

Specifying Custom Posters



A reverse-engineered blueprint for print buyers, marketing managers, and procurement teams. Moving from display environment to final quotation.

The professional quotation starts at the wall and works backward.



Compare supplier proposals only after confirming that each has interpreted the exact same construction and use case.

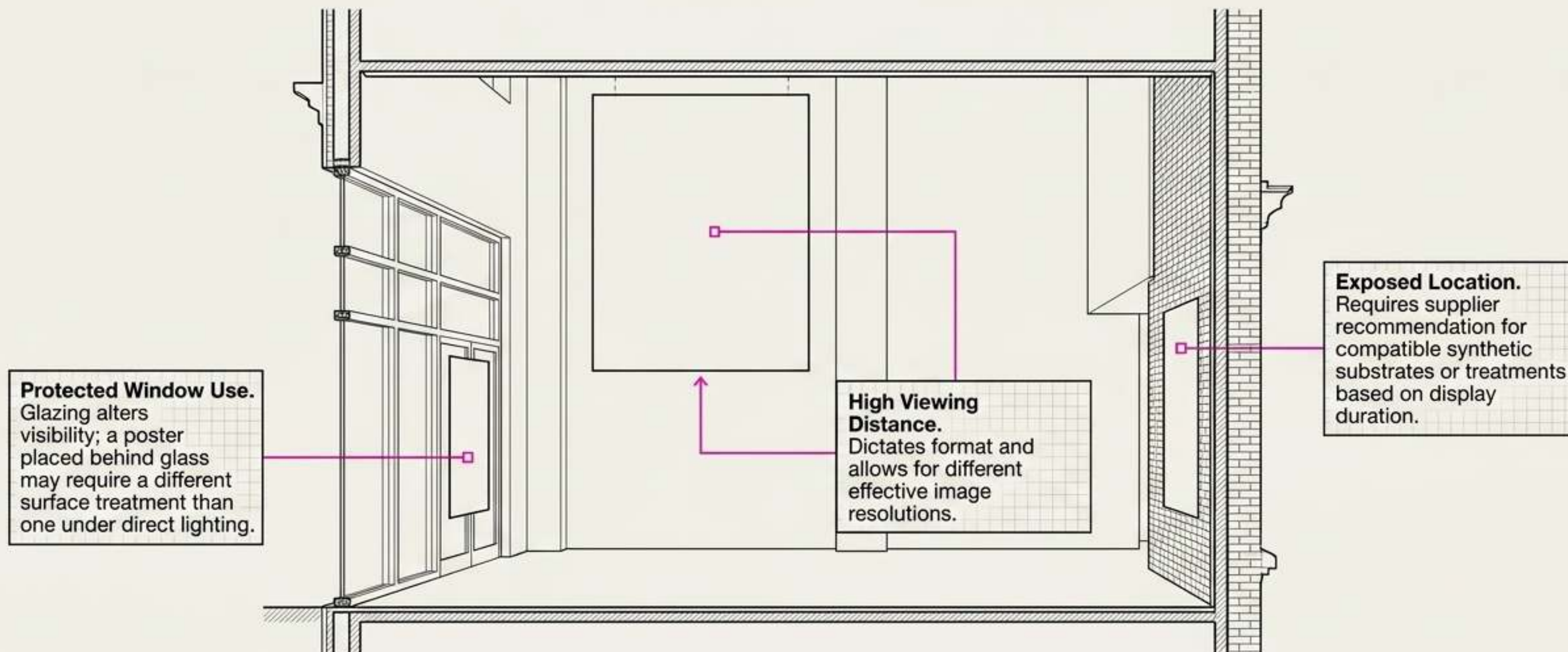
Defining the category boundary

A custom poster is a primarily visual, usually single-sheet printed display. Do not confuse it with other formats.

				
Custom Poster	Banner	Rigid Sign	Adhesive Decal	Fine-Art Print
Intended for walls/windows/frames/fixtures. Route: standard environment-based printing.	Selected for hanging strength or outdoor exposure.	Includes a structural board or panel.	Features a pressure-sensitive adhesive backing.	Requires specialized archival papers and rigorous color management.

