



Past Present Print

The sensible study of production possibilities in the face of the modern world's challenges.

Introduction

On sustainable printing
and why it matters



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In our daily life, we are mainly consumers – making dozens of decisions every day at that. Now we, rather than producers, feel responsible for our planet's increasing pollution (that single-use coffee cup), carbon dioxide emissions (flying instead of taking the train), water (not giving up meat). Choosing less waste, healthier lifestyle, or not driving a car in the city have a positive impact on our wellbeing. And the other way round, too – no changes in our behaviour can be burdensome.

It is a natural step forward to think about the systemic changes we can make, even on a small scale. Not necessarily aimed at changing the world, but stemming from the simple need to do everything at the lowest possible cost to the planet. Just that.

Past Present Print was created for graphic designers and their clients.

Perhaps you design graphics and make print or production orders at your workplace. This guide was also made for you. I wrote it from the designer's point of view, which is why you might come across some terms that can sound unfamiliar if this is not your area of expertise. I'll do my best to explain them along the way. All paper production-related information and details on the printer's work have been discussed to my best knowledge and in accordance with my discussions with experts. Production is a term I use when referring to all types of printed designs on a variety

of surfaces. It can mean a few dozen business cards or several thousand books. The main point is to showcase solutions and mechanisms that lead to more conscious, sustainable printing practices. This change involves no complications and no big, radical leaps. I hope this guide helps you make more sensible printing choices while reducing your impact on our planet's wellbeing.

Chapter one

In which we think about
what we actually need



Chapter one

In which we think about what we actually need

End of the year, unexpected surplus budget, a trade fair visit, or just a tendency for stocking up are among the most common reasons for production or reprints. This kind of pressure does not have a positive impact on our realistic judgment. Ordered materials pile up in magazines, long forgotten, still waiting for the moment when they become useful. And so I encourage you to start with asking yourself a question: is this production order really necessary? This question is especially important when designing promotional merchandise. There are plenty of innovative solutions available in this market, and yet most clients still choose the most popular, not always necessary but safe standard items, such as USB sticks, pens, and lanyards.

When ordering promotional merchandise, always make sure:

- 👉 Do I really need this product?
- 👉 Can I afford to produce merchandise of quality matching the values and image of my brand?
- 👉 Who will use those items and why?
- 👉 Do I really need them in such a large amount?

- 👉 Is this product imported? If so, what justifies the carbon footprint it generates?
- 👉 Does my budget allow swapping this product for a smaller batch of genuinely valuable gifts that bring in a better message or story?

For example, take a small production of 300 metal USB sticks. Let's say we choose a premium-quality product with 4GB capacity and custom etching. Such an order will cost about 1500 EUR. In the same price range, you can order 100 books on your brand-related subject and add a bespoke message inside. Another reliable and useful gift idea is a high-quality notebook.

In the market, you can find a multitude of solutions that are made both locally and sustainably. Many brands offer a variety of ways to personalise their products. And if this made you think of a surplus of calendars in your desk drawer or the world in general – well done!

So, back to the first questions: do I really need this product? And also: when you open your drawer, can you see more unused calendars or USB sticks with logos of companies with whom you have no relationship?

Turning to local products is not just a trend but a real change, forced by climate change and the global crisis caused by the coronavirus.

And so we choose our products to be manufactured near our location, for want of more sustainable production, availability and quality of the products and supporting the local businesses. It is also essential to keep

in mind that a local product (being more than just handicraft or some regional foods) showcases the authenticity of the brand and its intentions. Local products are items manufactured in your area, by local businesses or artisans. It is also worth looking for inspiration online. Don't be afraid to go for unexpected solutions. Another example of sustainable merchandise is durable publications and functional paper gadgets that are more original than mass-produced items and can be recycled once they fulfil their initial purpose.

