



CASE STUDY

Before our customers invest in a VarioPrint i-series printer from Canon Solutions America, they need confidence in the business model. They must be sure their customers will embrace the print-on-demand (POD) applications and new ways of working offered by the VarioPrint i-series.

The VarioPrint i-series installation at Centraal Boekhuis (CB) in the Netherlands is an excellent example of our customers helping their customers to evolve their business model. Equipped with two VarioPrint i300s, CB is helping its customer Koninklijke Boom Publishers address changing book market trends by delivering instant bestsellers on demand. And business is booming!

Tough challenges for publishers

CB was founded in 1871 to provide centralized storage and delivery of books to publishers in the Netherlands. Today, with over 800 professionals, CB's mission is to be an extremely efficient distribution company for bookshops in the Netherlands and Belgium. CB distributes some 54 million books annually.

But the book market is changing. "The average series of an edition is smaller," says Mathijs Suidman, Managing Director Media at CB. "That presents a tough challenge for publishers to deliver a book efficiently to the market. It's no longer self-evident that books are produced in large quantities on offset."

Producing bestsellers on demand

"This is what happens," says Paul Remy, Office Manager, Koninklijke Boom Publishers. "A book is available. We have 2,000 on stock, for instance. But for some reason, there is a sudden demand for 5,000 in one weekend. In that case, you will not sell 3,000 books if they are not instantly available." But that's not a problem at CB. The moment a book becomes a bestseller, it's produced immediately with print on demand.

"We use two VarioPrint i300s," says Dave van 't Wout, Operations Manager at CB. "We developed a print on demand warehouse in our distribution center, next to our book



warehouses. When a bookshop orders a title that is not in stock, it's produced automatically and delivered within the same time as any book that's here on the shelf." With this approach, CB produces in short runs and has books available instantly at a low cost price.

New markets for our customers' customers

CB's customers see new opportunities. Mathijs Suidman: "They understand that with books on demand, theoretically, we can deliver foreign language books within 24 hours." Foreign language books are typically printed in the country of origin and shipped via boat or airplane. "Just imagine what it means if we can produce here in 24 hours," says Mathijs. CB is exploring opportunities with a partner in the United States to print the partner's books on demand in the Netherlands.

Another interesting market is education. Thanks to devices like tablets, learning is increasingly digitized and personalized. Several publishers have contacted CB about the possibility to print books on demand with personalized content.

Booming business on demand

Mathijs Suidman: "Consumers who want a book want it today or tomorrow, so it must be produced today or tomorrow. More and more publishers understand that titles should always be available. So even bestsellers are printed here at our print on demand site. That has resulted in the successful business we have today, producing around 600,000 books a year on demand."

According to Caslon, the global market for digital book production will show strong growth of 12% annually between 2017 and 2022. Books are a booming business. But to meet the demands of the book-buying public, our customers' customers need new ways to manage inventory and increase speed to market, for both new releases and for reprints. The on-demand printing business of CB and Koninklijke Boom Publishers proves the power of the VarioPrint i-series to address the changing market dynamics with a successful business model.

Production Printing Products Business Unit BusinessNews 5/2019



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