

February/March 2018

# PostPress

*Print Decorating, Binding and Finishing*

## A Paradise of Decorative Processes

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Kick It Up with Multi-Level Embossing
- The Long and Short of Grain Direction
- Loose Leaf Keeps Up with Digital Age

**2018  
BUYERS  
GUIDE**







## Bound for Success – Loose Leaf Keeps Up with the Digital Age

by **Brittany Willes**, editor, *PostPress*

**P**rint is dead. Or so many believed during years of market recession and with the rising prominence of digital files. Against all predictions, the print industry has experienced a remarkable renaissance in the past few years. Recent studies have shown that consumers are experiencing digital overload. As a result, print and digital files have been making strides to coexist in an ever-evolving marketplace. Traditional print products, such as loose leaf binders, have experienced their own renaissance. Loose leaf binder manufacturers are finding new and unique uses for binders, offering greater numbers of styles and enhancements and embracing consumer demands for more environmentally friendly products.

Loose leaf binders have long been a popular choice as a sleek and professional option for displaying information. Different styles and sizes combine to create a unique look and feel for

a given project. Smaller binders (1/2 sheet size) are portable, neat and great for presenting information quickly and easily. More visual content – such as photographs – can be shown off using landscape binders, while portfolio binders – generally used to combine product samples and literature – act as a kit or box display. Whatever the style or size, binders represent an attractive and cost-effective way of showcasing important projects.

Not all binders are created equal, however. As with anything else, binders have their points of weakness that must be taken into account. Corporate Image, a Des Moines, Iowa-based binder manufacturer, is well versed in the challenges in designing products that can stand the test of time. For instance, one of the most common points of failure occurs at the hinge. Vice President Michael James stated, “Most binders use lightweight vinyl as the cover material. Over time, the vinyl becomes stiff and brittle.” This leads to cracked hinges that are destined to fail with time.

To overcome this, manufacturers are developing new styles featuring stronger, longer-lasting hinges. Corporate Image has incorporated into its designs a flexhinge spine, where the hinge is created by scoring through one piece of the binder’s board. “This offers an extremely durable hinge that will last for years,” said James. “The hinges are lab tested and proven to open and close over 250,000 times without failure.”

The flexhinge spine is available rounded or square, offering customers greater opportunity for customized products. As James noted, “The rounded spine has an interesting architectural look that sets it apart visually. The square spine is perfect when visual information needs to be presented clearly.”

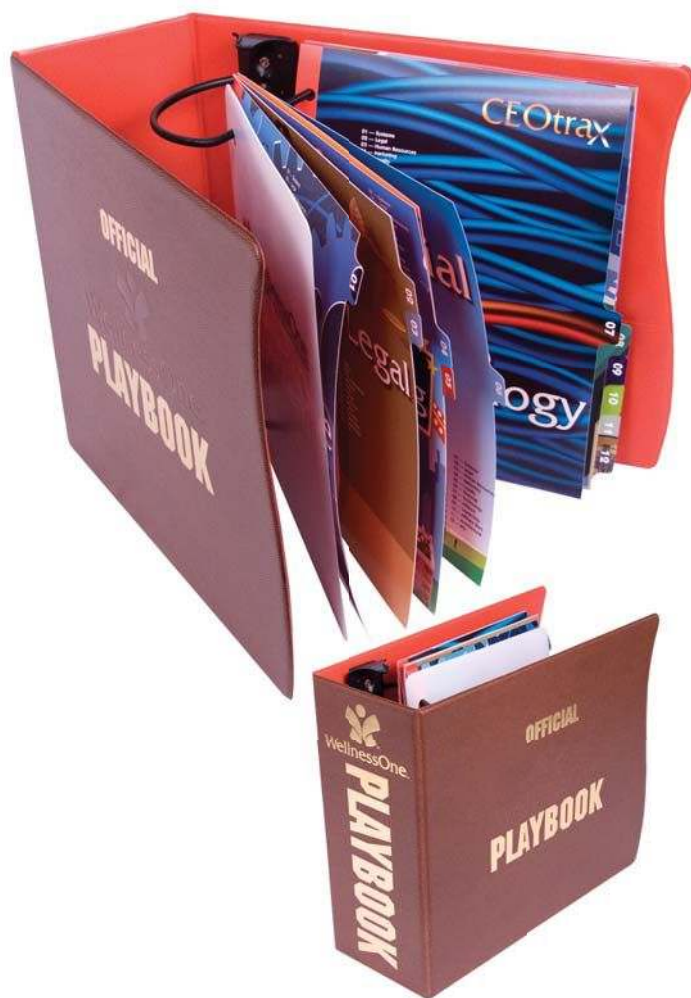
Ring size also can be a challenge for designers who think outside of the box,

<<

but there are unique solutions to such a problem. James explained that almost all ring systems are sized according to standard paper sizes. This poses a problem when it comes to incorporating unique paper and binder sizes. If the paper size is larger than normal, binders can be made to accommodate that size by choosing a ring that does not have boosters, which would normally interfere with the larger sheet. On the other hand, if the paper is smaller than normal, it may be a challenge to find a ring that will accommodate the smaller sheet size.

