

# NAVIGATING THE WORLD OF PAPER

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How many times have you looking for that you little something to make your current presentation click? Your flipping through the days mail or receive a visit from mill specification rep and there it is: The missing element, the perfect paper. Your eggs taste great, you didn't spill a drop of coffee on your morning commute, you've found the ideal paper for the client that will put your agency on the map, and you're still 2 days away from the press date. Your are convinced that, as Voltaire argued, "This is the best of all possible worlds."

Suddenly the unthinkable happens: the csr calls and says the paper is not available. If you want that paper, you'll have to wait 7 (working) days and you'll have to change the quantity from 1500 to 4000 pieces. . . . How could this happen?

While paper has been manufactured for thousands of years, the modern day mill and merchant distribution system have been around just long enough to be very consistent in there approach to their business. Loosely translated: "This is the way we've always done it."

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*For better or for worse now is a good time to discuss the rules of in the paper market.*

First and foremost, the more new, interesting, and unique you find, the more likely you'll have to wait longer or have larger minimum quantities you can order. Day in, day out, the local paper merchants will stock papers that have steady interest. The successful paper merchants will be able to fill the largest majority of their customer's needs in a timely fashion, while remaining competitively price. The primary way for a paper merchant to be profitable is to stock papers that move quickly (turn and earn). Consequently, the more atypical a paper appears, the more likely it is a mill stocked item.

When you hear the term mill stocked item, you can assume certain things: it will take between 2 to 8 days long to procure the paper, and that the paper must be purchased in full carton quantities. For instance, instead of ordering enough paper for 1000 covers, you may need to purchase one carton of the paper (ie. 500 sheets 23" x 35" which translates to 4000 sheets of 8 1/2 x 11).

The characteristics that make a paper unique are odd weight, colors, and sizes.

***The most common weights:***

Writing grades (includes bonds, xerox and laser) available in 20-24# and some 28#  
Common sizes 8.5x11 and 35x23

Coated text available in 70#, 80# and 100#  
Common sizes: good variation from 17.5x22 to 28x40

Uncoated text available in 70# and 80#  
Common sizes: 8.5x11, 23x35, and 25x38

Coated Covers available in 65#, 80#, and 100#  
Common sizes: good range from 19x25 to 26x40

Uncoated covers available in 65# and 80#  
Common sizes: 8.5x11, 35x23, and 26x40

Offset (book) papers available in 50#, 60# and 70#  
Common sizes: good ranges of size to white  
Colors limited to 8.5x11, 23x35, 25x38

***Important things NOT to assume:***

- 1. Just because it is in the swatchbook, it is readily available.*
- 2. Envelopes are stocked by merchant.*
- 3. The sample department had it, so it is stocked.*
- 4. Unique weights, pasted and duplex covers, are readily available.*