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Dec. 11, 2003. 01:00 AM

Printers print, publishers publish

The fastest way to get published

Dec. 9.

While I applaud the Toronto Star for profiling an obviously successful Canadian entrepreneur, there's a lot more to getting a book published than stated in Ho Anderson's article. Simply having 10 copies of a book printed and bound does not make for a published book. Nor does having copies printed on the InstaBook equipment make for a useable or saleable product (to either a publisher or customer).

One of the greatest misunderstandings in this article revolves around the use of publishing and printing terminology. Publishers do not print books but have them printed by printers; printing companies, through the use of their printing equipment, print books for publishers.

A publisher does much more than feed a manuscript into a machine and create copies of it. With every book published, thousands of dollars and hours are poured into it to make the book the best it can possibly be. Publishers pride themselves on quality — both in editorial standards and print quality through their printer vendors. Publishers work with professional book editors, typographers, graphic designers, booksellers, wholesalers, distributors and book printers, to name a few. And publishers sell books.

What Anderson's article also fails to point out is that the InstaBook product cannot compare, quality-wise, to the product produced by professional book printers. Book printing is an art of its own, one I hardly think a former shoe manufacturer tinkering with photocopiers would be able to emulate.

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One thing Anderson did quote correctly is that the publishing industry : trouble here in Canada. With high rates of returns and fewer people purchasing books each year, there are many of us working to improve t state of the industry.

Shannon Mobley,

VP Sales & Marketing,

BookSurge Canada,

Powell River, B.C.

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