

Green Publishing Toolkit for Small Publishers

For large publishers, real estate is an easy place to start when trying to reduce environmental impacts and lower carbon emissions. But for small publishers, who don't own their own office buildings and warehouses, your printer/paper choices are nearly 100% of your impact. That is the most important place to focus. Check out the Environmental Trends Report for more details-http://www.greenpressinitiative.org/documents/trends_summary.pdf.

If you really want to dive into a lot of information, you can refer to our Publisher Toolkit here:

<http://www.greenpressinitiative.org/documents/BookPublisherToolkit.pdf>

But here is the simplified version, specially for small publishers, with some extras for four-color projects.

1. Understand your impacts and make different choices

- The U.S. book industry uses approximately 30 million trees every year. Many of these trees are from old growth and endangered forests.
- The paper industry is the fourth largest industrial source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, and books and newspapers release greenhouse gases through their lifecycles.
- Globally, scientists estimate that deforestation is responsible for 25% of human caused greenhouse gases.
- When trees are cut to make paper, they cease to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through photosynthesis. In addition, greenhouse gases are released into the atmosphere when either unused plant material decays or is burned for energy at the mill.

As a result of these emissions and those associated with soil disturbances at the site of harvest, it can take up to 25 years for a newly planted forest to stop being a net emitter of greenhouse gases and hundreds of years before it stores the same amount of carbon as an undisturbed forest.

What are your choices? Choose recycled and FSC Certified papers as much as possible.

- Each ton of recycled fiber that replaces a ton of virgin fiber saves 17-24 mature trees and up to 7.5 tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions. Also, recycling keeps paper out of landfills where it currently represents 26% of landfills. The degradation produces methane, a greenhouse gas with 23 times the heat trapping capacity of carbon dioxide. Landfills are the source of 34% of methane releases—the single largest source in the U.S.
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper ensures that the fiber to make paper does not originate from Endangered Forests or areas of social conflict.

For more info check out our FAQ, and impacts page. <http://www.greenpressinitiative.org/about/faq.htm> A great summary of the steps to consider in reducing your footprint appeared in a recent issue of Book Business magazine: http://www.bookbusinessmag.com/article/efforts-more-environmentally-friendly-can-also-help-your-bottom-line-time-you-need-most-414810_1.html

2. Involve your whole team and make a written commitment

If you are a self-publisher, then the decision to go green is entirely yours. If you have a few employees, be sure to involve them in the research and choices. Make it a commitment that your whole team signs on to, then you aren't relying on one person to push your goals forward.

First, you can make that commitment by signing onto the Treatise on Responsible Publishing along with several hundred others <http://www.greenpressinitiative.org/Treatise/treatiseIndex.htm>

Next, develop a written commitment to pursue the best environmental choices. A written commitment is an on-going reminder of goals and timelines. It insures accountability and measures your progress. A sample template is located here: <https://www.greenpressinitiative.org/documents/BookPublisherPolicyTemplate.doc>

3. Try to print in North America because you can find many printers who are FSC-certified and offer recycled paper choices. The major U.S. book printers are here <http://www.greenpressinitiative.org/documents/PrinterList.xls> You can also consult the FSC US website <http://www.fscus.org/images/documents/FSC%20certified%20printers.pdf> and find several near you. Some of these companies are members of the Independent Book Publishers Association and may offer IBPA member discounts. There are now several North American book printers who can print four-color affordably.

4. If you decide to print in Asia, then make sure you work with a print broker who is committed to finding you an FSC printer or FSC paper. There are more of them each year. There are other certifications with good attributes, but none do as good a job to ensure maximum protection for Endangered Forests. <https://www.greenpressinitiative.org/impacts/forests.htm>

If you are concerned about climate stability for future generations, the choices here are particularly important.

5. Making marketing claims for environmental choices

A recent study by the Boston Consulting Group found that consumer demand for environmentally responsible products is higher than ever before, and companies everywhere are using their commitment to the environment to their marketing advantage. GPI staff will help you consider the best environmental claims for your marketing and ways to use your environmental commitment in promotion. Contact erin@greenpressinitiative.org for guidance. Green Press Initiative offers identification of best practices inside your books and on your website. Membership in GPI is required for logo use. You can identify your paper choices inside your book for FSC certified paper and/or for recycled paper and its related savings in trees and energy. Both require specific guidance and working with your printer.