

# Gay couple sues printing company over homophobic wedding pamphlets

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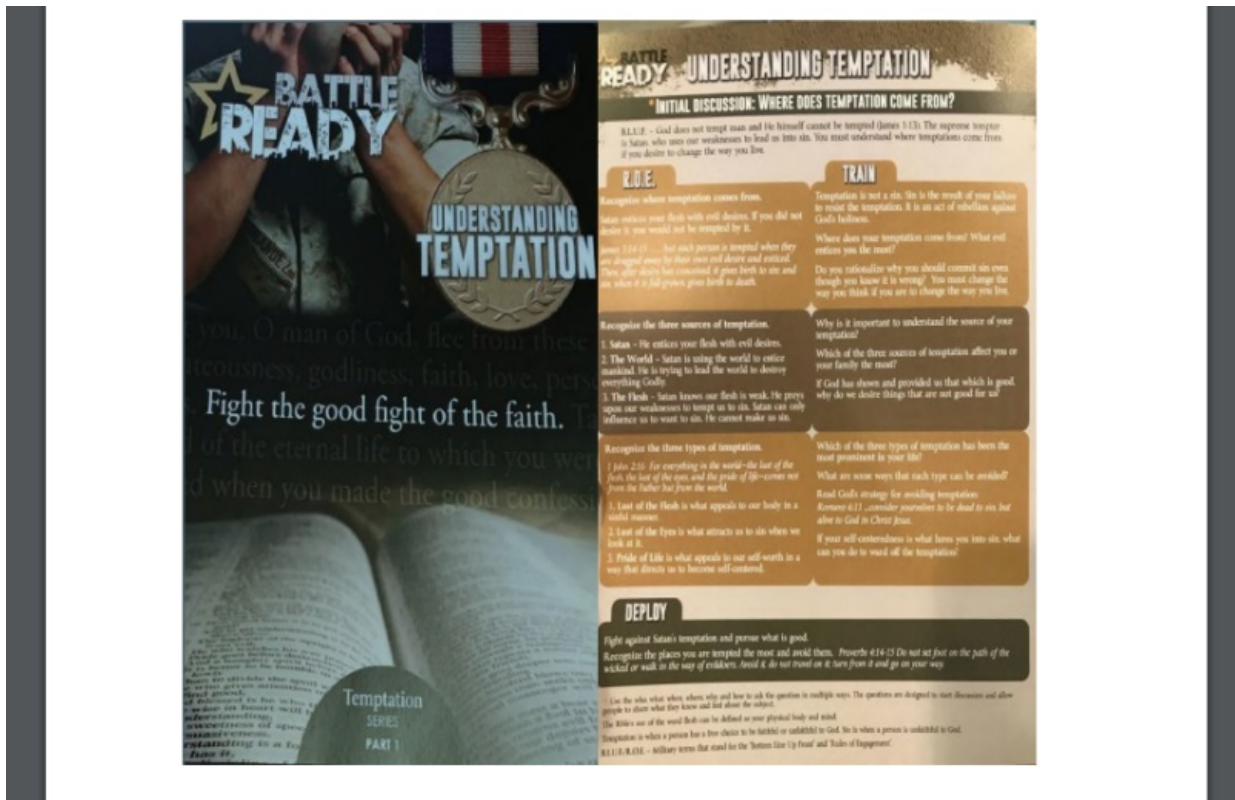
Andrew Borg, left, and Stephen Heasley, are suing Vistaprint for sending them homophobic pamphlets instead of the wedding programs they ordered. (Photo: Courtesy of Stephen Heasley and Andrew Borg)

Two men who ordered programs for their September wedding from a popular printing company but instead received a boxful of anti-gay pamphlets warning, “Satan entices your flesh with evil desires,” have filed a lawsuit claiming breach of contract and emotional pain.

“At first we thought it was simply a mistake, and we had accidentally received someone else’s order. But once we saw the images and actually read a bit of the pamphlet, we quickly realized this wasn’t a simple or innocent error,” Stephen Heasley, 31, and Andrew Borg, 39, who live in Australia, tell Yahoo Lifestyle via email. “Both of our initial reactions were ones of shock ... utter shock. The wording and imagery was aggressive, threatening, and deeply personally offensive.”

The claim was filed on Tuesday in U.S. District Court of Massachusetts, the state where the company in question, Vistaprint, is based.

“This was by far the most direct, personal, and aggressive act of homophobia either of us has experienced to date,” they added, regarding the shipment of homophobic pamphlets, which the couple received on the eve of their ceremony and a party for 100 guests.



The anti-gay pamphlet sent to the grooms. (Photo: Courtesy of Stephen Heasley and Andrew Borg)

The wedding programs ordered by the couple were to have listed the order of events, members of their wedding party, and lyrics to the Above & Beyond song “Treasure,” which played as they walked down the aisle. Instead, the fire-and-brimstone pamphlets they received warned that, among other notions, “Satan knows our flesh is weak. He preys upon our weaknesses to tempt us to sin. Satan can only influence us to want to sin. He cannot make us sin.”

The men did not immediately (or at any time since) contact Vistaprint to inquire about the bizarre mailing. Instead, they paid to have quick replacements printed up and went ahead with their wedding — though it was marred by anger and fear, they say.

“We realized that whoever had sent this had our personal addresses,” recalls Heasley, a portfolio manager for an educational publisher (Borg is a property manager for a retail facility). “We were getting married on a family farm in what we understand to be a fairly conservative and rural part of Pennsylvania. If ill-intentioned people decided to target our wedding and guests, we would have very few options to escape or seek shelter.”

The couple then hired legal representation — Cetrullo in Boston and Wigdor in New York City — to go after Vistaprint, and are now seeking an award of unspecified damages and a trial by jury.

When contacted by Yahoo Lifestyle, Vistaprint spokesperson Sara Nash offered the following response: “Vistaprint would never discriminate against customers for their sexual orientation. We pride ourselves on being a company that celebrates diversity and enables customers all over the world to customize products for their special events. We have just been made aware of this incident in the last few hours. We understand how upsetting it would be for anyone to receive materials such as these the night before their wedding and we have immediately launched an internal investigation. Until we have had the opportunity to complete our investigation, we cannot comment further.”

Vistaprint is part of custom-print company Cimpress, founded in 1996, with manufacturing facilities around the globe and a network of more than 7,000 employees. Its orders are “absolutely guaranteed,” with the [website, noting](#), “We want our customers to be 100 percent happy with their order. If for any reason they are not, we will make it right.”

Which will likely be good news to Heasley and Borg, who say the entire experience left the men feeling rattled by anger and fear — emotions that have not yet subsided.

“After four months of being married, the pain from those memories has not faded,” says Heasley. “Andrew describes his hurt as though feeling like someone has completely robbed him of what would have turned out to be nothing short of a brilliant wedding.”

It’s why they’ve gone the legal route, they say, noting, “Our goal is to hold Vistaprint accountable for the harm they have caused, to give a voice to others who may have been similarly victimized, to help prevent this from happening to someone else, and to send a message that there will be consequences for acts of hate perpetrated against others.”