

Wide spine punching



Eyelets

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Strong to the finish

Get creative with eyelets, fancy folds, tabs and more

By Milt Vine

Looking for creative ways to help print projects stand out? Tired of the same old thing? Feeling pressure from clients to come up with something more effective? Don't know where to turn? Try talking to your trusted print provider. Printers and the trade finishers they work with just love showing off their capabilities, and they are very experienced in handling special projects that involve other production partners. Sometimes, though, they don't think to promote these special resources. As the saying goes, "If you don't ask, you don't get."

Trade finishers in your area can be an excellent source of ideas. Ask your print sales representative to take you on a tour of the trade vendors with whom they work, and ask to see lots of samples. They should be eager to show off their capabilities, because you might bring them future business. If you and the print rep are able to sell additional services they provide, everyone comes out ahead.

Seattle's specialties

Our shop, Seattle Bindery (Seattle), is a good example of what should be available to you. We specialize in creating capacity to provide services that print providers normally don't offer in house. The traditional finishing processes of folding and stitching still are very important, but most printers have these abilities available. To bring added value to printers, trade finishers must offer other specialty services. Trade vendors in

every market typically choose a mix of services printers need, but others don't offer. In other words, one trade finisher might specialize in bindery applications, whereas another concentrates only on die-cutting and foil stamping.

Our company has added services as our customers have demonstrated a need for them; listing these might serve as an "idea list" and a sales idea stimulator. If you can offer these services, you might be able to bring some unprecedented value to the customer.

Bright ideas

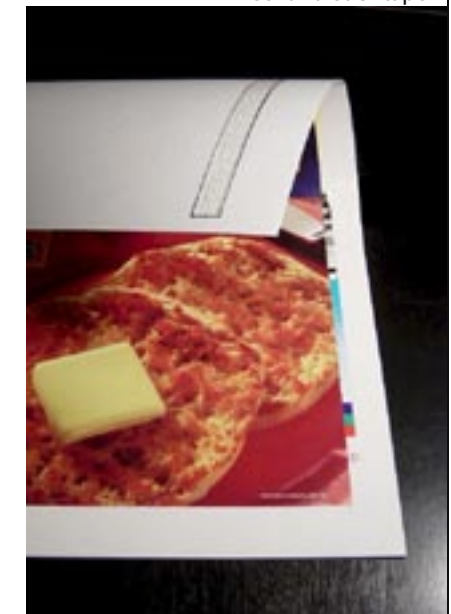
Eyeletting | Pre-drilling a hole and then inserting and crimping a one-piece eyelet. Eyelets serve as an attaching mechanism or as the pivot point for a spinning wheel, often used for reference or promotional pieces. Nickel eyelets are most common in our market, but brass and other special finishes are available. This can be a great alternative to side stitching. It also is used frequently with two-sided film laminate sheets that have been "encapsulated" as a way to attach those sheets to something.

Peel-and-stick tape | This comes in various "flavors," including different types of adhesive, from "not so aggressive" to "never let go." These can be applied at high speed and inline with other processes. This tape also can be applied on a "spot" basis—it can be put on different places on a printed sheet in one pass when run through the equipment.

Loop stitching | This stitch has an extended "loop" in the spine, which allows the book to be placed



Peel-and-stick tape



Samples of Seattle Bindery's work



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in a three-ring binder without drilling holes that might cut into part of the image. Loop stitching can result in a much better looking product.

Calendar hangers | These are the little loops in the top of a calendar that allow a single hanger to work for each month of the calendar. This process also requires a semicircle to be cut, to allow the hanger to travel through all the pages.

Closed gate folding | This process involves folding the two outside edges to meet in the center, then a second half-fold to finish the piece. This requires a special (and expensive) attachment to the folders, as well as special operator skills.

Wide spine punching | This technique is used for twin loop wires and for plastic coil elements. Seattle Bindery has a 20-inch punch and can punch from both sides to allow for a 40-inch binding edge, as well as several automated punches that give us lots of capacity.

Thick coil binding | This method uses larger holes that are punched farther apart, allowing for easy page turning even with two-inch-thick (50 mm) books. Seattle Bindery uses an oval hole pattern, also called "Double D," that helps the pages turn much more freely on thicker books. It uses a 2.5:1 hole pattern—2.5 holes are punched per linear inch—as compared to the more standard four holes per linear inch. Spreading out the holes like this requires a special coil element to be ordered, but it makes page turning much easier—the pages don't jam together as they are turned.

Pee Chee folding | Some presentation folders are designed to have glue in the edges on the face and sometimes on the head. This requires specialty equipment. Equipment upgrades will need to be made to handle these style folders; "standard" glue folding machines will not produce this format.

Presentation folders with unusual configurations | Seattle Bindery recently added the ability to produce three-panel folders with a wide variety of layouts. Not only do these increase capacity for holding more materials, they also allow room for interesting die-cutting and other unique finishing techniques.

Die-cutting | This finishing technique is one of the most useful when

it comes to producing unusual creative projects. Ask your printer to show you some projects that others have done using die-cutting. Seattle Bindery's press has the ability to knock out internal waste at full production speeds, which allows for minimal die nicking, where waste pieces remain in place until they are off of the press. The result is a better product (fewer nicks) produced in a shorter turn time for a lower cost.

