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PRINTtips

Building Relationships One Job at a Time



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We've said it before and we'll say it again – we love our customers. Nothing delights us as much as delivering a quality printed product on time and at the agreed-upon price. In fact, we have set up an entire production management system for the purpose of being the kind of dependable printer that businesses, organizations, and individuals need.

But did you know that you participate with us in the success of your job? Especially when you are providing critical job elements to us – a digital file, copy and photographs, or art direction – you have joined the production team. In case you've never thought of your relationship to us in this way, we'd like to let you know what you can expect from us and what we need from you to make your printing project go smoothly.

Customer service: where it all begins and ends

Our customer service representatives are the friendly voices you hear when you call to place an order or ask a question.

Our customer service representatives are responsible for translating your requirements for the printing project into manufacturing specifications. To do that competently, they have been trained in the technical aspects of print production – paper and ink; prepress; offset printing and high speed copying; post press functions; binding and bookmaking; and special effects such as thermography, blind



embossing, foiling, and die cutting.

They have been taught the production standards for our shop, the capability and capacity of each piece of equipment, and the throughput standards (how long it takes to perform an operation).

They have been trained in order entry. We use a computerized order entry and estimating system that incorporates a scheduling module. Using their knowledge of production standards and your stated delivery request date, our customer service representatives make a production plan for each job they take in. If needed, they generate a purchase order for any materials required for the job but not held in our inventory. When an order is entered, it has all the information needed to correctly produce the job and meet the requested delivery date.

Of course, our customer service representatives have also been trained in customer service. They know our procedures for requesting and granting credit, making charitable donations, and resolving customer complaints and disputes.

Building Relationships One Job at a Time (continued)

“It also helps if we understand what you are trying to accomplish...”

Our customer service representatives are your interface with our production staff. Unlike your sales representative, who may be temporarily unavailable to you during a part of the day, our customer service representatives are always on duty in the office and just a phone call or e-mail away.

Project management

In order for our customer service representatives to discharge their responsibilities, they need your cooperation, especially for a new project. You may complete project planning with your sales representative (who will brief the assigned customer service representative) or you may conduct project planning with our customer service representatives. Here's an example of what we mean by *project planning*:

1. The name of your project.
2. The dimensions and number of pages of the project.
3. The number of ink colors.
4. The quantity of finished pieces that you'll want.
5. The type of paper you want the project printed on.
6. The materials that you will be supplying to us (such as computer files or print-ready documents).
7. When you need the project completed or delivered.

It also helps if we understand what you are trying to accomplish with the printed piece and whether a budget has been established.

We like to provide an estimate or quotation prior to beginning work. We want you to know the cost of what you are planning and to evaluate the cost against your budget. To do this, we need project planning to be far enough along to develop manufacturing specifications. We are

also happy to provide estimates for alternatives – the cost of printing in one color versus two colors, for example, or the cost on two different kinds of paper.

Once you have accepted our quotation and provided all materials as agreed, our customer service representatives will enter your order and production will begin. At this point, it is the job of our customer service representatives to keep your job on schedule and on budget. Again, they will need your cooperation.

Please recognize that for us to deliver on time and on budget, all members of the production team must follow instructions given by our customer service representatives – the project managers. They will give you due dates – the days you must provide your input – to keep the job on schedule. Expect a due date for submission of materials (copy, photographs, graphics, electronic files, print ready artwork), for return of proofs, and for release of the job to press. If you miss or need to change one of your due dates, expect our customer service representatives to reschedule your delivery date.

Those special circumstances: when it positively, absolutely, has to be there overnight

Does it sound like we're too rigid and the relationship is too hard on you? We don't mean it to be. In fact, by carefully managing the production of each job, we actually create more time to be responsive to your special circumstances.

For those times when our standard production times won't produce the job in time for your required delivery date, just let us know. Our customer service representatives will take your requirement to our production manager, who will determine whether it is physically possible to meet your request. If it is, we will let you know and also tell you whether any additional costs



Building Relationships One Job at a Time (continued)

will be incurred. Now you can make an informed decision about proceeding. And once the production manager has committed to your due date, you can absolutely, positively count on an on-time delivery.

Building a relationship one job at a time

Our desire is to be your *dependable* printer – the one you can rely on to deliver a quality job on time and on budget. We're enthusiastic about building a relationship with you, one job at a time.

“Now you can make an informed decision about proceeding.”

Consider Using FTP

When you submit electronic artwork to us, particularly if you are using the file transfer function on our web site <<ftp://ftp.macgra.com>>, we prefer that you first compress the files to make them smaller. File compression eliminates or minimizes redundancy in a file, making your files smaller without losing any information. A simple example of compression is a set of characters “AAAADDDDDDD” (which represents a letter) being rewritten as “4A7D”,

saving seven spaces and making that line 64% smaller. File compression software (sometimes called a file compression utility) is available for both PC and Macintosh platforms. WinZip is popular with PC users.

Stuffit has been written for both Macintosh and PC platforms. Each platform offers two versions: Deluxe and Standard. For more information on these file compression utilities, go to <http://www.winzip.com> or <http://www.stuffit.com>.



“...we prefer that you first compress the files...”

Is your Pantone Guide Up-To-Date?

The Pantone Matching System (PMS) is, according to the company, “the definitive international reference for selecting, specifying, matching, and controlling ink colors.” The reference material consists of the formula guide (a three-guide set consisting of 1,114 solid colors on coated, uncoated, and matte stock), which shows corresponding printing ink formulas for each color, and a three-book set of solid chips that are perforated and can be torn out to use for quality control. You may be familiar with fan deck or chips, either because you have a set or because you've used the ones we keep here at MacMillan Graphics.

You may not know that in 2000, Pantone reformulated its colors and changed the

reproduction process for its books, chips, and fan decks. As a result, chip colors as well as the CMYK and RGB formulations in books produced in 2000 and later may be a slightly different tint than books printed prior to 2000.

Page layout software programs further complicate the issue. Illustrator v. 8 uses pre-2000 colors while Illustrator v. 9 and 10 and Quark 4 and 5/6 use 2000 colors.

If color match is critical to your printing project, you may want to specify the Pantone colors using our reference books. We update our fan decks regularly and store them out of direct sunlight to keep the colors faithful. Call us if you would like to bring in your book to compare to ours.



“Pantone reformulated its colors and changed the reproduction process...”



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Please Route to the Printing Buyer



“Allow one working day for us to complete each step in the order entry...”

Q. *Do I have to completely run out of something before I reorder it?*

A. No.

We hope you're smiling because we meant our answer to be tongue-in-cheek. We know you know that reorders are best handled routinely – when your remaining supply will last long enough for us to reprint the job in our normal turnaround time. But do you know what normal turnaround is? It varies with each job,

but we can give you an easy-to-remember rule of thumb. Allow one working day for us to complete each step in the order entry, printing, and delivery process.

Here are the typical steps to filling an order:

1. Order entry
2. Prepress
3. Platemaking
4. Press
5. Bindery
6. Packaging
7. Delivery

Of course, not every job requires all steps, and we may finish more than one step in a single day. But if you really want to pamper us, give us one day for each process. If you do, we'll deliver on time with a perfect job.