



WHY DESIGNERS CHOOSE PRINT REASON #5: PRINT PROVIDES GREEN OPTIONS

You've designed a fabulous product package. It's absolutely gorgeous, made of eco-friendly materials and fully recyclable. Or at least you think it's fully recyclable. As Jeff Salisbury, President and CEO of Label Impressions, points out, if the package will have a label, the choices you make can determine whether or not this is the case.

Keeping your packaging "green"

"Most label adhesives will either gum up the works at recycling plants or render a component completely unrecyclable, while other products such as compostable PLA labels can contaminate the recycling stream altogether," Salisbury explains. "So the question isn't 'is the product recyclable?' It's 'is the product recyclable with the label on it?' Although a printed label often makes up just a small portion of a product, it can have a huge impact on recyclability."

The good news is, print doesn't just provide green options for publications and collateral pieces. Print also provides green options for labels and packaging – including eco-friendly substrates, adhesives, coatings and inks.

Meeting your eco-vision

As the head of a company that's at the leading edge of sustainability in print, Salisbury spends a lot of time educating customers about these green options. "The first question you have to ask," he states, "is what does sustainability mean to your organization? Does sustainability mean designing for recyclability, using recycled products, water conservation, waste reduction or the use of sustainable materials? Once you set your eco-vision, you can tailor what you're doing to meet that vision."

For example, when designing a recyclable product that will have a label – including, in many cases, direct mail pieces – you can specify a label made with recycling compatible adhesives (RCAs). But that's not your only "green" option. You can also work with a printer that uses vegetable-based inks, water-based coatings and energy-efficient production methods. You can have the label printed on recycled paper. Or you can choose a synthetic paper such as Label Impressions' proprietary limestone-based FiberStone® paper, which is produced using substantially less water and energy than wood-based paper. All while meeting your design standards.

Green printing in action

Salisbury gives a great example of a company that used a sustainability initiative for good things as well as for marketing purposes.

"We produced a shampoo and conditioner gift pack for a leading brand sold through Whole Foods," Salisbury relates. "What sustainability meant to this brand was water conservation. So we produced a box out of water-saving FiberStone®, which has a very luxurious look and feel. This unit box made the cover of Packaging Design magazine, got them an end cap at Whole Foods and sold out in record time."

"Not that long ago," Salisbury adds, "people thought that print would go away because it wasn't green and cost effective. But we know that in many ways it is very green and becoming more competitive in price. Once you know what you want to achieve, there are a lot of ways that print can help you get there."