HISTORY OF MSI PRESS LLC

Updated 09-23-23

2003-2010

MSI Press was founded in 2003 by Carl and Betty Lou Leaver, who served as typesetter/graphic designer and editor, in order to support the publishing requirements of the Coalition of Distinguished Language Centers, founded in 2002. The CDLC was a a nonprofit educational organization, supported by US government grants and not permitted to do its own in-house publications.

Initially, MSI Press published the conference proceedings and the journal (Journal for Distinguished Language Studies) of the CDLC. It also published foreign language education books for learners and teachers oriented toward near-native levels of language proficiency.

Beginning in 2006, MSI Press branched out beyond the publications of the CDLC and began publishing books on spirituality, psychology, cross-cultural topics, and self-help, as well as memoirs.

2010-2011

In 2010, the CDLC closed.

In 2011, MSI Press transferred its language and culture collection to Villa Magna, the publishing arm of Virginia Institute. Other lines – spirituality, psychology, and self-help remained with MSI Press, which continued to expand its publications in those categories.

2012

In 2012, MSI Press incorporated as MSI Press LLC.

2013-2017

During these years, MSI Press LLC expanded its freelancer support to include web master, public relations specialist, artists, e-book designer, press release distributor, copyeditors, editors. The number of books published during these years also increased in quantity/year.

MSI Press LLC also developed its own website separate from the now-defunct CDLC and became a member of several publishing associations.

In addition to continuing to publish in earlier lines, MSI Press added lines for humor, education, abuse, health & fitness, and parenting, as well as a series of books “written” by a parish cat in support of a local Catholic Mission.

2018-2023

In 2018, Villa Magna returned the MSI Press language and culture collection. MSI put out second editions to most books but archived the CDLC volumes that were no longer relevant following the closure of the CDLC. In 2020, MSI Press LLC revived the dormant *Journal for Distinguished Language* *Studies* with an international editorial board and international contributions with current representation from Canada, France, Germany, Jordan, and the USA and abstracts prepared in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. The first new issue, Volume 7, covered the gap years 2011-2020; the second issue, Volume 8, covered 2021-2022, in which will be continuing as biennial publications. MSI Press LLC also took over awarding the Friend of Distinguished Language Proficiency that had earlier been awarded by the CDLC.

During this 5-year period, MSI Press LLC added two activities: a hybrid publishing division, San Juan Books, and a public-facing division, The Literary Center in San Juan Bautista, which offered seminars and just open doors to local authors and which closed when California Covid regulations closed all businesses that served the public (with the exception of stores such as groceries, paper supplies, and gas). TLC did not re-open when Covid regulations expired, and from then, the focus of MSI Press LLC has concentrated solely on publication, traditional and hybrid.

During Covid, 15 MSI Press LLC authors joined the effort to produce “pandemic books.” These were small books with pragmatic advice on how to handle aspects of lockdowns and quarantine. They covered topics like parenting, safety, self-care, spirituality, and daily life. The pandemic book collection is still available although times have moved on and the books are now backlisted, available mainly as e-books on Kindle or as paperbacks through the MSI Press LLC webstore.

Since Covid, MSI Press LLC took on a newsletter editor and began a monthly Newsletter-Bulletin that is e-blasted to a growing number of subscribers representing media, libraries, booksellers, and readers.

At the same time, MSI Press LLC lost its co-founder and primary typesetter/graphic designer. He was replaced by a freelancer from Nigeria but with a very similar skill set and way of producing books, which has made the transition smooth. MSI Press LLC keeps him quite busy.

During this same period, in keeping with changes in the publishing industry, MSI Press LLC stopped publishing a print catalogue and put up a webstore instead and moved from bulk mail advertising to e-blasts. Print advertising morphed to social media advertising as currently the most viable form of book promotion and publicity. MSI Press LLC now has a daily blog and a presence on several social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram, and Face Book) with plans to expand to newly appearing platforms once they settle down.

Currently, MSI Press LLC has a “staff” of 17 freelancers contributing to publication and book promotion efforts in various capacities. They are located in several US states and six countries, although one of our Russian artists died during this period and because of international sanctions we cannot engage the other.

Based on volume of annual releases and revenue streams, MSI Press LLC is categorized as a small press (and, by some, as a micro press). MSI Press currently has 84 authors, 135 books in publication, and a little more than a dozen books currently at some stage of production.