Quick And Simple Strategies You Can Apply To Find And Work With The Correct Commercial Printer

INSIDER'S REPORT

How To Work With Commercial Printers

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When you partner with the right printer for your business, you now have one less thing to worry about. A good printer will advise you on the best approach to take with your print job. They can act as a valuable resource for you on each job you print.

Good printers like to help their clients. They understand that if you are happy with what they do for you, you will become a repeat client. That is how they build a sustainable business.

If printing is important to your business, then choosing a quality printer is equally important. As in all things in life you get what you pay for. Here are a few areas to consider when choosing your ideal printer.

Experience

Check if they have worked before with other businesses like yours. If they have they may be able to share some of what they have learned, without breaking confidences. That information can be very useful.

Client testimonials

Look for printers who have testimonials. After all, you want to know they are doing a good job for other clients.

Price isn't everything

Don't be seduced with just cheap pricing. Cheap printing doesn't always save you money! You need to know that they have the staff and equipment to

do a quality print job. Your printed material says a certain something about your business. The better your material, the better you will be perceived. A good quality printer can help you achieve that.

How to reduce the overall cost of your print

We all want to get good value for money. Many people don't think they can reduce their overall print spend without compromising on quality. Here are 6 tips you can use the next time you want something printed.

It is worth remembering that the price for higher quality may produce better response rates. You have to balance this against cheaper printing costs and lower response rates.

1. Use the right paper stock

Decide if you use heaver or lighter stock, coated or uncoated, matt or gloss, bond or parchment.

2. Get the right volume

Can you get a higher volume printed, which will reduce per unit cost? Some printers will even offer to store stock for you until you need it.

Maybe you are regularly getting too much stock printed and it becomes obsolete. Would it make sense to do shorter runs and have the flexibility to change your materials more often?

You can now also use digital printing facilities from many printers, which allow you to do short runs for colour marketing materials, brochures, books and booklets. This can be a real cost saver.

3. Make best use of colour

Can you add or remove colour from your printed items? You can refer back to the colour chapter and the

> *Often you can do what are called print shells. Imagine you have a colour job to get printed. But sometimes your data changes. For example, you may have different addresses for seasonal products. You can get the full colour shell done as a longer run and then print smaller runs with the altered data.*

graphics sections to decide if you are making best use of your colour choices.

4. Use print shells

Often you can do what are called print shells. Imagine you have a colour job to get printed. But sometimes your data changes. For example, you may have different addresses for seasonal products. You can get the full colour shell done as a longer run and then print smaller runs with the altered data.

5. Print other items with the same specification

As an example, if you are getting letterheads printed it can often be less expensive for the printer to do similar items at the same time. You could get compliments slips, continuation sheets or a company form done on the same run. This can often reduce your overall cost per unit.

6. Ask your printer for advice

A couple of years ago I was printing brochures for a business I owned. The specification for these particular brochures was given to us by our supplier. As I was not impressed with the content of the brochure – it failed on most of the rules we have outlined in this guide – I decided to rewrite it.

I turned it into a full four-colour brochure with more content and on better quality paper. After getting the estimate from my printer, it turned out that the unit cost was lower for a higher quality brochure.

When I asked why this was the case, he explained that the fold on the previous brochure was complicated and needed to be run through their machines twice. The new brochure was a simple single fold. I saved about 35% and ended up with a significantly better marketing piece.

You should always talk to your printer and ask for their recommendations before you make your printing decisions.

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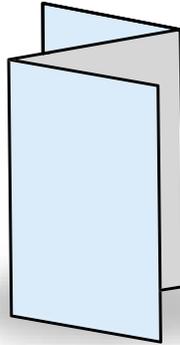*The new brochure was a simple single fold. I saved about 35% and ended up with a significantly better marketing piece.*

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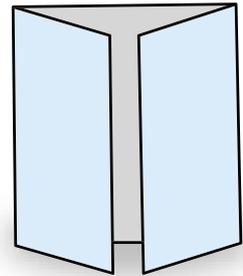# Everything You Need To Know About Folds But Were Afraid To Ask

Some of the more common paper folds
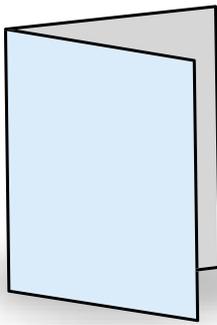
4 Page Single Fold

