



## The MIT Press

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### **The MIT Press and Edwards Brothers launch innovative print-on-demand program**

The MIT Press in partnership with Edwards Brothers announces the launch of The MIT Press Classics Series, which will make available **on demand** in sleek paperback editions 1750 previously out-of-print titles from The Press's backlist. Unlike the short run programs with which some publishers are experimenting, **this is a true print-on-demand program** with an innovative and uniquely streamlined production and fulfillment model. Beginning April 2003 customers (individuals, retailers, and wholesalers) can order from an initial list of more than 250 Classics Series titles; the list will include 1750 titles by the end of 2003. Orders can be placed by phone, fax, email, or the web (<http://mitpress.mit.edu/Classics>), and are routed directly to Edwards Brothers in Ann Arbor, MI for production and fulfillment. U.S. customers are promised books within 7 business days.

Here's how it works. The MIT Press has provided to Edwards Brothers PDF files of Classics Series titles, which were originally scanned for The Press overseas and then converted to print-quality PDFs by the Hewlett-Packard Company using a process developed by HP and The MIT Press. R.R. Donnelly/Allentown Digital Services pre-flighted the files (checking fonts, image resolution, and other issues to ensure the quality of the finished book), merged the metadata (information required for the electronic transaction, including author, title, ISBN, unit price, and type of file), and delivered final text and cover files, ready for POD, to Edwards Brothers. MIT Press Classics titles have an elegant black cover design that is standard across the series; but future MIT Press titles slated for the POD program will retain their original cover designs. Edwards Brothers stores both text and cover files awaiting orders.

Using an electronic data interchange (EDI) system, The MIT Press sends orders for Classics Series (and eventually other o/p) titles to Edwards Brothers. Within 48 hours of the order, EB prints, binds, packages and ships the books, entirely bypassing the Press's warehouse. Printing is done with state-of-the-art Xerox digital equipment. Packaging and labeling replicate The Press's own; and a variety of express shipping options are available. According to Edwards Brothers' Vice President of Sales and Marketing Joe Thomson, "This cutting edge business model design and variable cost-free transaction process has been talked about for years, and is finally a reality. I am unaware of any other publisher/printer relationship with EDI linked systems that provides such transparency to end-users."

A confluence of factors, including the maturing of POD and EDI technologies, has made this program possible. "The MIT Press has wanted to offer POD service to its customers for a number of years," says MIT Press Production Manager, Terry Lamoureux, who began investigating the options in early 1990s. But there were many barriers, most of them technical, to obtaining high quality on-demand books at a reasonable price. "This technology is just beginning to come into its own," says Lamoureux, "and we believe the MIT-EB program is among the most streamlined and efficient of its kind."

The program will allow The Press to offer more titles to its customers without having to keep all of these books in inventory. According to MIT Press Marketing Director Vicki Lepine, "Titles that have been out of print for years can now make a comeback in the Classics Series, and thanks to POD, we won't have to worry if these comebacks are modest ones. Ultimately, the goal is for all MIT Press books to be available to customers who may want them, even if their sales have fallen below the point at which we could afford to print and warehouse them conventionally."

The program's short-term objective is to make available approximately 1750 previously o/p titles by the end of 2003. A longer-term objective is to continue to make available any MIT Press book whose stock and sales have dwindled to the point where a conventional reprint would not make sense. Rather than going o/p, these titles will go into the POD program.

The MIT Press chose Edwards Brothers, a dedicated short-run printer, as a partner for a variety of reasons, including the company's commitment to the university press community; its understanding of the short-run and on-demand needs of small and mid-sized publishers; and the vision of EB President and CEO John Edwards. Edwards and Lamoureux worked to develop a POD system that could be efficiently integrated into the Press's own processes. "The need for this kind of integration was a key consideration for us in choosing a partner for the program," Lamoureux says. The resulting model is what Edwards Brothers calls a **digital book center**. This model, says John Edwards, substantially reduces the overhead costs associated with short run printing and gives both "printers and publishers the opportunity to manage a title from its first printing on a web press down to the small quantities required to keep it in print forever."

Titles scheduled for initial release in the MIT Press Classics Series this April include such diverse gems as ***War: Patterns of Conflict*** by Richard E. Barringer and Robert K. Ramers (1972); ***Preventing a Biological Arms Race*** edited by Susan Wright (1991); ***A Century of DNA: A History of the Discovery of the Structure and Function the Genetic Substance*** by Franklin H. Portugal and Jack S. Cohen (1977); ***The Organization of Learning*** by Charles R. Gallistel (1990); ***Revolutionary Struggle Vol. 1: Selected Works of Fidel Castro (1947-1958)*** edited by Rolando Bonachea and Nelson P. Valdes (1974); ***Knowing Who*** by Steven E. Boër and William G. Lycan (1985); ***When the Snakes Awake: Animals and Earthquake Prediction*** by Helmut Tributsch (1982); ***Nonlinear Problems in Random Theory*** by Norbert Wiener (1966); ***Post-Pop Art*** edited by Paul Taylor (1989); ***RePresentations: Philosophical Essays on the Foundations of Cognitive Science*** by Jerry Fodor (1981); ***The Multinational Paradigm*** by Robert Z. Aliber (1993); ***Lived-In Architecture: Le Corbusier's Pessac Revisited*** by Philippe Boudon and Gerald Onn (1979); and ***Energy and Development: A Case Study*** by William W. Seifert, Mohammed A. Bakr, and M. Ali Kettani (1973).

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