PREPRESS TWO CENTS:
And They All Printed Happily Ever After

nce upon a time…*there was a Happy Business that lived in a prosperous kingdom. At first the Happy Business only needed a few catalogs once or twice a year. As it grew, the Happy Business needed more and more catalogs. This was great except for the cost of printing more catalogs. What to do?*

One day a mysterious stranger (ok, a Printing Fairy Godmother) appeared at the door speaking of a near-magical process known as web printing. With web printing, large numbers of quality catalogs could be printed economically. Like all good magic, though, it had rules. No, the catalogs wouldn't suddenly turn into bubble gum wrappers if they weren't in homes at midnight. Instead, the web printing magic worked best when the page count was divisible by sixteen.

This sounded strange to the Happy Business who had always thought that the total number of pages just had to be divisible by four. Here's what the Happy Business learned:

> 2 x 16 = 32
> 3 x 16 = 48
> 4 x 16 = 64
> 5 x 16 = 80

A web press prints more efficiently because it produces sixteen pages at a time from a continuous roll of paper. This sheet of pages is called a "signature." The pages are imposed (arranged) so that they fall in the correct order when the signature cuts and folds as it comes off the press. See Figure 1.

Designing to make the most of this efficiency gives you your best value. Most people assume that fewer pages will cost less money. That's not always true.

For example, let's say you want to print a sixty-page catalog at a standard web trim size of 8.375 x 10.875. Sixty divided by sixteen equals 3.75. This means your catalog will require three-and-three-quarters signatures. That isn't possible; the web press can't print just 75% of a signature. In order to produce a sixty-page catalog, we would print three sixteen-page signatures on the web press for a total of 48 pages. The remaining twelve pages would have to be printed in two portions: an eight-page portion and a four-page portion. Are you sensing where this is going? Your sixty page catalog will have to be produced in *five separate pieces*. It will probably require being put on two different presses and will create more plates. Parts of it could even need extra cutting in preparation for stitching.

Now let's say you want to print a sixty-four page catalog. Sixty-four divided by sixteen equals four. That's right! Your catalog can easily and *efficiently* be produced by printing *four sixteen-page signatures* on the web press. There are fewer plates to burn, fewer press areas, there's less set-up time on the press and no extra processing prior to binding.

All of this translates into savings for you.

Which means, in this case, it will cost you less to produce the 64-page catalog than the 60-page catalog.

The bottom line is that we want to work with you to find the best way to print your job. We can give you a finished product at a great value to meet your needs!

So the Happy Business printed a sixty-four page catalog on a web press for a great price. The people were ecstatic and placed many orders from the attractive catalogs. And they all printed happily ever after!

10 9	7 8	6 5	11 12
16 15	1 2	4 3	13 14

Figure 1. This is how a 16 page booklet would be imposed. The black numbers represent the pages on the front of the signature, while the cyan numbers show the corresponding pages on the back side.

CPC
PRINTING & PROMOTIONS