

UCT Press all grown up in a digital age

UCT Press, today a wholly owned subsidiary of Juta, under the guidance of UCT faculty members that comprise its editorial board, is celebrating 21 years of scholarly publishing. Originally owned by UCT, its shares were released to Juta in 1999.

Twenty-one years ago, its main business was to publish and distribute academic books in short print-runs, using cost-effective high-speed laser printing. "Digital printing was still in its early days and it was still too expensive to print small amounts," says UCT Press publisher, Sandy Shepherd.



Technological developments

Over the years digital costs have come down, allowing short print-runs and technological developments have also enabled the revival of books that were once out of print.

"We currently have around 100 books in print in 12 academic disciplines that include African Studies, Development and Environmental Studies, Health, Economics, History, Literature, Psychology and Law. Our notable titles include 'Knowledge in the Blood: Confronting Race and the Apartheid Past' by Jonathan Jansen; 'Ubu and the Truth Commission' by Jane Taylor and 'Viewpoints: the University of Cape Town and its Treasure'.

Expansion into e-books

She says their expansion into e-books and onto various online platforms has further contributed to the success of the company. "Our sales and marketing strategies include email, the web and social media as well as partnerships with international distributors, which enables us to market and sell our books outside of Southern Africa and ultimately to ensure global reach."

"I look forward to the next 21 years - promoting our South African academics and their research and building new audiences among the public, remain priorities. We look forward to new close collaborations with other South African scholarly publishers, to grow our business and to increase awareness of UCT Press," she concludes.

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