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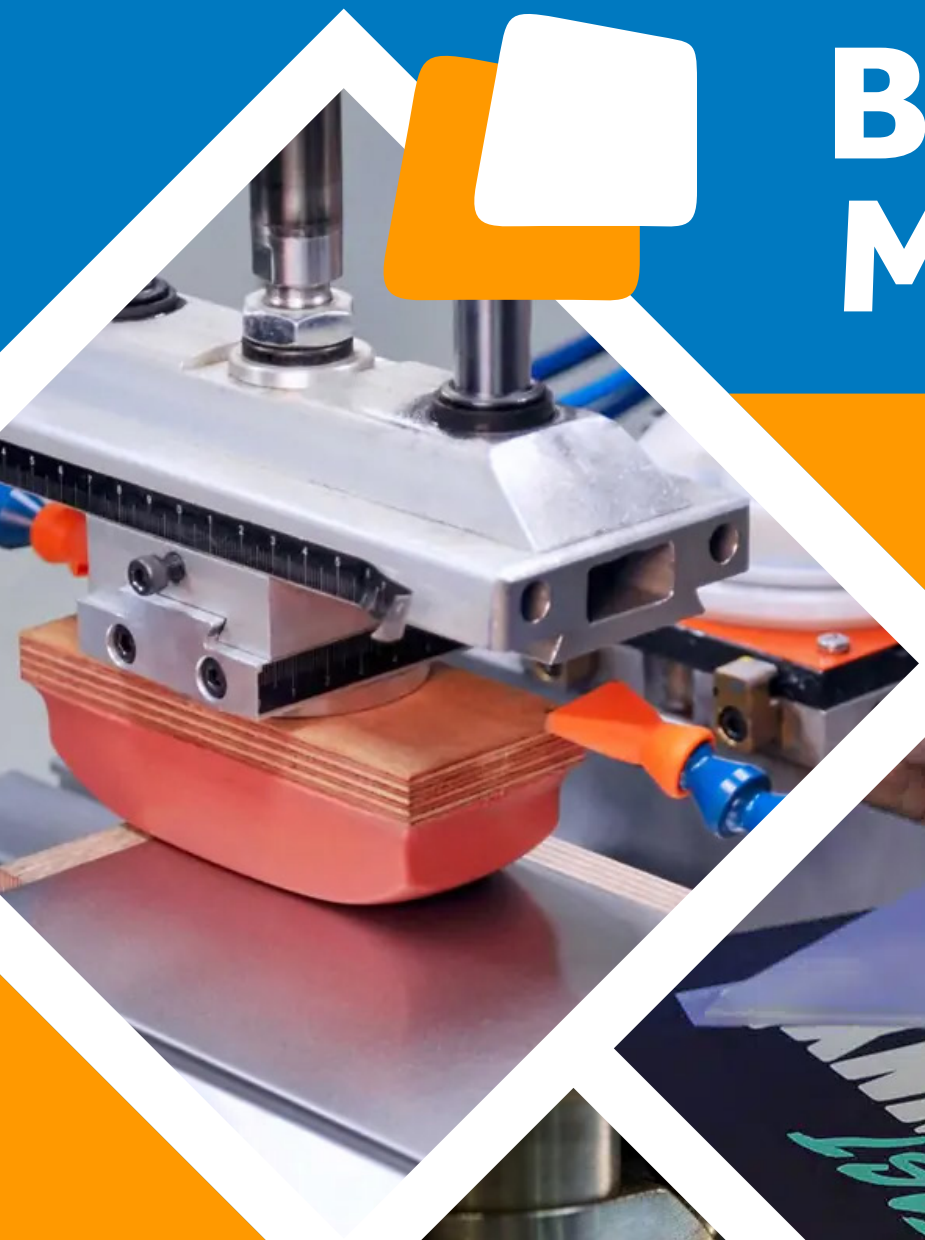
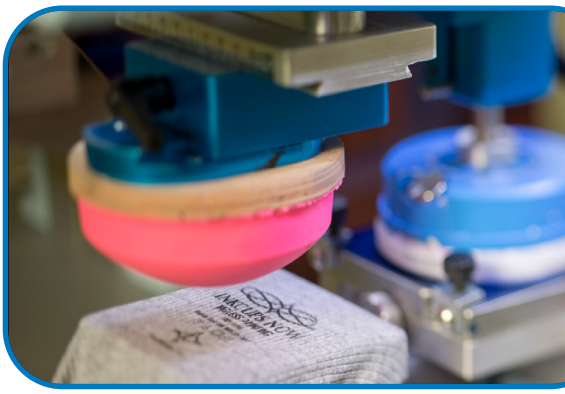
A Guide to Branding Methods



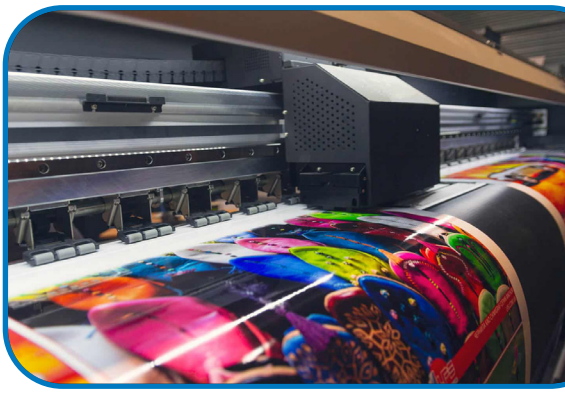
For those looking for a clear understanding of how each branding method is applied, here's a detailed technical breakdown:

