

# MBD and its book success in Raipur

A general education book was the company's first publication from Raipur, which has now grown into multiple series of education books – both printed and eEditions

It all started in 2000, when MBD Group set up its local office in Chhattisgarh. It was the time when the state came into existence. Prior to 2000, MBD served the region from its Bhopal office, as the geography was then a part of Madhya Pradesh.

Established in Jalandhar, Punjab in 1956, MBD today is one of the largest book publishers in India. In Raipur, MBD has a printing facility spread across 30,000-sqft area with 50 employees. It also has warehouses in the city—a 7,500-sqft site in the main city and a 15,000-sqft site in Siltara area of Raipur.

"The first successful book under our publication was the General Education Book authored and published by our founder Ashok Kumar Malhotra," says Monica Malhotra Kandhari, managing director at MBD Group. "One of our challenging projects was the book series for pre-primary classes for which we licensed Disney characters. The challenge was on content adaptation, wherein we had to adapt Disney characters as per the student's requirement."

For MBD, Raipur has been one of its top performing districts, besides Dhamtari and Jadalpur, where it publishes three brands of books: the Modern series—ABC of Physics, ABC of Chemistry, ABC of Biology and ABC of Mathematics (both English and Hindi mediums); MBD—MBD Super Refresher, MBD Sure Shot and MBD Safalta ka Sadhan; and HFJ—New Learnwell, Disney series for Kindergarten and Proquest Series for Class I to VIII.

"Chhattisgarh has been a good market for us in all the three divisions," says Kandhari.

## The workflow

MBD has eight printing presses in Raipur. Kandhari says different books can be of different sizes and the same can be printed in single-colour, two-colour or four-colour formats. "Depending on the size of the book and the number of colours to be used, we allocate the machine on which the job is to be printed, which can be in any of our eight printing units," he adds.



MBD is an ISO-certified company with defined workflows for all the processes. "This helps in streamlining the work and get desired quality output along with meeting the deadline," says Kandhari, adding, "All activities in the workflow are tracked using the Microsoft Navision ERP solution."

One of the benefits of a defined workflow is the supply of quality paper. Different products have different requirements in terms of paper quality. Kandhari explains, "One of the key factors in deciding the quality of paper to be used for a particular product is the product pricing. Some products are price sensitive and we are forced to use B-grade paper on those. However, we ensure that we use only A-grade paper wherever it is for small children or there are any illustrations."

## Betting on education

Books are here to stay, even in Raipur. In addition, MBD is focused on Edtech now and has launched the Aasoka App for students, where they can study at their own pace and time and can assess themselves.

The app features adaptive assessments, animated content, video content, and eBooks.

For schools, MBD has launched ALTS (Aasoka Learning and Teaching Solutions) under which the company provides curriculum-mapped textbooks, workbooks, teacher manuals, eBooks and a powerful and robust learning management system which empowers teachers to take live class, schedule assessments, plan their daily/monthly calendar, share homework and view detailed performance of each student. ALTS also helps the school administration monitor and run the school effectively.

"With the ICT Initiatives of the NCERT and the Chhattisgarh government, digital footprint is increasing in the state in the form of digital classrooms and apps. We, as a solution provider, have developed digital content for the state in Hindi for Class I to 12. We have installed our digital content in more than 4,000+ schools in Chhattisgarh," Kandhari explains.

Kandhari says print runs are becoming shorter for trade books and general books. "However, school students and teachers still prefer physical books, and also, there is a huge gap when we talk about availability of devices."

Last year was a tumultuous year for MBD, but, Kandhari says, its eLearning department came to the rescue. "We made available our entire eResources (digital content for Grade K12, assessments and eBooks) to the student and teacher community."

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## MONICA MALHOTRA KANDHARI



One thing about MBD no one knows.

In last two years we have installed our digital content for Class 1 to 12th in more than 8,500+ schools across India.

The toughest deadline you have had to execute?

Can't count as we churn out books in huge numbers and with our effective workflow we are able to complete the work on time every time. I can recall a project where we had to make a submission in South Africa which was to be delivered in a very short time... The shipping time by sea route is a minimum of six weeks. And we had just 45 days to deliver, so the

production team took up the challenge to print and dispatch six titles in two days so that the shipping time was not reduced. We were able to deliver on time and with that shipment, our books are now listed in the National Catalogue of South Africa.