



The Lightning Flash

The quarterly newsletter from Lightning Labels, the leaders in digital label printing

Issue No. 16
Fall 2008

From the Desk of Steve Smith

One of the most common “challenges” we encounter in our business is the issue of color matching – so it’s worth trying to explain why this is not as simple as most folks



think it should be. Firstly, as the leading digital label printer in the US, we constantly encounter customers who have previously used traditional printers to produce their labels – and the processes are very different, which often causes different results.

In digital printing (which does not make use of plates), the most critical factor in achieving the desired results is in the design and artwork phase. Unless the art files are created with digital printing in mind, the results can be unpredictable. However, if the designer understands the nuances of digital four-color process printing and delivers the files to us in the manner detailed on our website, the results are much more predictable. We’re always ready and willing to assist designers during the artwork creation process, in the interests of a mutually rewarding relationship and more consistent results.

Cheers,

Steve Smith
President

Save Money When Buying Labels

These are not the best of times. With rising unemployment, several trillion dollars of stock market and real estate wealth wiped out recently, and with most economic pundits saying we are probably in a recession, 2008 is going to go down as a difficult year for many people.

The burning question for most people and businesses now is, “How can we make our hard earned dollars stretch further?” If you have products to sell you still need to buy labels. So in order to help you here we have created this guide to help stretch the money you spend on labels. Below are ten ways you can save money when buying your custom labels from Lightning Labels.

1. Gang all label orders on same size

If you can gang all your label orders on the same size with the same material, your order is treated as one job. This point, above all else, will save you the most money. For example, you may need labels for a 4oz container and an 8oz container; the obvious thing to do here is to have two different label sizes. But if you can make do with one common label size you will save yourself possibly hundreds of dollars in label printing charges. Of course, in some circumstances it may not be possible, but the fewer label sizes you use the more money you will save.

2. Choose the best sized label

The best sized label is the smallest size that you can use that works well with your product. Obviously smaller labels use less ma-

terial and less ink so smaller is always going to be less expensive. You just have to weigh the small size with the visual impact on your product. Here at Lightning Labels we use 12” wide label material on our HP-Indigo WS4500 label presses, so obviously the smaller the label the more we can fit across the 12” of material. I invite you to play around with our Instant Online Label Quoter and choose various different sizes to find out the best value size you can work with.

3. Order on the least expensive material

Our most commonly used material is white BOPP - it is also our least expensive material. This combined with the high gloss laminate will provide you with the least expensive option for your labels without compromising on quality in any way. Your custom labels will look fantastic, be waterproof and oilproof, and be highly resistant to normal wear and tear. Our white BOPP is our most popular material simply because it is such great value.

4. Make sure your label is correct

One sure fire way to waste money when ordering labels is to make a mistake and then have to reorder the very same labels. We encourage every customer to check your artwork thoroughly before placing an order so errors can be corrected before they even get to us. As a further backup, we are happy to provide press proofs free of charge to you so you can see exactly what your labels will

In this issue:

Save Money When Buying Labels	1
Customer Focus.....	3
Lightning Labels News.....	3
Learning About Labels.....	4

Phone: (888) 68LABEL (888-685-2235)
Fax: (303) 695-0441

Internet: www.lightninglabels.com
Email: info@lightninglabels.com

Published by Lightning Labels LLC, 2369 S. Trenton Way, Denver, CO 80231

Edited by: Peter Renton peter@lightninglabels.com

© Copyright 2008

Save Money When Buying Labels

look like when printed. Always check your proof very carefully for any errors and make sure you are happy with the result before giving us the go ahead.

5. Don't be in a hurry

Here at Lightning Labels we treat every job as a rush job, so there are no additional fees for rush charges. However, you will have to get your labels shipped. The difference in ground rates and overnight rates for UPS is substantial, so you will always save money if you are not in a hurry. You can save up to 90% on shipping by using ground instead of overnight depending on the size of your order. Also, when you receive your label proofs be sure to approve them right away so your job can be placed in the production schedule here and ship sooner.

6. Order Slightly More Than You Need

When you order labels, the more you order the less you pay per label. So, 1,000 labels might cost you 35 cents each, but 1,500 labels might drop the unit price to 25 cents each. In effect with this example you get 500 more labels for just an extra \$25 (\$375 versus \$350). Now, you don't want to be caught with excess labels you can't use but more importantly you don't want to have to order another 500 labels in two months just after ordering 1,000 labels. A new order for 500 labels will probably cost around \$300, so by ordering 1,500 labels initially instead of 1,000 labels you have saved \$275. So our advice is to always think about the labels you really need and then just order a few extra. You may end up being very glad you did.