Questions to ask yourself before you print new merchandise:

- ☞ At whom are those materials directed, and what information does the recipient expect of them?
- ☞ Can I do something to ensure the recipient interacts with my materials more than once?
- ☞ Can I avoid making it a single-use product?
- ☞ Is the distribution strategy for this product coherent with how I wish for my products/services to be perceived?

Enormous print runs of leaflets and flyers often have no practical justification. Purposeful, well-planned communication strategy in an appropriately chosen form and shape can be incomparably more effective.

Examples:

leaflet advertising a local business

☞ personalised letter to local community members with discount offer included

leaflet advertising a local restaurant

☞ fridge-magnet business card with necessary information

full catalogue of products offered

☞ carefully designed catalogue showcasing offers services and solutions, inviting the client to view the full offer online

yet another calendar

☞ notebook with brand-related photographs

Chapter two

In which we decide
on the print run



Chapter two

In which we decide on the print run

The question about your print run should appear at the very beginning of the project. It is what often determines what technology will be best for completing our task. The fundamental division is between the digital and offset print. Digital printing is commonly thought to be more economical in small print runs up to 500 copies, while offset becomes profitable from upwards of 500, or sometimes even 300 copies (depends on print format). What affects the cost of production in offset print is the preparation stage, and extra paper needed to get the machine started.

When choosing the right technology, we must also consider our medium type (as not every surface is suitable for digital print) and desired outcome (offset print is usually more precise than digital).

When those limitations do not affect us, other key factors are colours and print run. In the case of colour-centred projects, the situation is simple. If our print is to include an extra metallic, fluorescent or pastel Pantone colour, our only option is offset print with the chosen Pantone colour. Pantone is a system of colour identification. It allows an exact choice of the exact colour we want (picked from a colour guide), and non-standard colour use, such as fluorescent, pastel or metallic colour printing.

When hoping to achieve a regular Pantone colour (outside the metallic, fluorescent, or pastel range), we can try simulating Pantone colours in

digital print. There are many digital printers in the market that make it possible. The key to success is good communication with the print provider and agreeing on the desired effect. After the trial print run and matching the result to the Pantone sampler, there will be no doubt about the success of the whole operation.

Digital print opens up many possibilities, including a chance to make a single reference copy. Of course, the sample print run is also possible on the offset printers, but it comes with an additional cost of preparing printing plates. It's also worth adding that offset printer needs some time to "warm up" before it can print properly, which means wasting power and trial copies.

This is unavoidable but can be another reason for choosing digital print if we want to do it as sustainably as possible.

In this chapter, we discuss digital and offset print on the sheet paper. In the case of large-format print, we should pay attention to the medium on which we are printing. Large-format print offers several options, including UV print, latex, and (especially harmful) solvent printing, and it is of particularly dubious ethical character as it's usually printed on PVC banner sheets. Fixers used on the print (which should be weather-resistant without extra coating!), combined with PVC sheets, make a highly non-recyclable, harmful waste product. If such production is really necessary, we can choose a more ecological non-PVC recyclable banner (such as *Terra Banner* from Endutex).

At the very beginning of the project, it is worth asking the client what is going to happen to the banners once they're no longer needed – they could get a second life, for example as insulation of doghouses in an animal shelter. They can also be upcycled and made into other items, such as promo tote bags (often used at festivals).

SINGLE-USE PRINT JOBS

We cannot always make a perfect estimate of our required print run. This is especially difficult to gauge with single-use print jobs, such as invitations, leaflets, brochures, and programmes for one-day events. If you're still unsure about how useful your print job is going to be and don't know the best way of distributing and using up all the materials, you might want to go for print-on-demand solution, letting you print as you go, with accordance to your current requirements. First, you go for a print run you're absolutely sure you can sensibly distribute, increased by 15%. Once the first print run is used up, you'll be able to estimate the time needed to distribute the second run. Also, before reprinting, you can make changes in your materials, and add or remove certain elements or information as required.

The fear of underestimating your print run is usually irrelevant and unfounded. Try to remember any event or conference you have attended in the past. Did you ever get an impression that the organisers ran out of programmes or flyers? Perhaps all you need is A-stands with updates at the location of your event, paired with communication online?

