

Book Printing: Choose Your Paper Stock Wisely

Which paper stock you choose when printing your book can have a huge impact on your print pricing. Coated or uncoated? Glossy finish, matte finish, or standard offset? What's the opacity? What's the weight? The answer to these questions will determine your paper pricing.

First-time publishers need to understand the difference between the paper they purchase at an office supply store versus what is used by a professional printing plant. While paper weights at an office supply store are measured as "bond," printing plants use a different measurement called "offset." I won't get into the details of why bond and offset weights are different for the same type of paper, but just know that if you multiply a bond weight by 2.5, you get the offset weight. For example, the 24# bond paper you purchase at Office Max is the same thickness as a 60# offset sheet used by your printer.

That 50# offset paper proves to be fine for many books. If your book has no or few images and no color inside, there is little reason to print on a much thicker paper. Save your money. You may want to check the pricing for 60# offset, but I usually don't recommend printing on paper much thicker than that for most novels, etc.

One thing I cannot emphasize enough - get print samples. There are a couple times when I have had a client tell me they knew exactly what type of paper they wanted to use, but then they were disappointed when they got the final product. Why? A friend of theirs had told them which paper stock to choose, and they ordered their books without ever seeing a paper sample. Don't make the same mistake!

Choosing paper stock for a book printed in full color is sometimes a little trickier. You may want to go with a glossy paper stock to make any images "pop" a little more. However, glossy stock often feels thinner than standard paper stock.

Most full color books are printed overseas, where a different standard of paper measurement is used - grams per square meter (gsm). To calculate gsm, multiply the offset weight by approximately 1.5. So an 80# gloss sheet in the U.S. would be the same as a 120 gsm sheet overseas. You'll definitely want a thicker paper stock for your color book versus a black & white book.

Again -- always get samples before making your decision!

Always ask for your book covers to include gloss lamination. Standard paperback cover stock is 10 pt. C1S. A C1S cover means that it is coated on one side for durability and to help the colors "pop" a little more. If your book is on the large side, consider bumping up to a 12 pt. cover for extra durability.

About the Author

Josh Prizer has helped hundreds of people print their books. He is a [book printing](#) authority. For help with [childrens book publishing](#), sign up for his Free 7-Part Mini-Course.

Source: <http://www.readezarchive.com>