7. Plan Your Reorders

In a similar vein, in order to save the most money you want to plan your reorders. We regularly see customers place a reorder for one label one month and then the very next

month they place a reorder for a similar label of the same size and material. If these labels had been ordered together it would have saved hundreds of dollars. So if you have 20 versions of a label and you are reordering just one version double check to make sure you won't need any of the other 19 versions any time soon.

8. Order an Existing Die Size

We have over 800 standard die sizes in stock. We have lots of common sizes and even many unusual sizes and shapes. Obviously we don't have every size imaginable, but we can usually come close to any requested size. So before you start designing your labels check our available die sizes on the Instant Quote page on our web site. We always keep this list up to date. By choosing an existing size you will save yourself the expense of buying a new die which can run several hundred dollars.

9. Read Art Specs on LL Web Site

We have a page on our web site dedicated to help you or your graphic designer with the design of your labels. This is the page you should read before you even begin a new project, particularly the parts around full bleed and layout requirements. Also, if you need to order 20 different labels it is a good idea to design one label first and send it to us for evaluation. We will have our prepress experts take a look at it and then give you the ok or suggest changes, all for no charge. This way you won't need to go back and change 20 designs, which will obviously cost you more money and time, and you will know how to move forward.

10. Don't Get Stung by Extra Fees

We will provide one press proof free of charge, but additional proofs are \$50. Also, if you send us your art and then decide you need to change it after we have sent a proof we charge a \$5 per version art replacement fee to cover

the time to recreate your job. These are not charges designed to make us money, they just cover the cost for the time and effort required to redo what has already been done. So it definitely pays once again to have your art correct and print-ready before sending it to us. This way we can keep our prices low for everybody.

Everyone likes to save money and in today's economic climate it is imperative. With sales slowing down in many industries the focus turns to our costs in order to maintain a profitable bottom line. By following the steps mentioned here you will be able to get the best bang for your buck when buying labels.

The informed customer will often pay less than the customer who just rushes in without thinking. We all hate to see our money wasted, particularly in these difficult times. Spend some time reading this article as well as the many resources on our web site. And then double check your artwork one more time before sending it in. The least expensive mistake is the one that we never see. Become an informed customer and take some extra time with your label order and you will save money when buying labels.



©2009 Dave Coverly. Used with the permission of Dave Coverly and The Cartoonists Group.

Label Trivia: The first labels produced in this country were apothecary labels printed for a drugstore in Salem, OH in 1862.

Customer Focus

Lee Williamson
San Francisco Bath Salts Co.
Hayward, CA

Lee Williamson is on a mission – he wants the world to relax. And he has just the solution: more baths. The tag line of



the company he founded, the San Francisco Bath Salt Company (SFBCS), is “relaxing the world one bath at a time.” But the key to a truly relaxing bath is bath salt, and SFBCS has the largest selection of bath salts available anywhere on earth.

Lee is from England where taking baths, as opposed to showers, is part of the culture. He came to this country as a summer camp counselor back in 1990 and liked it so much he decided to stay. But unlike most Ameri-

cans he still took baths regularly. Then one day back in 1999 after a long and stressful day working for a high tech company in Silicon Valley he was taking his customary evening bath when he had an epiphany. People in this country should take more baths.

So Lee did some research. He tried different bathing products to see what would provide the most relaxing and enjoyable bath. It quickly became evident that one product really stood out: bath salts. It is nature’s way of renewing dry skin, soothing aching muscles and clearing stressed minds. So Lee started sourcing the best salt from around the world. By 2004 SFBCS had become so successful that he quit his high tech job and launched himself full time into the world of bath salt. Today SFBCS offers salt from San Francisco’s Bay Area, as well as Dead Sea salt from Israel and Himalayan salt (the purest salt in the world).

Today’s economy may be hurting many businesses – but it doesn’t seem to be impacting SFBCS. October was their best month on record and 2008 will easily be their best year ever. They have doubled their employees over the last year and they are looking to expand more in 2009. They have a private label line which they have never really promoted and next year they plan to expand that part of the business dramatically.

When it came to labels, until a couple of years ago they were printing most of the labels in house on a low volume, very slow, label printer. When they went looking for professionally printed labels, after using a label company that took almost two months to print their order, they decided to use Lightning Labels. Lee loves the quick and easy ordering process, the online quoting, and that his orders are shipped out in less than a week. The fact that his label ordering is such a breeze is one of the major factors in their decision to expand their private label business next year.

Now, you might be wondering how often Lee takes a bath. He takes around three baths a week and the day we spoke he had just taken one the previous night. His mission is a noble one and he firmly believes that the world would be a better place if everyone took more relaxing baths. Given today’s economic turmoil it may be just what the world needs.



