



Makeover Tips for Price Lists

By Joseph Lopez

Can you generate more sales by revising your price list? Here are a few ideas for enhancing the visual appeal of a publisher's most basic tool.

Many publishing companies in developing countries find that printing four-color price lists or catalogs on glossy paper is too expensive. The latest promotions or new stock, at best, are advertised in black and white photocopies using A4s, also known as copy paper or bond paper. But how can you make a simple price list more appealing?

Heavier paper

If you can afford it, use heavier bond paper, 28 lb (105 grams per square meter) instead of the typical 20 lb (80 gsm) office-supply store papers. 20 lb bond feels flimsy. The heavier the paper the better the impression. 38lb (140 gsm) bond is the heaviest paper that can still feed smoothly through your desktop printer.

Black and white art

Have you ever ordered an item on a restaurant's menu based on a mouth-watering photograph? You can add visual bait to your price lists.

- Copy the book covers, scaling them down to stamp sizes. Include them in the master layout alongside the text and the price. Include the author's picture if available.
- Sketches, drawings and photos relevant to the book will draw attention to the text. With graphics or image editing software, you can

make an ordinary photograph look like an artist's sketch. You can also transform your full-color photographs to resemble old newsprint photos. Such black and white dot-style photography comes across well on copy paper.

- No graphics software? Try the lightening feature in your copier to bring your art (text or photo or both) to a point where it can be used as a light background for your price list, almost like a watermark. Then you can do a second process of copying your price list on a set of A4s already with that backdrop.

Avec or sans?

We are less accustomed to reading numbers than letters, so number-heavy documents are by nature less attractive to our eyes. The cleaner and rounder the look, the easier it is to read. Many catalogs now use sans (without) serif typeface, that is, fonts without short lines or hooks stemming from the upper and lower ends of the characters. Such fonts have a modern feel and are well suited to catalogs or price lists—documents that are meant to be browsed.

Do we really have to print numbers *avec* (with) a currency sign? Unless your price list crosses monetary borders, you can expand your white space by dropping the

currency sign. The focus is on the title, not the price. Unless you are marketing a bestseller at a discount, there is no need to draw attention to the price!

Adding Color

It is still possible to add color to a black and white flyer economically. One simple way of course is using colored paper. But the appeal, as in white paper, depends on the blackness of the ink: the more intense, the better. A washed out, speckled or grayish look reduces the desired contrast. The flyer will look amateurish. Consider what color combinations are appropriate to the tone of your books.

Enhance your price list with coloring materials. Use soft colored pencils, acrylic paints, or color markers for enhancements, rather than watercolors. The effect partly depends on the sizing or water resistance of the paper and most copy papers do not have good sizing.

Aesthetic Presentations

Conventions and conferences are excellent venues to promote your publications. If you intend to place a flyer on every seat, why not present it or fold it in a style that will catch people's attention?

Try paper-folding techniques, more popularly known as origami. Layout your price list to match the folds. Designs such as Pinwheel, Love Knot or Christmas Stocking make attractive flyers for any event. But avoid designs with too many creases or your price list will look like it is ready to fly to the trash bin. Note that some designs require lighter or heavier paper, or larger paper sizes.

If you only need 15 to 20 flyers, you can glue your trimmed A4s onto heavier colored paper or local specialty paper such as amati paper in Mexico, Hanji paper in Korea,

papyrus paper in Egypt, abaca paper in the Philippines, joss paper in China or plantation paper in Costa Rica. A cardboard cutout from grocery boxes can provide a sturdy base for an easel stand in your display tables.

The ideas are endless

The Web and your library have resources on design, paper craft, and layouts. Review department store catalogs and restaurant menus to develop price lists with your own unique touch.

Web sites where you can find simple and attractive origami designs include:

- <http://origami.kvi.nl/>
- <http://www.origami-instructions.com/>
- <http://www.folds.net/tutorial/index.html>
- <http://members.aol.com/ukpetd/>

www.origami.as

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