



BOOK PRINTING EDITION

# DISCOVER HOW YOUR PEERS DO MORE WITH CANON INKJET

DISCOVER HOW YOUR BOOK PRINTING PEERS DO MORE WITH CANON INKJET

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**MOVE  
FORWARD  
WITH CANON.**

# PRIORITIZING CUSTOMER SUCCESS

It's no secret production inkjet technology is the future of the printing industry, or that Canon is at the forefront of its evolution. According to InfoTrends, we currently hold 35% of U.S. total high-volume inkjet market share<sup>1</sup> and once again top the Leader Category in the latest IDC MarketScape assessment of global inkjet vendors.<sup>2</sup> We got here by prioritizing customer success. Now, we're taking this philosophy even further.

Through listening to our customers, we've been able to continuously develop inkjet solutions that help advance the industry. As challenges related to everything from productivity to labor, costs, sustainability, AI integration, and selling print in a digital world continue to mount, our goal is to help customers navigate these challenges and Move Forward with Canon. For example:

- **Equipping You for Success**—Canon's legacy of continuous innovation drives not only the improvement of existing products but also the development of technology for the future. Right now, we are positioned to offer a robust product portfolio for years to come.
- **Minimizing Labor Needs**—Canon inkjet presses are easy to use and don't require complex skill

sets. With on-site training and onboarding during installation, one press operator can run multiple presses with minimal intervention or manual processes.

- **Driving Down Costs**—The expert analysts of Canon's Professional Services team help customers drive out operational costs, maximize return on their inkjet investment, and customize strategies to attract new business and prepare for growth.
- **Promoting Print's Value**—The thINK user group of Canon inkjet customers offers members-only access to helpful resources for accelerating sales, including predesigned print samples and lead gen tools promoting the value of print and inkjet.

But you don't have to take our word for it. This guide features a compilation of select excerpts from Canon customer case studies, thINK presentations, testimonials, and articles presenting real-life stories and perspectives directly from your print provider peers. Discover how they do more with Canon inkjet.

1. InfoTrends; 2023 Full Year POD Tracker

2. "Worldwide High-Speed Inkjet Press 2023 Vendor Assessment" (IDC MarketScape, April 2023)

01

## ACUTRACK LEVERAGES INKJET FOR EXPLOSIVE GROWTH



**“ WITH THE iX WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO EXPLORE PROFITABLE NEW OPPORTUNITIES.”**

— RAJ BARMAN, CEO/OWNER, ACUTRACK

Meet Raj Barman, CEO and owner of Acutrack, a full-service book printing and fulfillment pioneer.

Acutrack started in 1992 as a garage-based fulfillment business in Livermore, California, with services including media production and kitting for Silicon Valley’s software giants. Soon, the company became one of the early pioneers of zero-inventory manufacture on demand (MOD).

When customers began requesting book fulfillment, Raj recognized an opportunity to leverage the company’s successful MOD strategy by also offering book printing. Although Acutrack outsourced all the printing at first, taking ownership of the entire cycle made them highly popular with customers, and the business took off.

### Print on demand gains power

As print became an increasingly crucial part of the company’s service offering, Raj added the

Canon varioPRINT iX-series sheetfed inkjet press to his warehouse floor. As expected, the varioPRINT iX’s high quality and media versatility enabled Acutrack to produce both monochrome and full-color book jobs with ease. It also exceeded expectations. When the company’s sales and marketing team began using the iX to demonstrate the power of its print-on-demand fulfillment model, Acutrack really saw game-changing results.

“With the iX we have been able to explore profitable new opportunities, including short runs, one-offs, backlists, out-of-print titles, reprints, and more, and this led us to explosive growth,” Raj shared.

### Canon inkjet as a catalyst for growth

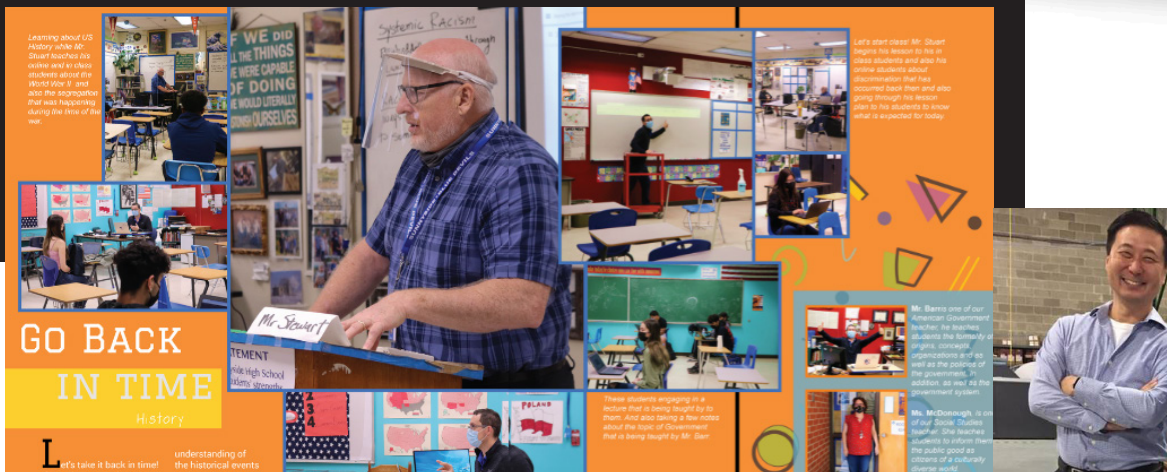
While rapid growth presents challenges, Acutrack made strategic decisions to maintain control over its expansion. As CEO, Raj firmly believes in the company’s current model of controlled growth, which combines in-house and outsourced print operations.

