

beyond paper and ink

Looking at your design project from a holistic point of view can find a surprising number of opportunities to reduce its environmental impact. Start the conversation early – your ideas will be easier to implement and more cost effective if they start in the planning phase.

Here are a few suggestions to help green your project, and save you money.

Choose an accredited printer

Many printers are taking action to address their environmental impact:

- > Use of renewable energy
- > Waste disposal – paper, ink, printing plates, containers, equipment
- > Reduction in water usage
- > Use of vegetable-based inks
- > Use of recycled or sustainable plantation sourced papers
- > Reduction or elimination of alcohol, chemicals and solvents
- > Consumption reduction

Lamination

Laminating print work is attractive and certainly makes it more durable but also prevents the paper from being recycled, ensuring its ends up in landfill.

Metallic Inks

Metallic inks cannot be recycled and when they are disposed of can leak toxic compounds into the water table.

Varnishing

Consider a vegetable, soy based, or aqueous (water based) varnish rather than a UV varnish. UV varnishes cannot be de-inked, preventing the product from being recycled.

Proofing

Consider if an online proof is sufficient, rather than a printed proof.

Sizing

Resizing a product can affect the amount of waste created. How many pages can fit to one sheet, and how much of the sheet is left over? Sometimes reducing the size by only a few millimeters can dramatically reduce the resulting wastage, and cost.

Be clever with less

How is the product packaged and is it necessary? Can it be redesigned to use less materials, be reused or recycled?

Local sourcing

Are there local products that can be used to create your product? Is your printer located close to the distribution area?

Afterlife

What happens to your product after its life? Can it be recycled? How will it be disposed of? Can it be re-used?

Digital projects

Consider the company that will be hosting your digital project – do they use renewable energy or offset their non-renewable energy? Discourage printing where appropriate, or offer a print friendly version that uses less ink and paper. Use existing technology to distribute your project, rather than a CD, DVD or USB stick.