

Avoiding Costly Changes Through Conscientious Proofing

Conscientious proofing of your job before sending it for printing will save you money.

Whether Biomedical Communications prepares files for your printing job, or your department prepares them, the job should be as complete, correct, and clean as possible before sending to a printing company for printing. This is the purpose of our department issuing a proof and requiring a signature. Your signature tells us you approve the job to be printed as you see it. Sometimes we go through 2 or 3 proofs as a client changes copy and or images. But, in the end, when corrections have all been made, your signature releases the job for printing as it stands. Any changes after this time can add to the final cost of your job.

Conscientious proofing means really reading the proof provided you. Now is the time to look for spelling and grammar errors, incorrect or incomplete information, wrong typefaces, information that hasn't translated between computers correctly, and images that are not printing correctly. Now is the time to request changes in the layout if it is not to your satisfaction. Even if your job is only a business card or envelope, don't assume that everything will be right ... you must really read it to make sure that all information is correct and to your satisfaction.

After approval of a proof, if your job is not one we can complete in-house in our Print Services department, your files are sent to a printing company for printing. The printing company will issue you proofs made from your files. The first proof is covered in the price they have issued you. However, should you decide to make additional changes at this time, the printing company will charge you not only for making the changes to the original file, but for new proofs as well. If your job is full color, these proofs can be quite expensive.

When a printing company makes your changes after they have issued a proof to you, you may be paying \$45-60 an hour for their operators to fix your files. Obviously, this is not the time for an extensive rewrite or redesign unless money is no object or something has happened in the meantime to make your job unusable as it was when it went to the printing company. Regardless of the reason, at this point the printing company has incurred costs on your behalf and they can add up.

Example: Department A brought a job to Biomedical Communications for production of a form. The job was laid out and a proof was issued for the client to approve. The client went through one or two proof revisions. Cost at this point is almost negligible because of BioMed's low prices. Ultimately, the client approved the job and the files were released to Printing Company B for printing.

Printing Company B ran its own proofs when they produced the film and/or plates for printing. The sales representative sent those proofs back to Department A for their approval. Department A decided some information was not right or they had changed their minds about how something should be laid out. They ordered changes. Printing

Company B made the changes, charging for the time to do so, and produced a second set of proofs. Department A once again had changes. The process was repeated.

This kind of scenario leads to a higher cost of the final cost because the printing company cannot be held responsible for Department A's indecision. The time to make changes, except for the most grievous of mistakes, is before the job reaches the printing company.

Ideally, if BioMed produced the job files in the first place, you will save money by having BioMed help you look over your printer's proof. We can make changes to the original file for you. This does not mean you will have no extra charges from the printing company because they will still have to issue you another proof after those changes are made. Sometimes that means new film or new plates. It will always mean a new proof, because no reputable company is going to go to press without your okay. But, you will cut down on the charges they will require if they do the fixes to the files.

The primary lesson here is that any changes except for obvious mistakes by the printing company will drive up the cost of your job. Unless it's absolutely imperative, don't make extensive changes after the printing company has your files. The final cost will not match your purchase order ... unless it's your very kind uncle whose company has to repeatedly tinker with your job.

A complete job, and clean ready-to-rip files will assure you the best possible output and finished product ... and avoid the surprise and headache of additional costs you hadn't planned for.