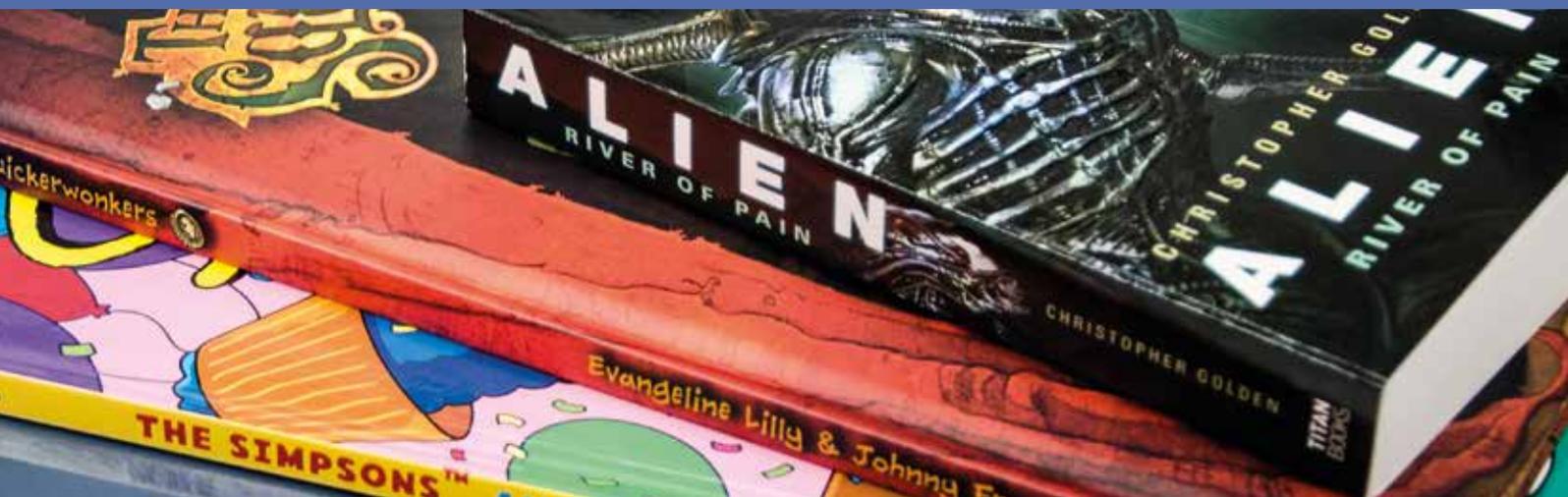


# Holy colophon, Batman! Rotolito Lombarda provides comprehensive printing and finishing services to Titan Publishing Group

Rotolito Lombarda prints 250,000 books annually for diversified UK publisher



In a world where many publishers struggle to compete with other media, Titan Publishing Group has found success by producing interlinked books and magazines largely based on established and successful subjects from other media. With licences from many familiar film, television, video game and toy franchises, Titan's portfolio includes magazines, comics, graphic novels, paperbacks, and illustrated books and the ever popular "annuals" that link to just about every entertainment category.

The illustrated books in particular usually include special limited editions to accompany film and video game releases for the avid collectors.

"Many brands are linked to a specific series of a television show, movie release or game release," explains Kevin Wooff, Print & Paper Buyer for Titan Publishing Group. "So along with The Simpsons' Annual 2015, we have, say, Once Upon A Time – Behind The Magic – The Official Companion to the Hit TV show which complements the continued interest in these entertainment franchises sparked by re-runs, satellite and cable channels, internet streaming and DVDs."

Titan's stable of licensed titles covers a wide range of tastes and interests, and even transcends time with highly collectible books like, Aliens - Colonial Marines Technical Manual, The Avengers: A Celebration - 50

Years of a Television Classic, and Man of Steel: Inside the Legendary World of Superman, which contain a mix of information, photographs, illustrations and diagrams. Other "evergreen" favourites licensed for various purposes include Sherlock Holmes, James Bond, Batman, Barbie and Sponge Bob.

## Achieving the right look and feel

"In general the accompanying illustrated books can be classified as 'The Art of,' 'A Portrait of,' and 'A Companion to' books," said Wooff. "Our books are printed in various formats like A-format mass market size (174 x 108mm), B-format trade paperback (195 x 130mm) as well as many other sizes for the larger illustrated titles with special editions (310 x 228mm for example), graphic novels (usually 258 x 170mm –

standard US comic size) or books where the pictures or artwork benefit from a particular design.”

