

## Document Considerations

A successful book binding project is based on proper planning. Consider the following when planning your project.

### Assessment

The first consideration involves a general assessment of the project. Review the following questions prior to beginning your document.

- **Usage** - How will the document be used? Will it be sold to the end user or will it be used in an office or production environment? Will it be used indoors or outdoors?
- **Handling** - Will the document need to lay flat on a work surface when opened?
- **Security** - Does the binding system need to be tamper resistant to eliminate the possibility of page removal or insertion?
- **Shelf Life** - Will the document need future updates that will add or remove sheets?

Review the Binding System Comparison to help with your selection decision. This section provides information about each of the binding systems available from Flex Finishing.

### Design and Layout

The second consideration involves making design and layout decisions based on the processes and capabilities of the bindery equipment. Review the following questions prior to beginning your document.

- **Bindery Processing Size (Run-size)** - What is the run-size range that can be processed using automated or semi-automated equipment? Can the layout of the document be changed to fall within this range? What run-size limitations exist when manual processing becomes necessary? Review the Book Binding Equipment Specifications table for answers to these questions.
- **Trimmed Finished-Size** - Have all finishing services been considered and designed into the trimmed, finished-size dimensions? Have all trim marks been added and double-checked for accuracy? Review the Book Binding Equipment Specifications table to ensure that the trimmed finished-size of your document can be processed.
- **Gutter Spacing** - How much space is required on the binding edge of the sheet to avoid punching through text or graphics? Similarly, how much space is required when an adhesive binding (Thermal Tape or Perfect) system is used? Finally, does the layout compensate for push-out when saddle stitching is used? Review the Book Binding Equipment Specifications table to ensure that proper binding-gutter spacing is available for the type of binding system you will use.
- **Element Colors** - Do you need a quick turnaround using inventoried elements or do you want elements shipped in that match a specific color? Review the Element Colors section on our website to determine if the color you have chosen is available with the binding system you plan to use.
- **Cover Types** - Do you want to use two-piece covers or a wrap-around cover that partially or totally conceals the binding element? Are the covers prone to transit damage due to the imaging process used? If so, should paper or foam separator sheets be used?

### **Proofing and Dummies**

The third consideration involves the document proof and dummy. Review the following questions prior to beginning your document.

- **Proof** - Is the text complete and have all graphics been included? Has the text been spell checked? Do the margins provide enough space for punching/drilling and trimming to final size? Have you confirmed the accuracy of your layout by creating a dummy?
- **Dummy** - Is the layout correct based on cutting the dummy to its final size? Have pagination, binding edge location and finished trim size details been communicated? Does the dummy match your purchase order exactly?

### **Stock**

The fourth consideration involves making stock decisions. Review the following questions prior to beginning your document.

- **Type** - Should I use thick paper covers or clear acetate covers on the document? Should I use a clear film laminate on paper covers to provide additional protection and longevity?
- **Weight** - Is the stock an appropriate weight for the project? Will the weight difference between the text sheets and cover be great enough to avoid the use of a slipsheet between each document? If the document is saddlestitched, is the cover so thick that it will easily separate from the rest of the booklet?

### **Printing**

The fifth consideration involves making printing process decisions. This decision is most often based on economics, but must also include a review of bindery requirements.. Review the following questions prior to beginning your document.

- **Offset Printing** - Will your run length make economic sense to run on offset equipment? Will the sheets need to be coated to minimize fingerprints from handling or scratches from finishing? Will the powder used in an offset press powder system cause any non-contributory transit damage?
- **Digital Printing** - Will you get the image quality you need with digital printing? Can you run the stock specified for the job or will you need to substitute a different stock due to the printer? Will the printed material stand up to bindery processing or will it need to be coated to eliminate marks or scratches? Will the printed images stand up to folding and creasing without flaking or cracking?

### **Packaging and Transportation**

The last consideration involves making packaging and transportation decisions. Review the following questions prior to beginning your document.

- **Packaging Method** - Will documents with digitally printed covers require a paper or foam separator sheet be placed between each set? Should I use standard corrugated cartons and pallets or will I need to purchase custom packaging?
- **Transportation Method** - What one best method will ensure that the material is delivered to the correct location, on time, without damage and at a reasonable cost?