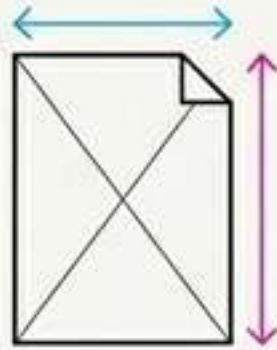
Identify the correct route rather than assuming one construction serves every display condition.

The display environment dictates the substrate



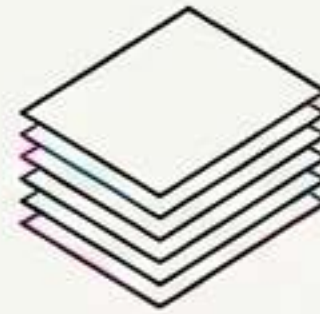
Always state expected viewing distance, illumination, display duration, and mounting method upfront.

Defining format and stock preferences



The Geometry

Specify finished size, orientation (portrait/landscape), and whether printed on single or multiple sides. Note if a full-bleed or bordered layout is required.



The Quantity Distribution

Explicitly state if multiple designs share the total quantity, as this impacts production efficiency.



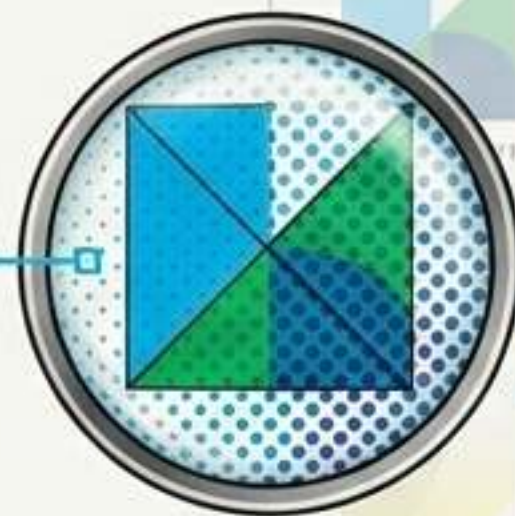
The Surface

Treat gloss, matte, uncoated, or synthetic preferences as critical visual and handling questions, not presumed defaults. Ask the supplier to recommend a compatible paper or synthetic substrate based on the environment.

Flagging critical visual elements for production review

Accurate Brand Color

Requires specific spot color identification and matching.



Photographic Skin Tones

Highly sensitive to color shifts and requires strict proofing.



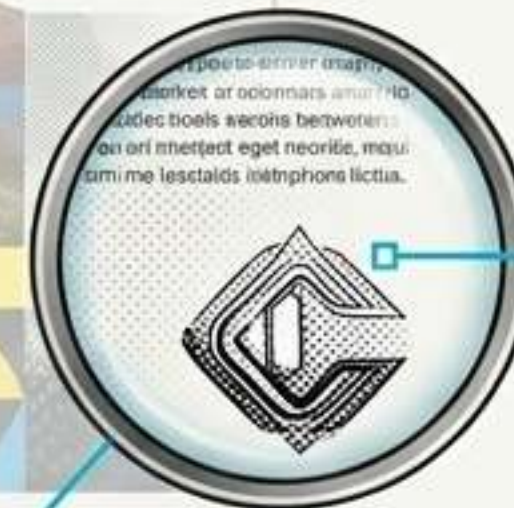
Dense Dark Areas

Heavy ink coverage requires review to prevent smudging or substrate warping.