6 Page Concertina (or Z) Fold

6 Page Gate Fold
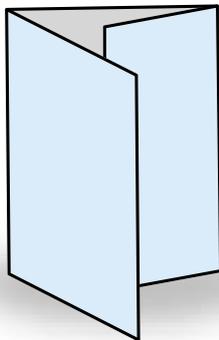
6 Page Standard (or Roll) Fold
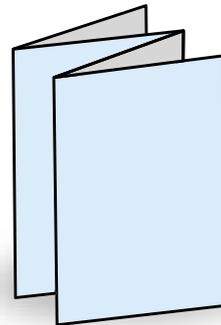
8 Page Concertina (or Roll) Fold
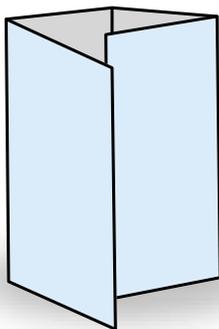
8 Page Gate Fold
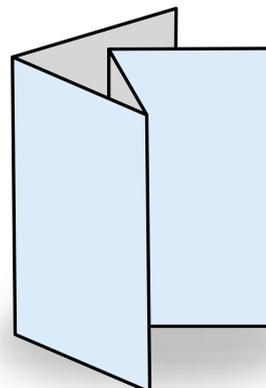
8 Page Parallel Double Fold

A Simple Guide To Understanding Paper Sizes

The comparison charts below give a very good indication of the relationships of the different sizes of paper to each other.

So next time someone mentions "A2" you'll know how it relates to an A4 sheet of paper!