Apart from commissioning, designing and publishing these books, there is the business of getting them printed, bound and delivered, which is where Rotolito Lombarda comes into the picture.

“My previous job had been with an Italian publisher in Milan, so working with an Italian printer presented no real concerns,” said Wooff.

“Like all publishers, we look for print quality, price and reliability, and Rotolito has long-proved itself on those criteria,” Wooff continued. “We also look for input into printing and binding; the best papers and flexibility in production. In addition, Rotolito prints the majority of annuals in Europe and understands the requirements of the market.”

## Titan and the state of the market

When talking about book publishing in the current market, several questions recur: How do you cope with falling run lengths? How are you streamlining logistics? And, how are you dealing with declining book sales?

“The nature of the books we publish means that demand is always busy and affected by the media and entertainment industry,” said Kevin Wooff, Print & Paper Buyer for Titan Publishing Group. “We introduce dozens of new titles each year and there’s no real ‘average run.’ It’s very much determined by the title and its destination. Print runs can vary between a few

thousand to hundreds of thousands of copies and Rotolito can cater for this wide variety – for example it did a run of 135,000 for us this year for one title and 20,000 for another. However, most of the time, it’s more cost-effective for us to utilise Rotolito’s short run capabilities and print lower quantities and reprint to fulfil demand than it is to warehouse the extra copies.”

A good example of this is the long-time favourite, How to Draw Comics the “Marvel” Way (Stan Lee), which Titan has reprinted more than 30 times since its first UK publication in 1986.

“Because of its state of the art equipment and workflow systems, Rotolito is able to deliver shorter runs at a viable cost,” said Wooff. “We also sometimes have to streamline the operation by undertaking deliveries to major customers direct (notably major book chains and supermarkets – primarily because of speed to market) even though we have a comprehensive distribution contract with a supplier. When this is required, Rotolito is able to provide us with quick turnarounds to ensure we meet our customers’ deadlines.”

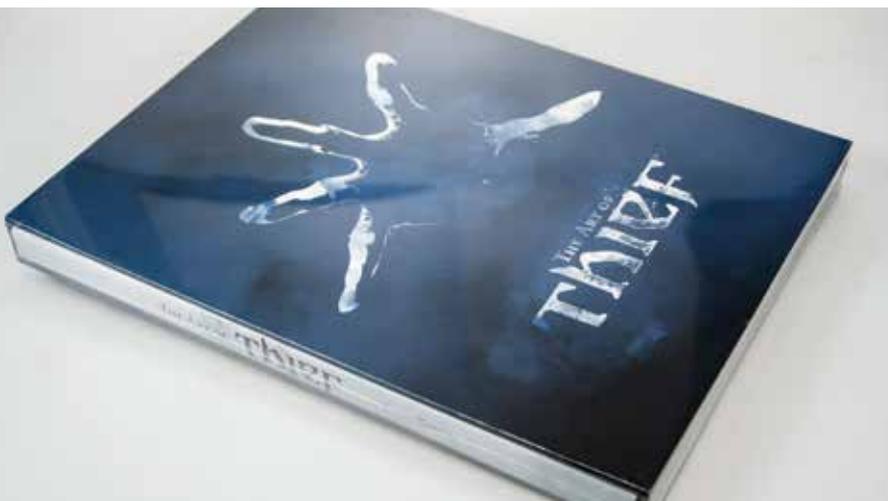
At present, all Titan Publishing’s books produced at Rotolito are offset litho printed.

“We’ve had discussions about using its digital colour inkjet web presses as well, especially as the range of paper stocks and ink coverage continues to grow,” Wooff explained. “Rotolito would be able to offer whatever finishing we wanted whether the books are printed on offset litho or digital presses, so it’s something we continue to talk to them about. Production methods don’t really matter as long as the priorities of quality, price and reliability are met.”

As for any concerns that the book market is declining:

“Our markets have proved strong,” said Wooff. “Our fiction sales have been growing exponentially, and the tie-ins – books and magazines – associated limited editions, and books to accompany games, have a pre-existing and expanding customer base that our publications and the brand owners can build on. It all adds value to the original experience of the films, TV shows, and games, by providing insights into the characters, technologies and art that has made them.

“Delivering this added experience through all aspects of our books is what gives us our success,” Wooff concluded. “Rotolito Lombarda is a big part of making that happen and they’re a good partner to work with.”



## About Titan Publishing Group

Based in London, Titan Publishing Group is part of the Titan Entertainment Group. Established in 1981, the group has about 200 employees with sales and distribution offices in the US, Australia, New Zealand and the UK, with agents in other countries.