In addition to designing longer-lasting products, manufacturers have begun finding new and unique uses for binders. For Corporate Image, this has included using three-, four- and five-panel ringless binders to showcase samples such as flooring, wallcoverings, tile, wood and more. Meanwhile, smaller binders are being used to great success for promoting the capabilities of businesses such as law firms and financial planning companies.

The move from straightforward business presentation materials to sample promotions has been a strategic one, as binders become less of a document storage medium and more of an interactive showpiece. According to Dominic Zaidan, director of art and marketing at Vulcan Information Packaging, “With the increased use of digital documents as opposed to printed sheets, loose leaf manufacturers have had to shift their focus to either more packaging



## WIRE SPOOLS | CALENDAR HANGERS

Bindaply™ wire binding will give your projects a professional look and keep the pages in perfect registration. Our durable binding wire allows your books to lay flat when opened. These premium wire spools can be used with all standard binding systems.

Coupled with our double loop wire, create professional wall calendars with our premium Calendar Hangers.

Bindaply™ wire is a lead free, kid safe product.



**LEADINGEDGE™**  
PRINT FINISHING EXPERTS



877.367.3644  
www.leadingedgelam.com  
sales@leadingedgelam.com

products or introduce market ring binder usage into the sample pages segment of the industry.”

For manufacturers like Vulcan, expanding more into packaging has meant broadened manufacturing capabilities and more services offered to its customers, including the ability to convert printed sheets into custom rigid boxes and other presentation products. “Our print partners can sell binder and packaging related products, send us the printed sheets and we can do the converting,” stated Zaidan.

Additionally, Vulcan now is able to produce true prototypes as close to the final products as possible, and they’re able to do so at a much faster rate. “With our UV digital press, automated cutting table and experienced sample makers,” said Zaidan, “we can produce production quality prototypes in as little as 24 hours.”

Zaidan noted that even as manufacturers like Vulcan expand into other markets, loose leaf binders will always have a place in the industry. “Showrooms that offer products such as cloth samples, wallpaper, tile and flooring, wood finishes, surface and countertops will likely always want to have some type of ring binder for presentation purposes,” he said.

Binders will continue to offer attractive and convenient methods for displaying product samples for customers to flip through and see all the available selections. “When used creatively as a sample holder, binders are a valuable solution for stores, marketing groups and sales people to show their samples,” Zaidan affirmed.

Expanding manufacturing capabilities is not the only way in which binder manufacturers have evolved. Consumers today are more environmentally conscious than ever. As such, they are looking for more eco-friendly products. Manufacturers like Corporate Image are more than willing to accommodate these needs.

“Corporate Image offers some of the most durable, eco-friendly and designable binders on the market,” remarked James. Unlike eco-friendly styles of the past, customers today are not limited in their design options. Corporate Image binder covers and liners are offset printed and offered in up to six colors. “Each binder is made with 100 percent recycled board,” he continued. “Additionally, every binder can be Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified, indicating that it has been made from materials that meet certified forestry management practices.” For the “green” consumer, FSC certification is an important design component.

For example, Corporate Image created an environmental binder for a hospice center that featured printing and debossing. “The goal

was to create a durable binder that looked recyclable and also was compatible with patients who had chemical sensitivity,” explained James. “To that end, we chose Kraft endleaf paper for the cover material due to its high recycled content, which gave the binder the recycled look the customer wanted.” The binder was printed with special-mix colors to match Pantone colors closely on the brown board stock, and the customer’s logo was blind debossed on the front and back covers. “The combination of the unique materials and finishing techniques created a truly stunning binder,” said James.

Incorporating more specialty finishing techniques, along with finding greater uses, will ensure binders continue to thrive in a digital world. As Zaidan explained, “Using binders as sample holders is a growth area that will keep our product relevant. As long as a company wants to present a ‘touch and feel’ of their samples, binders will remain relevant. In many instances, companies have tried a digital catalog only to realize they are missing the personal show-and-tell perspective of fabrics, furniture and construction materials present in a ring binder. The loose leaf binder market is still very strong and still in demand.” ♦

## The Art & Adventure of Screen Printing.



*The Sakurai MS-102AX screen press shown with Natgraph dryer and stacker*

### Introducing the MS-102AX cylinder screen press.

Sakurai, the global leader in sheet-fed screenprinting technology, introduces the MS-102AX cylinder screen press. Features include a motorized squeegee pressure control system, large display, optional automatic ink dispensing system and more. Ideal for specialty printing applications such as special effects finishing, glitter and soft touch, flood and spot coating, and more.

**Don't print ordinary.** To find out why savvy screen printers and trade finishers choose Sakurai, call sales at 847-490-9400.

**Sakurai**

Responsive customer service, support, parts and training  
Sales 1-847-490-9400 | [www.sakurai.com](http://www.sakurai.com)

©2018 Sakurai USA Inc.

