

**g**uru<sup>®</sup>  
l a b e l s

getting to know labels

LABELS • STATIONERY • PROMOTIONAL



## > getting to know labels

The Label Industry is different to other print-based industries. It is still a specialised industry.

Labels generally consist of 3 parts: a) Face Stock b) Adhesive & c) Liner  
Selecting the right raw materials to meet your needs and expectations is as easy as answering a couple of simple questions on the labels' expected purpose and application.

At Guru Labels, we have extensive experience combined with the full range of paper-based and synthetic materials to create and deliver quality printed labels. This enables us to provide industry specific knowledge and guidance on all of the options available to ensure you get the answer that you need. Creating your labels is an exciting time. We will guide you through the many choices available to provide the right solution for what you want to achieve.

## > where do you start?

To start with - we will need to ask some questions.

The most important is knowing the end use or application of your labels which will make the process of choosing much easier. The end use of the label will have an impact on the performance of the face stock, adhesive and liner and must be considered when choosing the right solution for you. The printing method, press type, colours chosen, embellishments, finishes and shape of the label then need to be considered.

- a. What is the label being used for?
- b. What is the size of the label?
- c. How many labels do you need & how long will they be in use? (or how long do they need to last?)
- d. How is it being applied? - by hand or by machine?
- e. What presentation is required?
- f. What is the roll direction? Look at the illustration on the last page to see your options.
- g. Will the labels be going through a printer?
- h. Do you have a sample of your current labels?
- i. Will a sample be available to check before ordering?
- j. What is your budget or the current price for your labels?

### > a. What is the label being used for and what to you want to accomplish?

Details of the end-use and application of the label help establish what label stock and adhesive will best suit. Some stocks are not suitable for certain applications, but there may be a range of alternatives. Application includes the material/substrate you are putting the label on and the temperature of both the product and contents during application and use. Basically, unless we know where the label is going, it's impossible to quote.

> **b. What is the size of the label?**

Labels are quoted in millimetres (mm) with the leading edge first (also referred to as the 'width' or 'web' measurement) followed by the other dimension (known as the 'draw'). This is very important for labels that are machine applied as it determines the way the labels are printed and affects die cut choices and plate directions. We also need to know if the size is critical or is it flexible (and by how much). If the sizing matches existing die sizes or our standard sizes, it could save you money.

> **c. How many labels do you want & over what period of time?**

What is the practical volume of labels to quote on? (eg. 5,000 / 10,000 / 20,000). For many labels the cost per thousand decreases as the quantity increases. By quoting on a range of quantities, you will be able to determine where the quantity breaks become more economical as the unit price changes. Sometimes a quote is requested only for 1,000 bottle labels when it would be much more economical over time to get 3,000 bottle labels now in one order.

> **d. How is it being applied? By hand or by an automatic applicator?**

This helps establish the roll direction, the adhesive release strength required and the availability of a synthetic liner to avoid breakages in the line.

> **e. What presentation is required?**

Labels can be supplied as singles, on sheets or on rolls. Each option may result in a different price so it is important to clarify this. When considering sheets, you may wish to request a certain quantity per sheet (based on a standard A4 sheet size) or you may require the sheet to be a certain finished size with a sensible number of labels to suit. When considering rolls; generally, the higher the number of labels per roll, the more cost effective it is in finishing time. (Eg. A job of 100,000 labels with 1000 rolls of 100 labels will take longer in finishing than 100 rolls of 1000). Our stock core sizes are 38mm and 76mm. The core size and roll quantity are particularly important for machine application or if the labels will be going through a printer.

> **f. What is the roll direction?**

Labels can be set up to have the narrow edge leading or the wide edge leading depending on your specific needs and application requirements. Roll directions are not based on an industry standard so please use the Guru Labels illustration (on the last page) and roll direction form to check.

> **g. Is the label going through a printer?**

Labels that go through thermal printers, laser printers or dot matrix printers all have special requirements in terms of face stock, backing and sometimes the need for sprockets on the side. The heat of certain printers (especially laser printers) demands special stock or the labels will not work.

> **h. Do you have a sample of your current labels?**

Providing us with a continuous strip of your current labels is helpful when determining how we will print the labels and on which press.

> **i. Will a sample be available to check before ordering?**

A pre-production sample that will represent the finished product (in material, colours, etc) are available, subject to a cost to manufacture. If this is required, please ask and we will be happy to quote this service for you.

> **j. What is your budget or the current price for your labels?**

We aim to be very competitive so any information on current pricing (even a rough idea) helps ensure we achieve this. At Guru, we use state-of-the-art digital print and finishing services to deliver the best prices every time.

## > face stocks

The face stock is the top surface of the label and will have a major influence on the final appearance of the label. Face stocks come in a vast range of textures, colours & opacity. When choosing the face stock for your labels, you will need to consider a lot of different things:

- Your budget; The balance between price and performance.
- Final appearance; Do you want a glossy finish, a matt-textured feel or a shiny metallic look?
- Printability; Will the label be overprinted? What quality of print will work with the face stock?
- End use; The shape and material of the packaging and the temperatures it will be exposed to, as well as the shelf life of the label.

**Label Face Stocks come in many variations of 2 main types: Paper or Synthetic**

### **Paper-based Face Stocks**

Most suitable for indoor use. Suitable for most dry environments where the intended use will not be exposed to the elements or needed to last for an extended period of time. Paper based labels are very popular for fast-moving items in office and retail environments, such as consumer goods or office labels. Paper face materials are highly versatile, economical and can achieve outstanding print results; particularly when combined with other embellishments such as a varnish or a laminate.

