

This section from the book, '14 Ways to Squeeze a Print Budget' contains descriptions of specific strategies that have helped some companies get the most out of their print budgets. These ideas are examples and do not attempt to cover the full range of possibilities that may be available for your company.

If you would like to investigate a new approach for your work, contact us for a free, no pressure consultation.

Mike Rickert, President
Catalog Press Corporation
3 Old Dock Road
Yaphank, NY 11980
(516) 967-8336
(516) 620-0950 fax
mrickert@catalog-press.com
www.catalog-press.com

10. Cash in on past budget overruns

Audit past experience, determine new directions with good consultation, and you can set up new methods and set measurable goals related to company or project objectives.

It's tedious but rewarding when you can get more done with the same budget.

Basic Planning Outline

- What did we expect and what happened instead? Detail this with amount over proposal and budget, days project was delayed, and estimate as close as possible the cost of delays (cost of additional administrative time, net margins on loss of sales, etc.).
- Were our assumptions correct? The specifications may have changed from the time of the budget – for what reason?
- Was the variance because of internal or external causes?
- Was this an uncontrollable event or could it have been managed?
- Is there a simple process change would correct a reasonable percentage of variance? Who will be responsible for implementing this change and are they prepared and authorized?

Asking your Vendors for Suggestions Costs Nothing

Most vendors assume that difficult service requirements that often lead to budget variances are routine for the client and cannot be questioned. Some minor changes can often make the difference.

In Method #9, 'Why overspend on anything?' I was in my early 20s and enlisted by the head of a division of a large customer to find ways to lower costs by 10% for their seminar workbooks. He got me aside and said they were going to their vendors to find ways to cut costs.

Initially I had no idea how to do that and honestly told him so, but he kindly replied, 'I know you don't know *now* how you're going to do it, and we're certainly not asking you to lose money, but see what you can come up with.'

It took a month or so to come up with the first 10 bad ideas, but it seemed that there was merit to 2 of them. They were clarified at meetings with managers there and through more fact finding at the plant, and one just might work if we could find a way to report timely information to the managers at the company. This was modified a few times and ended up saving them over \$180,000/year as outlined in Method #9. We continued this approach with other kinds of work we later got from them.