

NEWS RELEASE



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SBS Worldwide and Cambridge University Press move with the times

Publishing logistics specialist SBS Worldwide will continue to work with world-famous publisher Cambridge University Press, despite recent changes to the publisher's organisation.

More than 400 years of printing under the Cambridge University Press (CUP) name came to an end when the publisher agreed, on 29th June 2012, to place its main European printing contract with MPG Books Group.

The majority of the 69 jobs at Cambridge's in-house print capability will move to an MPG facility at Bar Hill in Cambridgeshire, although up to 16 positions in pre-press and administration will be lost. The decision has angered and saddened the printers' father of chapel, Nigel Gawthrop.

"What they should have done is put in investment three years ago. We've all got mixed emotions," he said. "Most of the people who work in the printing division are passionate about the company they work for, and to think about all that history going is heart-breaking." But CUP spokesman Peter Davison put the move in the context of the shifts taking place in publishing as digitisation takes hold.

We have recently outsourced our North American warehousing to Ingram in Tennessee and much of our international supply chain to our long standing air and ocean partner, SBS Worldwide. In the past two years the number of physical books we shipped has declined by two million," he said.

"Now, with printing it is more complicated. Five years ago we were printing in the UK for a world market and shipping tons of books around the world. But just as the technologies exist that enable us to transmit information around the globe instantly, so those same technologies enable us to print globally, digitally."

Davison added that the investment in the kind of equipment and technologies MPG already has would have been strategically wrong for CUP.

"It would have cost millions—money that we want to invest in scholarly and academic publishing. Many publishers who started out as printers, such as Collins and OUP have now moved away. Publishers no longer need to own printing houses, in the same way that Apple doesn't need to make its computers."

"We have been pleased to handle CUP's shipping for over 10 years. Our freight forwarding business has undergone similar change as we now offer companies supply chain innovation enabling them to de-risk on services or product that is not considered core" said Steve Walker, Chairman of SBS Worldwide.

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“CUP has shown its internal initiative for outsourcing and whilst the freight volumes will decrease in the digital world, we are delighted to continue to be involved with them”.

It is hard to estimate what the deal is worth to MPG, since digital continues to have a growing effect on academic and journal publishing, but CUP’s European printing contract was worth just under £10m last year.

“We accept that this is the end of an era and that there is sadness,” said Davison. “However, almost all the workforce have got a secure job to go to, as well as a new plant with millions of pounds of investment in the kind of equipment high-quality printers deserve.”



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