

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.

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4. Cash in on volume discounts with house stocks

Merchants and mills sell large amounts of particular stocks to printers at discounted pricing. Great savings can be realized by using these 'house stocks.'

Ask for a separate estimate using an equivalent house stock. Ask as well for a sample to be sent to arrive by the next day. Sometimes a house stock sample arrives ahead of the estimate!

More Flexibility with Page Counts

With web printing, it's common to have to make your catalog's text page count in multiples of 16. Often house stocks are inventoried in 1/2 rolls that net 8 pages, and sometimes even 3/4 rolls for 12 pages. By using these 1/2 and 3/4 roll sizes you can lower costs by having your catalog's text pages in 4 page increments and save on paper costs.

If on the other hand the plant is ordering specific paper that's not in inventory, a 10,000 pound minimum for each roll size is probably going to be included your estimate. You will probably end up with a lower cost therefore running an extra 4 to 8 pages to fill up a full roll with unneeded pages in the back. If you're using a house stock, 1/2 and 3/4 roll sizes are often on the floor and you'll only be charged for the paper you use.

Everyone is Motivated

The biggest factor is that merchants and mills will price much more aggressively a steady stream of paper tonnage. It's in the printer's interests to be able to keep buying this volume so it's priced accordingly, without 10,000 pound mill order minimums, and you're less likely limited to catalogs printed in increments of 16 pages.

Sometimes mills will incorrectly estimate demand and overrun one of their more expensive stocks and then try to quickly move that overrun by offering steep discounts to larger printing plants that can take the tonnage.

Printing companies are primarily interested in generating billable hours on equipment and are motivated to pass on their savings with lower cost paper from their inventory.

By routinely asking for a house stock equivalent as an alternate estimate, and getting a sample along with it, you'll certainly then be able to determine if you can live with any difference in appearance.