



## CASE STUDY

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## HOW FOCUSING ON THE MOMENT HELPED KEEP THE CREATIVE DIGITAL PRINTING TEAM'S FORTUNES INTACT

Even more than 30 years in the business world could not help Chris and Jeff Casey prepare for how the pandemic ripped its way through the commercial print industry. And then there was the exhausting personal toll it exacted on each and every employee and family member, not to mention friends and colleagues. The beginning of 2020 was supposed to be the start of something big for the brothers. After working in different places—Jeff founded Creative Digital Printing in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2005 while Chris worked as VP of Sales for a Cincinnati-based book printing company—they decided to join forces. So, in late 2019, the Casey brothers officially became business partners.

One of their first major steps was teaming up with Canon Solutions America, a move Chris and Jeff knew would help establish the foundation for their commercial print business in the book market. As part of their partnership, Creative Digital Printing installed a Canon varioPRINT i-series press, hoping the relationship would launch the print services provider into a whole new ballgame.

And then the bottom fell out. As so many pandemic stories remind us, 2020 was a year like no other. As the impact of the pandemic started taking hold, Chris and Jeff had to lay off everyone for the first 30 days. The Las Vegas market was shut down. Gone were the trade shows that energized the local business market. With the few customers it still had, the Creative Digital management team had to print and bind the books on order.

*"It felt like our feet were taken out from beneath us," recalls Chris, Executive VP of Sales & Marketing. "In the beginning, it was tough not knowing what was going to happen. We were disheartened."*

And while hindsight might stake a claim that it was a gamble to install the new Canon VarioPrint i300+, Chris and Jeff knew it was going to be a great addition to their arsenal. Thanks to orders from several of its loyal customers, Creative Digital made it through the first year. Methodically, it began to reach out to its book clients, eventually starting with printing trade books before adding children's books.



*"These books, along with our other clients and our promotional products team, helped us through it all," Chris says. "We didn't make a lot of money, but we were able to manage. My brother and I have learned a lot about how to manage through tough times. In all my years, I have never seen such a challenging time."*

The ability to stay the course and have an open mind to the opportunities at hand made all the difference in the world. Doing what they had to do to survive meant things would look different. Along with the varioPRINT i-series, Creative Digital has a Canon varioPRINT 6220 TITAN black-and-white sheet-fed press, as well as a Canon imagePRESS C10010 and a Canon imagePRESS C710 sheet-fed toner press in its equipment portfolio. *"Our shop now looks totally different than it did when it first opened,"* Chris says.

*"Other companies are trying to mimic this press, but only Canon has figured it out completely in my mind. The uptime on this press is great."*

**- Chris Casey**, Executive VP of Sales & Marketing

## **A book by any other name...**

If the boost in business is any indication, Creative Digital's customers and prospective customers continue to take note. As one of the only true book manufacturers in the greater Las Vegas area, Creative Digital continues to push the envelope of what it can do with the resources it has, especially the VarioPrint I300+. While living and working in Cincinnati, Chris saw firsthand what the printer could do at Graphic Village. Once he saw the efficiencies and the quality of the press, he knew the I300+ would be competitive for the book market. No need for make readies and running to a Gracol standard were game changers.

*"Being able to print on both coated and uncoated media as well as cover stocks up to 324 gsm is amazing,"* Chris says. *"Other companies are trying to mimic this press, but only Canon has figured it out completely in my mind. The uptime on this press is great. You can print one book, switch to another book type, print NCR, print a cover, and go back to the original book job without changing everything around in the press. Cut sheet is easy, maybe not as fast as the roll fed devices, but more versatile."*

Creative Digital has another ace up its proverbial sleeve—the book market is hot right now. On the heels of an extremely reliable children’s market, the trade and school textbook market continues to stay hot. With the Creative Digital presses printing book blocks all day long, the printer has posted more than five million impressions over the past few months, occasionally stopping the presses to print some of its commercial work. “Everyone reads a book, needs a book,” Chris says. “Our world is centered around learning and entertaining ourselves, and books do just that. I have been selling in this market for 21 years now and it never gets old. Sure, maybe a little challenging like back in 2020, but we made it.”

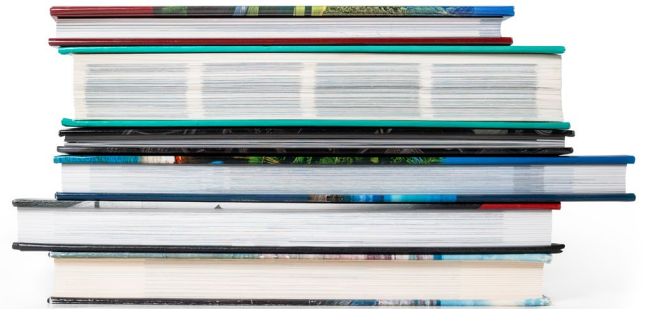
“They have been one of our bread-and-butter clients since the onset of the pandemic,” Chris says. “He told me at a dinner recently that without us, they wouldn’t have been able to meet their sales goals for 2021-2022. We appreciate customers like this because they care about our future as much as we care about theirs. It’s like Jeff and I have said: you can never give up. You have to keep looking at the present knowing the future will work itself out. Given the stress level and financial strains the pandemic put on all of us, we believed that it could only get better, and it did.”

As Chris emphasizes, it is as much about the partnerships you build as it is the effort you put in.

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- **Chris Casey**, Executive VP of Sales & Marketing

When he reflects on the early days of the pandemic—the ones where everything seemed to be up in the air—Chris is reminded of a story about a client in the Chicago trade publishing market. After all the print service providers returned to a sense of normalcy and things heated back up, printers started pushing out dates. The client started sending Creative Digital work that otherwise should have been printed on an offset press or a roll fed inkjet press.



*The views and opinions expressed here are based on the actual experiences of the customer. Testimonials are not claimed to represent typical results, and various factors can impact different customers' results.*

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