

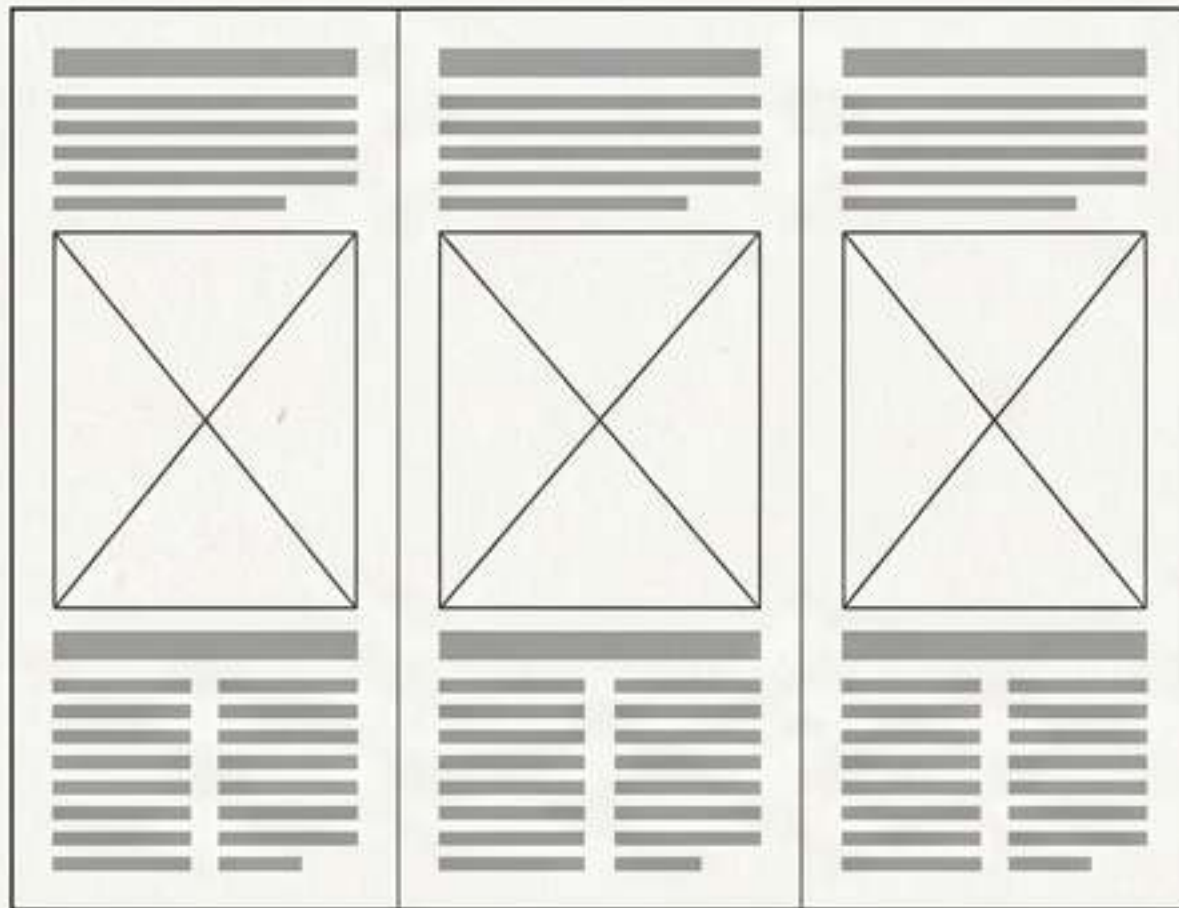
REGISTRATION & CMYK

FOLD ARCHITECTURE

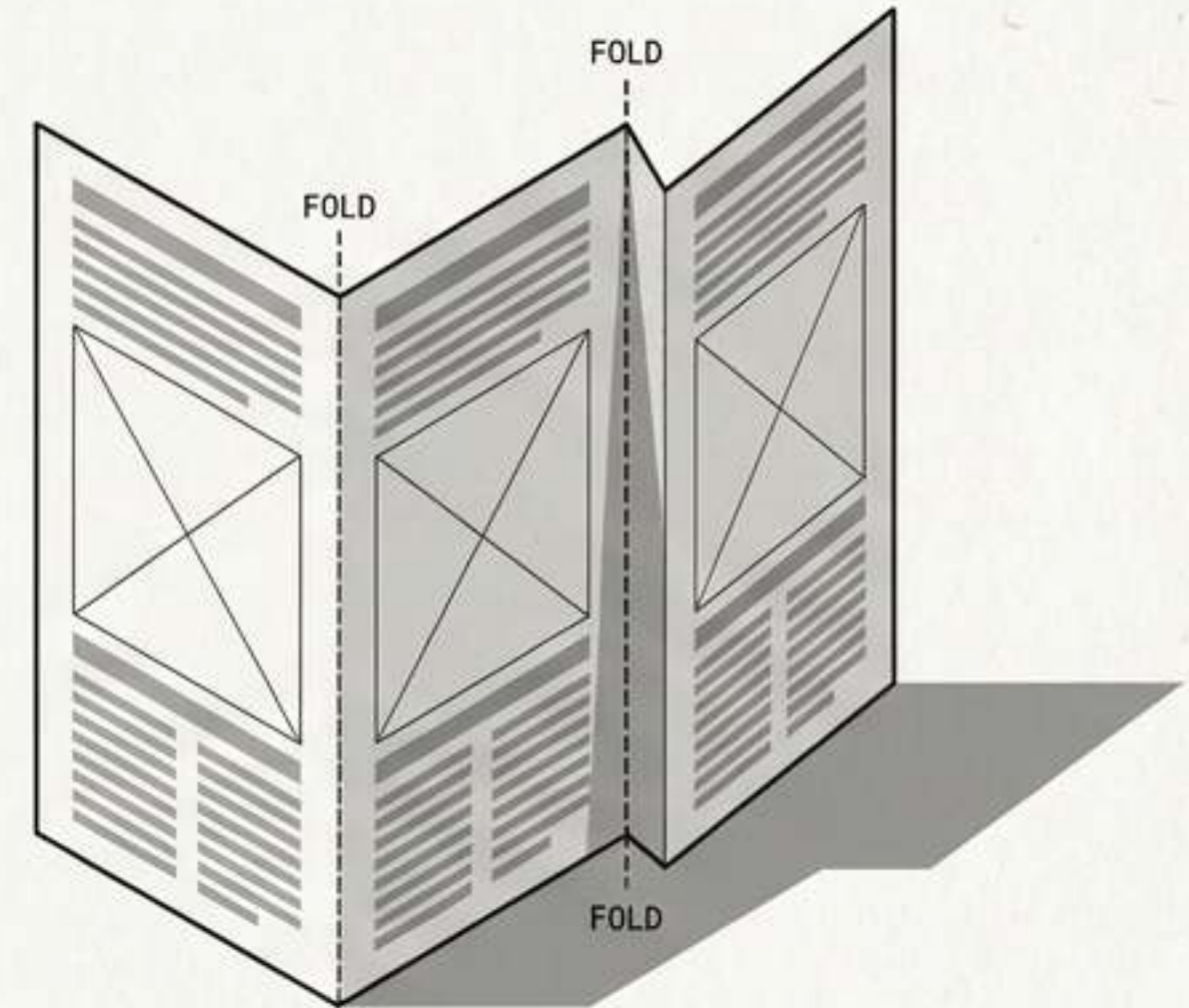
ENGINEERING THE CUSTOM BROCHURE:
A TECHNICAL PLAYBOOK FOR PRINT SPECIFICATION.

The Intersection of Design and Physics

The Graphic Intent



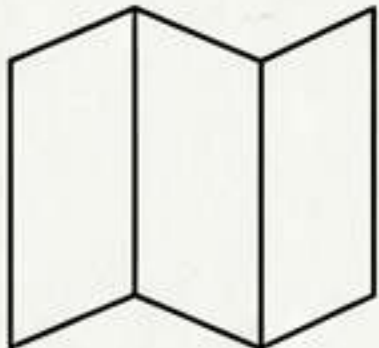
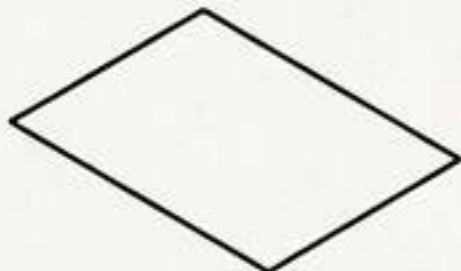
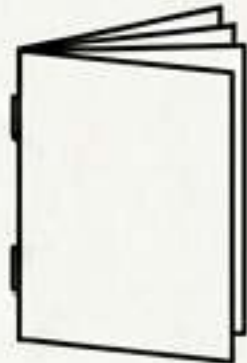
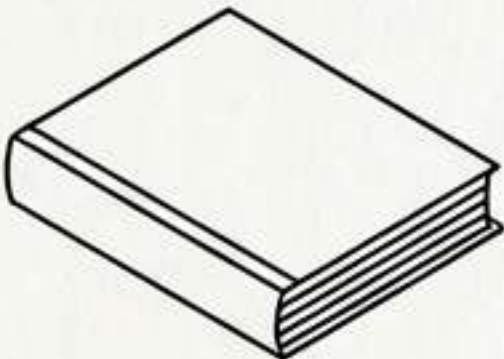
The Physical Sequence



Definition: A custom brochure is a printed communication piece produced from one or more sheets and folded into panels.

Core Insight: Effectiveness depends equally on graphic design and the physical sequence revealed as the piece is opened. It is an interactive, tactile medium.

