

Fast-Selling Children's Photo Books Incorporate Popular Licensed Characters

Yamazen Communications Co., Ltd.

“Bandai Character Photo Book”

Best-of-the-Best Award Winner—Photo
Xerox Premier Partners Global Network

Yamazen Communications Co., Ltd. is a leading provider of digital and offset printing, design services, database construction, Web development, photo book creation, photo restoration and market research. The company headquarters is in Utsunomiya, Japan.

www.yamazen-net.co.jp

“Our photo book solution has helped the Bandai Candy Toy Business Unit gain incremental revenue from its characters, while giving us new work and an opportunity to learn more about the licensing business.”

– Mitsumobu Yamamoto, COO, Yamazen Communications



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Yamazen Communications recommended an innovative way for the Bandai Candy Toy Business Unit to boost its business: whenever they sold a decorated birthday cake, include an offer to create a photo book that can include Bandai-licensed characters to commemorate the occasion. The business succeeded; in the first year, more than half of those who ordered cakes bought photo books.

Challenge

The Bandai Candy Toy Business Unit sought to explore new business opportunities with Bandai Co., Ltd.'s intellectual property, which includes popular TV, movie, comic book and video game characters like the Power Rangers. The business unit focused on one of its key customer touchpoints—the purchase of decorated cakes for birthdays or other occasions. The intent: find a way to make Bandai's contribution to the celebration last considerably longer than the cake. Given an opportunity to make a proposal, Yamazen Communications suggested creating a photo book that could permit children to incorporate images of their favorite Bandai-licensed characters along with photos from their special occasion.

Solution

Yamazen worked with Bandai to develop a photo book that could include any of 30 images of the Bandai-licensed characters Masked Rider, the Power Rangers and Precure. Customers who order a decorated cake receive a coupon to order a character book from a website that Yamazen developed and manages. There, customers submit their photos, select character images, create text messages and place their order. At Yamazen, photos and custom messages are automatically positioned in layout and sent to the Xerox® iGen4® Press with a Xerox® FreeFlow® Print Server for printing. The 12-page books are perfect bound on an offline Horizon BookBinder BQ-160 in a 13.8 cm x 14.8 cm (5.43" x 5.83") format using Sunmat Paper, which is unbleached, with no fluorescent material, to be safer for children.

Results

In 2015, the Bandai Candy Toy Business Unit received more than 1,000 orders for decorated cakes and 700 orders for Character Photo Books, making the books a very popular keepsake. Five percent of the Character Photo Books were ordered by grandparents who wanted their own copies of the books their grandchildren ordered—expanding Bandai's reach to a class of customers they otherwise would not have reached.

Yamazen Communications received incremental photo book business and began developing a tighter business relationship with the Bandai Candy Toy Business Unit, which could lead to more business in the future. Yamazen also is gaining valuable experience learning first-hand about the licensing business.

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