If you already know you won't be able to distribute 150 invitations for your event, print 80. As a rule of thumb, it is safe to say you will not run dry on those. And if you're advertising a local event, go for posters rather than flyers. More people will notice them without generating unnecessary rubbish (or course, you should always remember to distribute posters only in legally designated areas).

LONG-USE PRINTS

In case of more lasting prints, not needed for a single event or short season, large print runs are a sensible option. If you are confident that your product (brochure, catalogue, teaching materials) will not need to change for months or even years to come, make a large offset print run. This solution is more practical both for the environment and your finances.

With larger print runs, offset print is usually a go-to solution. Once again, keep in mind that offset printer needs to "warm up" before it starts printing. For example, a mid-range offset printer needs 20 minutes to produce 1000 sheets of paper. Setting up the machine takes 10 minutes and takes time, power, and paper used for the test run.

Chapter three

In which we choose
the right paper






Chapter three

In which we choose the right paper

For every printing project, choosing the right type of paper, or medium in general, is key. Sustainable and environment-conscious choices don't mean that you'll have to use brown or grey recycled paper that is difficult to print on and has low print readability. Those papers can be very appealing and draw attention to the fact that we are using "ecological" solutions, but are also a kind of curiosity, usually much more expensive than regular paper. My goal here is to show various choices of white paper fit for job-printings (business cards, invitations), and high volume print (leaflets, catalogues).

Recycled paper is not the most sustainable choice we can make. Paper can be recycled up to 6 times, and using the paper from the next phase (usually the second one) is not unequivocally better than its first, white and fresh incarnation. What's important is how high-quality is the primary product and whether our production process doesn't stop it from being recycled further.

When it comes to white papers, the choice is simple:

-  choose uncoated papers
-  choose certified papers
-  choose papers with the lowest possible carbon footprint

Choose uncoated papers

Uncoated paper is less harmful to the environment. Popular and cheap coated paper is made of cellulose core, coated from both sides with calcium carbonate with addition of bleaching agents and other harmful substances. Coated papers, especially brandless ones, may include toxins, and even microplastics. Retrieving paper pulp from the coated paper in the recycling process is very difficult. In our comparison of various paper types, you will also find high-quality coated papers that can be a good alternative to the calcium carbonate-coated paper if you really want to use this type of medium for your project.

Choose certified papers

Paper quality certificates allow an objective assessment of the product's origin. However, the multitude of certificates we encounter on the market, along with certificates and assessment criteria introduced by paper distributors can lead to some confusion. In order to offer you a clear and simple comparison, I checked sustainability certification (FSC), and

chlorine bleaching level (the ideal being TFC – Total Chlorine Free status). I also took into account other certificates, such as the EU Eco Label.

Certificates:

FSC

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international non-profit organisation, established by environmental groups, businesses, and trade unions to protect sustainable forestry with unified global standards. FSC certification is very stringent, which is why I chose it over the similar, but not exactly equal PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification). Both systems aim for sustainable forest management and overlap in many aspects. They share some of their certification criteria, such as:

- Operational planning in proportion to the forest size
- Sustainable management level
- Protection of biodiversity, especially in protected areas
- Providing diverse and high-quality products with best-possible use of natural resources
- Choosing local tree species

The difference between those certificates lies in details. In FSC, three chambers decide on the certification criteria: representatives of environmental associations, social benefit groups, and business groups. Meanwhile, PEFC – as they claim themselves – focuses mainly on protecting the interests of forest owners. FSC standards are much more detailed, especially when it comes to individual ecological criteria. For example, FSC

requires that 5% of the forest is not cultivated and remains a reference area, and ten trees in every hectare must be protected as habitat trees in the long-term perspective. The use of chemical pesticides in the FSC forests is only allowed based on the official order, while in the PEFC-certified forests, it is limited to the “necessary amount”. There are many such small differences regarding forest-planning as a whole, including the width and location of paths on which industrial machines can drive.