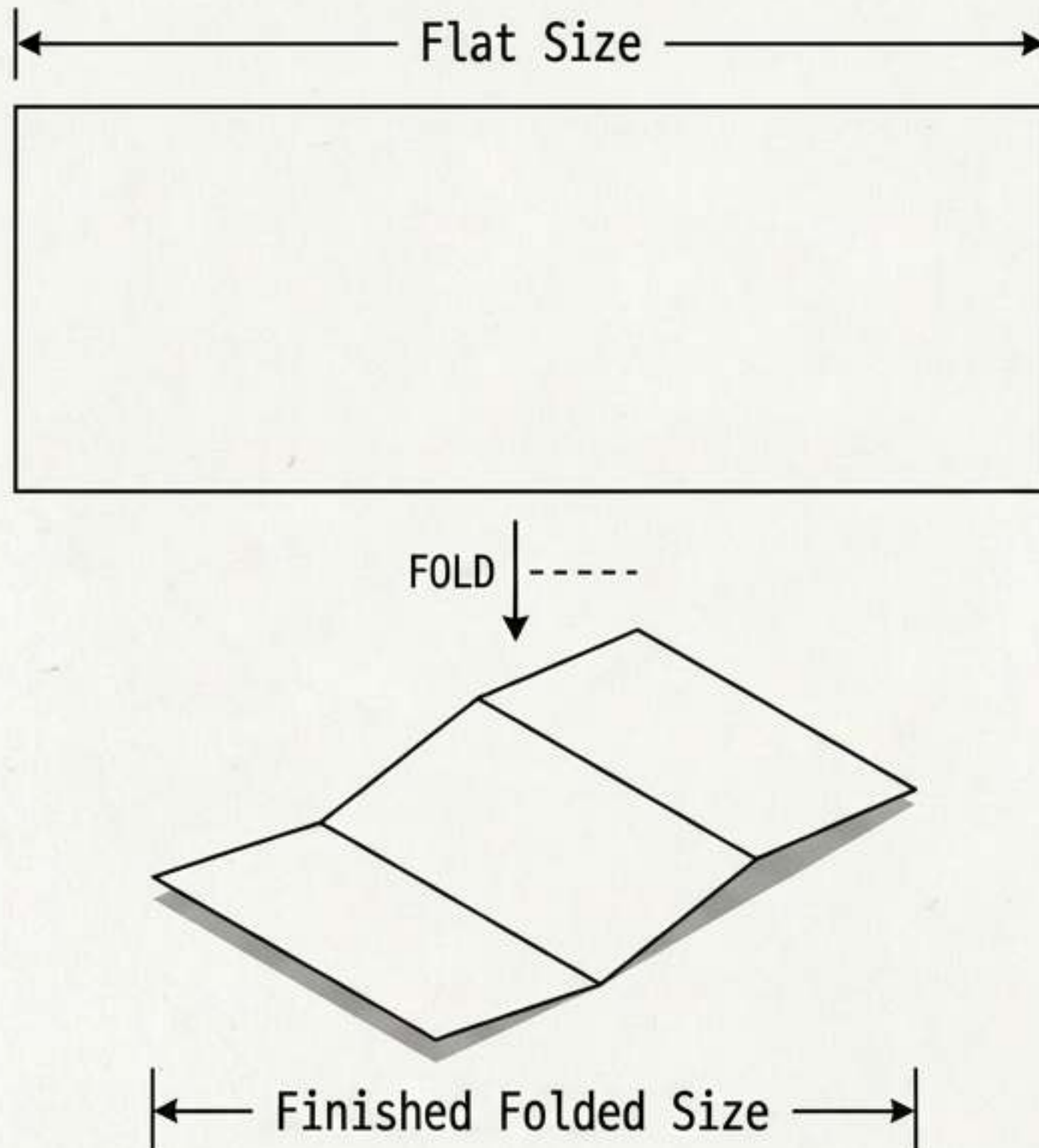
Format Diagnostic Matrix

Custom Brochure	Flyer / Leaflet	Booklet	Catalog
			
Structure: Multiple panels, sequenced folds. Format: Nested folding (no binding). Primary Use Case: Sequenced reveal for rack display, mail, or inserts.	Structure: Flat sheet or simple single fold. Format: Unbound. Primary Use Case: Handout for immediate reading.	Structure: Bound pages. Format: Stapled or stitched. Primary Use Case: Extended reading via handout or mail.	Structure: Extensive pagination. Format: Bound. Primary Use Case: Arranged primarily for product selection.



NOTE: If project requires multiple nested sheets, binding, pockets, or extensive pages, abort brochure specification and evaluate alternative production routes.

Phase 1: Specifying the Physical Mechanics



- ☐ Define Flat Size & Orientation
- ☐ Define Finished Folded Size
- ☐ Define Exact Number of Panels
- ☐ Define Specific Fold Style
(e.g., Tri-fold, Accordion, Gate)

Ambiguous terms like “tri-fold” invite misinterpretation. Always provide a fold diagram showing the front cover, back panel, inside sequence, and opening direction.

