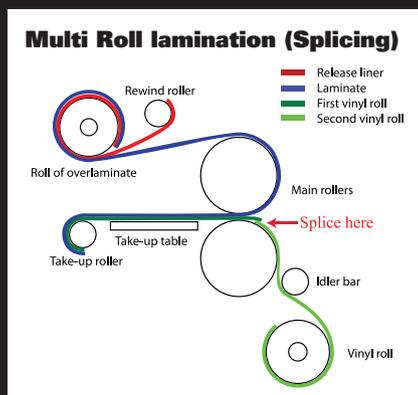
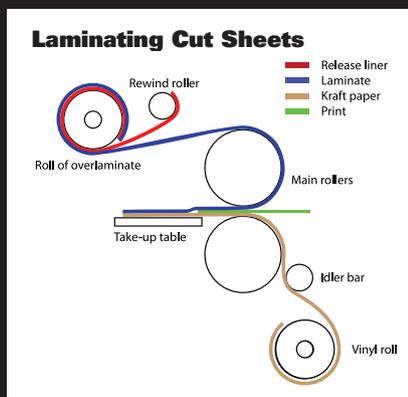
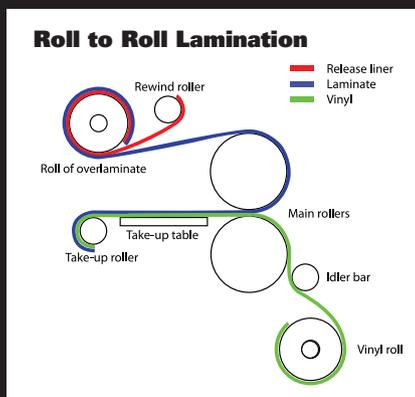
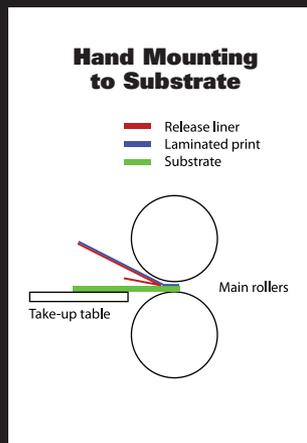
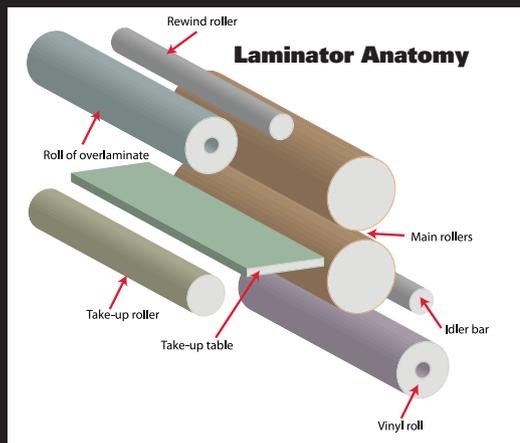


Lamination Techniques

BY DUANE FAST

Tips for reducing waste and ensuring great results in the laminator room



Duane Fast is the general manager at Artcraft Advertising Ltd., Vancouver. Since 1965, the company has specialized in the design and manufacturing of signage and display graphics. Contact him via e-mail at dfast@artcraft.com.

"Trust the expert" (Experto credite)

—Virgil (70-19 BC)

THIS MONTH I wanted to present some professional tips on laminating wide-format prints; but rather than sharing my own experiences, I decided to ask a true expert who teaches this material. Don Bahr owns Smooth Finish LLC, a wide-format digital printing consultancy. Among his many other talents, Don has spent 20 years teaching lamination techniques.

Here Don shares a few tips and tricks that he has learned over the years.

Roll-To-Roll Lamination

Here's how you can web your laminator with the least amount of waste:

1) Attach the laminate release liner to the rewind roller.

2) Separate the release liner from the laminate.

3) Web the laminate over the top main roller and through the nip (the space between the two main rollers).

4) Attach the loose end of the laminate to the rear take-up table.

5) Tighten the release liner on the rewind roller.

6) Web the vinyl behind the idler bar and feed between the main rollers, using only a 1" leader on the vinyl.

7) Adjust the pressure on the main rollers. The laminate will be pressed onto the vinyl directly under the roller pressure point.

8) Release the adhesive edge from the take-up table.

9) Feed the vinyl through the rollers to the rear take-up table.

10) Trim off the leader.

11) Attach to the rear take-up roller.

12) Run the job with only 1" of wasted leader!

No-Waste Splicing

Sometimes there are multiple short rolls of printed vinyl that all need the same laminate. Webbing each roll individually is time-consuming and wastes a lot of material. Splicing the rolls of vinyl together produces one long seamless roll.

1) After laminating the first roll, leave several inches of the back end of the first roll exposed at the front of the main rollers.

2) Put the next roll of vinyl onto its roller.

3) Web the vinyl behind the idler bar and up to the exposed end of the last roll.

