

Espresso Book Machine – News Release

A new print-on-demand machine at the University of Waterloo Bookstore will in mere minutes print a high-quality paperback book with colour cover at a low cost.

“The Espresso Book Machine has revolutionized the traditional textbook supply chain for book distribution said May Yan director of UW retail services. “We will be able to offer options to students and faculty that will be cost effective and options for customized textbooks that will never be out of stock. The EBM makes it possible to print quickly and easily almost every book published, including out-of-print titles and books in the public domain.”

The Bookstore will offer a new print-on-demand service for self-publishing authors or anyone requiring a short-run print order for their own book. The EBM is designed to print one copy or up to 300 copies of a paperback book for less than the price of photocopying.

The EBM, made by a New York based company called On Demand books, is a good example of green publishing, which deploys technology to print materials on-site and thus saves money and fuel on shipping and storage. It will avoid the pulping of unwanted books.. The machine has printed, bound, and automatically trimmed thousands of books in sites across the world, including bookstores at the University of Alberta and McMaster University.

It can print out a 300-page paperback with colour cover and standard paper stock in just four minutes. Print jobs and royalty payments to copyright holders are tracked. The on-board computer provides a simple user interface for controlling print jobs and managing content from digital files.

UW owns the latest version of the machine which costs under \$200,000 US. Waterloo’s EBM version 2.0 with high-speed printer is seven feet long, three feet wide and five feet tall and is faster and smaller than previous versions.

The EBM offers opportunities to work with publishers and faculty to achieve savings that will be passed on to students. For example, the full cost of a McGraw Hill accounting textbook retails for \$192. By selecting only the chapters of the book that students need to read, an instructor customizes the book and the price is reduced to \$89 based on the number of pages printed and copyright costs.

By printing the book on the EBM, the bookstore avoids the cost of shipping and storing textbooks as well as the delays that occur with out-of-stock reorders.

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