



Test results

- A mailing on standard paper generated 2.5% response.
- The standard-paper mailing with a reply card generated 5.7% response.
- A mailing with creative paper generated 3.9% response.
- Creative paper plus reply card generated 10.1% response.

pearance of your print item. You can also make the paper harmonise with the significance of the print item. Just as it should harmonise with the message and the design, the brand you are promoting and the basic function of the print product.

“A ticket to the Opera is a valuable document. You take it out of your purse or your coat pocket many times, looking forward to the event. The paper has got to be fine enough to match the expectations. Or take a U2 concert ticket, which thousands of people will want to frame after the concert. Why is it printed on the cheapest possible kind of paper? That’s a disaster. It looks like any ticket to a hockey game, effectively killing the joy of it all.”

Making a statement

“There’s really no mystery to this”, assures Emri. “It’s simply a matter of bringing the paper into the process at an earlier stage and realise that the paper can support what you want to do.” There is no shortage of advice and examples:

- To sell luxury cars, you need a brochure that breathes quality to the extent that it nearly emits the aroma of expensive leather.
- If you do brand communication in the steel industry, you want to use a heavy, hard, substantial paper with the right surface sheen.
- For health care services, why not choose a soft, tactile and tinted paper to add warmth to your message.
- If the product is clothes, you can select a paper with a generous paper feel, something that mimics the structure of fabrics.

Optimising function

Obvious and simple as all this may seem, it’s the most obvious rules that are the ones most often broken. But it’s not only about harmonising paper and content. It’s often simply about pure function:

“Cookbooks printed on gloss paper are an abomination”, says Emri. “They are useless – you just can’t read them for all the light reflection. They show no respect or concern for the user. It’s an insult. Photo books on the other hand require a glossy coated paper for sharpness, colour, contrast and image lift.”

What we are up against

So, why is such a great part of today’s print production standardised and boring? According to Emri, there are three reasons. A lack of time – not enough time is devoted to what difference the paper can make. A lack of awareness, especially among designers of the digital generation. A lack of communication between the (very) different people who interact in the speci-

fication process: they don’t speak the same language, don’t have the same focus and don’t share a common vision of what they want to achieve.

It’s not about cost

“It often comes down to cost issues, too. And quite unnecessarily. Look at the owner’s manual in a new car. The total cost amounts to roughly €12, that is for the whole process until it’s fitted with plastic covers and put into the glove compartment. Production cost for the print item itself is €1. The paper cost is 20 cents. If you choose the paper you want, it will perhaps cost 40 cents. It will make a lot of difference in perceived value, yet it’s a negligible cost item if you look at the bigger picture. The choice of a more expensive paper may be the right decision to make, commercially speaking – because it makes your print item promote your product better”, Emri concludes. □

www.storaenso.com
www.papyrus.com

Let the paper work for you

“It upsets me to see how print communication gets standardised”, says Gussi Emri, Managing Director Papyrus Sweden. “People nowadays can only expect dull sameness. A lot of what is produced and distributed today is inadequately executed, non-descript and void of imagination. People’s interest is low because quality is low.”



Gussi Emri is a man with a passion for paper. Which means he is also an angry man. So much money is wasted producing boring print items – because people neglect to use the paper as a communicative factor. “With paper, you have the opportunity to speak to all senses”, Emri explains. “You can trigger associations, thoughts and feelings, create atmosphere and move people’s minds. Paper has a rich palette of expression. It’s

physical and sensual. But it’s not used to its potential.”

Looks like the real thing

“Take an image in a car brochure, showing the car on a country road. The paintwork must gleam and glisten. But the tyres must look matt, and the fields and forest on the side of the road should feel rugged. You can do this with the right paper, the right repro, the right techniques and methods. Print communication lets you simulate reality.”

Listening to Emri, you wonder how people can afford not to consider the choice of paper more carefully. Because the paper makes a difference: how many readers can you attract? How long will the reader stay with you? How strong does the message come across? What response can you get?

Experiment delivers proof

“Let me give you an example”, says Emri. “A few years ago, BMW carried out a full-scale direct mail experiment. They differentiated their mailings to see what effect it would have to response rates. Standard paper or creative paper. With or without reply card. The results speak for themselves.”

Added value

The choice of a beautiful paper is in itself a design element that adds value to the ap-