Small Text

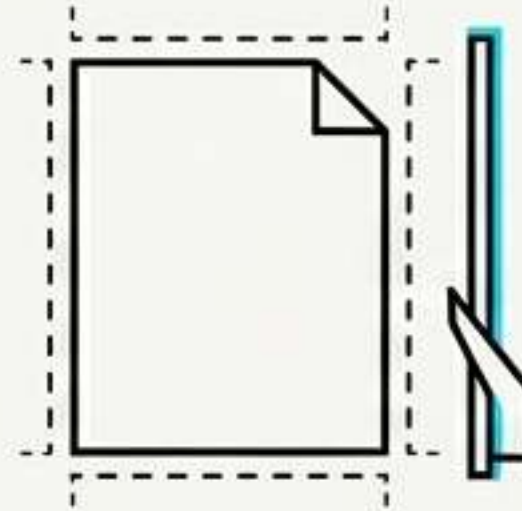
Can lose legibility depending on print resolution and viewing distance.



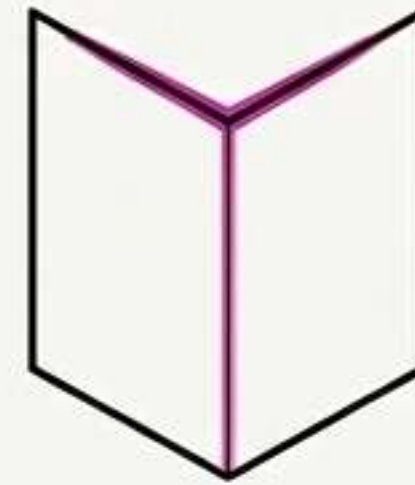
If any of these four elements are present and matter to the final result, they must be explicitly flagged for proof and production review.

Finishing requests change the product route

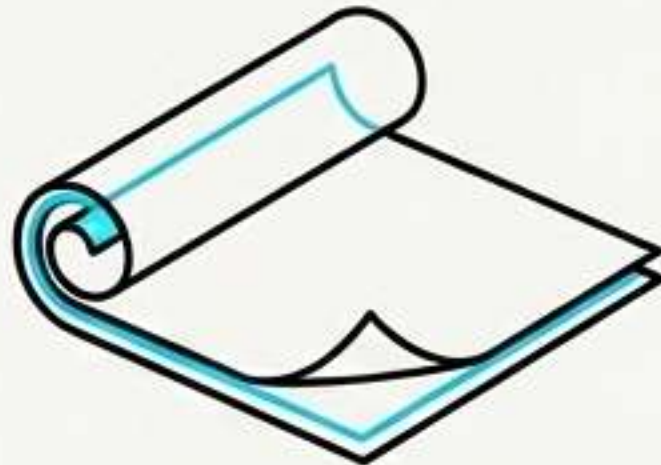
Finishing includes display preparation. Confirm whether any requested finishing is available and suitable for the chosen substrate.



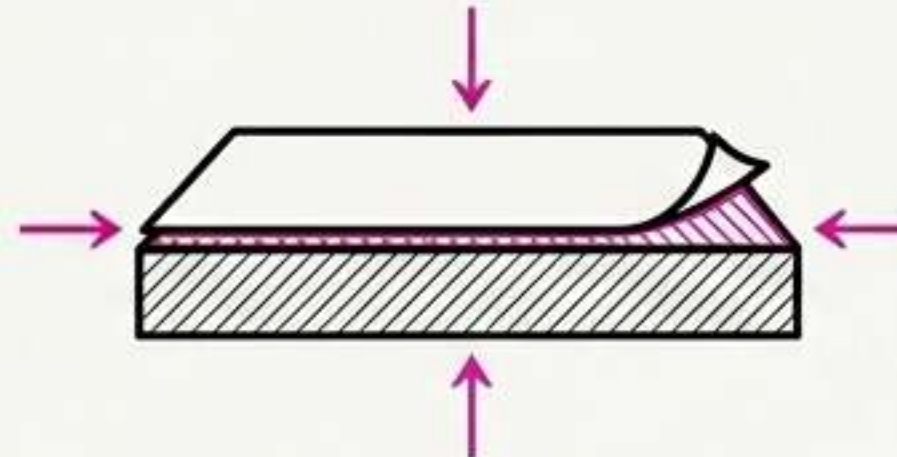
Trimming
Precision cutting to final finished size.



