45 Ideas:

Printing Production Ideas in only 45 Minutes

American Horse Publications
Annual Meeting
Albuquerque, New Mexico
June 23, 2007

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1. **Work with your printer to insure files from your advertisers match required specs.** Develop a link between your ad rate/spec page and your printers spec page and direct advertisers to prepare ad files according to these specs.
   - Dan Grubb

2. **Proofing platforms have become so inexpensive buy one for yourself.** Using the printers is not time or cost effective
   - Morgan Lightfoot

3. **Proactive communication of dates and quantity changes for special issues related to shows/conferences for more proactive production management and crisis avoidance.**
   - John Miller

4. **Switch to Periodical Class versus Standard mail.** The increases for Standard will be much larger this year than Periodical. Discounts will be available for Co-mailing, Co-Palletization and Drop Shipping.
   - Dave Russo

5. **Design your product with the paper stock and press in mind.** Exercise good design basics when creating products for print production. Designing for newsprint? Keep your reversals and use of large black objects to a minimum. Designing for a gloss stock? Inquire about recommended rich black blends and resolution requirements. Talk with your printer and ask for print specifications.
   - Paul Smith

6. **Invest in a good preflight software to use on your ads.** PitStop Pro is one of the better ones.
   - Dan Grubb

7. **Send your magazine in complete on a PDF-X1a file format or the format that your printer requests.**
   - Morgan Lightfoot

8. **Request and require tracking numbers for important shipments that can be used by the receiver to track their shipments.** Very useful for show copies.
   - John Miller

9. **Clean up your mail lists to make sure your addresses are correct and accurate.** The post office is going to penalize you if you have bad addresses
   - Dave Russo

10. **Ask your printer for a software compliancy list.** Share this information with your advertisers.
    - Paul Smith

11. **Before sending files make one final check to be sure all files are CYMK rather than RGB.**
    - Dan Grubb

12. **Print in forms that are cost effective with your printer, i.e. 8, 16, 32, 48 page forms.**
    - Morgan Lightfoot

13. **Use of PSA ads that can create a positive message for the publication and if necessary, be swapped out with last minute revenue ads.** Allowing for extended ad deadlines and fence sitters.
    - John Miller

14. **Lower the grade of paper to the next grade down to save money.** By going from a 50 lb #3 87 Brightness, you can save over 20% on your paper costs. Paper can represent 40-50% of your print bill.
- Dave Russo

15. **Do not accept ads that have been produced with non-compliant software.** Do not accept word processing and other unprofessionally produced ad and graphic files.
- Paul Smith

16. **Work with your printer to standardize handling of overprints…some printers handle them through distiller; others within the application.** Just be sure you know which one and that all files are consistent in the use of overprints.
- Dan Grubb

17. **Be open to new ideas when approached by your printer, trim size, type of paper, etc.**
- Morgan Lightfoot

18. **Inkjet labeling vs. paper labels for cost savings and less label failure.**
- John Miller

19. **Utilize your printer's unique bindery capabilities to sell premium priced ad campaigns with special foldouts, tip ins, gatefolds, etc.**
- Dave Russo

20. **Preflight all supplied files and ads prior to live production and deadline.** Some digital files cannot be fixed! Don't wait until deadline to figure this out. Utilize preflight requirements and software compliancy as qualifiers for production.
- Paul Smith

21. **If available from your printer, utilize soft proofing (web based) proofing methods and take advantage of any auto upload features they may have.** Could result in time and cost savings.
- Dan Grubb

22. **The single biggest thing in publishing today is postage.** Manage your lists AND CO-MAIL. Things like local entry, drop shipping, and co-palletting are things of the past. Take advantage of co-mailing for dollar saving and delivery time saving.
- Morgan Lightfoot

23. **Use of PDF's for improved workflow and accuracy through inbound ftp site use and soft proof approvals.**
- John Miller

24. **Use a printer that specializes in magazines and has the volume to Co-mail, Co-palletize and Drop Ship.**
- Dave Russo

25. **Preflight and examine your own files before sending to the printer.**
- Paul Smith

26. **Take a hard look at paper.** With upgrades mills have made in their whitening processes it might be possible to drop a grade and maybe even drop in weight without sacrificing quality. Result can be $ savings in both paper and postage.
<div align="right">- Dan Grubb</div>

27. **Control newsstand costs.** A.   number of copies being sent out. B. what are your benefits for newsstand vs. cost.
<div align="right">- Morgan Lightfoot</div>

28. **Use of polybag outserts that can allow for better production and increase revenue streams.**
<div align="right">- John Miller</div>

29. **Soft proof rather than hard proof, save time and money.**
<div align="right">- Dave Russo</div>

30. **Take advantage of your printer's technical knowledge.** Ask for help if you cannot preflight, fix or use an advertiser supplied file. Do this BEFORE deadline and keep everyone sane.
<div align="right">- Paul Smith</div>

31. **Be familiar with press impositions used by your printer and review your layout to determine what pages are running in-line.** You might be able to avoid some major in-line conflicts that if left to run could cause some advertiser color concerns.
<div align="right">- Dan Grubb</div>

32. **Virtual Proofing, the color calibrated in your office will match the one on press so the color you see is what the pressman sees.** This does away with the need for hard proofs.
<div align="right">- Morgan Lightfoot</div>

