

success stories

proven success of BookFWD counters unpredictability of order levels

Grey House Publishing has published over 80 directory titles, as well as countless annual or semi-annual editions of many of these directories. As a premiere database publisher of specialized reference content in finance, government, environment and more, all of Grey House directories and reference books are carefully compiled and researched, offering content that is comprehensive and current.

a paradigm shift

For centuries, the book publishing industry has been forced to treat printing like a gamble: to print large quantities of books without knowing how many would sell in order to get the lowest possible unit price, rolling the dice one title at a time and adjusting their careful guesswork for the next on the basis of the previous title's success. When Webcom recommended looking into the BookFWD program, which differs fundamentally from traditional printing models, Grey House was cautiously optimistic. Short runs of high quality books at the same unit price as a large quantities run was a benefit they were eager to hear more about.

Grey House worked extensively with Webcom over a period of thought and evaluation, initially hesitant to throw all their chips onto the table. Webcom planned an approach to ease them into the BookFWD program with a customized version of our STEPfwd model that carried a no risk guarantee.

fewer copies, same unit cost

As promised, the introductory model proved to be efficient, safe, and affordable, and Grey House began to experience the benefits immediately. Not only could they safely plan for the long term without being trapped in the "job-by-job" mindset, they were able to manage their inventory with greater efficiency, knowing that small order quantities would be just as affordable as large orders.

Eventually they transitioned from STEPfwd to a broader STRAIGHTfwd model, so that:

- they could confidently and more precisely order the amount of stock they would need
- if more runs were ever required, they could count on quick delivery with no cost surprises

Working with Webcom allowed Grey House to cut their turnaround times on short run case bound titles from 6 to 8 weeks down to 15 to 20 days. Cost savings on production alone amounted to 25% in the first year.

freedom to be flexible

In addition to the inventory management and cost-saving advantages, Grey House found that our digital inkjet technology provided them with greater adaptability in their book production. Books containing maps, for example, formerly had to group the maps together at the back of the book in order to minimize the cost of printing them in color. Titles printed on Webcom's T300, like Weather America, allow the publisher to position high quality four-color maps and diagrams at any point in the book, dispersed according to logic and design rather than the restrictions of outdated printing technology. By taking advantage of this improvement, Grey House is now better positioned to provide its customers with quality, custom designed books. With the cost savings to their custom book titles afforded by BookFWD, Grey House has embraced the printing model of the future wholeheartedly.

By every measure we were impressed by the proposed benefits of Webcom's BookFWD program. After the first year of breaking away from our traditional approach, the proven success of BookFWD makes sense on every level.

Laura Mars
Grey House Publishing
Vice President of Editorial

about Webcom

Webcom continually invests in new technologies and experienced professionals. You can rely on us for a fully consultative service experience and a comprehensive range of capabilities to meet the challenges associated with producing and delivering a business-to-business directory.

quality printing

For companies that put out multiple directories, often annually, consistency is essential for brand recognition. Whether we are matching a previous publication or producing a new directory, we fingerprint the publisher's standards to ensure we meet or exceed their quality goals. While we hold all of our projects to Webcom's high standards of quality, we also pay special attention to ensure all the important details that identify each directory and its publisher remain intact – providing on-site press approvals to ensure that you get exactly what you intended.

Investments made by Webcom throughout 2011 and 2012 marked our significant commitment to stand at the forefront of book printing with offset-equivalent short runs. New equipment installations spanned the entire production process from new prepress workflows to multiple digital inkjet presses and new bindery lines integrated with automation to optimize efficiency. Matching the quality of offset printing and achieving cost efficiency with short runs are the defining elements of our unique BookFWD program.

lightweight paper

B2B directories typically have extremely large page extents. Webcom's inventory includes lightweight papers specifically manufactured to accommodate this need. These papers offer great opacity and brightness combined with higher PPI's, and help you save money in the long run – on packaging, distribution, mailing, and storage.

Some of our paper grades can fit nearly 1,000 pages in a single inch of spine, which is an important factor in a business where some directories are more than 2,000 pages.

environmental commitment

Webcom's dedication to environmental integrity is not only award-winning, it's also more affordable than ever. Our extensive Legacy line of papers offers a wide range of quality grades at a reasonable cost. All Legacy papers offer an eco-friendly alternative by combining high percentages of post-consumer waste with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and Ancient Forest Friendly endorsement. We also make use of efficient, environmental processes that reduce waste and use vegetable-based products rather than more harmful chemicals.

consultative service

Webcom has been in the business of printing directories long enough to understand that the market is constantly evolving. To keep on top of what publishers need and want from their printing company, we are always engaging with our customers. After every completed job, we audit the process to review the outcome of each specific project. Our quarterly business meetings serve to share new industry information, review our performance, and look for ideas to further improve areas such as quality, turnaround time, and profitability. We're proud to say that we know directories, and never stop adapting to the needs of the industry.



put our experience to work for you

- Large print runs with web offset printing & short to medium runs on HPT300 inkjet
- Business models add revenue & cut supply chain cost
- Seamless prepress system, remote proofing
- Extensive paper inventory with diverse grades, weights, and environmental alternatives
- Strong, flexible bindery with otabind lay-flat
- Over 20 different coatings plus 4- to 6-colour options for covers