PEFC pays much attention to simple and inexpensive certification procedures. While in FSC, every forestry company (including every forest owner or group of owners) is undergoing annual controls, PEFC – especially within the regional certification procedures – can certify large areas at once, thus significantly simplifying the whole certification process for individual owners. PEFC requires annual controlling of at least 10% of the certified forest area. This means less effort, leading to lower expenditures. In other words, as I looked for unambiguously safe certification, I chose a reliable “classic” that is the more restrictive FSC.

There are three types of FSC certificates:

- 👉 FSC 100% label, meaning the wood used to make the product comes exclusively from FSC-certified forests. The organisation reports that one-third of all FSC-certified products have the FSC 100% label.
- 👉 FSC Mix label means the wood used to manufacture the product comes from FSC-certified materials, recycled paper, or controlled wood schemes.

The above list is not the full certification within the FSC system. FSC-controlled wood is not certified, but it cannot be obtained illegally and with any breaches of common or civil law. It also must not be obtained from the forests whose unique natural value is endangered, in the forests turned plantations, and where genetically modified trees are grown.

- 👉 FSC Recycled label means that all timber or paper used in the manufacturing of the product comes from recycled materials.

source: pl.fsc.org

It's also worth noting that in some paper mills, we can order paper with or without the FSC certificate. This means that on our request, the paper mill can apply for a certain type of certification and request a certification number. Such a procedure comes with extra effort and external costs, which is why the paper that receives the certification on request can be more expensive. However, it doesn't mean the certificate can be "bought" if the product does not meet the strict FSC criteria. The whole list of issued certificates can be found on the FSC website.

Before placing the FSC logo on any products of materials, always make sure you have the right to do so – discuss it with your paper mill or ask your printer for more information.

ECF/TCF/PCF – how does chlorine affect us?

Paper is made of cellulose pulp. It needed to be bleached for the paper not to go yellow (if you remember the cheap, high-print-run books from the 1980s, you surely know what I'm talking about). Until the 1990s, the most common bleach of choice was chlorine.

Bleaching with elemental chlorine (EC) means the lignin present in paper pulp becomes soluble in water. Next, chlorine needs to be separated from the lignine by leaching. Processed chlorine quickly produces organic compounds and dioxins. They are then introduced to the ecosystem, along with the rest of the paper industry sewage. What does this mean for humans? Such organic compounds are quickly absorbed by living organisms and are stored in fatty tissues, leading to damaging of such organs as liver or kidneys. In the 1980s, non-chlorine bleaching process was invented and named TCF (total chlorine-free). The TCF label indicates that both paper and pulp were bleached entirely without chlorine. This is the safest solution. Another option is the less restrictive ECF (elemental chlorine-free), meaning paper production without the use of any assimilable elemental chlorine.

ECF technology reduces the amount of environmentally-harmful compounds by 60-80%. For TCF, the amounts drop below the detection limit. Yes, TCF papers are not as white as ECF, but this does not make them resemble the low-quality recycled paper. The ECF process is so prevalent in Europe that whenever we reach for some paper, we can be almost sure it's an unmarked ECF product – however, it's still worth double-checking. At the same time, the TCF-label papers make for about 5% of the market.

Labels:

TCF (total chlorine free)

During the bleaching process, no chlorine gas, chlorine dioxide, or hypochlorite compounds are used. Instead, oxygen compounds are applied, such as ozone and hydrogen peroxide

ECF (elementar chlorine free)

does not allow the use of chlorine gas, but does allow the use of chlorine compounds.

PCF (process chlorine free)

used for recycled paper. Since waste paper is not considered raw material regardless of whether the initial product did or did not contain chlorine, this label is only used to indicate the paper was not bleached again.