A1

A2   A3

A4   A5

A6   A7

A7

A1

A2

A3

A4

A5

A6

A7
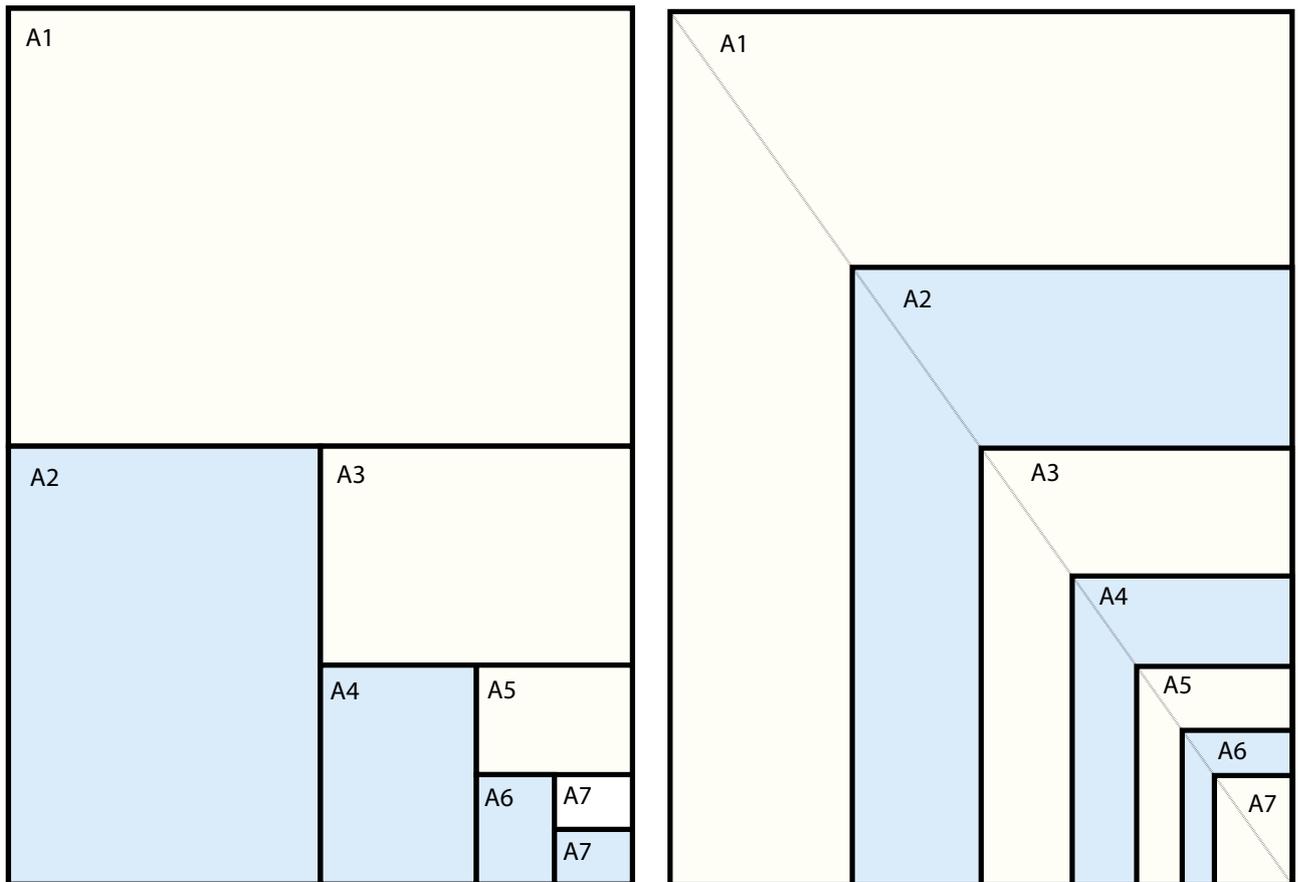
A1 is 840 x 1188mm

A2 is 420 x 594mm

A3 is 297 x 420mm

A4 is 210 x 297mm

A5 is 148 x 210mm

A6 is 105 x 148mm

A7 is 105 x 74mm

Discover What Size Paper Goes Into Which Envelope And How To Fold It

	A4	A4	A4	A5	A4

Unfolded **Folded once** **Folded twice** **Folded once** **Folded twice**

C4 **C5** **DL** **C6**
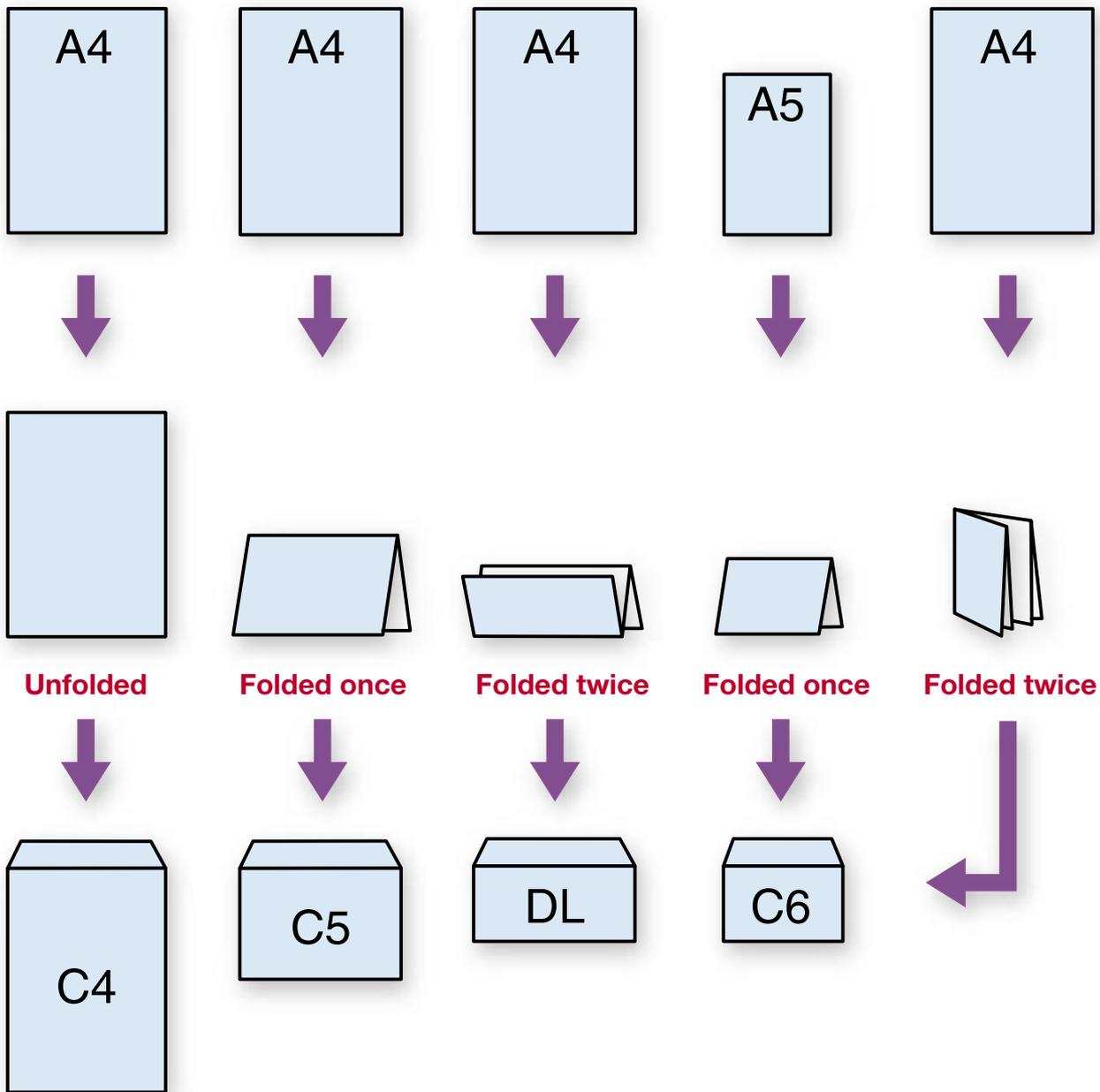
C6	162 x 114mm	A5 folded once / A4 folded twice
C5	229 x 162mm	A5 unfolded / A4 folded once
C4	229 x 324mm	A4 unfolded
DL	220 x 110mm	A4 folded twice

