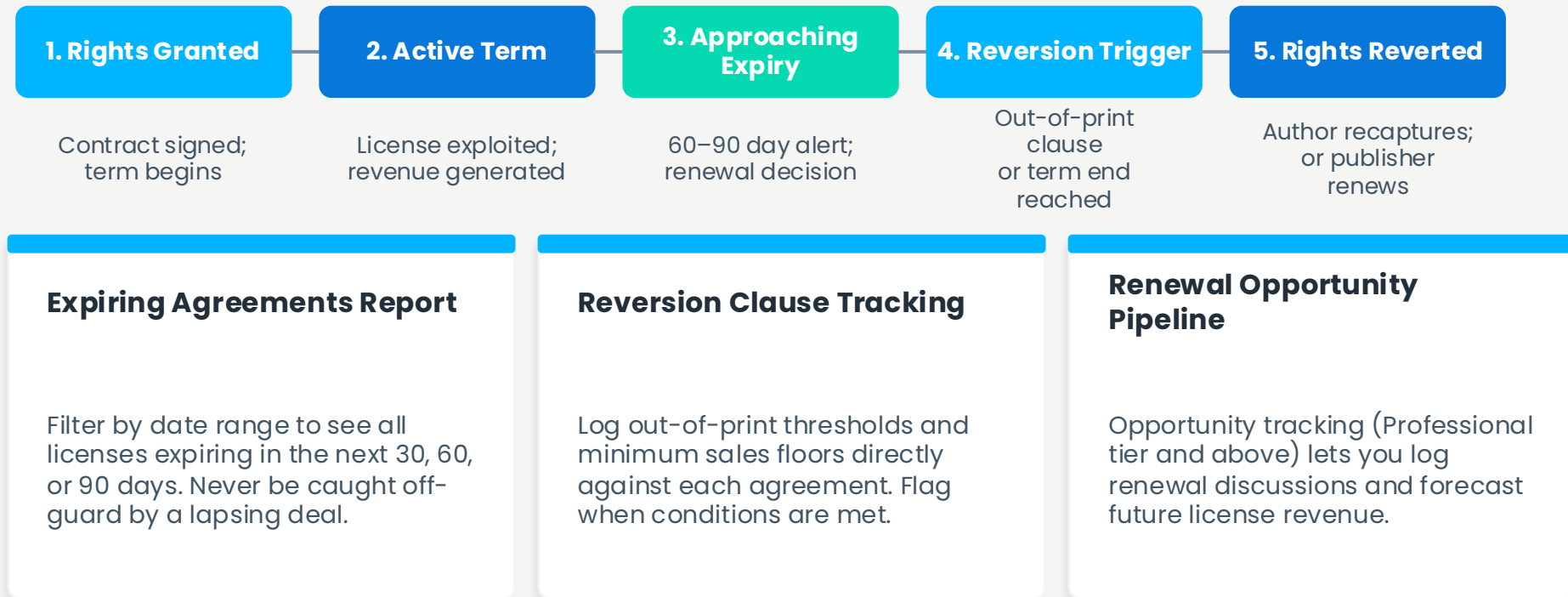
- Dual-date tracking: receipt date vs. posting date
- Foreign currency support for international deals
- Receipt exploding: split one payment across multiple titles
- One-time non-recoupable fees tracked separately

Dunning & Collections

- Automated dunning emails for overdue payments
- Bulk dunning send with customizable templates
- Fee-level dunning for overdue non-recoupable fees
- Past Due Royalties Report for partner follow-up

Expiration & Reversion Management

The rights you let expire are the rights you lose — often permanently



MODULE 4

Aligning Your Systems

Bridging title management, rights, royalties, and accounting

The Silos Problem: Why Disconnected Systems Fail Publishers

Title Management

What editions exist?

 **No rights link**

Rights System

Who has what rights?

 **No royalty link**

Royalty System

What's owed to authors?

 **No accounting link**

Accounting

What's been paid and received?

 **No title link**

Each silo creates a gap — and every gap is a potential error, delay, or lost revenue.

✓ The alternative: One centralized platform where title data, rights grants, royalty calculations, and payment records all live — and talk to each other.