Crash numbering | It's amazing that inkjet- and laser-produced numbering hasn't made this process obsolete, by now. But we still get quite a number of requests. Produced on old letterpress equipment, it requires an experienced operator to ensure the number sequence is correct. Jam-ups often can result in an unusable product.

Shingled tabs | Producing these properly requires more operator skill and, sometimes, additional equipment. Our operators have made tab cutting their profession, and they are very good at turning out perfectly cut tabs in a very short time.

Foil stamping and embossing | These processes are great when you want to add beautiful and interesting elements to your printed pieces. There is a wide range of foil colors to choose from, including holographic foils. These techniques still are very much a "craft" requiring years of training and an extremely high skill level. Several of our technicians have made foil stamping and embossing their specialty and they often consult with print buyers on projects. The creative uses for foil stamping and embossing easily could be the subject of an entire article. The possibilities, as they say, are endless.

Miniature folding | This is another process that has great potential for creative uses. Pieces can be folded down to as small as 3/4 x 1 inch. If you've ever wondered how those inserts in your toothpaste carton and aspirin box are produced, miniature folding is the answer. Also referred to as "pharmaceutical folding," miniature folding offers a wide range of folding options, making each project unique. The only requirement is that paper stock needs to be light. Because of creep in multiple folding projects, think in terms of 50-lb. or lighter uncoated stock.

Patch edge reinforcing | If you look at the tabs sold at many office

supply stores, you'll find lots of examples of this style of reinforcing, where the spine of a tab or page that's inserted in a notebook has reinforcing tape surrounding the 3/16-inch hole. These products can be turned around in a short time and are less intrusive in the product design.

Film laminating | This process encapsulates sheets with a protective film on one or both sides. The film comes in many different colors and finishes, including gloss, matte and satin, and can be used not only to protect, but also to enhance, the look of pieces.

You can find case studies illustrating some of these finishing techniques in interesting ways in the Library section at www.seattlebindery.com.

Your turn

One way to become acquainted with the many different finishing techniques available to you is to begin to collect pieces you find unique and interesting. Ask your print provider to show you how the different processes were done. You also can ask your printer to provide samples and then take you on a tour of a trade finisher, so you can see the equipment in action on an actual project. Don't forget to ask questions. If you have an upcoming project and would like to use one or more of these processes, find out what you need to do in planning the project and preparing the artwork.

Here's another idea: Google the topics I have mentioned here and go hunting for printers' Web sites that feature those services. Snoop around for examples and see if you can't pick up some more ideas there. P&MB

Contact Vine at miltvine@seattlebindery.com.

Take a look

- Milt Vine wasn't kidding about researching these techniques online. He found these sources via Google search. Thanks to the folks sponsoring each of these Web sites:
- >> Eyelets: www.stimpson.com/flange_barrels.htm.
 - >> Peel-and-stick tape: www.seattlebindery.com/HTML/Case%20Studies/CaseStudy4.htm.
 - >> Loop stitching: www.rickardbindery.com/html/loop-stitching.html.
 - >> Calendar Hangers: www.sgmbindery.com/doubleloopwire.htm.
 - >> Thick book with coil element: www.seattlebindery.com/HTML/Case%20Studies/CaseStudy2.htm.
 - >> Pee Chee folders: www.creativepro.com/story/feature/21870.html?origin=story.
 - >> Die-cutting with stripping (defined): www.interstatesp.com/die-cutting-terms.html.
 - >> Crash numbering machines: www.caxton-print-supp.co.uk/numbering%20boxes.htm.
 - >> Patch Edge Reinforcing: www.precision-index-equip.com/Reinforce.html.



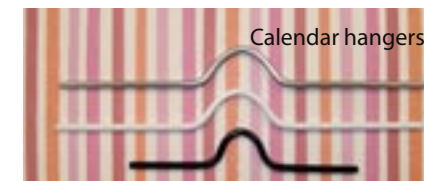
Closed gate folding



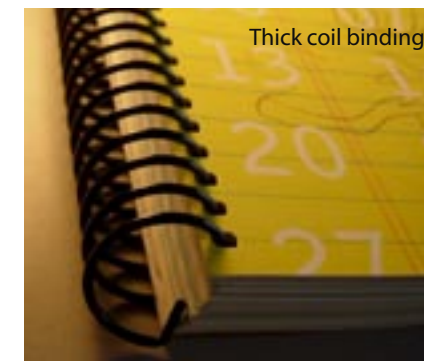
Miniature folding



Loop stitching



Calendar hangers



Thick coil binding

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The role of trade finishers

Trade finishers work "in the trade," which means we don't sell our services directly to print buyers. Rather, printers and other trade houses come to us for help on projects. Our business model is to provide services that don't make sense for printers to bring in house—either they are too expensive or they require too much specialized skill. Printers typically begin with limited in-house finishing capabilities, later adding services as volume and customers require. Many trade finishers fill in the gaps in this process. We also provide overflow capacity when deadlines are too tight and in-house operations are unable to perform. Importantly, we don't provide printing services at all, so we don't compete with our customers. Basically, we work in partnership with printers to provide a seamless service for the print buyer. Our job is to just make it work.



Film laminating