Printers Glossary Of More Common Terms

Art Paper
Paper coated with china clay and polished to a high finish.

Artwork
Copy/typesetting or design ready for printing.

Author's corrections
Corrections made by the author on proofs.

Bitmap
A grid of pixels or printed dots generated by computer to represent type and images.

Bleed
Where the printing runs off the cut edge of a page.

Board
General term for paper above 220gsm.

CMYK
Abbreviation for four process printing colours: cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

Colour separation
Separating full colour into the four process colours before printing.

Colour Swatch
A sample of a specified colour.

Copy date
Scheduled date for delivering copy to your printer.

Crop marks
Marks printed on a sheet of paper which indicate the intended finished page.

Duplex printing
Printing both sides.

Facing pages
Pages which face each other in an open book or magazine.

Finishing
Binding processes taking place after a job is printed, i.e. folding, stitching, cutting, inserting etc.

High Resolution
High density of detail.

Kerning
Adjusting the spacing between two adjacent letters to create a better visual fit.

Lamination
Thin plastic film applied by heat and pressure to a printed sheet for protection and/or appearance.

Make-ready
Setting up a printing machine to run a job.

OCR
Optical Character Recognition. The interpretation of typewritten characters by a piece of software.

Overprinting
An additional printing over something which has been printed before.

Page proof
Proof of page before printing.

Pantone Matching System (PMS)
Propriety name of a widely used colour-matching system.

Resolution
Measurement of image fineness stated in lines per inch (lpi), dots per inch (dpi) or pixels per inch (ppi).

RGB
Red, Green, Blue. The colour system used in televisions and computer monitors.

Saddle stitching
Binding inset books with wire staples through the middle of folded sheets.

Self Cover
The cover of a document is the same material as the internal pages.

Self-mailer
Printed piece mailed without an envelope.

Spot colour
A colour which is usually specified in a document as a particular colour (often Pantone).

Text
The body typesetting in a book as distinct from headings.

Trim marks
Alternative term for crop marks or tick marks.

Typeface
A set of text characters in a particular design piece.

Secrets of Digital Printing Revealed

How to Use The Biggest Change In The Printing Industry – *Since the Invention of The Printing Press in 1437* – To Make Your Marketing More Effective…

Traditional printing (litho printing) uses a metal plate on which the design to be printed accepts printing ink and the other parts of the plate repel ink.

One of the biggest costs associated with this type of printing is the cost of setting up the print equipment and cleaning it down after each job. That is why the unit cost of printed items reduces as the volume increases. The printer can amortise the set-up and clean-up over a higher volume of units.

Now… here's what's changed and why it could be very important to your business

Digital printing has come into its own in recent years. The industry forecast is that printers will be doing more digital printing than litho printing within the next decade.

That's like the quantum leap from LPs & Videos to CDs and DVDs.

This is a massive change in the industry and you can use it to your advantage. This is what is different:

Digital printing goes directly from computer to press without the need for intermediate steps such as film negatives or printing plates. You already do this with your photocopier and office printer. But now you can do it with commercial quality, increased flexibility and often at lower costs.

> *Digital printing goes directly from computer to press without the need for intermediate steps such as film negatives or printing plates.*

The Three Major Benefits of Digital Printing

1. Faster Turnaround times

Because of the simplified process at the printers, you can get faster turnaround times on your jobs. For example, if you have a print ready PDF, you can have it printed in minutes. No more of the back and forth with graphic designers and complicated proofing processes. This is a lot faster.

2. Lower Production Costs

Fewer steps for the printer means lower production costs. At the time of writing this book digital printing was suitable for short run colour jobs. If you have a long run (high volume) job you will still be better off with Litho printing. For the short run colour work you could be better off with Digital.