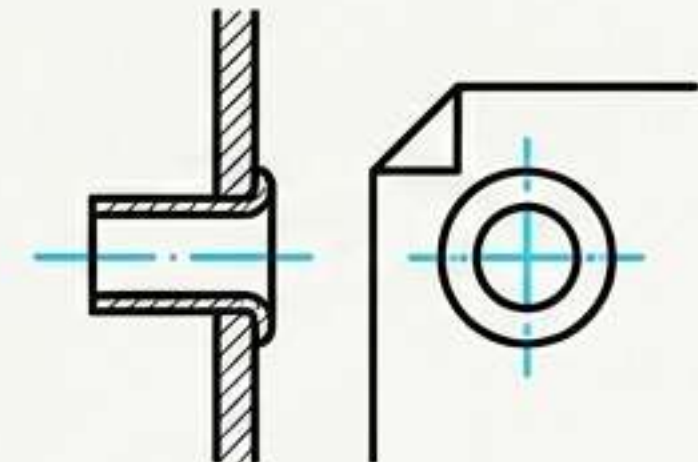
Folding
Alters handling and requires paper grain consideration.



Lamination
Adds protection but changes surface gloss/glare.



Mounting
Adhering to a temporary backing (pushes product toward rigid sign category).



Hardware
Eyelets or drilled holes for specific mounting methods.

Performance claims require physical testing

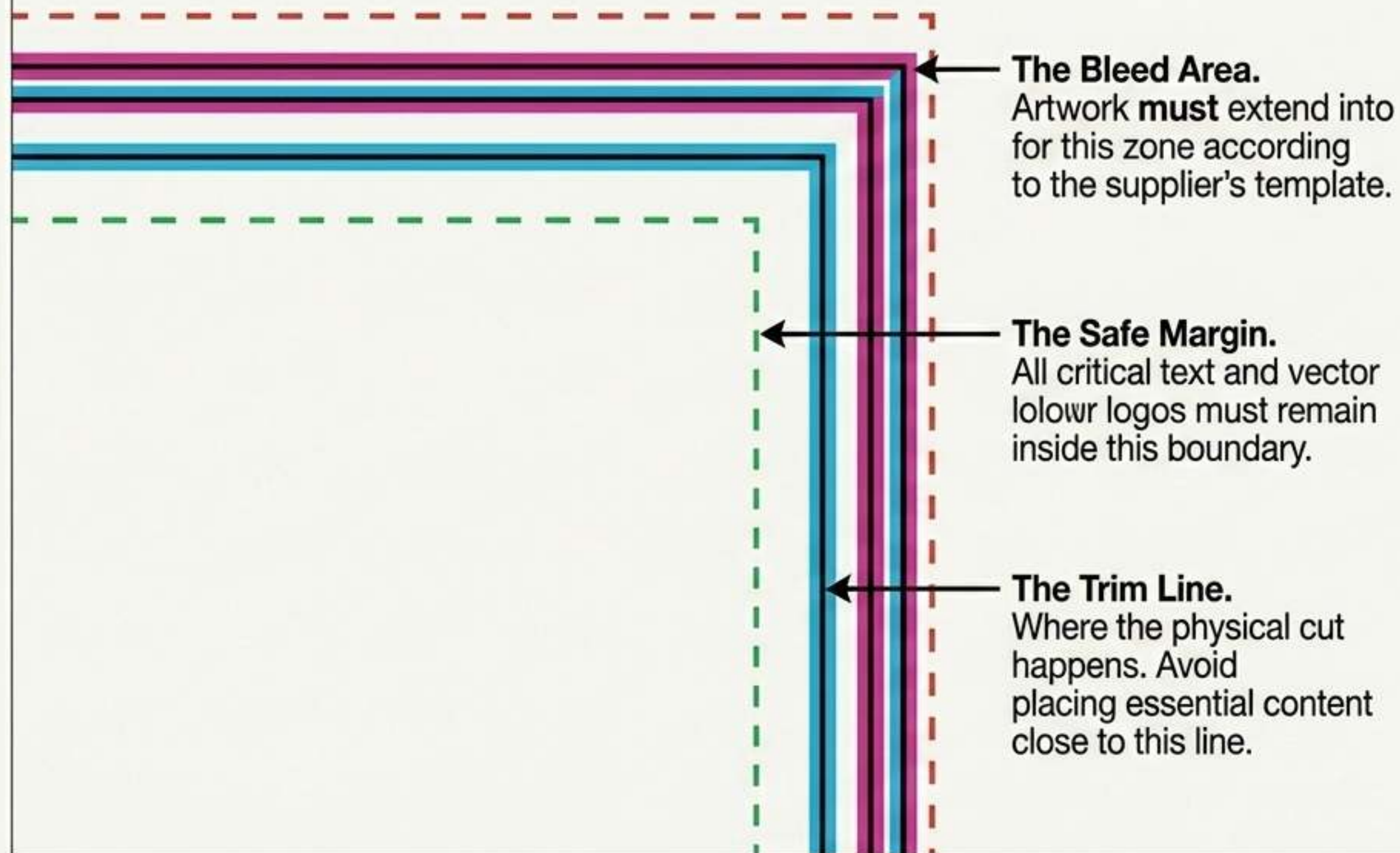
**Never accept promises of exact lifespan,
weather resistance, or color match
without verification.**