EU ECOLABEL

EU Ecolabel is a certificate issued by the European Commission for products and services that meet high environmental standards across their entire lifecycle – from the sourcing of materials, through production and distribution, to waste management. The EU Ecolabel promotes the closed-chain economy, encouraging companies to generate less waste and CO₂ during their production process. The EU ecological certification scheme also prompts businesses to design products that are long-lasting, easy to repair and highly recyclable.

This certification can apply to a wide range of products, but let's take a look at the “graphic paper”, used for printing jobs (which is how it's referred to as a product).

Graphic paper products with EU Ecolabel certification meet all the criteria that ensure:

- Low level of air and water pollution in the production process
- Limited amounts of dangerous substances used
- Production with the use of certified fibres from a sustainably-managed forest

All up-to-date Eu Ecolabel certificates can be found online:

ec.europa.eu/ecat/category/en/54/graphic-paper

NORDIC ECOLABEL

Nordic Ecolabel (also known as the Nordic swan) is the officially registered ecological certification label for the products from the Scandinavian countries. The certification criteria include the whole life cycle of a product, from its production (the use of chemicals, pollution of air and water), to distribution and ease of utilisation. In the EU, Nordic Ecolabel is an equivalent of the EU Ecolabel, with similar issuing criteria used by both systems, and often work together.

Der Blaue Engel / Blue Angel

It is a German certificate issued since the 1970s. The paper with this certificate must be at least 80% recycled. If wood fibres were used in the production process, they must come from sustainably-managed forests and forestry companies with high ecological standards in place.

To read more about the labels criteria and to see the list of certified papers, visit:

blauer-engel.de/en/products/paper-printing/printing-and-publication-papers

EMAS

EMAS is a European certification that supports sustainable development and effective management of available resources and energy. EMAS-certified organisations have their duties regarding environment protection, must optimise the costs of production and effectively manage their use of energy and resources.

Read more at:

emas.gdos.gov.pl/o-emas

Choose papers with a lower carbon footprint.

Watch out for greenwashing. Paper producers introduce many attractive products with “green” additives that are meant to imply they are environment-friendly. Make sure those options are biodegradable (if not, they will not be available for recycling). Exotic additions to bespoke paper brands, or paper brands available and shipped only to order, can be an ecological trap. Try to buy local whenever possible, choosing from the available options. Don't go for half-solutions.

The simplest choices

There are dozens of paper brands and types available in the market, from white to dyed to bespoke solutions. To make it easier, I prepared a list of safe papers and those not worth using.

White paper: the best choices:

TFC (total chlorine-free) papers are very safe and contain no optical whiteners:

- ☞ Nautilus (except the superwhite option) from the Mondi paper mill – recycled, TFC, Blue Angel certificate.
- ☞ Alto Naturel and Alto Creme bulkiness 1.3 and 1.5 – FSC, TCF, EMAS, ISO 9706 and Nordic Swan Ecolabel. (by Polish brand Panta)
- ☞ BIO TOP 3 next from Mondi – EU Ecolabel, FSC, TCF/ECF

Papers with the EU Ecolabel or Nordic Ecolabel:

- ☞ All Munken Design papers by Arctic Paper (also those distributed by Europapier) – Nordic Ecolabel, FSC, ECF, EMAS, food contact certificate. Toy safety certificate DIN EN 71-3, and the ISO 9706 archival paper permanence certification

- ☞ Nautilus Superwhite by the Mondi paper mill – EU Ecolabel, FSC recycled, also OHSAS and the DIN 6738 archival paper permanence certification
- ☞ Maxi Script by the UPM paper mill – EU Ecolabel, FSC, ECF, toy safety certificate DIN EN 71-3, and the ISO 9706 archival paper permanence certification, food contact certificate, EMAS.
- ☞ Soporset Premium Pre-Print by The Navigator Company paper mill – EU Ecolabel, FSC, ECF
- ☞ DNS Premium by the Mondi paper mill – Eu Ecolabel, FSC, ECF.
- ☞ IQ Selection Smooth by Mondi – EU Ecolabel, FSC, ECF, the ISO 9706 archival paper permanence certification
- ☞ Print Speed Offset / Laser Jet by Antalis – EU Ecolabel, FSC, ECF, the ISO 9706 archival paper permanence certification
- ☞ Pergraphica by Mondi – EU Ecolabel, FSC, ECF – but it should be noted that this paper contains eucalyptus fibres which are (obviously) not sourced locally
- ☞ The whole uncoated wood paper range from Stora: Brite Book, Bulk, Classic, Creamy, Novel 76/80, Plus Book – an interesting economy choice for large-sized book publications
- ☞ EccoBook by Antalis – EU Ecolabel, FSC, ECF, EMAS.

