

Decorative Print Finishing for Graphic Designers



There are a series of print finishing processes that designers can use to embellish the appearance of printed articles before they are made into the final product. This type of work is usually subcontracted by the printers to a specialist print finisher such as Ultra Finishers because of their expert knowledge, skillset, and specific machinery used to create the effects required.

The type of finish we apply will depend on the product and its particular customer market. For example, something like a University Prospectus folder would benefit from having a laminated film applied to the surface, to add strength, thickness, and durability because it is handled often and protects important documents. It is likely that this type of folder would also be improved by using a spot uv varnish or a coloured foil block to highlight the focal points. Essentially it is a sales item and is intended to promote the University course.

Basic Applications

I want to start with the basic print finishing applications and here are just a few that we use at Ultra Finishing.

Laminating – A thin layer of film applied onto the surface of a sheet.

Spot UV Varnishing – It is essentially printing over a specific image or area, using varnish instead of ink.

Foil blocking – Applying any coloured foil to a specific image or area.

Embossing – Raising the surface area of a specific image or area.

Using the above basic applications, designers can start to create some amazing projects.

When you delve deeper and start to investigate the many different options each basic application can offer. Then your creative limitations increase enormously and with each process having many different variations, it is possible to get highly creative indeed.

Use - Fluted foils to add depth and texture – holographic foils to add movement – soft touch lamination adds texture – glitter varnish adds sparkle – debossing adds texture and depth – high build spot uv adds more texture and depth, there are fragrance inks and thermal revealing inks we can apply to create many more effects.

Using decorative finishing in this way will add value to a product. Value in terms of appearance, functionality, and shelf appeal – Here designers can use their creative ability to make an ordinary item change into a fascinating object. Something that people will want to pick up and touch, something that looks elegant and luxurious. So, when planning It is important to try and visualise the end product. Think about the way it will feel and if there are any featured images that need to stand out. Think about where it will be presented, its target audience. Then try to bring your artwork to life using your imagination and understanding of the various types of finishes that can be applied. There is an info pack on our website. [Ultra Finishing Website](#) It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with our decorative finishing applications and try to add them layer upon layer as you build your projects. Understanding this will help you to create really awesome and memorable designs.