“Outsourcing has always been a part of our business model, as it allows us to scale up and down to meet customer demand,” he explains. “We will continue to do so, with the varioPRINT iX serving as the catalyst to attract business and provide the agility and control we require.”

Today, Acutrack prides itself on offering the broadest range of book trim sizes and binding options, accommodating a variety of book types, including glossy hardcover photography books, perfect-bound books, and coil-bound hard case journals. Its clientele includes authors, training institutions, coaches, corporations, and educational institutions.

***“Acutrack had been outsourcing print services before and will continue to do so, with the varioPRINT iX serving as the catalyst to attract business and provide the agility and control we require.”***

—Raj Barman, CEO and owner, Acutrack



## 02 ENTOURAGE BECOMES “MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED” YEARBOOK COMPANY

### Meet Edward Jo, cofounder and CFO of leading yearbook company Entourage

In just 18 years, Entourage has become a premier yearbook and photo specialty company in the U.S., annually serving thousands of schools and organizations across the country and around the globe. Distinguishing itself from traditional yearbook companies, Entourage offers an expansive array of digital tools and services to help make the process of publishing full-color yearbooks easy, plus a blazing fast production turnaround time.

To support its growing business in both yearbooks and the booming photo specialty market, Entourage recently made the transition to production inkjet, installing a Canon varioPRINT iX-series sheetfed press, further solidifying its reputation for quality and service. With the innovative inkjet capabilities of the varioPRINT iX, the company is capturing additional opportunities, pursuing even greater growth, and competing more aggressively.

## Not doing it old school

Entourage differentiates itself in the marketplace as the “next generation” yearbook company. It not only digitizes yearbook design, production, and printing but also sells a hybrid yearbook that includes both a printed copy and a digital license for unlimited online access.

The result is a simplified, seamless web-to-print yearbook solution. Students can collaborate on their preferred creative platforms (Photoshop, InDesign, etc.) to create a custom design or use a wide range of professionally designed templates, fonts, and themes. They can even use social media to upload photos from Instagram, Facebook, and Google Drive at the click of a button.

“If you want a yearbook that your parents and your grandparents got, you would go to a conventional company that’s been around for years,” says Edward. “But if you want a next-generation yearbook that is produced faster, more cost-effectively, and always has an interactive component to the experience, then you would go to Entourage.”

For example, Entourage offers variable data personalization. Schools can customize pages for individual students or groups and create one-off or a limited quantity of books at the same speed as static pages and with no significant additional cost. And speaking of speed, an industry-leading delivery model is another big differentiator for Entourage.

“When we first started, offset print providers we contacted couldn’t do



the work as fast as we needed them to,” says Edward. “We’d ask them for three-week turnaround, and they came back with 12 weeks. We felt that was way too long and wouldn’t work for our customers. Ordinarily, we promise 28-day delivery—but right now we’ve actually been able to complete printing within days, primarily because of the Canon varioPRINT iX-series!”

## Making the move to inkjet

According to Edward, before making the move to inkjet, Entourage leaders did their homework.

“The Canon varioPRINT iX-series was the first platform where we finally said, ‘This quality meets the standards that we need to deliver to our customers.’ Several things stood out as just being next level,” he explains.

**Consistency**—An important factor in yearbook production is making sure there are no deviations in color or image quality, even after days or weeks.

“Now it’s possible to order just enough yearbooks,” Edward says. “If a school gets a late order after the main print run is completed, they don’t even have to call us back. They can just go on our website and click to order one more yearbook. And they have peace of mind there will be no difference.”

**Ink coverage**—Another concern for Entourage was the fact that full-color applications, like yearbooks, require high ink coverage and high quality. The varioPRINT iX’s ink-optimizing and drying technologies made it the company’s top choice.

