



mohawk

THERMOGRAPHY PRINTING TIPS

Thermography creates raised effects much like engraving. It adds dimension and color to type, line work, solids and screens. Although thermography has advantages of its own, it is usually specified as a cost alternative to engraving.

Thermography is a process that combines offset printing ink with a powdered resin which is baked so that the resin rises to give the ink a textured effect. The image is first offset printed with a slow drying ink. Next, the wet printed sheets travel through a tunnel that dusts them with resin, vacuums off the extra, and then melts the remaining resin to form a raised, glassy and slightly enlarged image. Controlling the inks, resin and heat determine whether the thermography is glossy or if it has a stippled, orange-peel effect.

There are several types of powder used in thermography: fine, medium and coarse, dull, matte and gloss. The powders are transparent so they take on the color of the underlying ink. It is also possible to use a transparent, white ink which will make a transparent or “blind” design. Thermography is not recommended for screens or halftones as the non-image area may fill in with powder. For the same reason, avoid intricate elements and very small type (7 points or less).

Thermographed images do not have any overall size constraints, however large, solid areas of color may blister. Your printer can offer specifics for the image and paper specified.

Coated and uncoated papers are suitable for thermography. Uncoated papers provide contrast to the glossy surface of thermography. Basis weights from 20 lb. (75 gsm) to double-thick covers may be used. Avoid using heavily textured papers that have the potential of trapping powder in non-printing areas. Envelopes can be converted before thermographing.

Thermography will run through inkjet printers, however talk to your printer about using a laser-safe resin for letterhead/shells that will run through laser printers. Because thermography is a heat-set process, and because the printing is raised, it is not recommended on all laser printers or copiers which operate at high temperatures. Be sure to specify a paper that is laser guaranteed for these projects and run tests

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