

Save \$\$\$ on Paper

If you reduce the size of your multi-page publication you will save quite a bit. Smaller pages use less paper (less paper means less money for printing & for postage). Talk to your printer and your postal representative about the cost(s) for different sizes of publications to find the solution that will work best for you.

Another way to cut costs is to choose a paper that is one grade lower than you currently use. Before printing, be sure to ask your printer for both unprinted and printed samples on the new grade of paper to make sure the final product will be acceptable.

Selecting the Paper that is Right for your Project

Keys to Coated Paper

There are numerous options available when it comes to coated paper. How do you know which option from Gloss to Dull is best for you?

Showcasing Photos and Images

If your document features a lot of images and photographs a gloss coating is your best choice. Your photos will appear sharper and of higher contrast because the coating reflects light back at the reader. Your colors will also look richer.

Text-Heavy Documents

This same feature of gloss-coated stock makes it the unwise choice for documents high in text. The reader's eyes will "tire out" trying to read large blocks of text from paper with too much light reflecting back to them. Dull or matte coated stock is more appropriate for text-heavy documents and is more appropriate. The dull or matte coating(s) diffuses the light (scatters it rather than reflecting it directly back at the reader). This diffusion property of dull and matte coated sheets reduces eye strain when one is reading large amounts of copy.

Matte or Dull, What's the Difference?

Matte coating is not as dense or as "shiny" as a dull coating and matte stock is usually less expensive.

Paper for Both Photos and Text

Given the information above, what are your options for printing a text-heavy document that includes a lot of photos?

One option is to design your document so that the photos are positioned on pages together with small amounts of text while larger blocks of text remain together separately. Then use gloss-coated stock for the image-heavy pages and uncoated stock for the text-heavy pages.

Another option available is to use varnish to either accentuate the photo section or mute the paper in the text-heavy sections. For example, you can specify a dull paper stock for the entire publication. You can then either varnish the photo-heavy pages (while leaving the text-heavy pages dull) or you can spot varnish just the photos themselves, leaving the surrounding paper in its natural, dull-coated state. Otherwise, you can print the entire document on gloss-coated stock, then dull-varnish the text-heavy pages to reduce eye-strain.

Cast-Coated Stock

Cast coated stock is super-shiny paper produced by pressing the paper against a polished metal drum while the coating is still wet. This paper allows for superior reproduction of photographs (both in color reproduction and sharp detail). Cast-Coated stock also has the capability to be die-cut or embossed, however, it is very expensive and the coating may crack when the paper is folded. Discuss with your printer the options if you are going to print with cast-coated stock. He is aware of the possibilities and limitations, as well as best-practices to avoid cracking and yellowing.

Specialty Papers

Specialty papers include many specific-purpose papers such as NCR paper (no carbon required) for forms; parchment for certificates; translucent sheets; index and bristol for divider pages, folders, and tags; synthetic paper made of un-tearable plastic; and label stock (crack-and-peel and pressure sensitive), as well as others. Most specialty papers require specific processes (or presses). Not every printer has the capabilities and equipment to produce every specialty printer. If you are considering using a specialty paper, discuss your needs with your printer from the onset to ensure they have the capabilities to help you with your project.

Paper Size Little Changes can Save Big

Paper can account for thirty percent of the total cost of a job (or even more for longer-run, large-page-count publications). Therefore, to save money printing your piece, always consider the most efficient use of the press sheet early in the design process.

Optimize you Paper Size

Printer(s) use sheet-fed presses that utilize different cut-size sheets most efficiently. Once you have chosen a paper stock, discuss with your printer the optimum "cut-size sheet" for your publication given the needed area, bleeds, etc. You may find that reducing the size of your finished document by as little as ½ an inch will allow you to fit more copies onto a single cut-sheet. Significantly lowering the amount of paper needed to print your job (cutting your paper costs).

Mainly, putting more pages/spreads on each cut sheet (or roll for web presses) will minimize the amount of paper that you've paid for that is "trimmed" and thrown in the trash. Sacrificing a little space on your document can greatly reduce the paper "waste" and keep your printing costs reasonable.

Another important reason to keep your document smaller is that often, decreasing the size means decreasing the weight, saving you money on postage.

Include the Post Office from Step 1!

Don't wait until you have 10,000 items beautiful and useless sitting in the post office unapproved for mailing. While you are designing your document, show either a hard-copy or a faxed copy to your local (USPS) business reply mail center. Postal can provide you with books showing acceptable dimensions, requirements for contrast between paper and ink, textual requirements for a business reply card or envelope, and placement of all the elements on such a reply piece.

Save yourself time and money: **Get Approval for your design from the USPS BEFORE you pay to have it printed.**