The “Nesting” Imperative

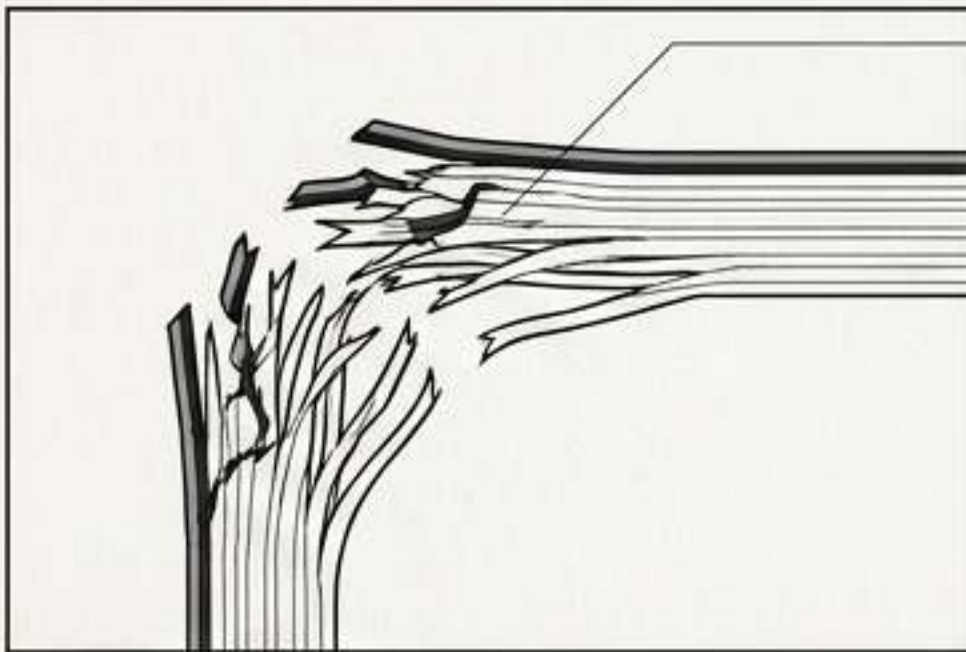
The Rule: Never assume equal panel widths for nested folds.



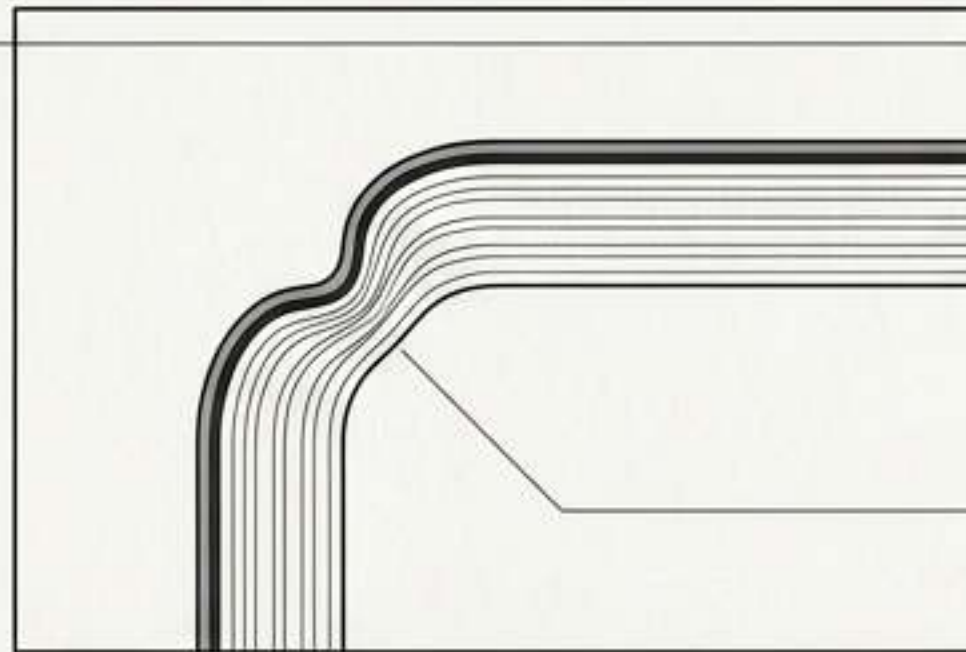
The Buckle Point: Inner panels must be physically narrower to fold inward without buckling against the outer spine.

ACTION ITEM: Always obtain the supplier's precise dieline or panel dimensions **BEFORE** executing final artwork.

The Physics of the Fold



Cracking (Unscored)



Engineered Score
(Pre-creased)

- Scoring is mandatory when utilizing thicker stock.
- Scoring is required when artwork features heavy, dark ink coverage across folds.
- Fold quality is heavily dictated by paper grain direction.

Additional Physical Specifications

Paper: Specify desired feel, opacity, stiffness, and surface (do not assume a named stock is available).

Treatments: Perforations, die-cut windows, rounded corners.

Finishes: Spot treatments, lamination, detachable coupons.

Compliance: Critical rub, moisture, mailing, safety, or surface requirements demand sample testing.

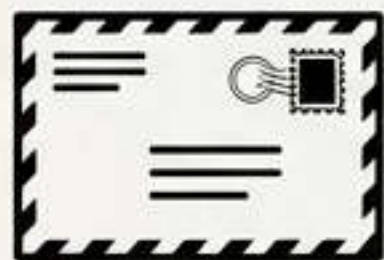
Distribution Logistics Dictate Physical Constraints



Method:
Rack Display

Primary Constraint: Visible Top Panel.

