

## THINK CLEAN, NOT GREEN

**A**n article in a regional British newspaper highlights how easy it is to be misled by common marketing terms. A customer wanted a brochure printed on green paper. What he meant was environmentally responsible paper; what he received was 10,000 brochures printed on green paper. Apart from the pure waste, this is a mistake from which every company should learn for future reference.

According to David Peck, managing director of Sprinta in Launceston, Tasmania, most of us are hanging on to the wrong end of the stick when it comes to purchasing printing.

"When it comes to printing, you would be surprised how many clients still ask for green when what they really want is clean," says Peck.

"What is green anyway?" he asks.

### NOT AS GREEN AS IT LOOKS

Over the last ten years, most companies have been educated to consider recycled paper for their printing. The use of recycled papers substantially reduces water consumption, energy use, air pollution, and water pollution. However, it is a sad fact that many papers labelled 'green' or 'recycled' contain only a small percentage of post-consumer waste or recycled paper. The rest comes from pulp and virgin fibres derived from environmentally irresponsible sources.

"Unfortunately, customers are being blinded by marketing hype now known as 'green-washing'—companies and products stating they are 'green' with no reality behind the claim," says Peck. "For a long time 'green' has been associated with being recycled and in many cases now, it is neither. For example, some products promote themselves as environmentally-friendly because they are 'recyclable', nothing to do with how and where they're made. In relation to paper types, often the customers do not have the knowledge or the time to research alternative paper products, neither should they have to.

"Clean, as opposed to the marketing term 'green', is what they should be asking for and, surprise, surprise, there are lots of clean paper products out there of an acceptable commercial quality.

"At Sprinta, we use a range of default stock lines that are 55 percent pre-consumer waste and 45 percent fibre sourced from either ISO or FSC certified plantations. These paper stocks fulfil all environmental management requirements without any compromise in quality. These default paper types represent about 80 percent of our business. Where possible, we are promoting Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified papers. Papers

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE 'GREEN'? IT'S A QUESTION THAT IS LIKELY TO PROMPT MUCH CHIN SCRATCHING AND FURROWED BROWS AMONG PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY, NOT TO MENTION CUSTOMERS. ACCORDING TO A TASMANIAN PRINTER, HOWEVER, WHEN PEOPLE TALK GREEN, WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN IS CLEAN. MARK D. WELLS REPORTS.**

certified by the FSC come from externally audited plantations and are processed using environmentally responsible methods. Again, there is nothing green about it... it's clean," emphasises Peck.

### CLEAN WITHOUT CHLORINE

Pre-consumer waste is waste from the manufacturing process prior to it being used by a consumer, after which it becomes 'post-consumer' waste which is less efficient because it is dirtier, harder to clean and lower quality.

Environmentally responsible papers are produced without the use of chlorine to bleach the pulp to give it a white colour. Chlorine creates effluent that is highly toxic to aquatic life, and

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can make its way into the food chain. Alternative paper production methods, those favoured by Sprinta and other environmentally responsible printers, use totally chlorine free (TFC) or elemental chlorine free (ECF) papers.

"TFC and ECF papers are now every bit as good as any other commercially acceptable paper. They are as white as normal papers, stable, do not yellow over time and, most importantly, they cost the same as normal papers. Why wouldn't you specify these papers for your next printing job?

"We are getting quite technical now, but the production of paper in the traditional manner results in the release of large quantities of volatile organic compounds. These compounds are also hazardous to humans and the environment, they contaminate the soil and groundwater, and contribute to air pollution in the form of greenhouse gases.

"As you can see, there is nothing green about traditional papers at all. Brown might be a better word to use, for all the smoggy air pollution they produce. Clean is the best word to use, it's the word we use, and the word our clients use," concluded Peck. ●

David Peck, managing director of Sprinta, with a delivery of environmentally responsible paper.