Best Practices: Aligning Your Systems

01

Establish a single source of truth

All rights information — grants, expirations, exclusivity status, financial terms — should live in one system, not scattered across email chains, spreadsheets, and shared drives.

02

Sync rights and royalties bidirectionally

When a rights license generates income, that data should flow directly to royalty calculations. MetaComet's RT-to-Rights sync links your royalty tracker and rights platform automatically.

03

Define your rights taxonomy up front

Agree on standard language for formats, territories, and rights types before data entry begins. User-defined languages, formats, and regions ensure your system mirrors your contracts exactly.

04

Gate pre-press on permissions completion

Build a 'rights complete' checkpoint into your editorial workflow before any title goes to press. Compliance workflows and permissions checklists prevent costly last-minute issues.

05

Run regular expiring agreements reviews

Schedule a monthly or quarterly review of rights approaching expiration. Combine with opportunity tracking to convert expiring licenses into renewal revenue.

MODULE 5

Unifying the Workflow

Bringing sales, editorial, accounting, and legal into one process

Rights & Permissions: A Cross-Departmental Workflow



Editorial

- What rights are available for new projects?
- Are permissions complete for this title?
- What's the reversion status on backlist?



Sales & Licensing

- Which titles have available audio / translation rights?
- Who are our active licensees by territory?
- What deals are up for renewal this quarter?



Accounting & Finance

- What advances are outstanding or overdue?
- What sub-rights income has been received?
- How do I reconcile foreign receipts in USD?



Legal & Contracts

- Is this new grant in conflict with an existing exclusive?
- What's the exact contractual language for this reversion?
- Where's the signed agreement for this title?

How MetaComet Powers Your Rights Operation



Rights Map & Availability

Visual, at-a-glance view of every right sold, retained, and available — by title, format, territory, and language.



Exclusivity Conflict Detection

Automatically flags when a proposed new grant conflicts with an existing exclusive license. Prevents costly double-grants.



Agreement Management

Full contract lifecycle tracking — from signature through expiry — with multi-project agreements and project status milestones.



Financial Integration

Advances, non-recoupable fees, foreign currency receipts, and sub-agent payment routing — all connected to rights grants.



Automated Alerts & Dunning

Expiring agreements reports, past-due royalties tracking, and customizable dunning emails keep your receivables current.



Royalty Tracker Integration

Bi-directional sync with MetaComet Royalty Tracker — rights data flows to royalty calculations automatically. Bundle saves 20%.

Your 10-Point Rights Management Action Plan

This Week

Conduct a rights audit of your top 20 titles — identify all unexploited subsidiary rights

This Week

Review active contracts for audio, translation, and digital rights ownership

This Month

Run an expiring agreements review — flag anything lapsing in the next 6 months

This Month

Build a permissions completeness checklist for your editorial workflow

This Quarter

Create a rights revenue plan: which titles have untapped audio, translation, or OA potential?

This Quarter

Identify opportunities for Frankfurt, London Book Fair, or direct licensee outreach

Next Contract

Ensure all agreements break out rights categories, territories, and reversion triggers explicitly

Next Contract

Include royalty statement requirements: format/territory breakdowns, not just totals

Ongoing

Schedule quarterly cross-department rights reviews (editorial, sales, accounting, legal)

Priority

Evaluate rights management software — manual tracking doesn't scale past 50 active agreements

Key Takeaways

Know What You Own: Rights & Permissions Management

- 1 Copyright is a bundle of rights — each one can and should be tracked, licensed, and exploited separately
- 2 Spreadsheets fail at scale: no conflict detection, no expiration alerts, no audit trail, no integration
- 3 Subsidiary rights (audio, translation, film, OA) are often the largest untapped revenue source for UPs
- 4 Contract terms must capture rights granted, territories, exclusivity, financial schedules, and reversion triggers
- 5 Aligning title management, rights, royalties, and accounting in one system eliminates costly errors
- 6 Unifying rights workflows across editorial, sales, accounting, and legal creates a competitive advantage
- 7 Your royalty system and rights system must talk to each other — or gaps will cost you

Questions?

Thank you for joining this session.

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Ask us about a free rights management demo

MetaComet Systems | Royalty & Rights Management Solutions for Publishers | Founded 2000