“What the Canon press does distinctively well is handle the high



ink coverage on our yearbooks,” Edward says. “Pretty much every page is covered with images. But with the iX, pages come out the way we expect them to—not only with exceptional image quality but also flat and ready to go through finishing.”

**Media flexibility**—Entourage also recognized that having media options is a big thing, especially with a constrained supply chain.

“Being able to use regular paper, rather than treated stocks, is great,” Edward says. “With such a large media library, if a paper is not available, we can quickly pivot to a different media—one that’s already been evaluated and calibrated for the iX.”

**Application opportunities**—The timing of Entourage’s move to inkjet couldn’t have been better. Globally, the demand for photo specialty products—including photobooks such as yearbooks, as well as personalized calendars, cards, and posters—is booming at the same time production inkjet printing technology has created a highly competitive platform for this growing multibillion-dollar market. It’s a

synergy that is helping Entourage grow and pursue more business opportunities as an outsourced partner for commercial printers and book manufacturers, especially during the off-peak season for yearbooks.

“Yearbook production is seasonal, with the work heavily concentrated in April, May, and June,” says Edward. “Which just happens to be countercyclical to the peak season for so many other photo specialty products. It actually works well to keep our presses running during the rest of the year by printing calendars, children’s books, photobooks, personalized gifts, etc., as overflow work from other print providers. That side of the business has grown a lot since we installed the varioPRINT iX.”

***“We’re looking to double our business in the short term—about three to five years—and I think the Canon platform will be instrumental in supporting our need to increase capacity and productivity.”***

*—Edward Jo, cofounder and CFO, Entourage*

03

## HF GROUP PURSUES NEXT CHAPTER IN BOOK PRINTING

**Meet Jim Heckman, partner, and Tim Malott, business development manager, of HF Group, a comprehensive book manufacturing service provider**

Established in 1931, HF Group began by specializing in manufacturing books for traditional library spaces and providing bindery services, primarily catering to colleges and universities. Now it has transformed into a cutting-edge book manufacturing service provider offering a wide range of solutions, including short-run, hardcover, and softcover book printing, as well as prebinding, library binding, digitization, textbook rebinding, enclosures, conservation, and more.

“There’s a reason we’ve been in business for over four generations: We know how to evolve with the ever-changing market,” says Jim. “We have always been known for delivering excellent products with outstanding customer service. That said, it is obvious that you cannot remain in business this long without adapting and embracing innovative technologies that help you uplevel the depth and breadth of your service offerings and the quality of your products. When we saw the Canon varioPRINT iX sheetfed inkjet



press, we knew it would help us gain a competitive advantage and be at the forefront of the evolving needs of the book market.”

With the varioPRINT iX equipping the company to manage a wider range of printing requirements—from short runs to larger, more complex projects—HF Group has expanded its print capabilities.



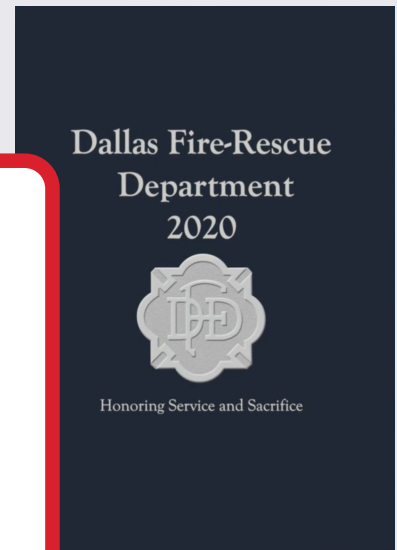




“Whether it is printing covers, book blocks, or entire books, we have the technology and expertise to deliver exceptional results every time,” adds Tim. “The color accuracy and sharpness of the varioPRINT iX is pretty amazing, and when you combine that with the sheer speed and reduced operating costs, it results in extremely high-quality print with fast turnaround times, all at a competitive price point for our customers.”

**“ We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. We are committed to pushing the boundaries of what is possible in book printing, delivering innovative solutions that exceed our customers’ expectations.”**

*—Tim Malott, business development manager, HF Group*



## 04

# SDI INNOVATIONS PLANS FOR GROWTH

**Meet Jeff Bapst, COO of SDI Innovations, a multifaceted provider of branded products and services primarily for the education market**

SDI Innovations manufactures and manages a range of branded products and services designed to fill specific needs in the education market and beyond. To publish its flagship School Datebooks, which are used in more than 18,000 schools nationwide and abroad, it relies on the Canon ColorStream series inkjet web platform to help ensure product quality, offer remarkable customization capability, and deliver with exceptional speed and precision.

“SDI is not a printer,” says Jeff. “Our niche is creating and delivering custom datebooks for schools. What began with a humble idea to help students grew within a few years to a thriving business that demanded we take a close look at how things were done and figure out the best way to operate efficiently as a company.”