Design must place critical hooks within the top 30% of the folded front cover.



Method:
Envelope /
Package Insert

Primary Constraint: Finished Folded Size & Bulk.

Size is strictly limited by carrier; insertion may require controlled orientation.



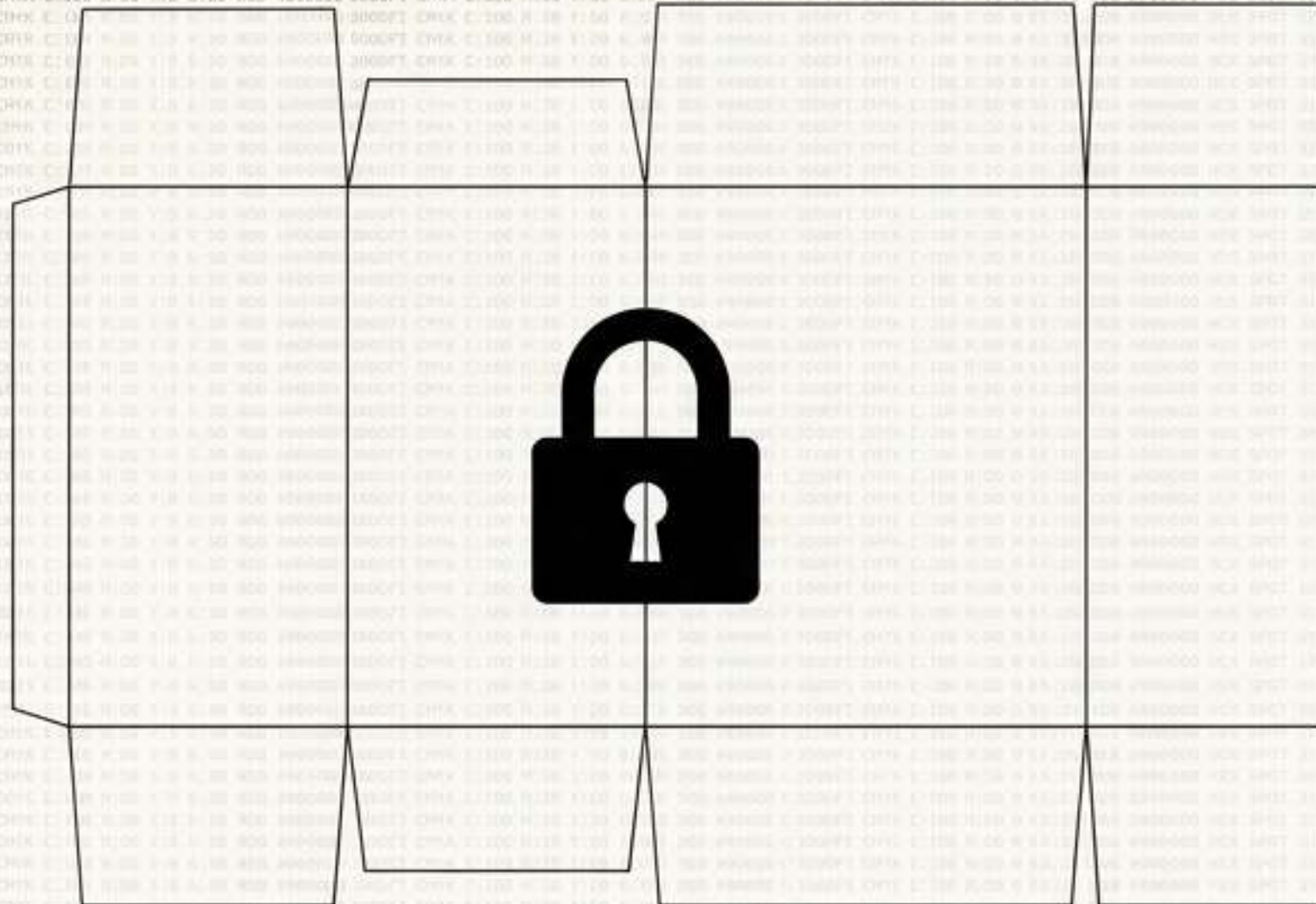
Method:
Machine-Fed
Dispensing

Primary Constraint: Mechanical Tolerances.

Feeder equipment requires exact dimensional consistency; practical trials are mandatory.

Specialty Use Case: If distribution involves writing, stamping, or mailing barcodes, specify an uncoated/unvarnished zone to accept secondary ink.

