

Ten Ways to Cut Your Printing Costs

1. Stick with standard finished sizes to reduce paper waste and minimize your costs.
2. Be careful when using bleeds, that is, color or images that run to the edges of the paper. Sometimes they require larger sheets that need to be trimmed, resulting in higher costs and longer production time.
3. Use color to print a large quantity of "shells." Then, customize the text as your projects come up throughout the year with one color of ink.
4. Similarly, spread the cost of color between several jobs. For example, design a series of brochures that share the same colors, and print them at the same time. It can be cheaper than paying separate setup charges for each.
5. Before placing a special order, ask if there is a paper stock in inventory that might be right for your project.
6. Choose the right type of binding. Saddle stitching (stapling the piece along the center fold) is one of the least expensive and most popular types of binding.
7. On larger quantities that are printed on two sides, lay out both sides on one larger sheet. This is called printing "two-up" and can reduce costs by about 25 percent since press time is cut in half.
8. If you are designing your materials on computer disk and/or providing a digital file, make sure your printer outputs a sample to check the accuracy of the layout and any color separations. In addition, make any revisions before you turn your layout or digital files over to the printer. Revisions are costly once a job is in production.
9. Consider digital color output. Though printing small quantities (under 400) of a full-color brochure is usually cost prohibitive for many organizations, consider short-run digital printing instead. If set up correctly, your project can be output directly from your digital files and the press time is cut in half.
10. Avoid rush charges. Find out what length of time is required from your printer for production printing and added processes like folding, paper- and die-cutting. Stay on deadline to avoid rush charges, which can be as high as 50 to 100 percent above the normal quote.