Take the time to talk to your printer about the options. They are the professionals and they keep up to date with the latest advances in this fast moving technology.

3. Increase Profits Through Personalised Marketing Pieces Using Variable Data

This is your BIG opportunity to do something really interesting in your marketing. Imagine being able to do full colour, production quality printing, but having it personalised.

And I'm not just talking about someone's name and address. I'm talking about advanced personalisation. Personalisation gets prospects to open your envelope, read and take action on your offer. Does that sound interesting?

You may be wondering what variable data is…

Personalisation is a form of variable data. Doing a mail merge with a data base of different prospects is just one use of variable data. But you can take it miles past that level.

> " *This is your BIG opportunity to do something really interesting in your marketing. Imagine being able to do full colour, production quality printing, but having it personalised.* "

✔ **You can insert different images depending on who the letter is going to.**

✔ You can create customised brochures to meet a person's particular area of interest.

✔ **You can customise your annual client calendar with your client's name on each month of the year. If they get six calendars in December, which calendar do you think they will keep on their desk?**

✔ You can have personalised user manuals depending on who purchased what. Carphone Warehouse does this with staggering results …and they make a profit on it!

✔ **You can send personalised colour postcards to your most important clients with an individual offer.**

✔ You can easily create targeted promotions depending on which clients purchased what products in the past.

✔ **You could send out a personalised newsletter.**

If your local printer offers digital printing as an option – and most do now – you must talk to them about how you can use it to increase sales. Here are some of the benefits current users are seeing in their business.

1. Higher response rates

There is no doubt about it, if you received a customised marketing piece that focuses on your areas of interest you are more likely to open and read it. That is the experience of countless companies successfully using variable and personalised marketing pieces. Some of them are seeing response rates increase by two to ten times. Yes, that did say **two to ten times!**

2. Greater client satisfaction

Carphone Warehouse sends their new clients a customised customer support pack when they buy a

> "
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> "

phone. It is tailored specifically to them. It includes only information relevant to their handset. It offers additional products specific to which purchases they made.

The clients love it. Many of them buy the up-sells which increases the profits per transaction. The company receives less support calls because most of what the new client needs is in his customised pack.

The handset providers pay to advertise in the support book, which pays for the printing. Everyone wins!

3. Higher customer sales values

Because you can customise your offer to your clients' specific areas of interest they will buy more. It has been proven over and over again that if a client has too many choices they CAN'T make a decision. When you make a relevant offer match with a specific area of interest people buy more.

4. Improved conversation rates

Your enquiry to sales rates will improve because of the reasons we have already discussed. Now your prospects are only receiving relevant promotions and relevant collateral, they are more likely to review it because it is of specific interest to their personal needs and wants.

Relevance is the single largest lever on response in individualized marketing communications. Relevant campaigns show at least **3x increase in response** over those that are just personalized. That's the power of variable data!

Personalization means that the images and text on every piece can be specific to the recipient. This allows true 1:1 "conversations" with your prospects, making your marketing much more effective.

5. Reduced costs

Because the labour involved in digital printing is reduced, so is the cost. Short runs are more cost effective.

"Relevance is the single largest lever on response in individualized marketing communications. Relevant campaigns show at least 3x increase in response over those that are just personalized. That's the power of variable data!"

Because you have greater potential to print on demand, you will reduce obsolescence and decrease your costs. You can also reduce storage issues if you are only printing what you need.

If you send information packs to prospects you can customise these and eliminate irrelevant data. This means fewer costs and postage for you and a more targeted mailer for your prospect.

If you have not discussed this new technology with your printer, I would encourage you to do so. Don't be holding on to your LPs while the world is moving to CDs.

This is a mind map diagram centered on "Choose Commercial Printer".

Experience
- Your Sector
- Are They Doing A Good Job

Testimonials / Proof

Price (LOW PRICE tag)
- Cheap Doesn't Save Money
- Can They Do The Job RIGHT? Will They Be Around Long Term?

Digital Print
- Fast Turnaround
- Lower Product Cost
- Increased Response
  - Personalisation
  - Increased Profits
- Variable Data
  - Data Is Relevant To The Recipient
  - One-On-One Conversation
  - Relevant - 3x Increase In Response-

Print Shells
- Plan In Advance

Reduce Overall Print Spend

Paper Stock
- Right One For The Job

Choose Right Volume

Choose Colours To Maximize Impact

Similar Specification
- Leverage The Cost Of The Machine Set-Up At The Printer
- Reduce Unit Costs

Ask For Advice
- They Want To Help
- The 'Fold' Story