

PUBLISHING

Printing progress

New technology leads Japanese publisher to Hiawatha company

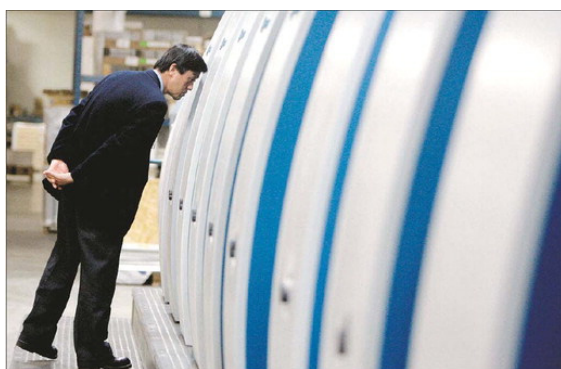
By George C. Ford
The Gazette

HIAWATHA — A Japanese publisher has signed an agreement with Cedar Graphics Inc. of Hiawatha to print four of its educational workbooks for children, moving the work from China to Eastern Iowa. Kumon Publishing North America, founded in 2004, publishes 36 workbooks, four crafts titles, flashcards and a self-help title. The material, aimed at children ages 2 through 7, covers basic skills (mazes and crafts), early reading and early mathematics. Kumon workbooks and related materials are sold by Barnes & Noble, Borders, Chapters/Indigo, Target Stores, Books-A-Million, Scholar's Choice and independent bookstores across North America. Kohei Tsumori, assistant general manager, international operations, for

Dai Nippon Printing Co. Ltd. in Tokyo, said Kumon Publishing North America has been using a printer in China to serve the U.S. market. "When the company started to explore the U.S. market, it wanted to find a place where the books could be printed and distributed at the right price," Tsumori said. "It found a printer in China." James Letzel, president of Global Sourcing Solutions Inc. of Mission Viejo, Calif., said having the books

printed in China and shipped to the United States created some problems for Kumon. "Kumon Publishing wanted to be faster to the market, supplying stores like Barnes and Noble and Target Stores," Letzel said. "Using a printer in China has required the workbooks to be shipped three weeks over the water and printed in larger quantities than Kumon would like." Tsumori said Kumon, which sold 1 million workbooks in the U.S. market last year, began looking for a printer five years ago. Letzel, who works with some of the largest printers in the United States, was aware that Cedar Graphics had installed a KBA Rapida 105 10-color printing press. "The press cylinder must be able to accommodate a longer printing plate," Letzel said. "Cedar Graphics was able to provide the right printing press and compete with the printers in China." Tsumori said

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Cliff Jette photos/ The Gazette

Shoichi Dokai, president of Japan 's Kumon Publishing Co. Ltd., gets a closer look at a KBA Rapida 105 10 color press at Cedar Graphics Inc. in Hiawatha. Cedar Graphics has received a contract to print four new Kumon Publishing educational workbooks for children. The 10-color press provides Cedar Graphics with the capability to handle the workbooks.



These are some of the products created by Japan 's Kumon Publishing.