

Autobond Etch Varnish - Common Questions

- Q.** What is the normal application/use for etch varnish?
- A.** To print over gloss film lamination, ensuring a contrast between the gloss film and matt etch varnish. The darker the colour, the better it looks. Etch varnish is used on brochures, book covers, presentation folders, etc.
- Q.** How is the etch varnish applied to the sheet?
- A.** It is printed on an offset printing press to the area of the sheet that is to be matt.
- Q.** What type of plate is used? Do I need to use a special plate?
- A.** A regular offset printing plate is all that is required.
- Q.** How much water do I use?
- A.** Use the minimum amount of water. Back it off until it dries on the plate, and then slightly increase the amount.
- Q.** Do I use offset powder?
- A.** Offset spray powder is used as normal – perhaps a little heavier than normal.
- Q.** How thick should the varnish be?
- A.** This is a difficult question to answer. It is something that is learned by using the varnish. If you apply too little, you see an inadequate covering. As with the water, go to the minimum and increase the amount. You can use an ink film thickness wheel on top of the sheet.

Working out volumes is not that easy as some jobs you can hit twice for a sensational effect and others, depending on color and backgrounds only need one light coat for the same sensational effect. How much ETCH you will need will also vary as the volume of your print, size of the coverage and so on are the contributors. One example, a printer who uses the ETCH said he coated sheet size of 700 x 1000 cm with around 50 % coverage in spots, they used just 1kg of etch per 5,000 sheets.

- Q.** Are there any registration issues with the etch varnish?
- A.** Registration can be a little tricky mostly due to the added thickness of the film to the sheet. Running 1-up is obviously the best registration situation. If running 2-up to 4-up or more, it's best to run the etch varnish in two different units. This will allow the pressman to register each half of the sheet independently. Another thing to be aware of is the curl on the sheet which can make feeding and registration a chore.. If this is an issue small piles on the feeder are recommended. Also wedges and swords can aid in keeping the pile flat.



Q. How many sheets can I put on a stacker?

A. If you don't have IR dryers, you need to rack the print in lifts of 10 mm / 4", depending on the thickness of paper. It takes approximately 2 hours to dry to touch when IR dryers are used or 10 hours to dry to touch when IR dryers are not used.

Q. Do I use special film on the laminator?

A. Most films can be used – OPP, PET, or Nylon, so long as the dyne level is 40 or over (anything less may alter the final result). However, film quality, age and temperature during processing will influence your results, so some internal trialing should be performed to find the best combination.

Q. What are the advantages over spot UV, and gloss over matt film?

A. Matt film is nearly twice the cost of gloss, and it scuffs very easily. Autobond Etch Varnish can be printed on any offset press with a regular plate – spot UV must go to a specialist screen press with UV dryers. In comparison with screen printing you can achieve a much tighter register with offset printing.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT OUR HEAD OFFICE



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