



NATIONAL REACH. LOCAL TOUCH.

7 questions to ask before committing to a label printer



Your label printer is a business partner crucial to ensuring the quality of your final product. Your label determines your shelf appeal and reinforces your brand, and you shouldn't trust just anyone with this responsibility. Just like any business partnership, do your research to find the label printer that's right for you

1. What capabilities do they offer?

Does your label printer offer flexographic printing? Digital printing? Both? Think about the embellishments you might want such as embossing and foil stamping – make sure your printer offers them. Their selection of inks, foils, label stock, adhesives, varnishes and laminations should be wide enough to engineer the perfect label for you, and their production capabilities should be able to process large label orders.

2. What is their turnaround time?

How fast do you need your labels? Make sure to get an accurate estimate of the turnaround time from your label printer. Turnaround time will usually start only after you've placed your order. Be sure to contact your printer well in advance if you need to spend time discussing your options or finalizing your art before placing your order. Turnaround time should be reasonable, even for long label runs and multiple SKUs. Also be sure to discuss any extra time that might be required for

things like press proofs and shipping.

3. Are they within your budget?

Request a quote from your label printer and be sure to give them as much information about your project as possible. Prices can vary depending on numerous things such as your quantities, materials used, tooling needed and embellishments added. Keep in mind larger quantities will almost always give you a better price break, especially when you order from a printer equipped to produce a large quantity of labels.

4. Are they established and experienced?

How long has your label printer been in business? It's a good idea to go with someone who is well established; not only will they be more experienced and able to handle the label needs of large brands, but they will also be more likely to stay in business.

5. Do they exhibit innovation and have ideas?

As a business partner, your label printer should exhibit the same commitment to innovation and new ideas that you do. They should demonstrate this within their own company through reinvestment in the business through new technologies and equipment and through dedication to offering new and exciting products and techniques. They should also be willing to collaborate with you to come up with creative solutions to your label challenges.

6. What questions do they have for you?

When starting a new project your printer should gather some basic information from you to engineer your label the correct way. For example, they will want to know how you will be applying your labels, by hand or machine? What type of surface will it be applied to, glass or plastic? What are the application conditions, cold or hot? As in a good interview, the questions and answers will flow both ways.

7. Are your communication styles compatible?

Think about your preferred contact method and make sure you will be able to communicate with your printer. If you prefer phone or email, make sure they will consistently be available to you that way. While you shouldn't make this decision based on emotions, this is the time to see how well you 'click' with your printer. You'll be able to tell from their communication style if they value your time and are committed to giving you quality service.

A good label printer will take the time to get to know you and your business. They will talk with you, not down to you, and provide resources to help you make educated decisions about your label project. Like any relationship, compatibility between character, personality, and best practices will make working together with your label printer a pleasure, and both parties can enjoy a mutually

beneficial, long-term partnership.