

Distributor Finds ‘Green Lite’ Just Right for Buyers’ Budgets

Green distributor urges clients to at least get their feet wet.

BY APRIL HOLLIS

When Eva Bowie hears that a client doesn't have the money or the flexibility to do a green mailing, she doesn't give up. Instead, she urges them to go 'green lite'—just a little bit green—for no additional cost.

“Green lite is something we really try to talk up,” says Bowie, head of business development for Production Management Group, Columbia, Md. For example, if a company can't afford to turn a whole project green, “we try to get them to go green on just the outside envelope.”

PMG helps its clients—mostly nonprofit organizations—perform a “green analysis” of their direct mail programs and identify affordable opportunities. The distributor also put together a green pricing sheet showing the cost of common direct mail offerings using standard paper, paper with 30 percent post-consumer waste (PCW), and FSC-certified paper with 30 percent PCW. The chart illustrates that in many cases, there is little or no cost difference between standard paper and paper with 30 percent PCW.

“For some items, you can go to 30 percent PCW for the same price. And for a couple items, you can go to 30 percent at very minimal extra cost—sometimes just 2 to 4 percent. So that becomes a no-brainer for our clients. FSC-certified paper is going to cost as much as 25 to 100 percent more for some pieces. Most of our clients aren't

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**Jennifer Woofter, President
Strategic Sustainability Consulting, Bethesda, Md.**



going to be in a situation to be able to do that yet, but we keep repricing this because as more printers become certified, we see the price gap closing.”

In a recent PMG client newsletter, the company emphasized that there are different degrees of green, especially where the outside envelope is concerned. “You can put the recycled logo on the outside, and that's something the recipients will see,” she says.

The newsletter also described an order where PMG priced out a Kraft #10 package upgrading to 30 percent PCW recycled paper for the carrier envelope and a canary hot sheet inside at no additional cost. Upgrading the remaining package components increased total costs by about 5 percent. In another example, an entire renewal mailing—letter/reply, carrier

and return envelope—was ordered using 30 percent PCW stock for no additional cost.

Sage Advice

Strategic Sustainability Consulting, Bethesda, Md., which advises companies on going green, says green lite “seems to be the main way distributors are pushing green to their general customers right now.”

President Jennifer Woofter says the green lite tactic shows clients that “if there's virtually no cost differential, why wouldn't you go green? The key thing is that going a little green is something that is generally very cost competitive. There are a number of different things people can do to make printed material more green, and it's a matter of mixing and matching based on cost.”

PMG USES NEWSLETTER TO PLANT GREEN SEEDS IN CLIENTS' MINDS

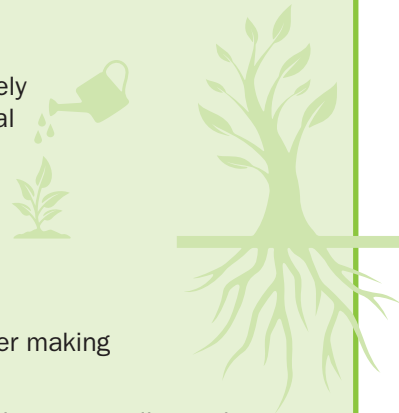
In its newsletter, PMG gives tips to clients trying to green their organizations:

My organization is ready to go green. How do we get started?

First of all, going green doesn't have to happen in a day. There are some relatively easy, incremental steps organizations can take to minimize the environmental impact of their direct marketing programs. Here are just a few to consider.

- Get to know your suppliers and the green business practices they've already implemented. You may be surprised to learn that many printers and paper suppliers are pretty far along the environmental stewardship curve. You may already be using recycled stock and not even know it!
- If you discover your suppliers are not being environmentally responsible, consider making a change. You've got options—lots of them.
- Tighten up your print inventory management. You may find you're printing more than you really need.
- Identify the package components you print in the greatest volume—these are likely your best candidates for achieving economies of scale and minimizing the cost of using recycled materials.
- Identify your highest visibility package components (e.g., carrier envelopes) as potential candidates for recycled materials. You'll get the most bang for your buck in generating awareness when members/donors see the recycling logo printed on them.
- If you're already using recycled paper, make sure you label it as such with a recycling logo. Your donors and members will appreciate and recognize your efforts.

Source: Production Management Group



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