⊗ Fade resistance
⊗ Moisture tolerance

⊗ Flame retardancy
⊗ Critical surface adhesion

Any critical surface, material, performance, or compliance requirement **must remain** subject to sample and testing review. Do not present unverified supplier inventory or capabilities as confirmed.

The anatomy of artwork preparation



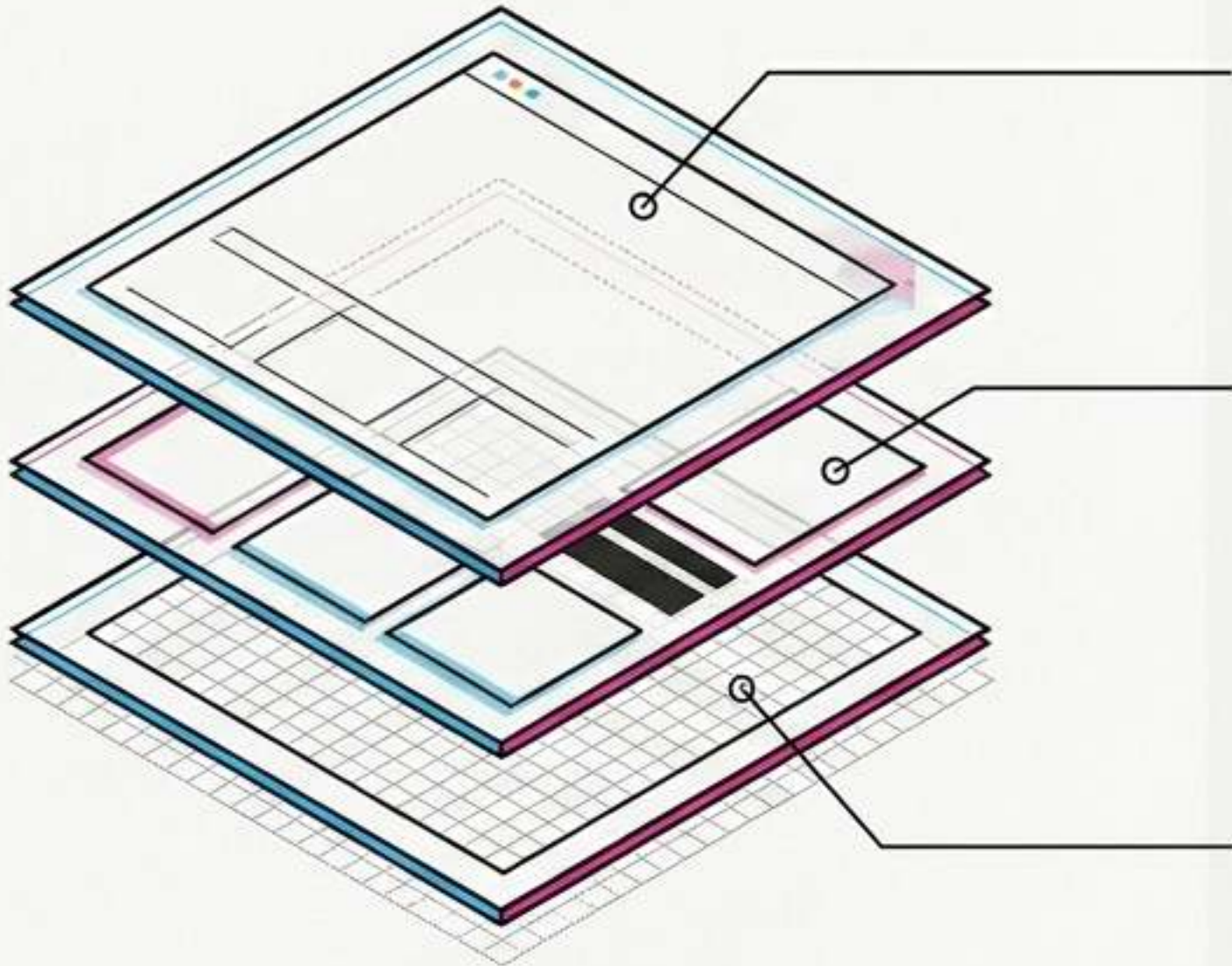
Supply artwork at final proportions.