### **Synthetic Face Stocks**

As a general rule, you shouldn't be able to tear a synthetic stock. Used in applications where label durability is an issue; such as in wet areas, or where the label needs to be of the same plastic construction as the bottle for recycling purposes. They are popular for beverages, cosmetics and personal care items, as well as for chemical and electronic packaging that may be subject to different temperatures and environmental conditions. For labels that are meant to handle extreme outside conditions, we also offer full UV-stable print options and a wide range of long lasting vinyl to deliver years of faithful advertising, even in direct sunlight.

## > adhesives - the sticky part

The next step is to consider the adhesive properties that will be best for your labels. The initial adhesion (or 'tack') during application will influence the performance of the label during its lifespan. A poorly applied label or the wrong adhesive can have a significant effect on how well your label performs. Guru Labels use a range of adhesives to achieve the right conclusion for your application. The end use of the label will have an effect on the performance of the adhesive and must be considered when choosing the right label for you. Different options that you will need to consider include the removability of the adhesive as well as the formulation of the adhesive. The options are as follows:

Adhesion: Permanent - Removable – Prepositional.

### **Permanent adhesives**

Mean just that – they are designed not to be removed. They should stay 'stuck' for the life of their intended use. This is the most common adhesive used and is used across all paper and synthetic face stocks. Permanent adhesives can be acrylic or hot melt formulated and are available in a range of options that allow adhesion to even the most difficult substrates or surfaces (including moist or frozen objects, curved surfaces, even tyres!). Any attempt to remove or reposition a label with permanent adhesive is likely to tear the face stock and/or leave adhesive residue on the surface/substrate it is applied to.

### **Repositional Adhesives**

Offer short term repositionability (usually within 48 hours) and can be used for refrigerated or wet conditions. They are commonly used where automatic labelling is difficult due to the shape of the object being labelled or the conditions under which items are labelled. They give the person an opportunity to remove the current label and reposition it to the correct location without tearing the face stock. Unlike permanent adhesives, repositionable adhesives are easy to remove directly after labelling but do become permanent over time - great for hand labelling or fixing the odd mistake.

### **Removable adhesives**

Removable adhesives are designed to allow long-term removability from a variety of substrates/surfaces. They are popular for use with glass containers and laboratory applications.

## **> backing materials - liner**

The backing material or liner for a label is usually coated with a silicon layer on the upper side (closest to the label stock adhesive) to allow the face stock to release from the backing as it is applied to the end product. The backing material choice may matter depending on whether you require clarity or visibility through the backing (such as when overprinting) or what strength is needed for different types of machine applicators.

**Our backing materials come in two main types: kraft or glassine.**

**Kraft Backing:** Kraft backing paper is coated on one side and is commonly used when extra stiffness is required. Kraft comes in a variety of weights and colours and is popularly used for sheeted or A4 laser labels as it maintains good rigidity when fed through laser and ink-jet printers and copiers.

**Glassine Backing:** This is a general purpose uncoated transparent backing paper that comes in a range of colour and weight variations (though usually white, yellow or light blue). Most popularly used for labels being overprinted as sensors can detect gaps between labels.

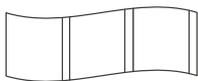
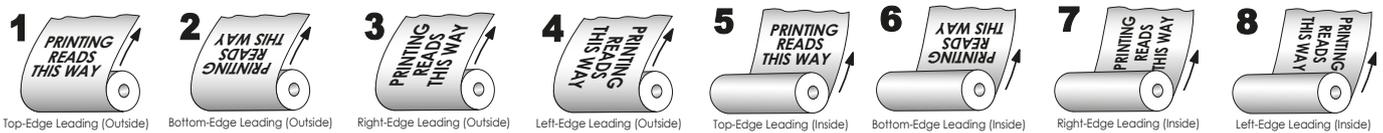
# > finishes & embellishments

Finishes & embellishments are the ways we enhance the appearance of a label, but can also have a practical purpose to improve the performance or life of the label. There are many options available to create stunning effects: special inks, varnishes and laminates. Varnish: the application of a clear ink over a label for added protection and can give a higher gloss finish or a matt finish where desired.

Over laminate: the application of a clear plastic film onto a label, generally for added protection and better presentation of a high gloss finish.

We offer two types of self-adhesive laminates: gloss & matt label finishing options

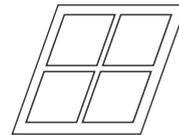
# > label finishing options



Side peeltab



Outer peeltab



Top cut sheets

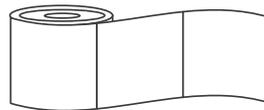


Eyelets for banners

## Xeikon DRR finishing options

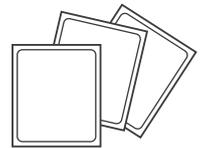
### Butt cut

There is no gap between each label. each label is flush to the edge of the backing paper. This is only possible if the artwork has a continuous solid colour or NO bleed. The advantage with butt cut is no tooling costs.



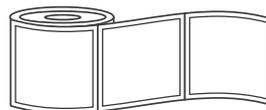
### Singles

Not on a roll, but single labels. (consider face cut with a perforation as a more cost effective option).



### Face cut

The standard is a 3mm gap between each label with a 1.5mm gap to the edge of the backing paper. the top waste is stripped away, leaving just the label on the backing paper. Face cut with a perforation - face cut and with a perforation between each label allowing tearing into singles. Often tidier and more convenient than to supply as singles. Also ensures that the order is retained if each label is unique.



### Top cut sheet