Lightning Labels News

LL Installs New Prepress System

The EskoArtwork Digital Front End prepress system is the current state of the art system when it comes to preparing files for the HP-Indigo digital label press. This system has been recently installed here at Lightning Labels. So what does this mean to you, our customer? It means faster preparation of your graphic files, it means even better color accuracy than before, and a wider variety of variable data capabilities. In short we will be able to produce labels more quickly and at an even higher quality than before.

Follow Lightning Labels on Twitter

You may have heard about Twitter in the news recently. Twitter is a “micro-blogging” social networking site. In plain English that means that you can send short updates (up to 140 characters) and people who are interested will be notified. Twitter is becoming a respected business marketing tool, with more and more companies communicating with their customers this way. If you want to hear what is going on with Lightning Labels and the world of label printing then check us out: <http://twitter.com/LightningLabels>.

New Green Material Available Soon

We have been testing new environmentally friendly materials here for the last couple of months. We are looking to replace our EarthFirst PLA material with an even better material. We are pleased to announce that a material called NatureFlex from Innovia Films has been chosen. It prints beautifully and we believe it is more environmentally friendly than PLA. It is made from wood pulp from managed tree plantations, so does not impact the food chain. We expect to have this material available in December.



Lightning Labels
2369 S. Trenton Way
Unit C
Denver, CO 80231
www.lightninglabels.com

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DENVER CO
PERMIT NO. 152

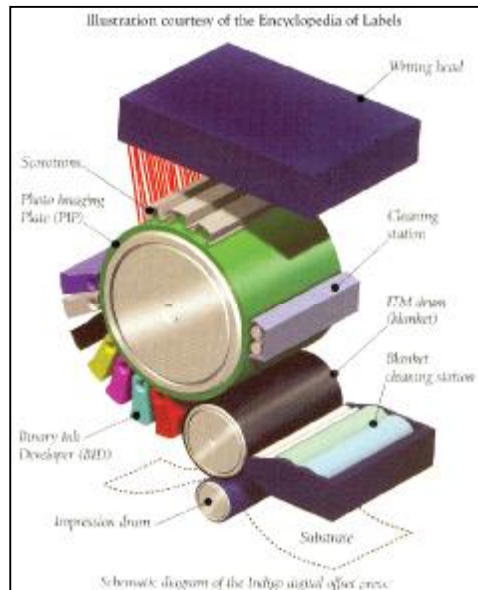
Learning About Labels

How does the HP-Indigo digital label press work?

It was the author Arthur C. Clarke who said that any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic. This certainly applies to the HP-Indigo digital printing technology. When you watch it in operation you see a bunch of moving parts and magically labels appear out the end of it.

Of course, it is not magic but very advanced technology. What follows is a brief explanation of how it all works. By looking at the diagram opposite you will be able to follow the explanation much more easily.

A press ready graphics file arrives at the press with instructions for the laser writing head. This writing head then sends laser beams on to the Photo Imaging Plate (PIP) which is a thin green foil plate. The PIP gets negatively charged, and the laser discharges this negative charge. HP-Indigo inks carry an electrical charge and the ink adheres to all the areas on the PIP that have been hit by the laser. The laser will image each CMYK (four color process) color separately on to the PIP. Ink is now adhering to the PIP, but it looks nothing like the finished image because each CMYK color has been imaged separately.



Now, the PIP will transfer each color on to the positively charged blanket that is attached to the ITM drum, and when the blanket has all the CMYK colors it will transfer the completed image on to the label material. In the HP-Indigo world we talk about frames, and a frame is actually just one revolution of the blanket. The whole process is repeated again for the next frame.

A Touch of Humor The Lion and the Monkey

Two monkeys were sitting in a tree and two lions were sleeping below them. One monkey said to the other monkey, "I dare you to go down there and kick one of those lions in the rear end."

The other monkey said, "OK. I'll go down there and kick him in the rear end as hard as I can." So he goes down the tree and kicks the lion as hard as he can and takes off swinging through the trees.

The lion starts to chase him. He keeps getting closer, and closer until the monkey thinks, "Man I better do something quick or that lion is going to eat me for lunch."

So he keeps swinging until the lion is pretty far behind him and he sees a newspaper lying on the ground. So he picks it up and starts to read it. All of a sudden the lion catches up to him and says, "Did you see a monkey run by here?"

The monkey goes, "You mean the one that kicked that lion in the rear end?"

And the lion says, "Dang it was in the paper already?"

"If you're playing a poker game and you look around the table and can't tell who the sucker is, it's you." ~ Paul Newman