Ensure adequate effective image resolution for the viewing distance.

Convert or package all fonts and preserve vector logos where possible.

Technical file specifications

Identify complex file attributes upfront. Use the requested color mode and alert the supplier to the following:



☒	Spot Colors Specific, non-CMYK inks required for brand accuracy.
☒	Overprints Where one ink color is intentionally printed directly over another.
☒	Rich Black Builds Layering CMYK percentages to create a deeper black than 100% K alone.
☒	Transparency Digital effects that must be correctly flattened for print.
☒	Variable Content Portions of the design that change across the print run (e.g., regional store addresses).

A screen preview is not a reliable substitute



Monitors emit light; paper absorbs it.
A screen cannot reliably preview a selected substrate or finish.

Path A: Digital Proof

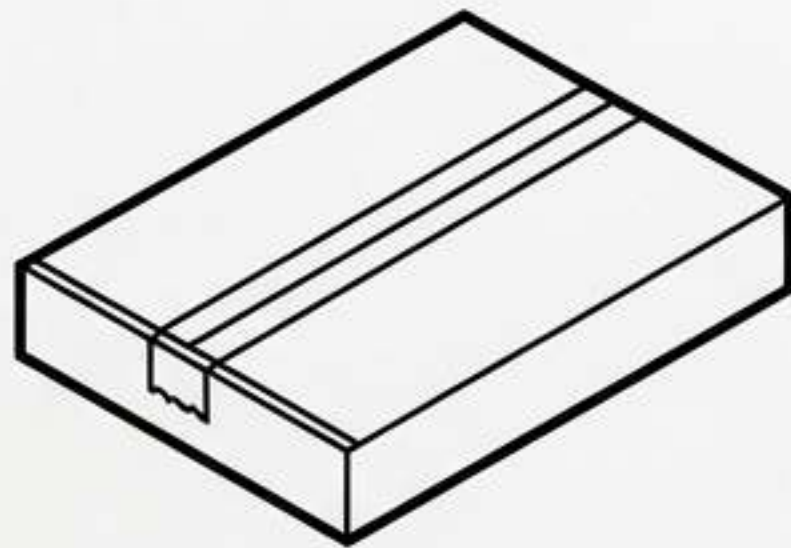
Use this exclusively for layout confirmation
and text checking.

Path B: Physical Proof or Production Sample

Request this if accurate color, complex surface
finish, or material performance is critical.

