

Color Catalog Printing 101

What quicker way to turn prospects into customers than by showing them all your products and providing a convenient ordering process with catalogs printed and delivered to their doors? Pull it off right with dazzling design, persuasive copy and professional printing to yield a great return on investment for your marketing efforts.



To help you get it right the first time, here's your crash course in Catalog Printing 101:

Colors

Before you design and layout your catalog, you need to make sure that the colors on your computer screen match what the final output will be. Catalogs have many pages, so you don't want to have to go back through your layout to make color changes after seeing a hardcopy proof. Invest in a good printed color swatch chart to see what specific CMYK values will look like on paper. Another good way to make sure your colors match is to have your graphic design program and computer screen calibrated.

Size and sequence

Catalogs come in several different sizes and page counts. Many printers such as Spectrum offer pre-formatted color templates, so you can be sure your bleeds extend all the way to the printing edge and your important product images and text won't be cut off during the finishing process. It's just as important to study your catalog printing template to make sure you have your pages in the right sequence.

Paper and binding



For those on a tight budget, your catalog can still look great if you go with a 70-pound matte or 80-pound gloss text paper for your catalog's inside pages. These grade-A papers are durable enough to withstand hundreds of turnings, but thin enough to be budget-friendly. For a more professional look, print your catalog's cover on 100-pound gloss cover paper — a thick and sturdy alternative that adds a touch of class and professionalism. For a sleek and clean catalog, upgrade your inside pages to 100-pound gloss text — the thicker texture will pleasantly resound with your page-turning prospects.

Decide whether your catalog will be saddle-stitched or bound with Wire-O. Saddle-stitching involves folding your printed catalog pages over and stapling the closed edge; thus forming a traditional catalog. Wire-O binding means the printer must first cut your pages and drill holes for the binding. In either case, make sure you check with your printer before you begin designing your catalog so that your layout accommodates your chosen binding method.

Mailing considerations

If you will be mass mailing your catalog, consult with your catalog printer and/or bulk mailing service to determine where the indicia and address information must be placed to satisfy postal regulations. Doing so will allow you to avoid costly design conflicts. Also, be aware that the size of

your catalog and the type of paper you use will ultimately affect your mailing costs. For example, 70-pound matte or 80-pound gloss text papers, for example, are lighter and can be mailed cheaper than 100-pound paper.

As with most forms of printing, the more catalogs you print, the cheaper your cost-per-catalog. Make sure you print enough catalogs to blanket your target audience for an efficient rate of return.

Proof it

Catalogs are large undertakings, so make sure you get a full hardcopy physical proof before you run the entire job. Never compromise on this — catalogs contain so many pages, images, text, prices and other information that it's absolutely imperative that you've checked everything twice.

Catalogs are one of the best ways to boost business through a rapid return rate. Follow the steps outlined above to ensure that your catalog production — from concept to completion — goes off without a hitch.

About Us

Since 1985, Spectrum has provided better printing and service to nearly 5000 small business marketers, business owners and graphic designers. Spectrum combines state-of-the-art capabilities and the industry's best digital and offset sheet fed and web printing equipment with experienced print professionals and color specialists to deliver quality, consistent color matching and 99.8 percent on-time delivery. By offering a 100 percent customer satisfaction guarantee, Spectrum also stands behind every order, every time. Spectrum is your success story!

www.SpectrumColorPrinting.com.