

Environmental considerations for mail production



By considering the wide variety of choices available to mail producers and users, all businesses involved in the production of mail can help minimise their environmental impact. This fact sheet identifies the world's best practice guidelines and principles to assist in making sustainable choices during the production and use of mail.

MANAGE YOUR DATA EFFECTIVELY

By improving targeting and consolidating mailing lists using data integration solutions, you can reduce waste, energy and the carbon impact of your mail outs. More effective targeting also increases response rates and reduces the overall cost of the mailing. So it's worth updating your data files regularly.

CHECKLIST:

- Verify your address files against the National Change of Address database.
- Eliminate undeliverable mail by checking against the Postal Address File provided by Australia Post.
- Use ADMA Australian National suppression files to remove recipients who have requested "Do Not Mail".
- Implement a return to sender management system.
- Provide the opportunity for customers to update their contact details with every communication sent.

DESIGN WITH THE ENVIRONMENT IN MIND

Considering every element of your mailing during the design phase can contribute to significant reductions on the impact on our environment.

Sustainable design choices in regards to the size of the layout and artwork all add up to make your mailing more environmentally friendly.

CHECKLIST:

- Consider the type of paper you use, for example, glossy paper stock does not recycle easily.
- Limit copy as the less ink there is on a page, the easier it is to recycle.
- Design to minimise production overruns, excessive trimming and waste.
- Use electronic files for proofing, presenting and editing rather than colour printouts.
- Specify sheet sizes to obtain the greatest print coverage and reduce waste when trimming.
- Reduce the number of individual sheets in each mail out and consider adding promotional messages directly onto transactional mail.

CONSIDER YOUR PRINT AND PRODUCTION SUPPLIERS

There's no point designing with the environment in mind if you're not seeking sustainable options for printing and production. Look for suppliers that have a formal environmental management scheme in place, for example, the Australian Government runs a Greenhouse Friendly™ certification which endorses Australian businesses that make greenhouse neutral products or services.

By knowing what to look for and asking a few questions when choosing your suppliers we can all make a difference.

CHECKLIST:

- Purchase your paper from sources with a certification of sustainable forest management.
- Consider using recycled, recyclable, reusable and biodegradable materials wherever possible.
- Choose suppliers with sustainable paper purchasing policies.
- Select printers that use vegetable based or recycled inks and aqueous varnishes.
- Reduce your overall paper usage, but not in place of using certain plastics which have a greater environmental impact.
- Use suppliers who minimise the use of materials when packaging your printed collateral.

SPECIFY PAPER FROM RESPONSIBLE SOURCES AND ENCOURAGE RECYCLING

Many paper suppliers purchase from sources with a certification of sustainable forest management programs. This ensures that the paper is made with environmentally sustainable practices. Ask your supplier if the paper you've chosen follows these practices. There are different types of paper for all sorts of purposes.

CHECKLIST:

- Consider 100 per cent post consumer recycled paper since it has a significantly lower environmental impact.
- Attach a 'Please Recycle' message to your printed materials to remind consumers to dispose of mail the same way they do newspapers and magazines - in their recycling bin.
- Select envelopes with adhesives that don't interfere with the recycling process. Plastic wraps should also be biodegradable.
- If you use an envelope with a plastic window, ensure it's made from a biodegradable window film.

It's easy to minimise your environmental impact once you know what to specify. Visit auspost.com.au/sustainablemail for more details.



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