

COPY CENTRE SERVICE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Simon Fraser Student Society has operated a copy centre for decades. The service was developed during times when there was little competition on campus. **Currently, there are a number of print and copy options that are available for students**, including:

- SFU Library
- SFU Document Solutions (Burnaby and Surrey campus locations)
- Cornerstone Printing (Burnaby campus)
- Staples Copy & Print

- Still Creek Printing
- ARC Document Solutions
- Vistaprint
- LinxPrint
- Printing at home

A number of efforts have been undertaken to understand and respond to the financial challenges faced by our Copy Centre, including:

- Analyzing and adjusting work order processes
- Meeting with industry representatives to seek advice
- Developing and reviewing standard operating procedures related to Copy Centre operations
- Reviewing revenue and expenditure performance to determine where we may have opportunities to improve

There are a number of key factors that impact our financial performance, including:

- increasing competition on campus
- increasing off-campus, self-directed options (e.g. Staples)
- operating in a price-sensitive student-centric market
- a small staff complement (1 Coordinator and some student hours) leaves us little flexibility to decrease our costs without having a major impact on our ability to provide service

For some historical context, the SFSS began providing copy and print services at a time when:

- the Internet was not available
- social media did not exist
- home-based printing options were very limited
- digital media did not exist
- cell phones were large and only available to the "privileged few"
- desktop publishing didn't really exist
- papers and assignments were all completed on paper
- e-books did not exist



THE FINANCIAL SITUATION

In spite of efforts to improve the financial operations of the Copy Centre, the department continues to lose money. While we saw an improvement during the 2017-2018 fiscal year compared to previous years, the cost to operate the Copy Centre was still \$37,059. During the last ten years (2009-2018), the SFSS has invested \$466,771 to cover the cost of operating the Copy Centre (average of \$46,677 per year).

The Copy Centre is budgeted to lose \$29,446 during the current fiscal year (2018-2019) which is equivalent to \$9,815 per semester.

REVIEW OF A RECENT SEMESTER

The following information has been gathered from the Copy Centre's daily transaction reports for the Fall 2018 semester:

| | Category of Client | Number of transactions |
|---|--|------------------------|
| А | Cash/debit/credit card purchases (SFSS members + others) | 500 |
| В | Club/student union grant-funded (SFSS members) | 139 |
| С | SFSS internal departments | 49 |
| D | SFU departments (promotional material) | 73 |
| Е | SFU departments (thesis printing/binding) | 22 |
| | | 783 |

The available data provides the following information:

- It costs the SFSS approximately \$12.50 to process each transaction (after revenues). In other words, each order is subsidized by this amount.
- Up to 639 SFSS members used the Copy Centre during the Fall 2018 semester (see categories A and B in the table above). In reality, far fewer SFSS members used the Copy Centre as this number also includes external customers.
- Throughout the semester, the Copy Centre served an average of 11.4 customers per day (783 transactions divided by 69 business days).

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The Copy Centre provides various products and services that fulfill student needs for printing. The following table compares the products and services provided by the Copy Centre with those provided by several local and online copy and print businesses:

| | Letter Size Printing | Ledger Size Printing | Posters | Rollup Banners | Business Cards | Hardcover Book Binding | Coroplast Signage |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| SFSS Copy Centre | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| SFU Library | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| SFU Document Solutions | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Cornerstone Printing | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| Staples Copy and Print | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Still Creek Printing | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| ARC Document Solutions | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| VistaPrint (online) | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| LinxPrint (online) | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Most of these businesses fulfill many of the printing functions that the Copy Centre provides, especially in poster and business card printing. Printing for letter and ledger size are consistently available at all print solutions, and stand-up banners are similarly available, barring Staples Copy and Print. Hardcover book binding for thesis printing is the most unique of these services, but both SFU Document Solutions and online printing solutions also provide this function. The SFU Library was an outlier in this list, since they are not equipped for large scale printing and are more suitable for printing small assignments.

| | SFSS Copy Centre | Cornerstone Printing | Staples Copy and Print | VistaPrint |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Letter Size (Colour) | \$0.25/sheet | \$0.30/sheet | \$0.40/sheet | N/A |
| Letter Size (B&W) | \$0.09/sheet | \$0.10/sheet | \$0.11/sheet | N/A |
| Ledger Size (Colour) | \$0.50/sheet | \$0.60/sheet | \$0.61/sheet | N/A |
| Ledger Size (B&W) | \$0.20/sheet | \$0.20/sheet | \$0.12/sheet | N/A |
| Posters | Undisclosed | \$3.99/sq. ft | \$4.99/sq. ft | \$3.49/sq. ft |
| Roll-Up Banners | \$300.00 | \$240.00 | N/A | \$103.49 |
| Business Cards (per 100) | Undisclosed | \$25.00 | \$14.99 | \$7.99 |



For letter and ledger size colour print jobs, the Copy Centre charges a lower cost per sheet service. However, the variance in costing for black and white printing for letter size is minute, and the cost of printing in ledger is on the higher range at almost double Staples Copy and Print. With regards to infrequent printing orders such as posters, banners and business cards, online variants were significantly less expensive than local print shops; however, given that the Copy Centre does not have standard charges for posters and business cards, it can only be determined to be more expensive anecdotally.