**Harry Potter casts spell on publishing – *Answers***

The magic of Harry Potter has enchanted not just children but also publishers, who have rediscovered the value of children’s books.

Ahead of the release of the sixth instalment of JK Rowling’s phenomenally successful series about the boy wizard, bookseller Waterstone’s **analysed** the impact Harry Potter had had on the publishing industry, UK tourism and business. The superstar of children’s fiction, JK Rowling **helped** her fellow authors by raising the profile of the genre.

Waterstone’s said there had been a tenfold increase in the number of new children’s books **released** every month since 2000. In a state of decline before the appearance of Harry Potter in 1997, sales of children’s books excluding the young wizard have since been **growing** at a rate of 2% a year.

“Demand for other children’s authors, **stimulated** by interest in Harry Potter, has helped the publishing industry as a whole,” Waterstone’s said, “New writers are now **taken** more seriously, recognised more quickly, and invested in more heavily.”

Retailers have doubled the space they **devote** to children’s books, and publishers spend “substantially more” money on marketing and promotion of the genre. Authors have also **benefited** and can command more money, for example Michelle Praver, who wrote Wolf Boy, **received** an advance of nearly £2m.

The popularity of Harry Potter has **boosted** sales of other children’s authors such as Philip Pullman and Mark Haddon. The top three best-selling fiction authors in the UK are now children’s writers, ahead of John Grisham, Dan Brown and Danielle Steel.

Harry Potter has also **fuelled** the popularity of the crossover genre, or books that are read by both adults and children. Adult editions of the fifth book in the series, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, **accounted** for 10% of total sales.

Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince smashed all publishing records when it was simultaneously released around the world at one minute past midnight Saturday July 16 2005.

“Normally a popular or much anticipated book would be lucky to **sell** two million copies in its lifetime, let alone its first 24 hours,” said Waterstone’s children’s manager. British publisher Bloomsbury remains tight-lipped about print runs for the book, but US publisher Scholastic **announced** a first run of 10.8 million copies. This was a 27% increase on its run for book five.

The ripple effect of Harry Potter’s success has also helped the UK tourism industry. Just as Lord of the Rings **drew** visitors to New Zealand, Harry Potter fans have been inspired to travel to Britain.

Forbes magazine **estimates** the Harry Potter brand is worth $1bn (£575), almost three times more than brand Beckham (estimated to be worth $375m). It says at least a dozen US companies cited Harry Potter as a factor affecting their sales.