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A Comparison between Digital and Offset Printing by James Blee

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With the growth of digital printing technology over the years, commercial feature have become even more innovative and versatile. At the same time, it has created a sense of confusion among many people regarding which mode to choose, digital or the traditional offset type. Basically, both these types have benefits and drawbacks of their own. In this article, we are going to see a brief comparison of the two types.

Offset lithography is rated to be the commonest and widely used commercial printing technology over the years. In this type, the image is burned on to a transparent plate followed by transfer of the image to a rubber blanket and finally to the desired printing surface. The total process is based on the repulsion of water and oil. However, the digital mode is a lot more user friendly and lesser complex compared to their traditional counterparts.

Quantity- Unlike the digital modes, the offset mode associates a higher front end cost load whereas for bulk orders the unit cost decreases for offset and rises for digital. Therefore, to make it simple offset printing is suitable for bulk requirements whereas digital is cost effective for shorter requirements.

Medium - Offset have always been flexible and even today it is the most flexible but for requirements demanding special paper, unique finishing touches and size, digital is the best way to proceed.

Turnaround- Digital is always going to be the quicker as expected.

Proofing- Digital offers perfect proofs as designer can see the sample every time. However, the accuracy is not so high in case of offset.

Color- Offset presses use two color printing process, whereas digital employs a four color model. Therefore, for black and white images, offset is ideal, while for colored frames, digital is better.

Customization- Undoubtedly, digital is versatile and therefore capable of customization.

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