4) Attach the new vinyl to the old roll using an inch of underlap. The edge of the first roll should be on top of the edge for the second roll. This eliminates the possibility of the edge catching on the rollers.

5) Feed through the rollers and keep on laminating!

Hand Mounting Small Pieces

Rather than webbing up an entire roll just to mount a small print to substrate, hand-mounting can save a lot of time and money.

1) Set the height of the rollers by using a piece of the mounting substrate to get an appropriate amount of pressure.

2) Trim the graphic to fit the substrate.

3) Turn the graphic upside-down and pull back one edge of the release liner to expose 2" of adhesive. Crease the liner to make a sharp edge at the fold.

4) Turn the graphic face-up and position on the substrate.

5) Mount the exposed adhesive portion of the graphic to the substrate by pressing on the edge of the graphic with the heel of the hand.

6) Take it to the rear of the laminator, it's easier to do this from the back.

7) Feed the substrate 1" into the main rollers.

8) Hold onto the release liner flap and run the print through the machine.

9) *Viola!* A mounted print with no waste!



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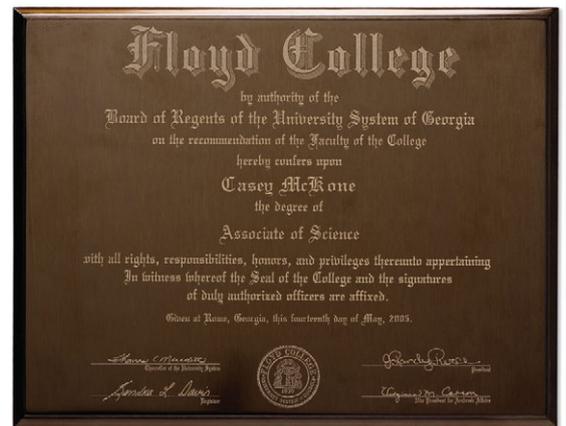
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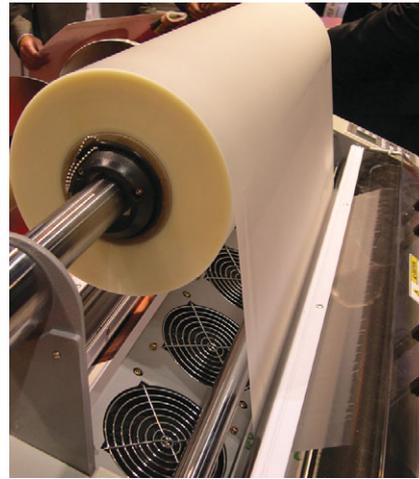
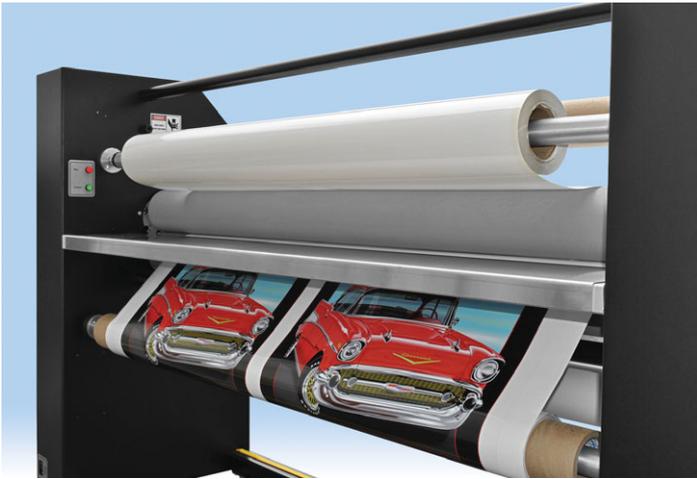
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(Far left) Professional laminating in various situations can be achieved with minimal waste. (Photo courtesy of AGL)

(Left) It's possible to web up your laminator so you waste only 1" in vinyl leader on your next job.

Laminating Cut Sheets

Laminating small prints can be very tricky and time consuming, but this procedure reduces the difficulty level and decreases the chances of failure:

- 1) Attach the laminate release liner to the rewind roller.
- 2) Separate the release liner from the laminate.
- 3) Web the laminate over the top main roller and through the nip (the

space between the two main rollers).

- 4) Attach the loose end of the laminate to the rear take-up table.
- 5) Tighten the release liner on the rewind roller.
- 6) Mount a roll of Kraft paper on the bottom roller. Web the paper behind the idler bar and feed between the main rollers.
- 7) Adjust the pressure on the main rollers. The laminate will be pressed

onto the paper directly under the roller pressure point.

- 8) Release the adhesive edge from the take-up table.
- 9) Feed the paper through the rollers to the rear take-up table.
- 10) Trim off the leader.
- 11) Attach to the rear take-up roller.
- 12) Feed the prints through the main rollers and they will come out the back perfectly laminated! **SDG**

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