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NEW YORK UP CLOSE

Where Fingers Walked, They Now Lift Weights

Make room in your kitchen drawer. By this week, some Manhattan residents will be lugging their third yellow pages in a month, with two more expected to blanket the borough by November.

Three companies are challenging the unrivaled dominance in yellow pages in the Manhattan market of Bell Atlantic, which delivers its new edition on Wednesday. The Yellow Pages Publishers Association, an international trade group, estimates that business directory ad sales in Manhattan will reach \$110 million this year.

"Manhattan is a big nut to crack," said Joe Walsh, president of Yellow Book USA, which is delivering nearly a million books to consumers and businesses this month. Yellow Book, a 70-year-old company, publishes about 300 directories nationwide, including listings for Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island.

"We've been lifting weights and training for a big Manhattan push," Mr. Walsh said. But it may be residents who get a workout; the book, at 2,050 pages, weighs more than many newborns.

Another company, DAG Media, publishers of the 10-year-old Jewish Israeli Yellow Pages, rolled out its three-and-a-half pound New Yellow on March 31 and plans to deliver 900,000 copies by next month, said Assaf Ran, its president. The company is planning a second edition in October. And Ambassador Publishing, a privately held

start-up, plans to publish a 1,600-page directory in November.

Why the yellow rush?

"It's symptomatic of the changes going on in the yellow pages industry," said Charles Laughlin, an analyst with the Kelsey Group, a research firm based in Princeton, N.J. "There is an emergence of larger independent companies."

While each publisher is seeking to distinguish its directory through advertising, Mr.

Laughlin says consumers are unlikely to listen. "Everybody will choose one, and it will be based on convenience or who came first," he said. "Consumers only have so much space."

Some observers say the new books goes against the industry trend toward Web pages. "Quite frankly," said Mr. Santoro said, "we are much more concerned about increased competition from new technologies like the Internet." **DENNY LEE**

FLIPPING THE PAGES

Battle of the Books



Bell Atlantic Yellow Pages



Yellow Book



Dag Media New Yellow



Ambassador Yellow Pages*

Online	www.bigyellow.com	www.yellowbook.com	www.newyellow.com	www.aypny.com
Full Page Ad	\$76,000	\$28,000	\$21,000	\$24,000
Circulation	1.5 million	1 million	900,000	850,000
Pages	1,800	2,050	1,280	1,600
Thickness	2 inches	2.75 inches	1.75 inches	2 inches
Weight	5 pounds	6.2 pounds	3.5 pounds	4.8 pounds
Entries	180,000	260,000	125,000	Unavailable
Main Selling Point	"A trusted and respected consumer business directory for more than 100 years."	"One book that combines consumer yellow pages, business yellow pages and business white pages."	"First company to publish a Manhattan business directory in 2000."	"Special editorial sections like health, home, parenting and personal finance."

*due out in November