

InstaBook turns page on publishing

Iridologist publishes own book to help raise awareness of her work

BY DEBRA DOWNEY
SENIOR EDITOR

Iridologist Diane Elms believes things happen for a reason. Last summer she was in the middle of writing a book about her unique work involving the eye's iris and its ability to reveal weaknesses in the body. With no ideas on how to get her work published, the writing process had slowed to a trickle.

Then, one of Ms. Elms' clients told her about a local entrepreneur who was starting a new business called InstaBook.

Ms. Elms was intrigued and with the help of the InstaBook Web site, she produced her own text and designed a cover complete with a full-colour photograph.

"I think even someone who is not computer literate could still work with this program," said Ms. Elms, adding once the writing and designing process was complete, it took less than five minutes for the first runs of *I'm Frustrated, Iridology, the Science and Its Value* to be printed from InstaBook's Stoney Creek location.

Ms. Elms' 100-page softcover book details the background and success of iridology — the reading of the iris as reflected by the brain. Ms. Elms said every organ and system of the body communicates with the brain and these messages of strengths and weaknesses are then reflected into the iris of the eye.

"This information then becomes a valuable tool for people wanting to use a holistic approach to health care," said Ms. Elms, who discovered iridology after suffering health problems in 1995.

She has since been certified by IIPA (International Iridology Practitioners Association) as an instructor and teaches iridology through McMaster University's and Mohawk College's continuing education program.

Ms. Elms has also been approved through research at McMaster to show the efficacy of iridology as a diagnostic tool in hopes of having it covered under the Ontario Hospital Insurance Plan (OHIP).

As part of her teaching tools, Ms. Elms penned her book and had it published through the help of InstaBook. The technology allows her to direct people from her Website to InstaBook for ordering *I'm Frustrated, Iridology, the Science and Its Value*.

"I didn't want to buy 20,000 books because I don't want 20,000 books in my closet," said Ms. Elms. "This way, it can be purchased online or off my Website, just like someone is ordering from Amazon."

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Diane Elms



PHOTO BY DEBRA DOWNEY

Iridologist Diane Elms holds a copy of her book, *I'm Frustrated, Iridology, the Science and Its Value*. Ms. Elms said it took less than five minutes for the first runs to be printed.

Dave Di Marcantonio, president of InstaBook, said the services of the fledgling company are getting a lot of interest from people like Ms. Elms, who want to relate their experiences to others.

"It has been received very well," said Mr. Di Marcantonio. "Right now, we're doing a lot of projects with first-time novelists who want to see their work published and with people who want to publish their family histories."

Mr. Di Marcantonio, who grew up in Hamilton/Grimsby area but now calls Stoney Creek home, said his interest in book manufacturing was piqued after reading a newspaper article outlining the challenges facing the publishing industry.

Shelves overstocked

"Books are being returned to the publisher and bookstore shelves are over-stocked," said Mr. Di Marcantonio. "I said to myself, 'I wonder if you can manufacture and produce books on site.' That sparked an idea, and as I was doing research of the new concept, I came across InstaBook Corporation, a company that had the technology."

Mr. Di Marcantonio flew down to Florida to meet InstaBook company president Victor Celorio and six months later, in October 2001, the first InstaBook machine made its way into Canada.

Mr. Di Marcantonio test-marketed the idea and ran a pilot project. By the end of 2003, the

company was ready for business.

InstaBook prints and binds economical any book in a soft-cover paperback format in a variety of trim sizes. The company also provides books-on-demand through interconnected services involving production and distribution, called Digital Bookstores and Self-Publishing Centers.

Mr. Di Marcantonio said the InstaBook technology works somewhat like a photocopier.

"Each book produced is in actuality an 'original' printed from a digital file," said Mr. Marcantonio. "If the files are formatted to our specifications, we can print a proof — best case scenario — in 10 minutes."

InstaBook currently has three locations in Cambridge, Oakville and on Community Avenue in Stoney Creek.

Mr. Di Marcantonio said the technology revolutionizing the book publishing industry by allowing users to have quality printed and bound books in quantities of one or more. He expects InstaBook to attract the attention of unpublished authors, those wanting to publish family histories, personal memories, custom recipe books, religious group publications, professional or human resource manuals.

For iridologist Diane Elms, InstaBook quickly and efficiently solved her problem of how to get her ideas published.

"I think a lot of people have a story to tell," said Ms. Elms. "Mine is about iridology."

For more information on InstaBook, visit www.instabook.ca