Phase 2: Artwork Engineering

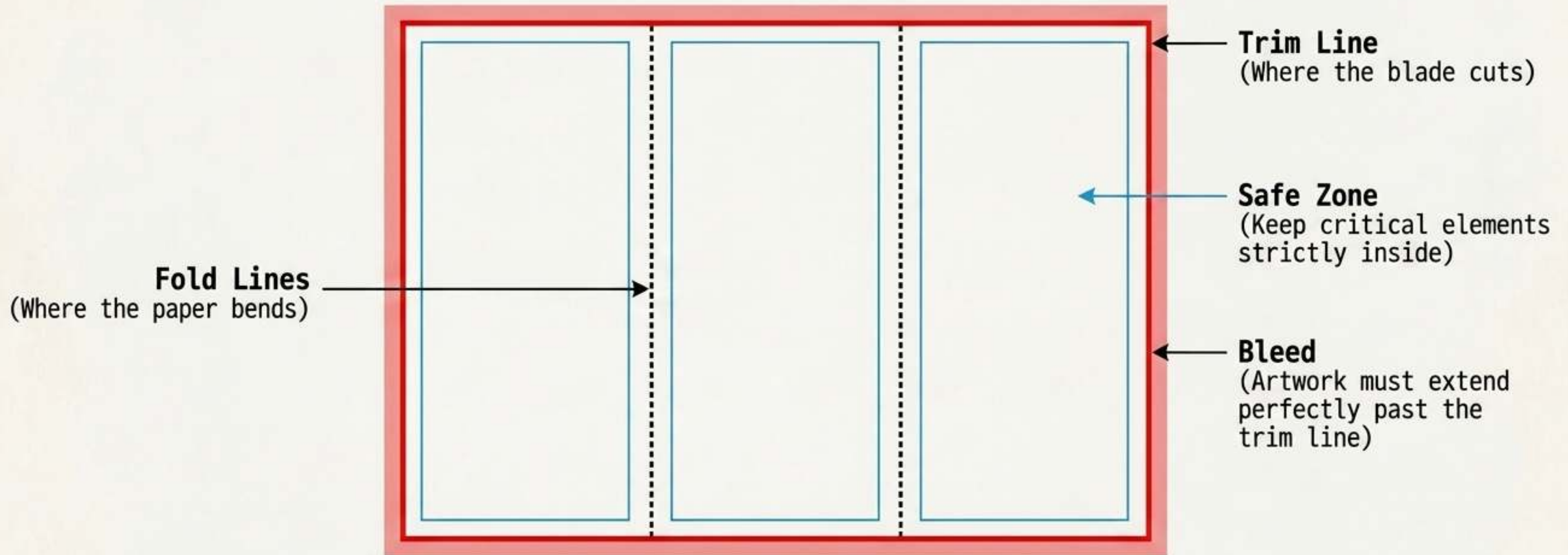


PREP CHECKLIST:

- Use suitable image resolution (300dpi).
- Preserve vector logos and fine rules.
- Identify brand colors, spot colors, and overprints.
- Flag heavy dark coverage and small reversed type.

Beautiful design fails if it defies the dieline.
Artwork must be structurally engineered,
not just aesthetically pleasing.

Anatomy of a Production Blueprint



Rule 1: Mark panel names outside the live area during review.



Rule 2: Never place small text or faces directly across dotted fold lines.



Rule 3: Keep folds, trim, bleed, and safe zones on clearly separated, non-printing file layers.

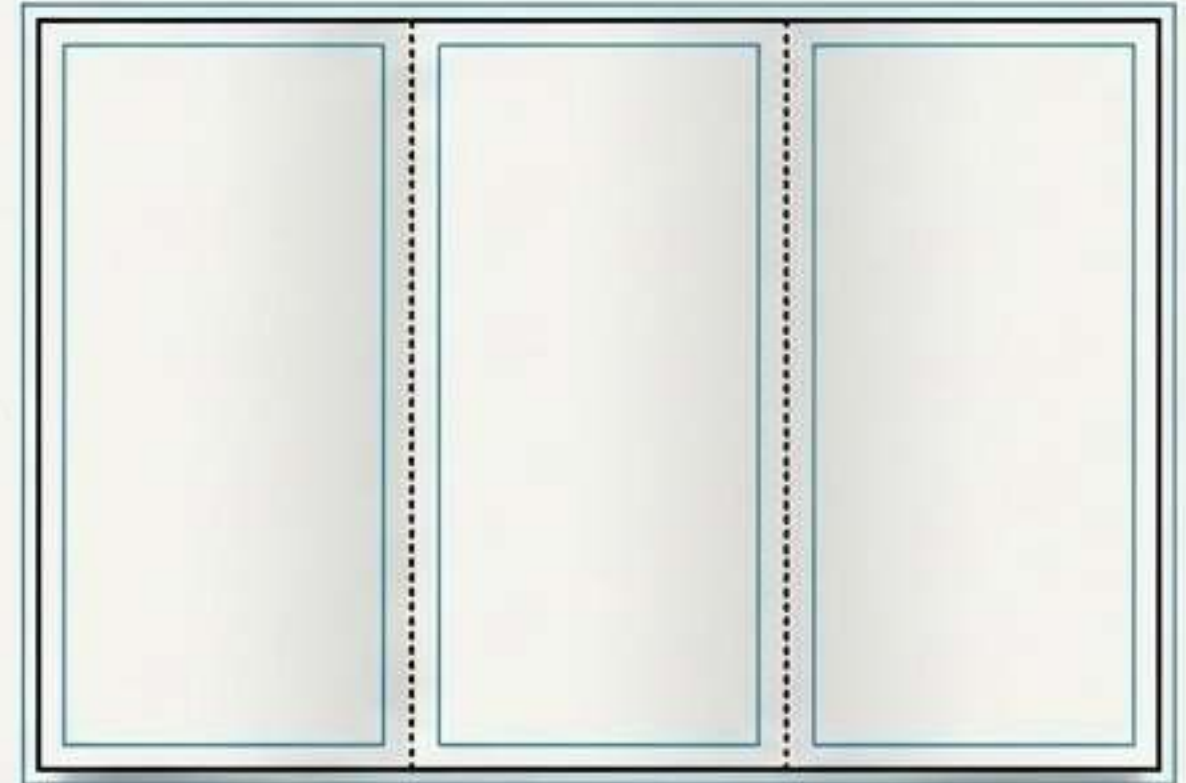
The Reading Sequence (The Reveal)