1. Pad Printing



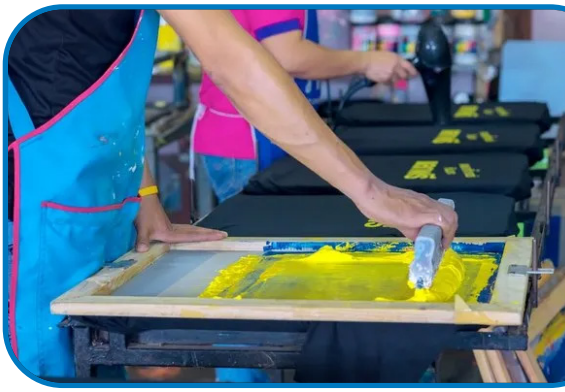
Pad printing uses an etched plate (known as a cliché) that holds the desired design. Ink is spread across the plate and wiped away, leaving ink only in the etched areas. A soft silicone pad then picks up the ink from the etched plate and transfers it onto the item's surface. The pad's flexibility allows it to conform to curved, textured, or uneven surfaces. This method is highly effective for small, detailed logos and is commonly used for pens, golf balls, and stress toys.

2. Full Colour Digital Printing



This method uses specialised inkjet technology to spray liquid ink directly onto the surface of the product. The ink is immediately cured by UV light, which bonds the ink securely to the material. Digital printing is ideal for complex designs, gradients, and photo-quality images. It works best on flat or slightly curved items such as drinkware, power banks, or phone accessories.

3. Screenprinting



Screenprinting involves creating a stencil (or screen) by coating a mesh screen with a light-sensitive emulsion. The design is exposed onto the screen using UV light, and the unexposed areas are washed away to leave an open mesh design. Ink is then spread over the screen, and a squeegee is used to push the ink through the stencil onto the product beneath. Each colour requires a separate screen. This method is effective for textiles, bags, and flat surfaces.

4. Digital Transfers

In this method, a digital printer prints a design onto transfer paper. The printed transfer is then placed on the product, and a heat press is used to apply heat and pressure, bonding the design to the material's surface. The combination of heat and adhesive backing ensures the design adheres securely, making digital transfers ideal for complex, multi-colour designs on garments and sportswear.

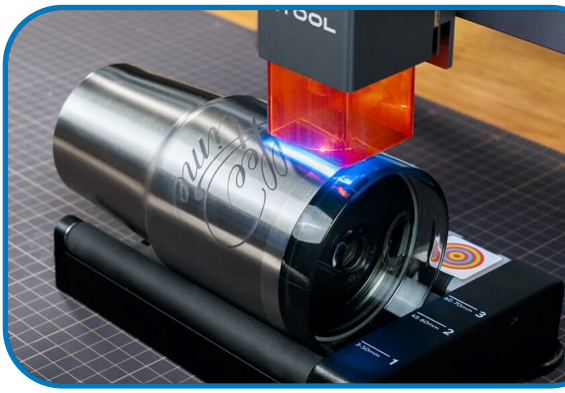
5. Supacolour

Supacolour combines digital printing with heat transfer technology. The design is printed in full colour onto a transfer sheet and is cut precisely to shape. The transfer is then pressed onto the garment using a heat press. Supacolour transfers are known for their vibrant colours, crisp details, and excellent durability, making them suitable for apparel, bags, and soft textiles.

6. Sublimation

Sublimation printing involves printing designs onto special transfer paper using sublimation ink. The transfer paper is then placed on a polyester-based item and exposed to heat and pressure in a heat press. The heat turns the ink into gas, which bonds with the polyester fibres to create a permanent design that will not crack, peel, or fade. Sublimation is ideal for clothing, drinkware, and promotional textiles.

7. Engraving



Laser engraving uses a focused beam of light that vaporises the material's surface, creating a permanent, high-precision mark. The laser beam follows a pre-programmed design, burning away the top layer of the material to reveal the base underneath. This method is suitable for metal, glass, wood, and some plastics. Rotary engraving, an alternative method, uses a spinning tool to carve the design into the product's surface.

8. Embossing

Embossing involves creating a raised design by pressing a custom-made metal die into the product's surface. Heat and pressure are applied to create a raised imprint. Embossing works best on leather, paper, or card stock. For added effect, coloured foil can be incorporated into the process.

9. Debossing

Debossing is the opposite of embossing — instead of raising the design, it is recessed into the product. A custom die is pressed into the material with heat and pressure to create an indented impression. Debossing is common on leather, notebooks, and corporate stationery.

10. Embroidery

Embroidery involves stitching a design directly into fabric using thread. Specialised embroidery machines use programmed designs to guide multiple needles that stitch precise patterns and logos. Embroidery is highly durable, making it ideal for apparel, caps, and uniforms. Complex designs may require additional backing to maintain stability.

11. Etching

Etching involves using acid or a laser to remove a thin layer from the surface of a product. Acid etching is typically used on glass, where a masking material protects non-etched areas while the acid eats away exposed sections to create a frosted effect. Laser etching, ideal for metals, vapourises the surface layer to produce precise and permanent markings.

12. Imitation Etching

Imitation etching is achieved using a specialised ink spray that mimics the frosted appearance of traditional acid or laser etching. The ink is applied using a stencil, creating a translucent design that resembles etched glass or metal. Imitation etching is faster and more cost-effective than traditional etching.

13. Foil Print

Foil printing uses a heated die to press metallic or coloured foil onto a product's surface. The die is customised with the desired design, and when pressure and heat are applied, the foil adheres to the material, transferring the design. This method is ideal for luxury items, invitations, and premium product packaging.

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