

‘400gsm for weight and depth?’



# How to get a print quote

Knowing how to communicate the technical requirements of your print job to your printer will make the process easier and may well get you a better price too. In this factsheet we've included some jargon busters and some tips on how to get the most cost effective print estimates.

## Essentials

The essential details the printer will need are:

- **Size**
- **Stock**
- **Colours**
- **Sides**
- **Finishing**
- **Bleed**
- **Quantity**

## Size

### Common sizes:

- Letterheads - A4 (210 x 297mm)
- Compliment slip - 1/3 A4 (210 x 99mm)
- Business card - 85 x 55mm
- Postcard - A6 (148.5 x 105mm)
- Leaflet - A5 (148.5 x 210mm)

When designing custom shaped or sized work it's a good idea to check that they fit within a common A series size (A7, A6, A5, A4, A3, A2 etc). This is because a lot of printing is done on A sized stock and jobs are usually printed more than one to a page, eg 4 A5's will be printed together on an A3 sheet. If you had a leaflet that was 160 x 220mm (ie a bit bigger than A5) you'd only be able to print two to a sheet and so costs will be higher as there will be more stock wastage and a longer print run.

## Stock

What sort of material do you want the work printed on? Costs of paper and card can vary greatly depending on the quality and make. If you're not sure of what stock to use, don't be shy of asking your printer for recommendations and/or samples. Your designer will also usually have a look and feel in mind when they're creating the design so ask them what they suggest too.

### Some basic stock choices:

- Letterheads and comp slips - 100gsm bond.
- Business cards - 350gsm Royal Kent.
- Postcards - 300gsm gloss.
- 1/3 A4 tri-fold leaflet - 170gsm silk.
- 24 page A4 brochure - 250gsm gloss cover + 170gsm silk inner pages.
- Poster - 170gsm silk.

## Colours

How many colours does the design use? This will affect how the work needs to be printed, and therefore costs. There's a separate Itonic guide that explains the processes of colour printing but basically, you need to tell the printer whether it's b&w, 1 colour, 2 colour or full colour.



Example print spec for the above:

Business Card

85 x 55mm printed 2 Pantone colours (210 and Cool Grey 8) to front, 1 colour on reverse with bleed.

Stock: 350gsm Conqueror Diamond White Laid.

Qty: 500

Delivery to Lancing.

Artwork supplied as press ready PDF.

A shorthand way of communicating the above would be:

500 x BC (85 x 55mm). 2/1 with bleed onto 350gsm Conq DWL.

PDF supplied, delivery to Lancing.

If you want to know more, just ask!

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## Sides

Is the print on one side (single sided) or both sides (double sided)?

## Finishing

Is anything additional to the print needed?

### Common finishing requirements might be:

- Business cards - embossing, laminating or foil blocking.
- Leaflets - folding and/or mail merging.
- Brochures/documents - collating, folding and stapling.
- Invoice sheets - numbering.

Please see the separate Itonic guide that explains finishing techniques in more details.

## Bleed

If your artwork goes right to the edge of the page it needs to be printed with 'bleed' to give a neat result and this will need to be allowed for in the printing costs.

## Quantity

You'll hopefully know how many you want (!), however it's worth noting that the more you have printed, the lower the unit cost will be. For example the price for 1000 business cards would typically be only 20% more than for 500.

It's also worth knowing that if you need business cards for a few people it's best to get them printed at the same time as printers usually print them together in batches. The unit cost of 10 lots of 250 cards printed like this should be much lower than having 10 separate lots.

If you have a few different items that need to be printed in the same colours, eg b/cards plus letterheads plus leaflets you should save money on ink set-ups by having them printed together.

## Other information

### Timescale

If you can plan ahead and don't need your printing doing in a rush you may benefit from a better deal. It's also a good idea to book in big jobs in advance with printers.

### Artwork

How will the artwork be supplied to the printer? Will it be emailed, or posted on disk? What programme was the artwork created in? Will you be able to supply it to them in a 'press-ready' format? Your designer will usually do this for you and supply a hi-res pdf set up for print with crop marks, bleed and the necessary fonts and images.

### Proofs

Will you require proofs back from the printer before the work is actually printed? For smaller jobs the printer will print straight from your approved supplied artwork. For larger jobs or colour sensitive work you may want to request a pre-press proof. This is sometimes referred to as a Cromalin (similar to all vacuum cleaners being called Hoovers). A pre-press proof is where the final artwork files are printed on a machine that simulates as closely as possible how the final job will print. This will be an additional charge, although standard proofs are normally included in the price and are used to check that everything is where it should be and that there aren't any bits of text or images missing.

### Delivery

Delivery to one (local) address is often included in the print quote. However if the goods need to go further afield or to multiple addresses you need to factor in the cost of the shipping as it may add quite a bit to the overall price.

*We're experts in managing print projects, so if you need a quote we're here to help.*