Step 1: The Hook
(Cover)



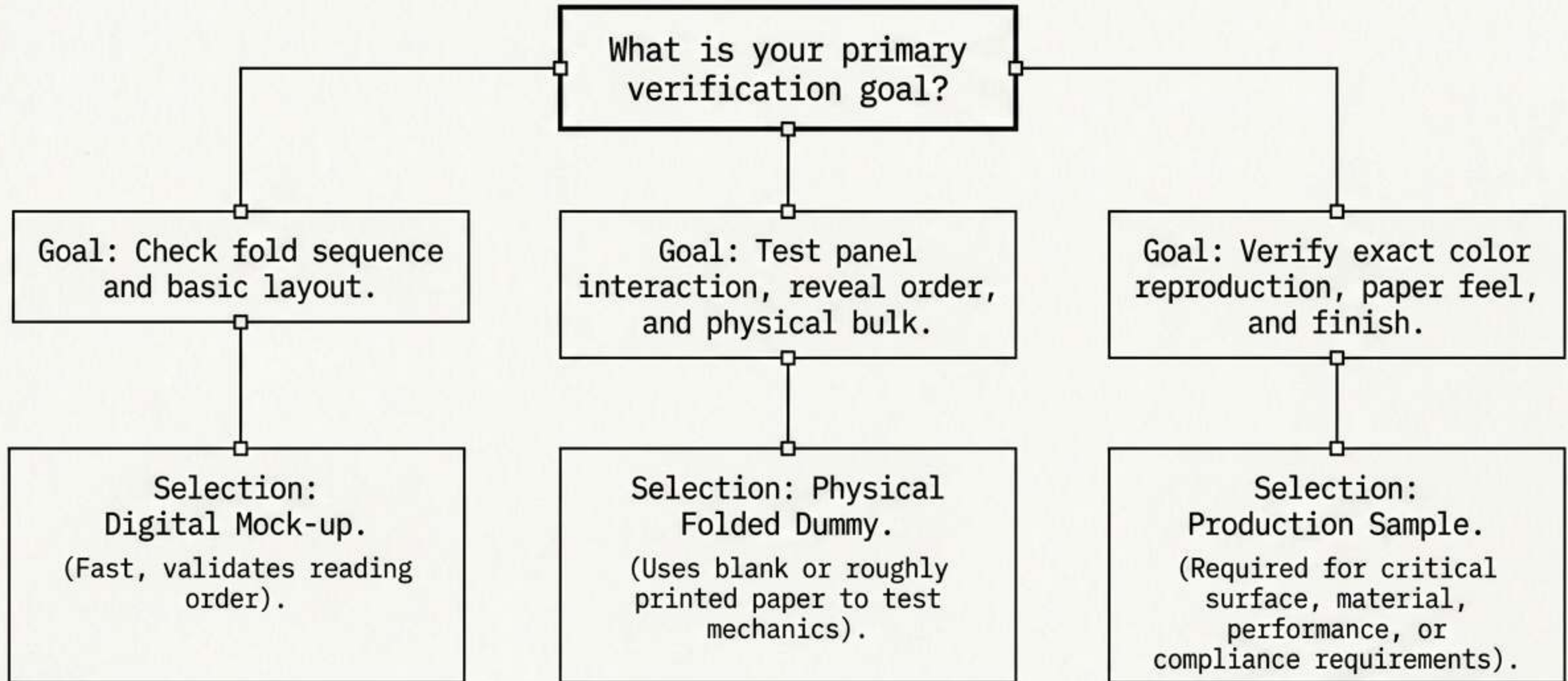
Step 2: The Pivot
(Initial Reveal)