Up to that point, SDI Innovations was essentially a design/publishing company, developing products, assembling artwork, and farming out production to commercial printers. But company leaders realized growth would be limited unless they took more control of the manufacturing process.

To stay profitable and competitive, SDI Innovations made the decision to add its own manufacturing capabilities, scaling growth in step with increasing business. That’s when SDI’s partnership with Canon began—first with a Canon VarioStream 7000 series digital toner press that brought custom, small-volume, quick-turnaround, black-and-white projects in-house.

### **Color and customization call for inkjet**

Soon, however, SDI Innovations also started actively acquiring its competitors, many of which were printing large four-color runs overseas. As the company absorbed some of these new product lines, the company realized managing a more extensive



outsourced manufacturing pipeline was a hindrance. “It was squeezing margins and driving up costs,” recalls Jeff.

Within a few years, the introduction of the Canon ColorStream 3900 offered the company a more profitable way to meet customer demand for vibrant color, mass customization, fast turnaround, and inventory precision.

“We were an early adopter of the ColorStream,” explains Jeff, “which brought with it the realization that we could build a model of high-volume web printing and small-volume digital printing to quickly and competently meet the needs of more schools while keeping more of the production process in-house.”

### **New opportunities call for an upgrade**

Inkjet also allowed SDI Innovations to expand in the full-color manufacturing market as well as set much more specific inventory projections, keeping them tight and printing for customers on-demand. With more control of production and more opportunities to grow, upgrading was an obvious next step for SDI.

“We reached a point,” says Jeff, “where it made sense to go for the print quality improvements and technology innovation afforded by the Canon ColorStream 6900. That was easy ROI for me because keeping those impressions in-house as opposed to outsourced made the upgrade an easy call. . . . Plus, when it comes to operational consistency and uptime, the 6900 just runs. It’s a workhorse.”

The jump in productivity, quality, and reliability has been the catalyst for SDI Innovations to launch new product lines—like adult coloring books and journals—and expand into new markets. It’s enabled the company to not only produce millions of datebooks for students in all 50 states and 23 countries but also build e-commerce capabilities on sites like Amazon and pursue alternate production opportunities during off-peak season.

**“We’ve expanded into new markets and launched new product lines. Evolving our business along with Canon technology has been key to that success. I’m positive it will continue to be a great partnership.”**

*—Jeff Bapst, COO, SDI Innovations*





### Canon ProStream 3000 Product Video [▶](#) [Watch the Video >](#)

Discover how Canon continues to carry out its mission to help customers print beyond limits. The new Canon ProStream 3000 series web-fed inkjet press represents the art of going above and beyond by delivering offset quality with industrial speed and inkjet flexibility, plus a host of innovative processing technologies.

### varioPRINT iX-series Sheetfed Inkjet Press [▶](#) [Watch the Video >](#)

Are you ready for a revolution in sheetfed inkjet? Our newest technology has a lower cost of ownership for vibrant colors, razor-sharp details, and application versatility to set you up for offset quality at inkjet's high speed. Get ready to experience more profit and more business.

## 05 RECOMMENDED VIEWING

### HF Group Inkjet Innovation 2024 [▶](#) [Watch the Video >](#)

Discover how installing a Canon varioPRINT iX sheetfed inkjet press helps book manufacturer HF Group “look like rockstars” to customers who demand everything from short-run reprints of coffee table books that mirror the original’s offset quality to sophisticated art books suitable for a gallery or museum setting.

### Camelot Inkjet Innovation 2024 [▶](#) [Watch the Video >](#)

When Camelot Print & Copy Centers needed to print a high-quality but cost-effective photobook for a school band, the Canon varioPRINT iX hit all the high notes. The school colors popped off the page, the photo files came out crystal clear without any fine-tuning, and the customer was blown away.





Canon recommends forward-thinking strategies to help achieve the highest levels of information management efficiency for your unique business needs. Using superior technology and innovative services, we then design, implement, and track solutions that help improve information flow throughout your organization while considering the environment, helping to result in greater productivity and reduced costs.

### **Canon Provides End-to-End Solutions Like These:**

- Paper Program
- Media and Solutions Lab
- TrueSupport
- Training and Experience
- Escalation Procedures
- Preventive Maintenance
- Canon PRISMA Workflow Software
- Resource Center Website

As a company that is dedicated to your needs, we support our solutions with highly skilled professionals and advanced diagnostic systems to maintain peak performance. And with ongoing consultation, we can further your document management capabilities to help ensure the highest level of satisfaction and productivity.



think is an independent community of Canon Production Inkjet customers, solution partners, and print industry experts, and Canon is a proud executive sponsor. Led by some of the most successful inkjet service providers in the country, it provides a forum for members to network, gain knowledge, discuss common challenges, and share best practices.

Discover more resources from Canon  
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