

Publishing turns page with print on demand

A burgeoning number of authors are putting out books on their own as digital technology improves and small press runs become less expensive

By Dennis Nishi
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Digital technology is dramatically changing how books are printed—and by whom.

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Printer offers hint of future

Digital technology may be revolutionizing publishing, but digital printers like Hewlett-Packard's Indigo and Xerox's iGen3 still fill entire rooms. And neither printer will do what the InstaBook Maker can do in five minutes: paginate, print and bind a softcover book while you wait. It also can print artwork on the inside pages.

About the size of a large office copier, the InstaBook Maker aspires to achieve the print-on-demand ideal of total automation.

Customers can choose to print a book from a large online catalog or can print their own work. The rest is handled by the machine.

It's the fastest way to get published, though the quality falls short of what print-on-demand publishers offer.

Florida-based InstaBook Corp. plans to penetrate the library, retail bookseller and government markets with its all-in-one product.