

PRESS RELEASE
RISO Africa

Print on demand offers way to solve textbook crisis

The challenge of getting the right textbooks to the right schools has become perennial in South Africa, especially in hard-to-reach rural schools. New print-on-demand technology from Riso Africa has the capability to help solve this crisis in South Africa's schools—and transform the publishing industry as well.

“Print on demand has been talked about for years, but only now has it become a practical and cost-effective option for schools, churches, corporate training departments and the like,” says Sonia Anderson, marketing manager at Riso Africa. “With technology like this in place, we could help the education department solve the textbook crisis with relative ease.”

Riso's new-generation ComColor+ printer uses Riso's high-speed printing technology—up to 150 pages per minute—to produce bound copies within minutes. For example, this means that it is possible to produce a 600-page perfect-bound book in full colour in less than six minutes. Additionally, Anderson points out, Riso's “business colour” technology means that full-colour printing is now affordable.

“Because we take into account the coverage of colour across the whole print job, as well as the volume, the average cost for full colour can be as little as 35c a page,” she says. “In fact, using this technology, one distance educator is able to include more colour in its materials while reducing costs.”

The ComColor+ unit has a small footprint and only occupies around three metres of floor space. It's also remarkably energy-efficient, and is being successfully run on solar power at one school in Kempton Park.

“All of these factors mean that one school could take on the role of print hub for all the schools in its area, creating a separate revenue stream for itself and allowing each school to print the exact number of textbooks it needs,” she explains. “Our software also allows for each copy to be personalised with the pupil's name or other information, which would help cut down on book theft—not to mention logistics costs and challenges.”

Anderson goes on to say that Riso intends to work closely with publishers to ensure that their copyright is fully protected. Riso's print management software would enable the print jobs to be tracked for this purpose or, indeed, could be set up to print only the number of copies corresponding to a payment made to the publisher, with the digital file delivered via the cloud.

“We are eager to work with the publishing industry to use this cost-effective and powerful technology to transform not only the educational publishing landscape in South Africa but also, potentially, the book retail one as well,” says Anderson. “Now, for the first time, it is practical to order a book via a website and have it printed at an outlet such as PostNet for the customer to collect. There is also obviously a solid business case for companies that print out significant volumes of training material.”

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About Riso Africa

Founded in 1954, “Riso” means “ideal” in Japanese, and the company strives to create the ideal printing solution for its customers. Riso products emphasise productivity, cost efficiency, energy saving and versatility.

Riso's range of printers uses patented, cutting-edge technology that redefines paper-based communication. Our powerful solutions deliver performance at a fraction of the cost, time and energy used by conventional printing.

www.riso.co.za

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