The worst choices

The options you should give a second thought are synthetic mediums, double-coated paper, and multiloft. All those mediums include additives that affect their recyclability. In the case of synthetic materials, the situation is plain and simple – they are not part of the paper recycling process. With coated paper, it gets more complicated. This paper is made in a tiny part of natural components while containing plenty of glue and pigment. It is far from the best choice you can make. As for multiloft papers (a sandwich-like paper with several layers surrounding a coloured or white core), we are dealing with integrated glue on the membrane. And since it is made of many various elements, this paper is not recommended, either.

Chapter four

In which we cut back
on razzle-dazzle



Chapter four

In which we cut back on razzle-dazzle

It may often seem that the print attractiveness is mainly defined by their level of shine and sparkle. Aesthetics aside, we should note that those shiny coatings, varnishings, or spot coating can affect the recyclability of the printed product, or, to make it simpler – whether we should put it in the paper waste or the mixed waste bin. Among the practices about which we should be cautious, are foil coating, UV varnishing, and hot stamping. As for book-type publications, various choices of binding solutions are also relevant.

Foil coating

Foil coating is a finishing method achieved by combining paper with a polypropylene foil with paper using glue. This method can be done hot or cold, the material it produces ceases to have anything to do with paper – it is no longer fit for recycling. Foil-coated paper cannot be put into the paper recycling bin as it immediately becomes a waste product that can only be burned.

Foil coating is still the most popular method of securing the print. We can choose from glossy, matte, or soft-touch foils, as well as structured foils and other bespoke materials. Foil-coated print often has a more vivid colour and is protected from staining or moisture. Glossy magazines, as the name suggests, often come with shiny foil-coated cov-

ers – and considering their omnipresence, no wonder such solution remains popular. I really, really encourage you to think twice before using foil-coated paper. In case of long-term use prints you want to protect from the elements (such as a bar or restaurant menu), you could consider using a biodegradable synthetic material instead, such as polypropylene.

UV Varnish

Another popular finishing method is a UV varnish, often used on foil-coated papers for a more effective result. Just like with foil coating, UV varnish finishing makes the paper impossible to recycle. If we go for the brand-new, previously unrecycled paper, our decision immediately ruins any chances of recycling this product might have. Varnishing your logo is a decision that not only turns paper into a waste product but also impacts your carbon footprint with higher energy use needed for production and travel since many printers have to source UV varnishing services externally.

Hotstamping

Hot stamping is yet another decorative method we should be wary of – that is, gold foil finishing. We have several solutions to choose from. The most popular is hot stamping, meaning pressing metallic foil into paper with hot press. No paper product with such application can be recycled. It is worth considering all pros and cons of this technique before we use it in our production process. One of the alternatives is dry-stamping without using any kind of foil – this technique allows to create a relief or hollow effect on paper. Another hot stamping alternatives that do not require matrix preparation, are sleeking and “liquid

gold” method, that is digital methods of applying gold foil on paper. Sleeking is a method of integrating gold foil with paper using toner printing and foil fuser. And again, the final product is no longer paper. “Liquid gold” method means attaching the foil to paper with a thick layer of varnish instead of glue, achieving a protruding gold foil finish. This method works best on foil-coated paper and can be a quick stand-in for hot stamping, but cannot be recommended from the ecological perspective.

