

This question is for other members with web presses.

While considering web projects with black-only plate changes/versions, we're wondering how other web printers quote and then produce them. Over time, we've had a small number of these jobs whereby the customer's artwork versions were not handled perfectly (an image within the files may have moved between the versioning) leading to the CMYK images falling out of registration during the black-only version change. This may also occur if the non-black plates stretch during the run, and then the version black plate not lining up perfectly with the others.

We've actually steered away from producing only the black plate on these, instead making all four plates to hang for the black-only versions to ensure good registration. This is obviously expensive on larger jobs with multiple forms and we would likely not be awarded the project if we built all CMYK plates into the black-only version cost.

Do others produce web jobs with black-plate versions by reusing the C-M-Y plates and redoing only the black plate? Have you had trouble with the artwork or plates either moving, stretching or not fitting? If you do provide black-plate only versioning within your quotes, do you have a disclaimer on your quote in the event that something doesn't line up while the job is already on press?

Generally speaking, I would think that you would run the same set of CMYK plates for the color portion the whole time, then address whatever is changing in black only with inkjet heads mounted on your web press. That's how I would address it.

No longer in the web end of things but when in shops that did numerous black plate changes we often left the CMYK plates on press and ran the changeable black type on a 5th unit. As long as you have a 5 or 6 unit press this works best.

It also made for much faster plate changes and fewer registration issues.
