



athens
paper



WALL PRINTING

PAPER TIPS

Selecting the “Right” Paper for the Job

When determining which grade of paper will provide the best value for any job there are several key considerations to keep in mind. Price is important, but the decision is impacted by other factors that help determine the overall best selection.

Size of the Job – Paper cost is always a percentage of the finished job. This percentage, however, can vary dramatically.

- a. The smaller the job the less paper is of the total cost. Make ready and fixed costs remain the same no matter whether one sheet or 1 million are printed. **Small jobs can have great latitude in paper selection** will little impact on cost.
- b. The **larger the job the more paper costs as a percent** of the total. With long runs it is extremely important to have competitive pricing.

Amount of Value Added – The more Value Added in a job the lower paper is as a percentage of the total and the greater the demand for good performance. Jobs with little Value Added typically have paper as a high percentage of the total cost and require less out of the paper.

Copy- The higher the quality of the copy, the greater the need for a high quality paper. A good press cannot compensate for a poor print surface. Saving money on paper, but providing an inferior reproduction, will often result in a dissatisfied customer.

Special Requirements – Does it mail? This may require lighter weight paper. Will it be used as a post card? If yes, then it must be either a minimum of .007 or .009 in thickness. Is there full coverage on the cover that may require a better folding sheet to prevent cracking? Will the printed piece be run through a laser printer? Paper weight and grain direction are important for laser compatibility. Will the paper work on a digital press? Does the design require more opacity? Are pages per inch (PPI) or bulk a key consideration? Perfect bound pieces may require higher bulk, while thinner sheets will allow for more pages to be placed in a binder.

Coated or Uncoated – Coated papers provide better ink hold-out and reproduction, while uncoated grades have more bulk, opacity and stiffness. Both are good choices, but individual requirements may favor one over the other.

Availability – If fast turn around is important, be sure that you choose a stock that is readily available. If the quantity is small you may incur small order penalties for mill only items, while at the same time delaying the finished job.

Customer’s Expectations – Don’t dwell on price if quality is the primary concern, and stay away from premium grades for low budget jobs. For short run jobs with a lot of Value Added, however, there is a great deal of flexibility in paper selection with minimal impact on cost. Don’t try to save pennies and fall short of quality expectations.