Bookbinding

When it comes to books and notebooks, it is worth paying attention to binding techniques available. When we choose staple binding, the situation is simple – staples disintegrate quickly and are not a problematic waste. With the perfect binding, we should take into account the type of glue we’re using – it should be non-synthetic and water-soluble.

If you need more information, ask your printer for some help or practical advice. With stitched or glued-stitched binding, make sure whether the thread is natural or synthetic. It’s not always possible to avoid the synthetic thread in stitched binding, but this way, you’ll have full knowledge of your product at hand.



Chapter five

In which we print locally

Chapter five

In which we print locally

Now, it is time to take a moment and think about the environment and our closest surroundings. If you only have an opportunity to do so, try to print locally and support your local production chain. We said a lot about how your decisions – such as choices of technologies or types of paper used for printing – impact the sustainability of your production. But it is the printer who has the most significant impact on the final shape of your product. It is the printer who can suggest the best paper type for your project, help you with bespoke projects (preparing RGB prints, or finding the right ICC paper profile), and take care of your entire production process.

Finding a trusted printer is not easy, but I encourage you to give it a go. In a perfect scenario, you will find a printer in your city or town and will be able to meet them in person, see the prints in advance, or pick up your order yourself. If that's not possible, try looking for a printer a bit further out, so that you can still cycle there (if you need smaller print jobs done or just pick up test prints), use ones along the routes of your frequent travel, or those who ship their prints in the most sustainable possible way.

When ordering print jobs with shipping, it is worth asking the printer about climate-neutral packaging. Keep in mind that of all the places, print houses usually have more than enough paper scraps rolling around – a great alternative for plastic fillers or bubble wrap. And if you also swap plastic tape for paper one, you can make your shipments genuinely planet-friendly.

Chapter six

In which we share
our knowledge



Chapter six

In which we share our knowledge

This guide emerged out of determination bordering on desperation. Whenever I was looking for more sustainable printing solutions, all I came across were marketing tricks advertising ostensibly eco-friendly products and machines, all in the “make printing green again!” vibe. More than once, I had to listen to the printers’ serenades (“No can do, M’am, no can do!”), and I most certainly had my fill of vaguely-ecology-related novelty solutions that only drag the designers and clients away from the simple and straightforward solutions. Having collected the materials and consulted my information with experts, I condensed it all into bite-sized chapters. I hope this project keeps on growing and expanding, starting with information on more sustainable packagings or labels, for example. This booklet has not been made on kale-enriched tofu paper, but I believe it can still help you with your work. This is not a complete, closed project. If you have any questions or ideas, go ahead and [send me a message](#). Share this guide with others, let it travel. If you want to show us your prints and experiences, we’ll be delighted to publish them, too.

Perhaps some of the information in this guide was surprising to you. Maybe now you will take a moment to think whether the print you’re holding in your hand should go to the paper recycling bin, or is it just a piece of single-use waste. I would like to simplify this process. Right now, we don’t even have clear and unambiguous pictograms to help us segregate waste

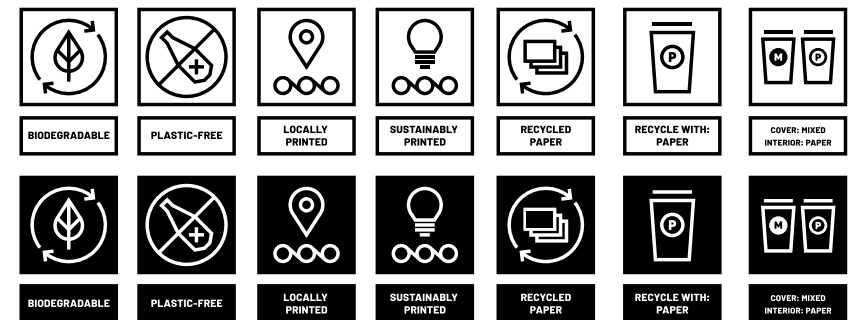
properly. This is why we designed our own, easy-to-follow information on what every printed item is made of. I also encourage you to use paper certification icons on your prints and packagings. Such solutions are already very popular across Western Europe, where most packagings are no longer varnished or coated, and every box and envelope has a clear information on what kind of paper was used to make it. Let’s stay aware.