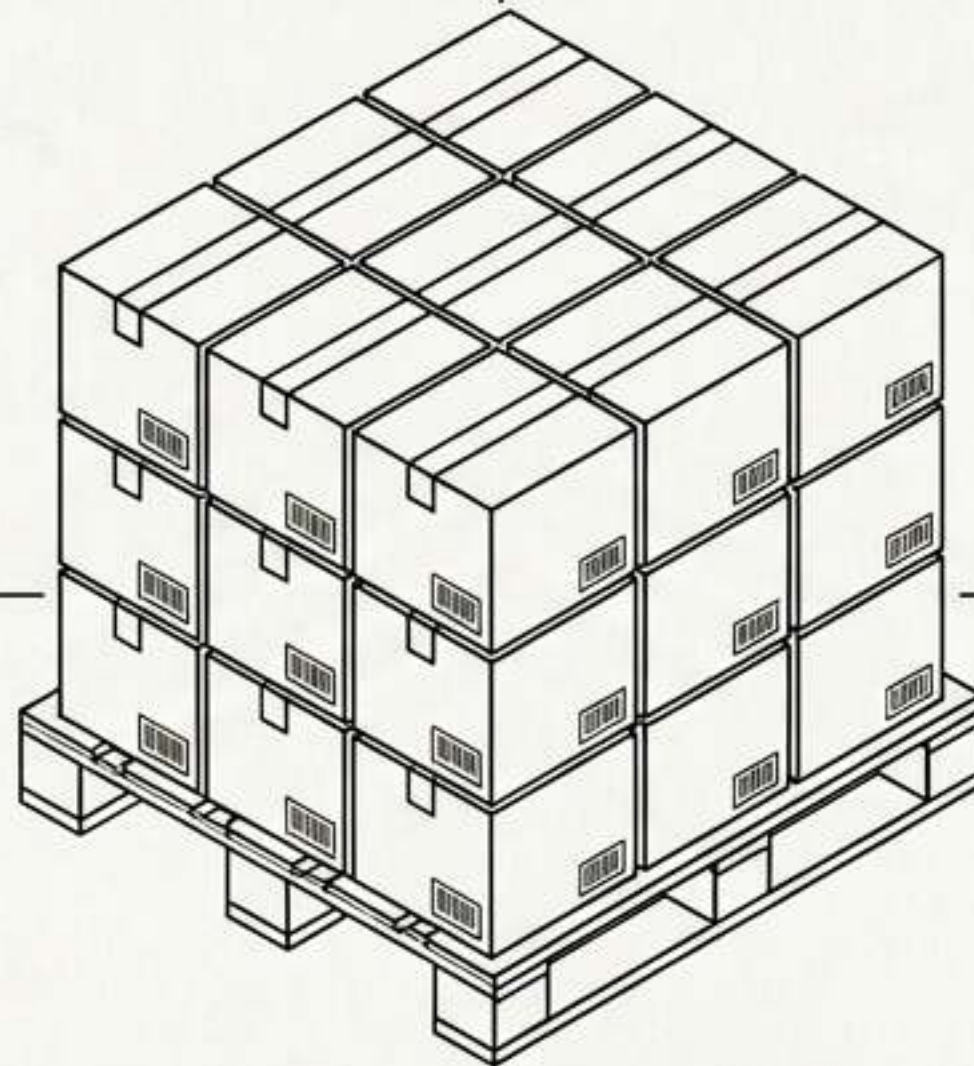
Step 3: The Payoff
(Full Spread)

Structural Insight: Check that copy orientation remains correct after each fold. The visual reading sequence must perfectly align with the physical form. Graphic design cannot exist independently of fold architecture.

Proofing Selection Guide



Phase 3: Post-Press Logistics & Versioning



What happens after the ink dries. Specification must include exactly how the brochures are handled, versioned, and delivered. Failing to specify packing constraints can ruin a flawless print run before it reaches the end user.

Packing & Fulfillment Logistics

Version Control

Are there language, offer, location, or salesperson versions?

ACTION: Clarify if versions share the same paper/finishing. Ask supplier if grouped or separate production is more sensible based on setup constraints.

Packing State

Delivery formats: Flat, Folded, Bundled, Banded, or Individually Protected?

ACTION: Define exact bundle counts, alternating orientation (if required to prevent bowing), and specific carton labels for strict version separation.

Final Destination

Are there multiple delivery destinations? Will these be inserted into another item?

ACTION: If feeding automatic inserting equipment, provide exact equipment dimensional constraints to the printer and request a practical trial run.

Phase 4: The Watertight RFQ Framework

Quadrant 1: Physical Specs

1. Flat size, folded size, quantity, and versions.
2. Fold diagram with sequence, cover, and opening direction.

Quadrant 2: Art & Prepress

3. Template confirmation before final artwork.
4. Writing zones, mailing panels, detachable offers, barcodes.
5. Sequence proofing, folded dummy, and samples.

Quadrant 3: Finishing & Materials

6. Printed sides, color priorities, paper feel, opacity, surface.
7. Scoring, perforation, die-cutting, lamination, special treatments.

Quadrant 4: Logistics & Fulfillment

8. Handout, rack, mail, package-insert, or equipment-fed use.
9. Folded/flat packing, bundles, labels, version control, destinations.
10. Itemized quotation, schedule, freight, and delivery terms.

Quotation
Hub

The Golden Rule of Print Buying

**Confirm panel geometry
and physical reading order
BEFORE approving
design, paper, or finishing.**

The fold plan is the core brochure specification.
Flawless brochures are the result of perfectly synchronized
physical, visual, and logistical engineering.

DISCLAIMER: Final technical and commercial commitments require quotation, artwork, and material review. Never promise exact prices, minimums, schedules, tolerances, or fold accuracy until confirmed by the supplier through physical samples and testing.