



Keeping Your Costs in Check

As print budgets get tighter, it makes sense to revisit some basics for controlling project costs.

Schedule Ahead

Printers absorb very real additional costs on “rush” projects that range from staff overtime premiums to courier expenses for paper delivery. Since most print estimates assume a “normal” turnaround cycle, these additional costs are not covered in your quoted price unless you have specified an accelerated schedule at the time of the estimate request. By allowing adequate time for your project, you can avoid unbudgeted additional costs.

Green Implication: Unnecessary courier trips have the environmental impact associated with any additional miles on the highway.

Keep It Simple

At every turn, complexity adds cost in ways you might not imagine. A prime example is adding finishing steps such as die-cutting and embossing. Beyond the actual cost for these processes, the printer has to increase the print run to allow for set-up and waste for each additional finishing process. If you are using expensive stock, which is often the case when these finishing steps are used, you can significantly increase the paper (and overall) cost for your project.

Green Implication: Overruns needed for additional finishing steps consume paper stock, increase waste paper, and often require trips to and from outside suppliers.

Design For Economy

Just as project complexity can add to cost, designing for economy can yield appreciable savings. Depending on the run length, paper can consume as much as 25% of your print budget. Designing your finished sizes to minimize waste from the parent paper sheets can help keep stock costs in check. Choosing printer “house stocks” can also help reduce paper costs. Image complexity, including bleeds, crossovers, metallic inks and additional spot colors also contributes to cost. Consider using color digital printing processes when the run length is suitable (typically under 1,500 sheets).

Green Implication: Less paper and less paper waste are always “greener”. Digital processes use no chemistry and produce products that are readily recyclable. Fewer ink colors require fewer plates, less associated chemistry and less press make-ready.

Avoid Hand Bindery Work

Projects that must be completed using hand bindery work, instead of automation, are inherently more expensive. Consider asking your print provider (before you start designing your project) if your project could be configured differently to avoid hand bindery work and what your binding options are for your potential finished product.