

Document preparation

– getting ready for print

This factsheet is intended to provide basic guidance on digital printing. It is written for general guidance, rather than for seasoned design professionals. If you have any queries at all, you can find our full contact details at the end of the factsheet.

This factsheet by nature contains some technical terms. If you would like to find out more, please see our complementary glossary of print terms, which is available for download from www.victoirepress.com/factsheets.php

What is digital print?

In recent years or so, an increasing amount of commercial print has been digital – as opposed to more traditional litho. Where litho printing involves printing using plates and ink, digital print uses a fine powder (toner) which melts onto the paper.

When is digital print used?

Victoire offers both digital and litho print, and we are equipped to handle both equally well. We can therefore advise you on a job-by-job basis as to which method is appropriate for your print work.

Broadly speaking, digital print is good for print work where the following factors come into play:

- *Short and medium run colour and mono work.* Because no plates are needed, the initial setup for digital print is much easier and cheaper than for litho, which makes digital print attractive. For longer print runs, though, the speed and efficiencies of a litho machine make it more attractive.
- *Fast turnaround.* Digital print needs no time to dry than ink-printed litho work. This can reduce lead times on short runs. On longer runs, however, the quicker running speeds of a litho machine can counter this.
- *Variable data* (e.g. mailmerging, document numbering, and so on). For digital printing, the digital image of the page is output for every single page printed, so it's quite possible to hook the artwork up to a database and vary the data – great for marketing and personalisation.
- *Print-on-demand.* Again, because of the lower setup costs, it becomes possible to print items (e.g. computer manuals, information packs) only when they are needed, thus avoiding the costs and inconvenience of holding stock. Furthermore, a digital machine could be connected direct to the product ordering system, thereby automating the process.

Digital print technology is moving fast, and digital print quality is now extremely impressive for black and white, and for colour work.

Digital print would not be suitable for jobs which will need to be overprinted (e.g. business letterhead) using, for example, an office laser printer.

This is because the heat could melt and distort the toner. Also, where a very high print quality is absolutely critical, we would tend to recommend litho print.

Examples

Digital print can therefore be used for a wide variety of jobs, including manuals, short-run flyers, posters, colour work, newsletters, and mailmerging.

Let us help you

Victoire has more than 20 years' experience in digital print, and understands the product and process thoroughly, including problematic areas such as file formats and final output.

If you are at all unsure about any aspect of digital printing or how it affects your print needs, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Victoire has vast experience in all areas of print, design and publishing, so the earlier you can get us involved in print process (e.g. advising on materials, pacesetting, and so on), the more we can help you.

Full contact details

Victoire Press Ltd
1 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridge CB3 8SQ

Tel. 01954 781919
Fax 01954 780977

Email info@victoirepress.com
Web www.victoirepress.com