**PS. If you take just one thing away from our guide, let it be this:
hey, don’t print stuff on glossy double-coated paper!**

Our pictograms

We have prepared a set of icons to help you transparently label your prints. You can use them in your products.

You can use the full set (Polish and English) in EPS and PNG format [here](https://bit.ly/30dvLMi):
<https://bit.ly/30dvLMi>.



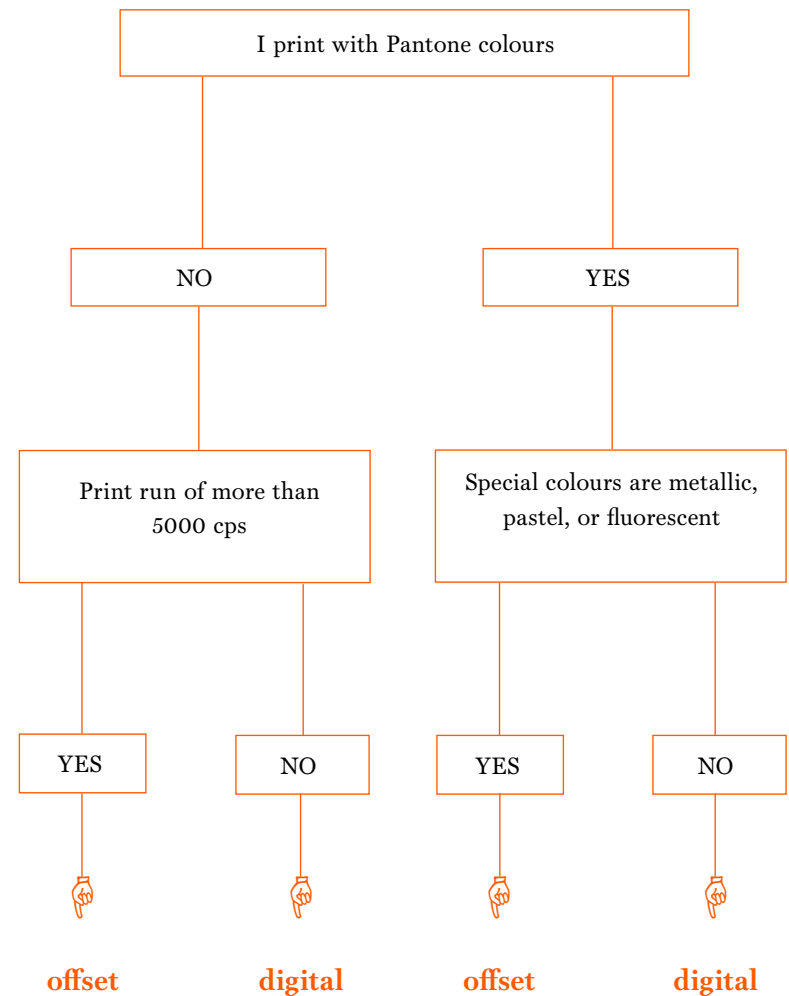
Before you print

Pre-production checklist

- 👉 Do I really need to make this?
- 👉 Do I know how I'm going to distribute this material and how long it's going to be relevant?
- 👉 Do I know where the paper I chose comes from (what it's called, who produced it, what certificates it has)?
- 👉 Did I choose uncoated paper?
- 👉 Are the embellishments I chose affecting recyclability of my production?
- 👉 Did I inform my client what my production will be made of and how it can be utilised?
- 👉 Did I choose a local printing service provider?
- 👉 Did I make sure the shipment contains no single-use plastics?

Before you print

Let's print!



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Mellow, mellow.com.pl

Printed on Panta Alto Creme 1.5 100g

on HP Indigo

Media partnership:

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