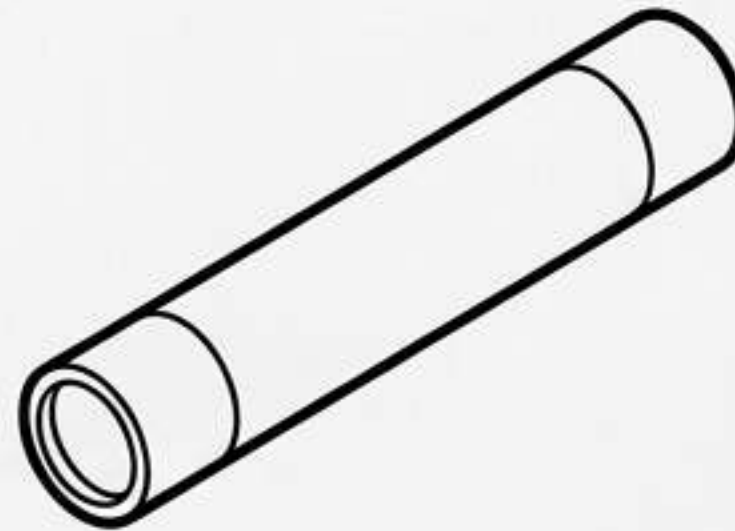
The physical impact of packing decisions

Method 1: Flat Packing



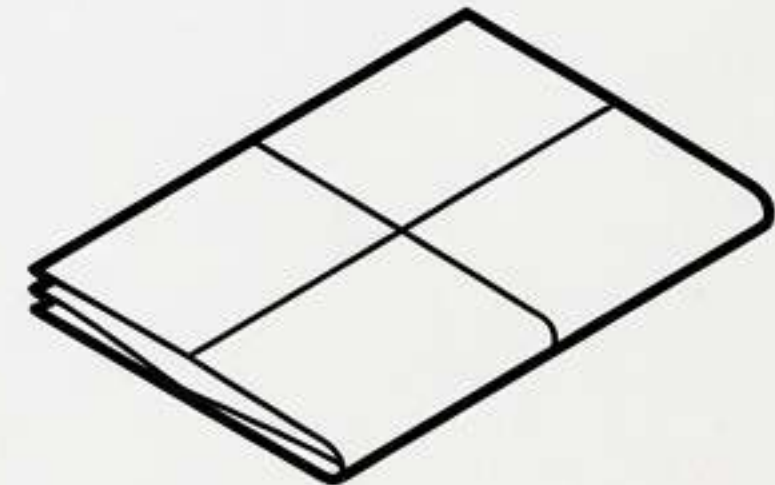
Impact: Protects presentation, but significantly increases parcel dimensions and freight cost.

Method 2: Rolled



Impact: Compact for shipping, but may negatively affect the ability to flatten the poster later for installation.

Method 3: Folded



Impact: Most compact and cost-effective, but creates permanent structural creases in the artwork.

Alternative notes: Specify if posters should be interleaved (sheets of protective paper between posters) or individually protected.

Delivery routing and quotation structure



Quantity Math ←

List total quantity AND quantity per design. Ask whether versions can be combined efficiently or must be quoted separately.



Kitting Sequence ←

Detail any specific order the posters must be packed in for retail rollout.



→ Carton Specs

Provide required carton identification and exact inner-pack quantities.



→ Quotation Breakdown

Ask the supplier to separate the quotation into distinct line items: Printing, Finishing, Proofing, Packing, and Freight.

The Complete RFQ Blueprint

Phase 1: Environment & Specs

1. State size, orientation, quantity, and designs.
2. Describe indoor/window/exposed use and duration.
3. Give viewing distance, lighting, and mounting.
4. Specify printed sides, bleed, stock, and surface.

Phase 2: Print & Artwork

5. List trimming, lamination, holes, or finishing.
6. Identify brand-color, photo, small-text, or compliance priorities.
7. Provide artwork format and request template requirements.
8. Select digital proof, physical proof, or sample review.

Phase 3: Logistics

9. Define flat, rolled, folded, interleaved, or individual packing.
10. Request terms, schedule, freight, and delivery plan.

Guardrails

Final commercial commitments require full artwork and material review. Do not promise exact prices, minimums, lead times, or tolerances upfront. Verify everything.