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July 14, 2009

### **Once Printed, Package and Ship Correctly**

*Knowing how to ship to GPO means the difference between success and rejection*

*by Deborah Snider, Senior Vice President, e-LYNXX Corporation*

Producing the perfect, beautiful print job for the U. S. Government Print Office (GPO) is only one step toward GPO success. Next come packaging, shipping and GPO acceptance.

Like with the print itself, specifications and instructions must be followed precisely or work could well be rejected. Getting printed material to the GPO late or incorrectly is not an option. You have to know what you are doing.

The GPO will spell out how it wants the printed material prepared for shipping. In some cases, the instructions assume that you have done GPO work before and know what to do.

For instance, the GPO will specify whether the work should be shrink wrapped for shipment and how many documents should be in each shrink-wrapped package. Each package is usually, but not always, required to be no more than 10 inches in height. Additionally cardboard or chipboard sheets may be placed in each package. A label identifying the job by requisition number, department name and other form information must be on each package for identification. Not putting the label in the right place on the package can lead to job rejection. Likewise putting the supplier's name on the label can lead to rejection. Shrink-wrapped packages are usually, but not always, put in 275 pound test shipping boxes, and a separate GPO furnished label can be required to be affixed to each box. The boxes are then usually, but not always, placed on GPO specified pallets that are somewhat different from common commercial pallets. Some of this comes with GPO instructions that are received when the purchase order is made. Some of it does not.

You also have to know what to do if all the instructions are not falling into place. A client of ours once had a GPO job that specified shrink wrapping with further instructions that each shrink-wrapped package must contain 500 documents. The problem was that each package with 500 documents exceeded by about 6-inches another requirement on the same job for a 10-inch maximum shrink wrap package height. The GPO contract administrator could have resolved the problem, but it was after hours for GPO and the administrator was not available. Knowing how to make this and similar decisions is key to successfully accomplishing GPO work.

Completed work must be shipped to the government agency that placed the order. Often one or two copies must be sent to the GPO and 15 copies to the Library of Congress. Government furnished materials (photos, CDs, artwork, reference materials, etc.) must be packaged separately and clearly marked so they get back to the person at the agency who initiated the work in the first place. Government furnished material cannot just be placed in one of the boxes of printed material, because it could end up in a warehouse and probably never seen again. This would cause huge problems with the GPO and the agency that is expecting its original artwork, photos, CDs, etc. back. But sometimes there is a requirement to break this rule and send the furnished materials in the package with the print. Knowing when to do what is key to successfully accomplishing GPO work. A general practice is to note the government furnished material as a separate item on the packing list if it is being returned along with the bulk of the shipment.

All work for the GPO must be shipped by traceable means, meaning that you must be able to provide proof of delivery with signatures. Unless the GPO stipulates a shipping method, you are to use the most cost effective means that will get the shipments delivered on time, unless, of course, you have quoted the job f.o.b. destination, then your requirement is to get the job delivered on time regardless of cost. Small package carrier services typically are the most dependable for on-time deliveries. If the product is to go through the United States Postal Service, the GPO requires special forms that must be completed. You also can opt to use your own vehicles for delivering as long as you get a signature and date showing proof of receipt.

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All of this requires close attention to detail, patience, persistence and knowledge. This is where government print management experts can make the difference for you. In addition to assisting with the production and shipping processes, government print management experts assist with specification interpretation, proposal preparation, bidding process management, change order negotiation, invoice preparation and collection. Full representational services, accurate information, market intelligence, past price histories, and access to all available GPO solicitations are all an integral and requisite part of the package. The most effective GPO print suppliers have two things in common – (1) they use a print management firm to ensure their success and (2) they maximize usage of production capacity. Here's how:

First, print suppliers receive from the government print management firm all available GPO and other government solicitations that meet their individualized production requirements and capabilities. This allows each to bid on work which conveniently fills otherwise unused production time, thereby adding revenues and increasing profitability. This is key because production utilization for print suppliers, using a government print management firm, increases from an average of 70 percent to full utilization of 90 percent to 95 percent. While many jobs are bid low in price due to intense competition, other job opportunities – when managed by the print management firm in partnership with the supplier -- command higher than commercial prices because of the job's uniqueness, quick timing requirements or limited availability.

With a steady flow of government work, suppliers improve profits. Before GPO work, a print supplier can average 2.5% profitability on 70% production utilization. Add GPO work through services of an expert government print management firm to manage the relationship, and bottom line profitability can increase to 10% to 15% of revenue.

Working with GPO can certainly boost your profits. Those who are successful understand what the GPO wants, how they want it and when they want it from winning the order, to delivering the finished product to invoicing correctly and getting paid in 21 days.

#### **About Deborah Snider**

Deborah Snider is senior vice president of Government Print Management, a division of e-LYNXX Corporation - the leading print management firm in North America. Mrs. Snider is a graduate of Central Penn Business College and has headed Government Print Management and its predecessor since 1984. Government Print Management represents the majority of successful printers that work with GPO. The firm is commission based and specializes in helping printers to smooth their way to GPO related profitability. Government Print Management is exclusively endorsed by Printing Industries of America (PIA). She can be reached at 888-876-5432, through the web site at [www.GovernmentPrintManagement.com](http://www.GovernmentPrintManagement.com) or at [Deborah.Snider@GovernmentPrintManagement.com](mailto:Deborah.Snider@GovernmentPrintManagement.com).



#### **About e-LYNXX Corporation**

e-LYNXX Corporation, the North American procurement authority, is exclusively endorsed by *Printing Industries of America (PIA)* and *Educational and Institutional Cooperative Purchasing (E&I)* and recognized as a top 100 procurement firm by *Supply & Demand Chain Executive*. Founded in 1975, e-LYNXX has three divisions. ● American Print Management provides enterprise print procurement solutions and patented competitive methods to reduce costs for direct mail, marketing materials, packaging and other procured print. Results include enhanced quality and service levels, efficiencies, process control, transparency and procured print cost reduction of 25% to 50%. ● Patented Procurement Method grants patent licenses for supply chain optimization. Results include substantial reduction in existing costs of competitively procured goods and services. ● Government Print Management offers U.S. GPO bid services, access and assistance. Results include filled downtime, operational stability, improved cash flows and increased profitability. [www.e-LYNXX.com](http://www.e-LYNXX.com) – 888-876-5432