**How to Write Good Print Specs**

Every print job is customized and based on the specifications you give to the printer.

Here is a list of the 12 basic specs every printer needs to know about for your print job.

1. **Job name and description.** This is for easy reference. Always make sure the contact person’s name, email, phone, etc., is provided.
2. **Delivery date requested.** The date you need it by is key. You need to be sure a printer can deliver when you need it.
3. **Quantity.** How many do you need? If this job is tied to a mailing list, be careful about the final quantity. You don’t want to run short. Extras (“overs”) are standard on any print job, however, acceptance of overrun quantities not specified in the accepted quote or purchase order is not an acceptable practice by FSU,.
4. **Flat size.** What size is the piece before it is finished or folded? Dimensions are given by width and then by height (i.e. 8 1/2 x 11).
5. **Finished size**. This notes the dimensions once a job is folded or bound.
6. **Page count**. This applies to magazines, bound newsletters, books, booklets, and some brochures.
7. **Paper stock**. This is important, as paper is the major cost of almost every print job. If you have a specific stock in mind, give the printer all of the details. If not, describe the paper in general and ask for help.
8. **Inks**. For example, Is this a 1-color, 2-color, or 4-color job? Tell your printer everything. If it is a 4-color job, are you requesting CMYK (the 4 process colors) or specific PMS colors? If your finished job will be run through laser printers, make sure you note this on the spec form. The inks must be compatible.
9. **Binding.** This describes any finishing steps done to a job once it’s printed, including folding, perfect binding, spiral binding, saddle-wiring, perforating, scoring, embossing, and so on.
10. **Job format.** How will the printer get your job file? Electronically? If so, what platform are you using (Mac or PC)? How about the design programs you are using to build the job, including the specific versions?
11. **Special concerns**. Tell the printer anything else about the job that you have not already done so. Does it need certain varnishes? Is it a Variable Data Printing (VDP) job? Are there going to be a significant amount of solids on it? Will this piece need to match other projects that are already printed or printing elsewhere?
12. **Shipping**. Where will the finished job be shipped? Supply all details, including any special shipping or packing instructions.

Keep this list handy as you supply job specs to your printers. Remember to give every printer who is quoting on your job the same set of specs.

**Example Specifications**

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| **Small Jobs**  **Business Cards**:  Count 250 - 3.5 x 2 Bc for (name on card)  **Brochure**:  Count 1,000 - [Trifold Brochure - With Bleeds] - 4/4 on 28# White Text, 8.5 x 11 with Bleeds, Trifold to 3.67 x 8.5, From Print Ready File 1 Original  **Factsheets**:  Count 5,000 - Fall 2020 Factsheets – 3.5 x 5 finished size 60# white smooth text 4/4 – color ink; 2-sided print, No bleed Double parallel fold  **Magazine**:  Count14,800 - Size: 8 ½ x 11; 40 pages + Cover (44); Paper: Cover: 100 lb. Gloss Text; Text: 60 lb. Gloss Text; Files: \*Press Ready File; Ink: 4/4 + Special Effects Aqueous (Spot Dull Aqueous for cover); Proofs: Xerox & Improof Included; Bindery: Trim, fold, collate, and saddle stitch; Mail Services Ink Jet Addresses, NCOA, either deliver to FSU post office or sort and mail from printer if they have that ability, 14,185; Box balance of 615 and deliver F.O.B. Tallahassee, Florida | **Large Jobs**  **Guide book**:  Size: 6 X 9 160pg + Cover  Paper: 100# Matte Cover & 80# Matte Text  Color: 4/4 CP + Soft Touch Aqueous Cover  Binding: Wire O Bind with Cover Wrap (Reversible and Wrap around prices) Delivery: No later than Sept. 27, 2020 Packaging: In boxes of 50  Price: Each Quantity - Web press Only 10,000/20,000/30,000  **Tickets**:  Sample Spec. - The supplier shall furnish initial pdf proofs via email to verify all ticket elements are included and accurately placed in the ticket layout, followed by a hard copy proof of the final layout in color, if desired.  Sample Questionnaire - Does supplier have the capacity to furnish all the items according to the bid specifications? (yes/no) If not, please explain.  Does your company have the ability to fulfill and mail each season package to the respective ticket holder without the use of any sub-contractors? (yes/no) If not, please explain. |