



10 Tips to Save Money on Commercial Printing

The quality that comes with commercial printing can give your company's image the boost that it needs to rise above your competition and to make an impression on your customers.

Whether you need hundreds or thousands of prints, the following tips will save you money and help your project look its best and most professional.

1. **Proof everything and then proof it again!** It is *not* the printer's responsibility to proof and correct your copy. If you find a typo on the printed proof given to you by your printer and have to resubmit your corrected artwork files, you'll likely be charged for a second proof and possibly for any delays in printing the project. Take a tip from professional proofreaders: they read the copy on the final proof . . . backwards! Try it; you might be amazed at what you'll find.
2. Be sure that your artwork is in the proper format for printing *before* giving it to your printer. Your graphic designer should have a "preflight" checklist for the project and should check all fonts, images, colors, and transparency issues before sending any artwork to the printer. Make sure your final artwork is "press ready." Otherwise your printer may need to send it back to you for changes, additions, and corrections.
3. For small print runs (500 or less), ask your printer if your project could be printed digitally rather than offset. Digital printing is almost always less expensive for smaller jobs.
4. Print on a lighter weight of paper. Unless the paper weight will affect the look and feel you want for the piece (and it often does), you can save money with a lighter paper stock.
5. Ask your printer for paper stock suggestions. Most printers have "house" stocks that they use. Using your printer's default paper stock, rather than a custom stock, can save you time and money.
6. Keep solid ink coverage to a minimum in the design. The more ink a project needs, the more it may cost to print.
7. Bleeds usually cost extra. A 'bleed' is when the ink or printing goes all the way to one or more of the edges of the paper. It's a nice effect, but not always necessary.
8. Consider whether special processes like spot varnishes, metallic inks, die-cuts, or embossing are really necessary.
9. If you think you might need more of the printed piece in the future, consider having more printed now. Offset printing prices per piece go down as quantity goes up. It's less expensive in the long run to print a larger quantity now than it is to print two shorter quantity runs.
10. **Plan ahead!** There is an old saying in the printing business: "*Time. Cost. Quality. Pick two.*" Plan ahead and allow plenty of time for design, editing, proofing, and printing. This will avoid rush fees, reduce errors, and ensure a professional-looking result.