33. **Take advantage of supplier seminars especially for newer employees and ad sales reps.** Allows for greater understanding of entire process, pitfalls and opportunities.
<div align="right">- John Miller</div>

34. **If you feel you must get hard copy proofs, use them only as a last look at page content, font's correct, type flow, graphics and photos.** Make all your editorial corrections before sending files to the printer. It's always less expensive to correct files internally than at the printer.
<div align="right">- Dave Russo</div>

35. **Understand the importance of image, trim and bleed position within your template.**
<div align="right">- Paul Smith</div>

36. **If at all possible, when building design elements on your pages, keep it simple**. If you can achieve the same or similar result using 2 colors instead of four, you give your printer a much greater chance for success of matching color consistently…especially if that same element is used on multiple pages.
<div align="right">- Dan Grubb</div>

37. **E-book or digital edition your printer should be able to put your book on line at little cost.** This does not take the place of the printed piece just gives you and your advertiser more exposure.
> - Morgan Lightfoot

38. **Including CSR/print rep/company in the masthead to increase exposure and ownership in success of publication.**
> - John Miller

39. **Put your magazine online for your foreign subscribers.** They can get your magazine in the same timely manner that your domestic subscribers have been accustom to. Save money on postage and you can insure that your foreign readers will get their magazine.
> - Dave Russo

40. **Keep an organized font library.** Diligently police your fonts for invalid and corrupt fonts.
> - Paul Smith

41. **Ask your printer abut the use of "fine line screens."** Traditionally, 133, 150 and in a few cases maybe 175 line screens have been the norm. However, computer to plate technology, close loop press systems and other technologies have helped reduce dot gain enabling the use of 200 line or stochastic screening on a more regular basis. Fine line screens will allow for greater detail, especially in the highlight and shadow areas.
> - Dan Grubb

42. **Think of changing your trim size.** By going to 8.375 x 10.5 from 8.375 x 10.875 you can save 5 percent in paper cost and possibly help with postage.
> - Morgan Lightfoot

43. **Reevaluate subscription and hand along cards to drive subscriptions and general interest.**
> - John Miller

44. **Change your binding type if you can.** If you are perfect binding and you are under a ¼" thick. Go to saddle.
> - Dave Russo

45. **Understand how object position affects the appearance of your finished publication.** Ask your printer to explain this. When objects are positioned too close to trim and do not bleed, then your publication can appear out-of-square when trimmed.
> - Paul Smith

46. **Avoid those 4-page signatures.** They're costly on a per page basis and depending on the basis weight of your paper may even result in additional bindery charges.
> - Dan Grubb

47. **Keep your graphic library current.** Open and update your files when you install or upgrade your software.
> - Paul Smith

48. **Understand color management.** Ask your printer to help you with your color profiles and software.
> - Paul Smith

49. **Communicate.** Get as much information about the upcoming issue to your printer as you can prior to sending the files. This will enable the CSR to do necessary paperwork prior to materials coming in and allow them more time to devote to production details. Don't get hung up on specific print run numbers…they can always be changed. But this allows them to plan the press and bindery in advance.
   - Dan Grubb

50. **Wiro coil binding is normally less then plastic coil binding for directory style products, ask for comparative proposals.**
   - John Miller

51. **Along the lines of clean up your mail list – review your comp list on a regular basis and any of the other regular shipments you do.** Find out if they are worth the cost of the publications as well as the shipping.
   - Dave Russo

52. **Understand how to work with transparent objects.** It is very important to understand how to prepare your files when working with transparent objects. Take the time to read the Adobe white papers about this very important topic.
   - Paul Smith

53. **Originality is overrated – look for novel and interesting ideas from other publications that have been successful – if already done by one printer, it should be able to be done by many.**
   - John Miller

54. **Send test files to your printer when you experience a change in your computer environment.** Got new software? Did you just upgrade your system? Did you need to reinstall your system software? Did you experience a hardware crash? If the answer is yes, then send test files prior to deadline.
   - Paul Smith

55. **Establish a close relationship with your local post office.** They can provide timely information and in some cases eliminate problems related to postal issues.
   - John Miller

56. **Review your print invoice in detail to make sure you know what every single item is.** This can often spark a conversation with your printer on an alternative way of producing your magazine.
   - Dave Russo

57. **Do not outline all of your text objects when creating PDF files for submission.** This is not correct! Embed your fonts into your PDF files.
   - Paul Smith

58. **If you can, take any early pay discounts available.** You may have to move things around, but saving 1-2% on your magazine every month can add up.
   - Dave Russo

59. **Ask for a template from your printer before you begin a new project.**
   - Paul Smith

60. **Just come out and ask your vendors what you can do to save money.**
- Dave Russo

61. **Pass print specifications on to your advertisers.** Remember to include image, trim and bleed information.
- Paul Smith

62. **Keep all text and non-bleed objects within the defined image area.**
- Paul Smith

63. **Deliver files as requested by your printer.** Follow their naming conventions and file management requirements. This will help to make your production more efficient.
- Paul Smith

64. **Notify your printer when you decide to accept low-resolution graphics.**
- Paul Smith

65. **Be a good student.** There is a multitude of information available to you, take advantage of this! Surf the internet. Become a member of a user group. Read your user manuals.
- Paul Smith