ARLON

▸ Selection and Use of Application Paper

Application paper is used to protect graphic films from surface damage, to maintain spacing registration and to assist with installation. While selection and use of application paper is relatively simple, there are a few rules that must be followed:

- **Select the proper paperweight and adhesion for the graphic processes involved.**

  UV-cured inks respond differently from solvent-screened or water-based inks just as polyester graphics bond differently to application tape from PVC types. It is, therefore, necessary to do a little testing to determine the proper match.

  An easy way to determine proper application tape is to make test sheets with the various graphic films and application papers used in your operation. Allow them to sit on a shelf for a month or so and then install the graphics. If the papers remove smoothly without the adhesive legging off the paper, the paper tearing or the graphic film being stained or dulled, the combination will work for you as long as a laminated (uninstalled) sign may sit around your shop.

  This test will determine which of the high or low tack application papers that most shops have in stock will work best in a particular situation. Without this testing you might find certain graphics to be very difficult to work with. The tape you are using may bond too little or too much, giving undesirable results.

- **Install application tape in a single sheet over continuous character.**

  A line of small bubbles will invariably result when application tape is overlapped. These bubbles will have to be painstakingly "worked out" using a pin, heat and fingertip. While at times this is unavoidable, it should be the exception rather than the rule.

- **Be careful and avoid wrinkles and air pockets when laminating application tape to graphics during the actual installation.**

  These deformations in the paper make it more difficult to maintain flatness and even squeegee pressure during the installation of the graphic.

- **Be careful not to over-stretch the application paper.**

  If you put extreme tension on application paper, in an effort to stretch it, the graphic most likely will curl away from the release liner resulting in poor registration and additional wrinkle problems during installation.

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